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The Girl With The Dragon Tattoo: The Millennium Series, Book 1



Synopsis

A spellbinding amalgam of murder mystery, family saga, love story, and financial intrigue....It's about the disappearance 40 years ago of Harriet Vanger, a young scion of one of the wealthiest families in Sweden...and about her octogenarian uncle, determined to know the truth about what he believes was her murder.It's about Mikael Blomkvist, a crusading journalist recently at the wrong end of a libel case, hired to get to the bottom of Harriet's disappearance...and about Lisbeth Salander, a 24-year-old, pierced and tattooed genius hacker possessed of the hard-earned wisdom of someone twice her age, who assists Blomkvist with the investigation.This unlikely team discovers a vein of nearly unfathomable iniquity running through the Vanger family, astonishing corruption in the highest echelons of Swedish industrialism - and an unexpected connection between themselves.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A 24-year-old computer hacker sporting an assortment of tattoos and body piercings and afflicted with Asperger Syndrome or something of the like has been under state guardianship in her native Sweden since she was thirteen. She supports herself by doing deep background investigations for Dragan Armansky, who, in turn, worries the anorexic-looking Lisbeth Salander is "the perfect victim for anyone who wished her ill." Salander may look fourteen and stubbornly shun social norms, but she possesses the inner strength of a determined survivor. She sees more than her word processor page in black and white and despises the users and abusers of this world. She won't hesitate to exact her own unique brand of retribution against small-potatoes bullies, sick predators, and corrupt

magnates alike. Financial journalist Carl Mikael Blomkvist has just been convicted of libeling a financier and is facing a fine and three months in jail. Blomkvist, after a Salander-completed background check, is summoned to a meeting with semi-retired industrialist Henrik Vanger whose far-flung but shrinking corporate empire is wholly family owned. Vanger has brooded for 36 years about the fate of his great niece, Harriet. Blomkvist is expected to live for a year on the island where many Vanger family members still reside and where Harriet was last seen. Under the cover story that he is writing a family history, Blomkvist is to investigate which family member might have done away with the teenager. So, the stage is set. The reader easily guesses early that somehow Blomkvist and Salander will pool their talents to probe the Vanger mystery. However, Swede Stieg Larsson's *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* is no humdrum, formulaic whodunit. It is fascinating and very difficult to put down.

The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo is a masterwork of fine craftsmanship. When I reached the final page I was disappointed that there was no more to read. I did not want the story to end. The characters are too intriguing for this to be the end. Apparently this was the first novel in a trilogy by the brilliant writer, Stieg Larsson, who unfortunately died in 2004: the book contains a tribute to him and his career. I cannot wait to read the sequels scheduled for release in the USA in 2009. *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* is an international best seller and is set in Sweden. It takes a little effort to get accustomed to all the Swedish names and places but then the story moves with lightening speed. There are two key plots happening simultaneously. In one, a Swedish financial investigative journalist publishes a libelous attack about a powerful industrialist and is sentenced to jail, fined a ruinous sum, and has his career torn to shreds. Another industrialist, Vanger, hires the journalist to investigate the 36 year old disappearance of his then 14 year old grand niece. There has been no trace of her in all these years and she is assumed dead. Yet, every year on his birthday, he receives a mysterious gift of a pressed flower, mimicking a gift his missing grandniece used to give him when she lived there. Vanger, an old man, is tormented by the flower gifts, and wants one more chance to find out what happened to her and who killed her. What the journalist uncovers about the Vanger family's hitherto unknown secrets and connections to the Nazis, will have you hanging on the edge of your seat.

Henrik Vanger, an elderly Swedish industrialist, has long been receiving the same anonymous gift on his birthday: a single framed flower. He is convinced the series of flowers has something to do with his great-niece Harriet who vanished decades ago in mysterious circumstances when she was

just 16. Vanger coerces a disgraced and prison-bound journalist, Mikael Blomkvist, to do some research into the disappearance. In exchange for information on his niece, Vanger promises Blomkvist enough dirt to take down the rich man who is sending him to jail. So begins "The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo," a blockbuster best-seller in Europe. As Blomkvist moves closer to the truth, he teams up with the titular character, a tattooed detective named Lisbeth Salander who's the real star of the show. Together they uncover things that stun even Blomkvist, a crusading financial reporter who thought he knew all there was to know about the rot of corruption, the myriad abuses of power and the darkest sides of ourselves. The novel is long and sometimes feels even longer; it takes its time threading out the dense plot. There's a lot going on here. This is the kind of book that provides you with a family-tree chart upfront; by midpoint you may be wishing there were even more aids offered by the author to keep track of things. There is a series of horrible crimes at the heart of "The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo," but I hesitate to call this work a thriller. It's a crime novel, yes, but it has more on its mind than generic conventions. The author, the late Stieg Larsson, was a journo in the muckraking tradition, like his character Blomkvist. The book serves up a heapin' helpful of essay that tastes like story but isn't.

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