



Liv forlag 2022
384 pages
Original title: *Kleptokratiet*
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AWARDS

The Norwegian Silver Dagger Award
(Sølvkniven) 2025

OTHER TITLES

The Crime Series:
Traitors (2024)
The Kleptocracy (2022)
Blood is Thicker Than Water (2021)
Slaughter (2019)

Novel:
Nothing to Hide (2025)



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The Kleptocracy

The Norwegian environmental and human rights activist Sofie Christensen is determined to uncover the consequences of oil operations carried out by a Norwegian-owned company in the rainforest of the Democratic Republic of Congo. At the same time, a defector from a notorious rebel group asks Christensen's Swedish colleague, Anna Hagberg, for help in finding his sons. Shortly afterwards, the women are attacked in their apartment in Kinshasa. The defector and a stranger are killed. The women are arrested for murder.

Chief Inspector Tom Grayston and his partner Chris Møller from Kripas are assigned to travel to Congo. It becomes the beginning of a case they will never forget.

The Kleptocracy is a crime novel with international crime and environmental issues as its themes.

The novel was published in 2024 by Liv Forlag and is the third in the crime series. *The Kleptocracy* was nominated for the Norwegian Silver Dagger Award (Sølvkniven) for Best Crime Novel of 2022.

Book reviewer Tor Hammerø in the newspaper Nettavisen reviewed *The Kleptocracy* and wrote: "Espen Skjerven has taken a giant step up into the Norwegian crime literature elite."

The Kleptocracy is nothing less than brilliant...a page-turner of the rare kind (rating 5/6).

- Tor Hammerø, Nettavisen

Kleptocracy gives the reader the nagging unease that a good crime novel should have.

- Ole Martin Mortvedt, Politiforum

Espen Skjerven has written a thriller of international proportions (rating 6/6)

- Simen Ingemundsen, Randaberg24

The story is packed with action—almost to the point where it's hard to catch your breath (rating 6/6).

- Tine Sundal, bookblogger

The Kleptocracy is a quality crime novel (rating 6/6).

- Henning Sviland, bookblogger

With the Kleptocracy, Skjerven cements his solid position among my

top three Norwegian favorites who write cracking good crime with meaning.

- Marianne Barron, bookblogger

Espen Skjerven cements his position as a truly excellent crime writer (rating 5/6).

- Kjell Magne Gjørseter, bookblogger

Espen Skjerven undoubtedly belongs to the elite of crime writers in Norway, and the Kleptocracy fully confirms it (rating 6/6).

- Ernst Stenberg, bookstagrammer

Skjerven shows that he is on par with the very best. I warmly recommend the book (rating 6/6).

- Hilde Sæther, bookblogger

Espen Skjerven is a name to remember. I've enjoyed all of his books (rating 6/6).

- Anne Lise Johannesen, Hverdagsnett.no

The Kleptocracy by Espen Skjerven is a fantastic, eventful, and well-written crime novel with a fast pace and great suspense curves (rating 5+/6).

- Heidis boble, bookblogger

Skjerven to the people! (rating 5/6).

- Anita Ness, bookblogger

Top quality, plain and simple.

- Mariann Tokle, blogger

“...an incredibly exciting crime story, intense and action-packed. Tom Grayston appears as a thoughtful and sympathetic investigator, with a strong sense of justice, and I am happy to follow him both in his work and private life.”

- Åslaug Rise Holberg, blogger



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Espen Skjerven works as a district court judge at Sør-Rogaland District Court. He has a background as a prosecutor in the national investigative units Økokrim and Kripos, as well as a business lawyer/litigator.



Skjerven has written four books in the crime series about police officer Tom Grayston: *Slaughter* (Slakt 2019), *Blood is Thicker than Water* (Blod er tykkere enn vann, 2021), *The Kleptocracy* (Kleptokratiet, 2022), and *Traitors* (Svikere, 2024).

Traitors won the Norwegian Silver Dagger Award (Sølvkniven), for best release of 2024.

Book reviewer Tor Hammerø in the newspaper Nettavisen reviewed the *Kleptocracy* and wrote: “Espen Skjerven has taken a giant step up into the Norwegian crime literature elite.”

Nothing to Hide (Ingenting å skjule, 2025) is Skjerven’s first work of fiction.



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