



The Bird King

Original title: Fuglekongen
Publisher: Tiden, 2024
Genre: Crime/Thriller
Pages: 350 pages
English sample

Foreign rights

Bulgarian: Perseus
Danish: Gyldendal
Dutch: Bruna
Finnish: Tammi
German: Rowohlt
Serbian: Dokaz
Swedish: Forum

Awards

Winner of the Riverton Prize 2024
Winner of the Glass Key 2025
Winner of Tara Book Prize 2025



Eva Fretheim

The Bird King

When Lars Ove Jansen—known around town as “Love”—is found dead, at least one woman in the small village breathes a sigh of relief. But as police investigator Vigdis Malmstrøm and her team begin digging into the case, that relief quickly turns into unease—and then panic. Because what really happened fifteen years ago, when Love was convicted of a bank robbery without solid evidence, and his alleged accomplice vanished without a trace?

The Bird King is an intense drama about love, jealousy, and the complexities of family ties—and about how far we might be willing to go to protect the ones we love.

With elegance and ease, Eva Fretheim delivers a gripping psychological thriller, firmly establishing herself as a crime writer readers won't want to miss.

Literary rural noir of the highest caliber.

NRK, 5/6 stars

... a personal blend of gritty cynicism and a portrayal of the wear and tear of ordinary lives and family dynamics that calls to mind Karin Fossum at her finest.

Adresseavisen, 5/6 stars

Why are so many women in the village so relieved that Lars Ove Hansen has been found murdered, and what really happened to his best friend and accomplice who disappeared without a trace after a bank robbery fifteen years ago? In her second crime novel since her 2022 debut, Fretheim writes elegantly and effortlessly, with beautiful precision and timing, crafting a cast of characters where seemingly innocent events unfold under intense pressure, where hidden relationships and connections simmer, and where secrets are gradually and inevitably revealed.

Jury statement, Riverton Prize

The Bird King is an elegant, seamless suspense novel... Eva Fretheim delivers surprising revelations—and in that sense, fulfills her contract with the reader. The Bird King shows that she can craft compelling and suspenseful entertainment, both in terms of plot twists and the novel's finely tuned literary structure.

Dagsavisen

This is an intense psychological drama about love, jealousy and complex family relationships - and how far we are willing to go in order to protect those we love.

Jury statement, Tara Book Prize

Eva Fretheim

Eva Fretheim (b. 1967) lives in Moss and works as a journalist. She holds a master's degree in journalism and previously published the novel *Pink Cotton Candy*. In 2022, she made her crime fiction debut with *Queenland*, for which she received the Maurits Hansen Award – New Blood. The critically acclaimed sequel, *The Bird King*, was released in 2024 and was awarded both the Riverton Prize and the Glass Key Award. *The Paper Dolls*, the third crime novel featuring police investigator Vigdis Malmstrøm in the lead role, came out in early 2025 to rave reviews.