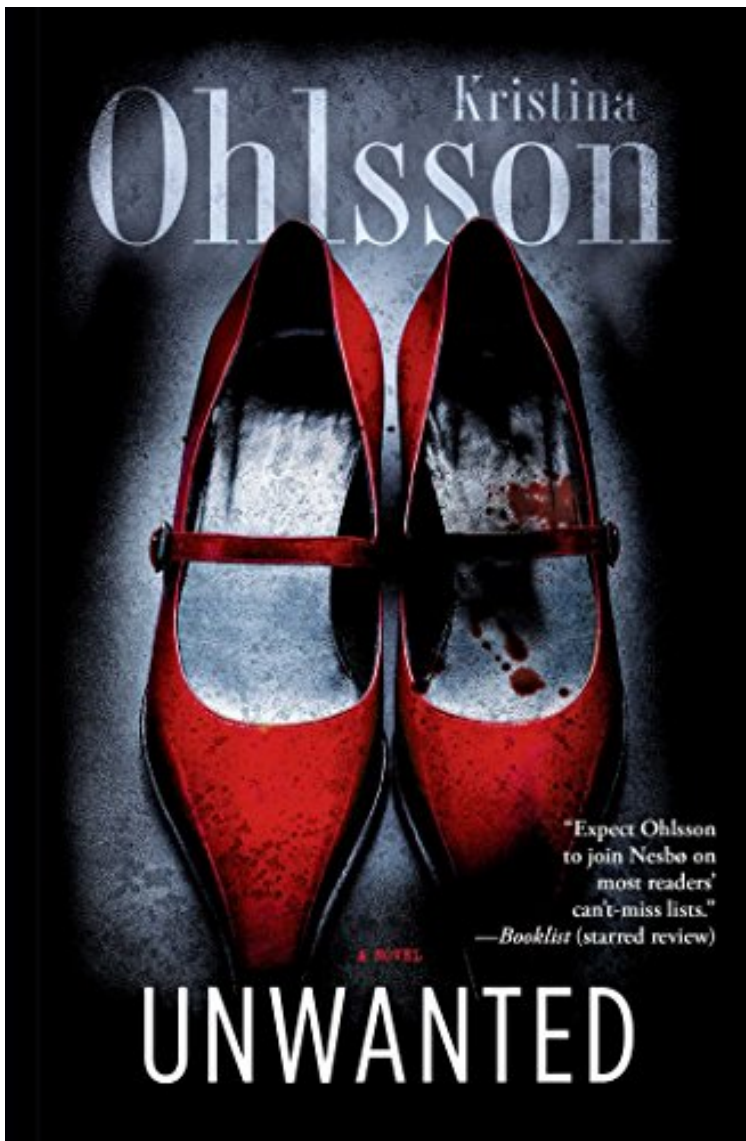


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Unwanted: A Novel



Par Kristina Ohlsson
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Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurKristina Ohlssons critically acclaimed, award-winning mystery debut introduces readers to captivating investigative analyst Fredrika Bergman. One mistake changes everything...In the middle of a rainy Swedish summer, a little girl is abducted from a crowded train. The nightmare is just beginning.ExtraitWhenever he let his thoughts wander, for some reason they always came back sooner or later to the case notes. It usually happened at night. He lay quite still in his bed and looked up at the ceiling, where a fly was moving. He had never been much good at darkness and rest. It was as though his defenses were stripped away the moment the sun disappeared and the fatigue and darkness crept up to enfold him. Defenselessness was something at odds with his entire nature. A large part of his life had revolved around being on his guard, being prepared. Readiness demanded wakefulness. He registered that it had been a long

time since he had been woken at night by his own tears. It had been a long time since the memories hurt him and weakened him. In that respect, he had come far in his attempt to find peace. And yet. If he shut his eyes really hard, and if it was totally, totally quiet all round him, he could see her in front of him. Her bulky form detached itself from the dark shadows and came lumbering toward him. Slowly, slowly, the way she always moved. The memory of her scent still made him feel sick. Dark, sweet, and full of dust. Impossible to breathe in. Like the smell of the books in her library. And he could hear her voice: You stubborn good-for-nothing, it hissed. You worthless abortion. And then she grabbed him and gripped him hard. The words were always followed by the pain and the punishment. By the fire. The memory of the fire was still there on parts of his body. He liked running his finger over the scar tissue and knowing that he had survived. When he was really small, he had assumed the punishment was because he always did everything wrong. So he tried, following his child's logic, to do everything right. Desperately, tenaciously. And yet: it all turned out wrong. When he was older he understood better. There simply was nothing that was right. It wasn't just his actions that were wrong and needed to be punished, it was his whole essence and existence. He was being punished for existing. If he had not existed, She would never have died. You never should have been born! she howled into his face. You're evil, evil, evil! The crying that followed, that came after the fire, must always be silent. Silent, silent, so she wouldn't hear. Because if she did, she would come back. Always. He remembered that the accusation had caused him intense anxiety for a long time. How could he ever come to terms with what she said he was guilty of? How could he ever pay for what he had done, compensate for his sin? The case notes. He went to the hospital where She had been a patient and read Her notes. Mostly to get some conception of the full extent of his crime. He was of age by then. Of age but eternally in debt as a result of his evil deeds. What he found in the notes, however, turned him, entirely unexpectedly, from a debtor into a free man. With this liberation came strength and recovery. He found a new life, and new and important questions to answer. The question was no longer how he could compensate someone else. The question then was how he was to be compensated. Lying there in the dark, he gave a slight smile and glanced sideways at the new doll he had chosen. He thought he could never be sure but he thought this one would last longer than the others. She didn't need to deal with her past, as he himself had done. All she needed was a firm hand, his firm hand. And lots and lots of love. His very special, guiding love. He caressed her back cautiously. By mistake, or perhaps because he genuinely could not see the injuries he had inflicted on her, his hand passed right over one of the freshest bruises. It adorned, like a dark little lake, one of her shoulder blades. She woke with a start and turned toward him. Her eyes were glassy with fear; she never knew what awaited her when darkness fell. Its time, doll. Her delicate face broke into a pretty, drowsy smile. Well start tomorrow, he whispered. Then he rolled onto his back again and fixed his gaze on the fly once more. Awake and ready. Without rest. 2009 Kristina Ohlsson *Revue de presse* 'The author uses her inside knowledge to great effect in this compelling debut' *Sunday Times* 'Superbly crafted, and with a set of police detectives who are all too human, it seeps into your subconscious, as only truly good thrillers can do' *Daily Mail*