



Pitch forlag 2019  
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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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## *Slaughter*

Investor Erik Hoff is fighting for his innocence in a brutal double murder case in Sandnes. When police officers Tom Grayston and Dagny Stokka investigate new leads in the case, they become entangled in a dark underworld of prostitution and severe human trafficking. Truth and trust are put to the test, and the line between guilt and innocence is blurred.

*Slaughter* (Slakt) was published in 2019 by Pitch forlag and is the first in the crime series about Tom Grayston. It is a realistic crime novel containing courtroom drama, police investigation, and sequences of suspense.

This is what Skjerven said about *Slaughter*:

“As the author of *Slaughter*, I have had the privilege of creating my own story and my own universe, where the main goal has been to provide exciting entertainment. At the same time, I wanted to challenge the genre somewhat: to bring seriousness into the fiction. The reader is given the opportunity to ask themselves the following questions: Could this have happened in reality, and is society doing enough to prevent this type of crime?”

In 2020, *Slaughter* was nominated to compete for the literature prize Årets Ulest organized by Bookis.

*Slaughter is an exceptionally well-crafted story...“The characters are so vividly portrayed that each one remains firmly in memory (rating 6/6).*

- Tine Sundal, bookblogger

*A sensational debut..Incredibly realistic and very well told.*

- Marianne Barron, bookblogger

*A credible crime debut. The book is exciting and well-written... the plot and dialogue flow smoothly. It's simply a little difficult to put down.*

- Sven Arne Kjepso, Politiforum

*Espen Skjerven has got me hooked.*

- Marie Brudevold, supermarie, bookstagrammer

*Slaughter is an incredibly well-written, thrilling, and easy-to-read book, highly recommended (rating 6/6).*

- Heidi Engesbak, blogger

*A very strong crime debut...The plot stands rock-solid throughout the novel (rating 5/6)*

- Kjell Magne Gjøsaeter, bokblogger.com

*...this is thought-provoking entertainment at the highest level (rating 6/6).*

- Ernst Stenberg, bookstagrammer

*A real page-turner...At times I was breathless, wanting to skip ahead because I could hardly wait to see what happens next — it's that exciting.*

- Anita Ness, bookblogger

*Espen Skjerven has written a crime novel with great pace, constant surprises, and tension present all the way through (rating 5/6).*

- Bjørn Bakken, author and bookblogger

*Slaughter is a strong, brutal, and thrilling crime novel. It is very easy to read, with great immersion. The characters are vivid and exciting (rating 5/6).*

- Ina Syrstad, bookblogger

*Unbearably exciting.*

- Mariann Tokle, blogger

*A bang of a debut from the author! The story is very engaging, and it's almost impossible to put the book down.*

- Anne Lise Johannesen, hverdagsnett.no

*Slaughter is a very promising debut, an easy-to-read book with great momentum and hard to put down, with suspense from the first to the last page (rating 5/6).*

- Henning Sviland, bookblogger

*...the ending is fast-paced, thrilling, and above all surprising, and all in all I think this is a good crime novel I can recommend.*

- Astrid Terese, bookblogger

*An insanely good crime debut...A nerve-wracking and grand story.*

- Simen Ingemundsen, Bygdebladet Randaberg og Rennesøy

*This book was at times raw and chilling, but I loved it, and I'd gladly read more from this author.*

- Hilde Sæther, bookblogger



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## Espen Skjerven

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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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