



Book of the Week

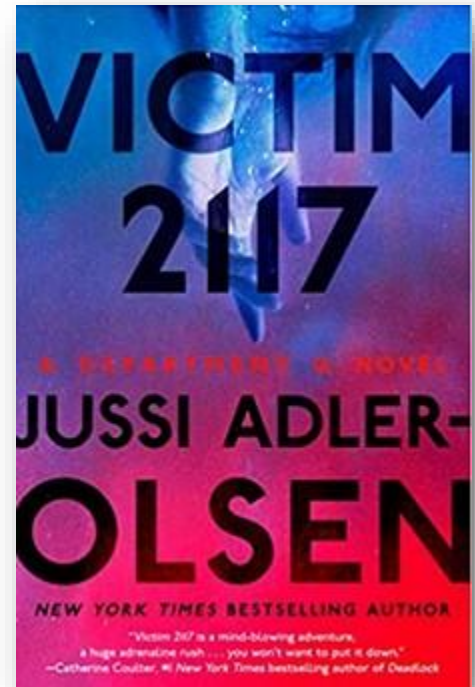
***Victim 2117* by Jussi Adler-Olsen**

Book Review by Lynn Reinschmiedt

A little background on my reading habits before I get to my Friends of the Library board member pick. Since my post-graduate school days in the mid-70s until my retirement in 2010-2016, depending on how you count part-time employment, I've averaged reading two to eight books a month. Over this time I've evolved with technology from strictly hardback/paperback to electronic, Kindle for example, to audible (cassette, CD, Audible.com, etc.). Today I must admit that with the advent of the smart phone and various Bluetooth applications the audible is my preferred format. However, I still buy a lot of hardback books, particularly nonfiction, which constitutes about a third of my reading.

My book choice for this selection comes from a growing number of Scandinavian crime writers that have appeared, particularly since the introduction and popularity of Stieg Larsson's *Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* series around 2010. Among those that I am most familiar are Jo Nesbo, Lars Kepler (pen name for a Swedish husband/wife couple), and Jussi Adler-Olsen to name a few. My selection here is by Jussi Adler-Olsen, a Danish writer, his book number eight in the so-called Department Q series, *Victim 2117*. Department Q is an elite group of misfit police investigators assigned to investigate cold crimes. *Victim 2117* departs from the usual Danish-based crimes in that it diverges from typical police procedural matters and goes into the background and history of Assad, one of Department Q's more murky and mysterious members.

The book opens with the capsizing of a boat load of refugees fleeing the Syrian civil war and washing ashore of bodies and survivors on the coast of Cyprus. Assad is startled to learn from an international photograph of one of the victims and distraught survivors appearing in Copenhagen newspapers were that of a close family friend and Assad's wife and one of his daughters whom he was led to believe had



been killed before he had emigrated to Denmark. The book's plot from here evolves around major world problems of religious and political terrorism, a sidebar of domestic lone-wolf Danish terrorism, and the plight of refugees seeking freedom. At the heart of plot is the primary terrorist using Assad's family members, who he had held hostage as the key instruments of revenge in drawing Assad into the open in retaliation for his disfigurement incurred during Assad's escape from Abu Griahib prison years before. Like all new book series releases feels like a renewal of old relationships. In this book Adler-Olsen fills in the gaps in Assad's background and allows a peak into future book themes and sidebar plots.

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