

# BookFilter: Karin Slaughter on Her New Thriller And The Family Secret That Fuels Her Passion For Justice

## BookFilter: Karin Slaughter on Her New Thriller And The Family Secret That Fuels Her Passion For Justice

### PRETTY GIRLS

By [Karin Slaughter](#)

\$27.99; HarperLuxe

Let's be clear: author Karin Slaughter is already a hugely popular, critically acclaimed author. Her books have sold well over 30 million copies around the world. She's just signed a globe-spanning deal with HarperCollins that is the wave of the future for name brand authors like herself. Check out the blurbs on her titles and you'll find raves from critics and peers like Lee Childs, Kathy Reichs and Gillian Flynn.

But she's about to get bigger. Slaughter's new stand-alone thriller *Pretty Girls* is the [#1 pick on BookFilter](#) and here's why:

*Pretty Girls* is a roller coaster of a tale, filled with twists and turns, each one more jaw-dropping, unnerving and just plain fun than the one before. But it also retains Slaughter's gift for genuine, complex characters and that makes the danger palpable, the stakes real, the emotions raw.

The story begins long after a tragedy. Claire and Lydia are the sisters who "survived" when their sibling Julia was abducted off a college campus two decades earlier. Of course their family was never the same. Their father became obsessed with the case and died alone, their mother won't discuss it, and the two sisters are estranged. Claire has the successful marriage, the country club membership and the showcase home. Lydia is a recovering addict (and sex worker) dating an ex-con.

But nothing is as it seems: a violent murder upends Claire's world and pulls Lydia back into her orbit. Slowly we realize Lydia is on the road to recovery, Claire is on a slide into turmoil and they're both being haunted and hunted by a spectre from the past. Without ever shortchanging the adrenaline rush of a thriller, Slaughter has crafted characters far more compelling than the usual cardboard cut-outs which pass for people in most such genre fare. It's a triumph that will bring this author to a wider audience than ever. And that's saying something. -- Michael Giltz/BookFilter

Slaughter met with me in Atlanta near a hotel where one of the key scenes in *Pretty Girls* takes place. Longtime fans will be relieved to hear that after two stand-alone novels she was at her cabin retreat, working on a new entry in the best-selling Will Trent series. Confident, jazzed about her new publishing partnership (which officially reunites her with the editor she's worked with throughout her career), Slaughter proved ready to talk with the practiced ease of a pro and the excitement of knowing her fifteenth novel may well be her biggest yet. Though always witty and relaxed, she can talk unflinchingly and smartly about rape, violence towards women in our culture and the ins and outs of a publishing industry roiled by change.

Here's Slaughter on how *50 Shades Of Grey* (and especially the character of Christian) inspired her in crafting

the plot of *Pretty Girls*. Oh the drugs helped too. (Painkillers, actually; Slaughter may swim with sharks and tackle adventures like the space camp comet vomit, but when it comes to drugs she is boringly vanilla.)

Slaughter has spoken proudly of her parents and how her father was insistent his daughters all be self-reliant: they best know how to change a tire and handle a gun. Now she talks movingly about the painful fact that her grandmother was beaten by her grandfather. That pained silence -- no one mentioned it for many years -- is one reason why Slaughter is so passionate about delving into the dark side of crime in her novels and speaks up fearlessly today on once-taboo topics like rape. And she's disarmingly funny about it, for example pointing out how calling a woman a crazy bitch seems dismissive while calling a man like Donald Trump a jerk can be a badge of honor.

Obviously, Slaughter is one of many women writing superior thrillers that appeal to both men and women. But why do women in particular want to read thrillers where female characters are often forced to confront the absolute worst nightmares of criminal depravity? Slaughter explains that all women -- no matter how well-trained in self-defense, no matter if they're packing heat or surrounded by security -- are constantly reminded that they are a target. They've all faced that late night walk on a darkened street or to a parked car when an unexpected sound or person sends a bolt of fear through them. And books like those by Slaughter let them face the worst the world has to offer head on, with no flinching and no self-preserving need to run away.

You can [see the complete interview on the front page of BookFilter](#).

Thanks for reading. Michael Giltz is the founder and CEO of BookFilter, a book lover's best friend. Head to BookFilter if you want to find more great picks like this.

Want to know what's just come out in your favorite categories, like sci-fi or mystery or romance or history? Come to BookFilter! We list every book every week in every category -- something no one else does.

Want a gift idea that's quick and easy and sure to be something they don't already have? Come to BookFilter! We've got new releases on the front page from every category imaginable -- each one an ideal gift and brand spanking new!

Want recommendations by passionate people instead of crowd-sourced "discoveries" you heard about months ago? Or worse, banal automated choices from a soulless algorithm? Come to BookFilter! Our recommendations are always our personal, informed choices. Unlike those chain bookstores, no one can pay us off to display their book prominently.

[BookFilter](#): your source for what's new and what's good.

Note: Michael Giltz is provided with free galleys and final copies of books in the hope that he'll review or write a story on them. He receives far more copies of books than he could ever cover.