

Master of the Finnish Crime

Matti
Rönkä

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Matti Rönkä

‘... fascinating characters from a part of the world we know all too little about. The finest thing, however, is the impressiveness of Rönkä’s narrative – it is almost masterly.”

Kaliber 38 (Germany)

Matti Rönkä (born 1959) grew up in northern Karelia near the Russian border. Later on he moved to Helsinki to study political science and became a journalist. He has worked as a journalist in magazines, the radio as well as TV. Matti Rönkä is one of the most familiar faces on TV since he works as a news anchor for the YLE TV. Rönkä lives in Helsinki with his wife and his children. The books of Rönkä have been acknowledged especially for their humoristic language that contains a sharp societal point of view. Rönkä was awarded with the Finnish crime novel prize in 2006 as well as the German prize for crime fiction (Deutscher Krimi Preis) in 2008. Furthermore, Rönkä was awarded The Glass Key Award (Glasnyckel) in 2007.



Matti Rönkä

Awards:

Clue of the Year 2006 (Friends Far Away)

The Glass Key 2007 (Friends Far Away)

Finnish Golden Pocket 2008 prize

Nominations:

Best crime novel of 2007, Germany (A Man With a Killer’s Face)

Deutscher Krimi Preis 2008 (A Man With a Killer’s Face)

Le Prix du Livre Européen, pre-selection, 2011, France

The Kärppä series

2011	A Dead Man in a Foreign Country
2009	Souvenir from Moscow
2007	The Father, The Son And The Unholy Ghost
2005	Friends Far Away
2003	Good Brother, Bad Brother
2002	A Man With A Killer’s Face

About the successful Kärppä series

‘Since there can be just one most original hero in crime fiction in Finland, the choice falls on Viktor Kärppä.’

Kansan Uutiset (Finland)

It is a matter of opinion as to whether or not Matti Rönkä's books can be counted as crime fiction at all. Although they are set in the world of crime, but fleetingly, in a most unusual set-up. There are no police detectives who solve crimes, no middle-aged male reporters. Instead, there is Viktor Kärppä, a Russian of Finnish extraction, who fixes things for his countrymen and runs his business on the hazy side of the law. Apart from social ills, Rönkä's books also deal with universal themes such as jealousy, betrayal, brotherhood and friendship.

A former Special Forces soldier in the Soviet Army, Viktor Kärppä is now a wheeling and dealing construction entrepreneur in his new homeland Finland, with even a modicum of success. Kärppä sees himself as a reliable businessman. He arranges permits and sees deals through, he does not steal or become involved in drugs, and he does not kill, even if he does have a killer's face. Although Kärppä has settled down in Finland, his past in the Red Army Special Forces and as a gangster's henchman return to haunt him – and not only in his dreams.

Matti Rönkä is the winner of the prestigious Glass Key and Clue of the Year awards for crime fiction. His debut novel *A Man With a Killer's Face* was ranked third in Germany's most prestigious detective fiction award, Deutscher Krimi Preis, in 2008.

“Viktor Kärppä is a great invention by the Finnish writer Matti Rönkä. Kärppä is a wild departure from the ordinary soft and noble protagonists of detective stories.”

Tages-Anzeiger (Switzerland)

A Man With A Killer's Face

Deutscher Krimi Preis 2008

In the first book of the series, *A Man With a Killer's Face*, a husband hires Kärppä to find his lost Estonian wife. The well-paid job wreaks havoc with Kärppä's orderly life and suddenly nothing is as it used to be. Before he knows it, Kärppä has been drawn into the international drug business. A new girlfriend, Marja, brings additional color to his life. For this independent-minded academic woman, Kärppä's businesses seem shady to say the least, and do not bode well for a healthy relationship.

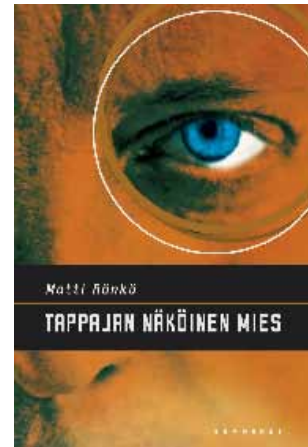
A Man With a Killer's Face was the runner-up in the competition for the title of the best crime novel of the year in Germany. According to the jury, Rönkä's book shows that 'Finnish crime fiction is not as gloomy as in the other Nordic countries, but has a more joyful, Karelian streak to it.' The jury also noted the political topicality of the novel set in Helsinki, Tallinn and Russia, since crimes linking Finland with Russia and the Baltic countries have not been addressed before in fiction. *A Man With a Killer's Face* was short-listed for the Deutscher Krimi Preis for Best Crime Fiction of 2008.

'*A Man With a Killer's Face* clearly rises above the mainstream of suspense fiction. Matti Rönkä really brings his characters to life. His language is straightforward, lucid and unpretentious, his plots exciting and realistic.'

Bayerischer Rundfunk (Germany)

'The main character of the book, a private eye with a tendency to fool himself, Viktor Kärppä is a great invention by the Finnish writer Matti Rönkä. Kärppä is a wild departure from the ordinary soft and noble protagonists of detective stories.'

Tages-Anzeiger (Switzerland)



Original title:

Tappajan näköinen mies

Pages: 304

Published: 2002

Publisher: Gummerus

Rights sold:

Finland, Gummerus

Sweden, Lindelöws

Norway, Samlaget

Denmark, Turbine

Germany, Grafit

Holland, Querido

France, l'Archipel

Spain, Alfaguara

Italy, Iperborea

Estonia, Pegasus

Czech Republic, Euromedia

Slovakia, Ikar

Poland, Czarne

Hungary, Animus

Greece, Papadopoulos

Ukraine, Tempora

Japan, Shueisha

Good Brother, Bad Brother

In the second novel of the series, *Good Brother, Bad Brother*, Kärppä's girlfriend Marja travels to the United States to continue her studies. Linked only by e-mail their love starts to fade, but there are plenty of fish in the sea. When Kärppä meets Helena, a woman with a family of her own, things just seem to drift to a certain point. Kärppä's spirit may be willing, but the flesh proves to be weak.

Enter Aleksei Kärppä, Viktor's elder brother, who intends to move to Finland in the footsteps of his successful kid brother. The mess is ready when lethal super-heroin is found in Helsinki and Viktor's brother is the prime suspect. The St Petersburg mafia tolerates neither middlemen nor their brothers. Viktor has no choice except to start looking for the real source of the heroin.

When *Good Brother, Bad Brother* was published in Germany, it immediately rose to the top of the German critics' list.

'Kärppä is such an utterly enjoyable character that you want to spend time with him.'

Satakunnan Kansa (Finland)

'A wise, direct novel that gives its reader lots of food for thought.'

Ulrich Noller, WDR (Germany)



Original title:

Hyvä veli, paha veli

Pages: 241

Published: 2003

Publisher: Gummerus

Rights sold:

Finland, Gummerus

Sweden, Lindelöws

Norway, Samlaget

Germany, Grafit

Italy, Iperborea

Estonia, Pegasus

Holland, Querido

Slovakia, Ikar

Poland, Czarne

Friends Far Away

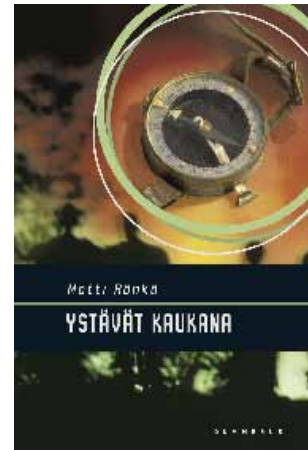
Winner of The Glass Key 2007

Viktor Kärppä has finally managed to put his business affairs on an almost legal basis and his relationship is almost happy. His construction firm is running smoothly and trade with the Russians is doing fine. Kärppä is fast becoming a middle-aged, virtually legal, virtually Finnish entrepreneur. This all changes when ghosts from his past turn up to haunt him in the flesh. Two Russian businessmen appear in Kärppä's office, demanding that he hand over his 'bizznis' to them. To underline their point, they burn down Kärppä's house. Kärppä has no choice but to embark on an odyssey across Finland and over the border into Russia to find out who is out to get him. Along the way, he needs all the special skills he learned in the Red Army and, also, all his old contacts.

Matti Rönkä's third novel, *Friends Far Away*, won the prestigious Glass Key award as the best Nordic crime novel in 2007.

"Matti Rönkä possesses that most important tool of a writer, a voice of his own. The text is flowing and economic, but not too dense or dry. The settings in the book are credible. The Soviet Union of the protagonist's youth, and the Finland and Russia of his present, provide an opportunity to observe society with a critical eye."

Glass Key Jury about *Friends Far Away*



Original title:

Ystävätkä kaukana

Pages: 240

Published: 2005

Publisher: Gummerus

Rights sold:

Finland, Gummerus

Sweden, Lindelöws

Germany, Lübbe

Poland, Czarne

The Father, The Son And The Unholy Ghost

In the fourth novel, *The Father, The Son and The Unholy Ghost*, Viktor Kärppä finds himself trying to sort out trade in illegal labour. Pavel Vadaev from Russia wants a better life. When he is offered a dream job, he moves to Finland. Naturally, the offer is too good to be true. Then Vadaev disappears on a job. But as luck would have it, he has a relative in Helsinki – Viktor Kärppä. The Vadaev family travels there to ask Kärppä for help.

Although Kärppä has a generous heart, he also has a bad habit of straying from the straight and narrow. His attempts to bring his businesses onto a more legal footing are just as unsuccessful as in the past: his typical week includes fixing the plumbing for prostitutes, peering in the windows of other people's homes, fixing a theft, and negotiating with cops, a spy, a drug dealer and a slave trader.

‘Writing about his hero, Rönkä offers topicality and exoticism in one and the same package. Can there be any more topical subject in Europe today than the meeting of cultures and the problems of immigrants?’
Turun Sanomat (Finland)



Original title:

Isä, poika ja paha henki

Pages: 240

Published: 2007

Publisher: Gummerus

Rights sold:

Finland, Gummerus

Germany, Lübbe

Souvenir from Moscow

In Rönkä's fifth novel, Viktor Kärppä gets involved in a large-scale backroom deal whilst doing business at the start of the recession. The deal seems to have something to do with the visit to Finland of Russian President Medvedev.

Viktor's common-law wife, Marja, has opened a nursing home and Viktor keeps busy renovating the Finnish lakeside holiday homes of rich Russians. At a business meeting in Petroskoi, Viktor meets an old army mate, Vronski, whose contacts might prove useful in his own business operations. Instead of helping Viktor, Vronski gets him involved in a backroom deal that proves too big and far too scary. Viktor refuses to cooperate with Finland's civilian intelligence service. Instead, he sets about finding out who was responsible for dragging him into the operation. This experience has shown him that you cannot trust even your closest friends.

"Using a variety of elements, Rönkä manages to produce a relaxed, expressively written novel that the reader can identify with. Rönkä has provided a new eastern dimension to the Finnish detective story, and this latest book shows us what interesting stories and themes can be created thanks to this new dimension."

Helsingin Sanomat



Original title:

Tuliaiset Moskovasta

Pages: 236

Published: 2009

Publisher: Gummerus

Rights sold:

Finland, Gummerus

Germany, Lübbe

A Dead Man in a Foreign Country

Matti Rönkä's sixth crime novel, *A Dead Man in a Foreign Country*, continues the story of Viktor Kärppä, the author's Finno-Russian protagonist, in his dealings with Finns and with Finland's Russian speaking minority. The book starts with Kärppä chancing upon the body of a young Russian man while on an uneventful and mundane job. While Kärppä is at the deceased man's home informing his parents of his death, the body disappears without trace. The deceased was not the most honest of men, but Kärppä still believed that he deserves an honourable burial. Who was he, who killed him, and where did his body go? Viktor Kärppä has to investigate all of this in wintry, snow-covered Helsinki. Everyone, including the Russian Embassy, urges Kärppä to steer clear of the case, but when he has taken it upon himself to investigate the death, he must find the corpse and return it to the mother for burial.

The case soon features familiar characters from previous Kärppä novels, including former KGB officers. The book contains interesting information about the history of Soviet Union and Russia, and Rönkä offers readers some pertinent observations about modern day Russia. Matti Rönkä moves the story nimbly across a grey zone, where it is easy to slip into the side of the underworld. Rönkä's social awareness, biting humour and nuanced narration make his novels humanly touching and highly captivating.

"It looks like Matti Rönkä has clearly found his very own form of narration. The text is measured and dense and the language full of clarity. The author has not forgotten humour, including black humour". *Kirjavinkit*

"Thankfully we have Matti Rönkä". *Satakunnan Kansa*

"Kärppä has made his way into the hearts of Finnish readers. He manages to be ordinary and unique, all at the same time. He resembles the picture that Finns have of themselves: We are perfectly ordinary, yet quietly know that underneath the surface lurks something extraordinary." *Helsingin Sanomat*



Original title:

Väärän maan vainaja

Pages: 244

Published: 2011

Publisher: Gummerus

Rights sold:

Finland, Gummerus

There is Soviet romanticism in Viktor Kärppä

The author of three detective books, Matti Rönkä, wanted to create a character who felt like himself: the Ingrian immigrant Viktor Kärppä was born! A huge number of detective stories are written each year in Finland, and surprisingly many of them deserve the characterisation “the most interesting book this year”. But only one detective character deserves to be called Finland’s most original: Matti Rönkä’s news anchor, Viktor Kärppä.

It is a matter of opinion if the three books describing the life of the Ingrian immigrant are detective stories at all. They do talk about the world of crime, but fleetingly, in a most unusual set-up. There are no police in the books investigating crimes committed by criminals. Instead, there is the immigrant Viktor Kärppä, who in the first two books looks after his fellow-immigrants’ affairs and conducts business on the fringes of the black market. In the third book, *Friends Far Away*, Victor resembles a legitimate Finnish entrepreneur, and no longer seems as amusing and helpful. In Matti Rönkä’s own words, the Viktor Kärppä books could also be described as “human relations” detective stories. The first book, *A Man With a Killer’s Face* (2002), delved into a mother-son relationship, the second book, *Good Brother, Bad Brother* (2003) contained jealousy, and the third book’s themes could well be brotherhood and friendship. In Matti Rönkä’s opinion, the books could be described as containing a kind of playful criminality.

“But I have not been unduly concerned about what to call them. “

“When I wrote the first book, I did it simply because I wanted to write a book. I opted for the detective genre because the plot structure acts as a useful framework, to which can be added those other things that I really wanted to talk about,” explains Rönkä, whose day job is that of a news anchor at Finland’s national public broadcasting corporation, YLE.

In detective stories, the murder is often of secondary importance. Matti Rönkä considers it a positive thing if, when opening a book, the reader needs to use his brain cells to figure out what the book is all about. He muses that if he learns more about the genre, he may one day pluck up the courage to write a book without a clearly defined storyline. Rönkä tells us that he has read plenty of detective stories, but still would not consider himself a true practitioner of the genre. Once again, we come up with the difficulty of definitions. What exactly does the word “detective story” mean these days?

“I think that to many Henning Mankell readers, the crime story and its solution are just excuses. It is everything else about the book that the reader finds captivating.” According to Rönkä, the same applies to Raymond Chandler.

“I only started reading his books recently, and wondered what it was about the books that I liked so much. I decided that it was the unconnected situation that was completely irrelevant to the rest of the story, but hugely enjoyable to read nevertheless.”

When planning his books, Matti Rönkä wanted his main character to be a unique and different kind of character, not an alcohol-dependent middle-aged policeman. As he created Viktor Kärppä, Rönkä made use of the material obtained in his day job concerning Finnish communist defectors, material acquired during trips to Russia, and his experiences as an adoptive father of a Russian-born child.

“I noticed that I had enough material and a pretty good idea of Viktor’s family history and his surroundings. I did not have to spell out why Russian relatives surface half-way through the books, and why Viktor has acquired the status of an Ingrian immigrant.

“When organising other people’s affairs, Viktor naturally resembles a private detec-

tive, but the more I thought about the character and considered it, the more useful this character appeared to me.”

Predominant culture through the eyes of an outsider

Matti Rönkä feels camaraderie towards those detective writers who view the predominant culture through the eyes of an outsider. One such detective is an American living in Italy, Donna Leon, who makes everyday observations about her adopted homeland through the eyes of Inspector Guido Brunetti. Walter Mosely’s *Easy Rawlings*, on the other hand, is a black man through whose eyes we can view white America. In Tony Hillerman’s books the same task is undertaken by two Navajo policemen, Joe Leaphorn and Jim Chee. The lifestyle of Russians living in Finland seems very genuine in Matti Rönkä’s books, but he has not familiarised himself with it in depth.

“Sometimes I have to keep reminding myself that this is not journalism. It is enough for the main facts to be correct,” he adds.

“But in this second generation of returning immigrants, the criminality of children is a statistical truth. And there is a small Russian minority, who buy groceries in their own shops and listen to Radio Sputnik. These kinds of structures exist, and when you meet people you make more observations. If on a jogging path you see a couple of women walking hand in hand, they usually speak Russian.

“My impressions are the result of these kinds of observations, but I have no direct contact with Russians living in Finland.”

Russian Romanticism colours the books

Viktor Kärppä is an unusual character in Finnish literature also because he is not a menacing mafioso; instead, he leads a relatively ordinary life. Rönkä explains that Viktor Kärppä is also a product of his own Russian Romanticism.

“Every time I go to Russia I get angry about things. But I also find many things attractive. People there are kind and warm-hearted, but in other respects things often end up in a total shambles,” he adds, laughing.

Rönkä does not disapprove of the typical picture in Finnish novels of Russians as mafioso characters and prostitutes.

“Stories are often told through stereotypical characters and simplification,” he notes. Matti Rönkä has not received feedback from his Russian-born readers. He admits to having been slightly worried about whether they understand these stories.

“My starting point is the fact that people are either good or bad. I tend to think that people are good, and that fact should come across through all the characters.”

Matti Rönkä has no major urge to become a full-time writer. He is very happy working in the television news department of YLE.

“I am genuinely thankful to be doing a job, the usefulness of which I don’t constantly have to question”.

Journalist: Kai Hirvasnoro

Translation: Kirsti Gibbs

Originally published in *Kansan Uutiset* weekly newspaper 4 th of November 2005

Reviews

“What makes [*A Man with a Killer's Face*] enjoyable is the way the author breaks new ground. The way he ignores classic thriller techniques, choosing instead to borrow freely from various other genres. [...] The descriptions are tender and fragile. The budding love story between Kärppä and Marja is so far from the usual model that it becomes refreshingly romantic in all its everyday simplicity.” *Dagens Bok blog* (Sweden)

“Rönkä is a practised writer and knows how to create suspense and believable characters. With his out-of-the-ordinary yet realistic setting, he has created a ‘Helsinki noir’ series that’s a cut above the rest.” *BTJ-häftet* (Sweden)

“The language is spare. This author has an abrupt, burlesque vein. He creates a sort of Finnish noir ambience. Matti Rönkä provides his readers with numerous surprises as he builds up his intrigue. But the book’s strongest features are its attempt to convey a portrait of contemporary society and the hist [*A Man with a Killer's Face*] orical consequences of the dismantling of the Iron Curtain.” *Dala-Demokraten newspaper* (Sweden)

“Unlike so many contemporary Swedish (and Finnish, for that matter) crime writers who render Russians and other East European characters as one-dimensional villains, Rönkä creates a far more nuanced image. Even if the majority of the figures we encounter in this novel are involved in some sort of shady deals, they also have a number of favourable qualities, and Rönkä provides a complex, informative portrait of the Finnish multicultural milieu. As a crime novel, *A Man with a Killer's Face* is not that fast-paced and its thriller quotient is low, notwithstanding a surprising twist at the end. There is, however, an ironic distance in the narration and a warmth in the portrayals, which serve to enliven the writing. *A Man with a Killer's Face* is a hard-boiled story written in spare language tinged with humour.” *Smålandsposten newspaper* (Sweden)

“At Czarne publishing house they like to do things their way. They even adapt to literary fashions in their own way. Matti Rönkä’s *A Man With a Killer's Face* is no exception here. This is a book that would roughly fit in the contemporary trends for reading Scandinavian crime novels. Well, roughly. And that’s what is good about it. [...] There is no mention of serial killers or abuse of women (in its most radical and degenerated form) that proliferate Scandinavian crime fiction. There are no frequent digressions that allow the reader to learn what the hunted killer is thinking. And the way the story is told doesn’t have much to do with sensational or criminal style either. It is a very simple novel. And that’s what makes it a good one.” *Gazeta Wyborcza* (Poland)

“*A Man with a Killer's Face* is an excellent hard-boiled Finnish crime story. Succinct writing with sudden twists and tough language.” *Parool* (Netherlands)

“[Viktor Kärppä] is an interesting, complex personality with his heart in the right place. A welcome addition to the Scandinavian thrillers. Good news that *A Man with a Killer's Face* is the first in a series.” *de Telegraaf* (Netherlands)

‘*A Man With a Killer’s Face* clearly rises above the mainstream of suspense fiction. Matti Rönkä really brings his characters to life. His language is straightforward, lucid and unpretentious, his plots exciting and realistic.’ *Bayerischer Rundfunk* (Germany)

‘A wise, direct novel that gives its reader lots of food for thought.’ Ulrich Noller, *WDR* (Germany)

‘An effective story and amazing diving into the Scandinavian society “ *Le Parisien* (France)

‘The main character of the book, a private eye with a tendency to fool himself, Viktor Kärppä is a great invention by the Finnish writer Matti Rönkä. Kärppä is a wild departure from the ordinary soft and noble protagonists of detective stories.’ *Tages-Anzeiger* (Switzerland)

‘Matti Rönkä’s first novel about Kärppä is filled with fascinating characters from a part of the world we know all too little about. The finest thing, however, is the impressiveness of Rönkä’s narrative – it is almost masterly.’ www.kaliber38.de (Germany)

‘Matti Rönkä possesses that most important tool of a writer, a voice of his own. The text is flowing and economic, but not too dense or dry. The settings in the book are credible. The Soviet Union of the protagonist’s youth, and the Finland and Russia of his present, provide an opportunity to observe society with a critical eye.’ Glass Key jury about *Friends Far Away*

‘Writing about his hero, Rönkä offers topicality and exoticism in one and the same package. Can there be any more topical subject in Europe today than the meeting of cultures and the problems of immigrants?’ *Turun Sanomat* (Finland)

‘Rönkä is a sympathetic and socially astute crime writer.’ *Helsingin Sanomat* (Finland)

‘Since there can be just one most original hero in crime fiction in Finland, the choice falls on Viktor Kärppä.’ *Kansan Uutiset* (Finland)

‘Kärppä is such an utterly enjoyable character that you want to spend time with him.’ *Satakunnan Kansa* (Finland)

‘Rönkä’s sentences are nearly fat free and his tone is sober. In accordance with that he practises a refreshing and unforced, yet sharp-tongued humor. (...) Matti Rönkä has written a criminal novel that is quiet and unspectacular in the best senses, wisely composed and believable from the characters to the scenes of action. This author simply leaves no room for clichés. He also leaves no room for the latent depressive investigators and the forced melancholy that is so widely spread in the Nordic countries and so tightly linked with the literary descriptions of the landscapes that you can hardly ignore them. Rönkä can without playing.’ *Titel-Magazin* (Germany)

‘The wonderful thing about the narrator in addition to the distinction between the in- and out-looks is the displaced look on the fine line of right and wrong with an intact moral integrity at the same time. (...) The hopes of the genre are being equally over-served and ironically infiltrated. Finnish understatement at its best.’ *Taz* (Germany)

'During the novel the author unmasks not only the different strings of the criminal coincidences and organizations, but also the very normal everyday life of both women, men and people with a past of immigration in the Finnish capital in a very informative way. It is through the small and modest manners and ways of life that Rönkä becomes believable and gains depth. (...) This is the charm of this criminal novel together with the slow speed of telling. It is never breathtaking or hectic, but at the same time the excitement never ceases and the ending is fulminate. A great way of entertaining.' *Uli Geißler, www.amazon.de/www.libri.de*

'My favourite among the Finns is definitely Matti Rönkä. (...) No one has written about the world of swindlers, smugglers and traffickers as eagerly as Matti Rönkä.' *Tagesspiegel (Germany)*

'Rönkä has created a restraint dodger, a person who has disillusion with life but still has not become compassionless. He lets him speak in the form of the story-teller without any frills, exactly describing the different surroundings. A new tone of colour in the world of detective stories.' *Frankfurter Rundschau (Germany)*

'Kärppä is the story-teller and the biggest strength of the novel. Kärppä is at home nowhere and everywhere, an unrestrained opportunist who maneuvers his way through and tries to make his cut in a way or another. And he is sympathetic all the way through. (...) Also the side characters such as the criminal investigation servant Korhonen, who unlike Kärppä "has it all" but is still devastated with life, are marvelous. (...) Rönkä really lifts himself up from his Scandinavian colleagues. His main character is neither a hero nor a depressed person. Rönkä writes concise and precise with a continuous dash of humor. And the best part is: Rönkä does not bore you with explanations, but trusts the vivacity of his story. And the fact that no one gets murdered during the very whole book goes unnoticed by the reader in this magnificently entertaining novel.' *Focus online (Germany)*

'Kärppä moves among the cultures of Finland, the former Soviet Union and the new Russia, between the states, between legality and illegality. Rönkä writes detective stories not as amusing fiction landscapes of the private soundproofing walls between the reader and the unpleasant reality, but as shocking break-ins of discomfort that mediates much more about the new, greedy Europe than the summit talks of the politicians.' *Stuttgarter Zeitung (Germany)*

'Rönkä writes without sleet, roughly out of principal, precise out of passion and funny when you least expect it. (...) Furthermore, Rönkä does not explain anything, he just tells. (...) The silent defiance that Rönkä uses to ignore all norms and the way to write a detective story are admirable. They result in a magnificent detective story.' *Crime Watch, Freitag (Germany)*

'It is so straightforward, so exact and pure that anything can possibly be in today's detective story universe. *Good Brother, Bad Brother* is the best detective story of the springtime.' *Deutschlandfunk (Germany)*

“Matti Rönkä is the author of feelings and inner emotions. He draws up the portrait of a character who expects nothing special from life, a character who gazes upon his fellow men and the society he lives in with a lucid, accepting gaze. It’s a sober novel that carries within it a certain melancholy and offers an eccentric read about an unrecognized part of the world” *Unpolar* (France)

“If today had been a sunny summer day, I would have advised you to savor A Man with a Killer’s face in a shade of a tree or a beach umbrella as if you would savor ice cream. Nevertheless, rain and thunderstorms are also propitious to discovery. All those who have never heard of Rönkä should dare and dive to the unknown! I’m sure they will no longer be able to go without his sardonic humor and his critical look upon the Finnish society.” *Impudique Magazine* (France)

“Those readers intrigued by Finland, a country quite unknown and yet a unique and atypical witness of contemporary history, will discover an interesting novel classic in the making but very personal in tone.” *Le blog du polar* (France)

“In addition to its very convincing plot, it is this (gloomy and melancholic) atmosphere and context that make the whole point of this solid Nordic thriller” *ABC Polar* (France)