



# Apothecary Melchior and the Ghost of Rataskaevu Street

*Indrek Hargla*

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## **Apothecary Melchior and the Ghost of Rataskaevu Street** Indrek Hargla

Tallinn, 1419. What links the Keeper of the Tower, a prostitute and a Flemish painter to a haunted house on Rataskaevu Street? All three claim to have seen a ghost near the house, and each is found dead soon afterwards. Melchior Wakenstede, apothecary and assistant bailiff, is charged with unearthing the truth. With a cultivated sense for justice, Melchior investigates the deaths and attempts to find out whether, as the denizens of medieval Tallinn believe, ghosts can reap their revenge upon the living. When a powerful merchant dies, Melchior perceives a corporeal connection between this and the other deaths. As Melchior becomes embroiled in the conflicts and rivalries between religious orders, merchant guilds and Teutonic Knights, all vying with one another for control of the town, what he discovers is more incredible and more terrible than any ghost.

## **Apothecary Melchior and the Ghost of Rataskaevu Street Details**

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Author : Indrek Hargla

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# From Reader Review Apothecary Melchior and the Ghost of Rataskaevu Street for online ebook

## Tiina says

Üsna tore lugemine. Läheb kiirelt ka.

Kokku umbes 3,5 tähte, sest midagi jäi nagu häirima v puudu. Lõpuseelgitus oli kuidagi segane. Samas on lõpp alati ootamatu ja seda oli võimatu ette arvata. Sõnakasutus häirib natuke kohati, aga küllap ta ajastikutruu on.

Siiski soovitaks ja vast loen neid ikka edasi.

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## Sarm?te says

Nu viens gabali?š bez kauliem! Uh! J?, nu ž?l, ka dienasgaismu latvisk? tulkojum? ieraudz?juši daudz v?j?ki gabali par šo. Ž?l, tieš?m ž?l, ka Melhiora turpm?k?s gaitas man neuzzin?t...

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## Mairita (Marii gr?matplaukts) says

3,5 zvaigznes. S?kums dikti l?ns, bet uz beig?m ieš?poj?s uz aizraujošu un šaušal?gu atrisin?jumu.  
<https://gramatas.wordpress.com/2015/1...>

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## Tarmo says

See oli minu esimene kokkupuude Hargla kirjandusega ja seda raamatut peetakse erinevates ülevaadetes tema parimaks Melchiori looks. Mulle jättis see siiski vastakad tunded. Esiteks, sellist mõnusat voolavat pinget, mida žanr võiks pakkuda ja mis ei lase raamatut käest panna, ei tekkinudki. Lihtsustatult - puudu jäi põnevusest. Kui loetud oli üle 100 lehekülje, siis ei olnud ikka veel aru saada, kas raamatus kirjeldatud surmad olid mõrvad? Lõpuks selgus, et siiski olid ja ka pahategija tabatakse, kuid jääb ebaselgeks kuidas üldse apteekrihärä lahenduseni jõudis? Kurjategija ülestunnistus annab küll suurema osa lõpus olevast lahendusest, kui mõnede üksikasjade lahenduseni jõudmiseni ei paku autor mingit infot. Meeldivaks pooleks oli keskaegse Tallinna põhjalik kirjeldus ja erinevate ühiskonnakihtide kirjeldused. Selles osas on Hargla tõesti meister.

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## Anu Korpinen says

Pidän historiallisista dekkareista, ja niinpä tämäkin sarja herätti mielenkiintoni. Keskiajan Tallinnaan sijoittuva Rataskaivonkadun kummitus on apteekkari Melchiorin seikkailujen toinen osa. Pidin kyllä Tarinan asetelmasta. Saksalaisen ritarikunnan hallitsema Tallinna on kiehtova paikka, ja päähenkilönä apteekkari

tarjoaa monta tilaisuutta keskiajan lääketieteen ihmeellisyyksien esittelyyn.

Melkein puoleenväliin päästyäni kirja uhkasi kuitenkin jäädä kesken turhanaikaisen jaarittelun takia. Juoni ei tuntunut etenevän ja kaikenlaista nippelitietoa oli ujutettu tekstiin vähän väkinäisen oloisesti. Dialogi toisteli jo kertaalleen selitetyjä asioita ja aikamuoto hyppeli kappaleiden välillä preesensistä imperfektiin ja takaisin. Suomennoskin tuntui paikoitellen hiukan takeltelevan, joissakin lauseissa ei tuntunut olevan mitään tolkkua.

Melkein pari kuukautta vierähti ja luin sivun tai pari kerrallaan aina silloin kun jaksoin. Loppua kohti tarina alkoi kuitenkin tiivistyä ja kirjan viimeisen kolmanneksen luin aidolla mielenkiinnolla. Makaaberista kostotarinasta huolimatta tiputan puolikkaan tähden kankean tekstin takia. Saakoon kaksi ja puoli.

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## **Kurkulis Lilita says**

R?ms viduslaiku detekt?vgabals ar pat?kamu saprat?gu 'detekt?vu' aptiek?ru.

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## **Oskar says**

Ma ei tea kuidas Hargla seda teeb, aga ta tegi seda jälle. Olin jõudnud juba eeviimasesse peatükki ning polnud suutnud kurjategijaid ära arvata, kui Hargla nad paljastas. Ning ma polnud oma kahtlutega isegi ligilähedal! Ja ma lugesin raamatut teist korda ja ikka ei suutnud antud niidiotsi kokku viia. Minus ikka pole Hercule või Sherlocki verd. See keskaegne Tallinn hakkab ikka kodusemaks ja kodusemaks muutuma, mis sellest et pervedid, nekrofiilid ja kastreeritud mungad mööda tänavaid ringi jooksevad. Ikka on tunne nagu viibiks kodus.

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## **E.A. Turley says**

Apothecary Melchior and the Ghost of Rataskaevu Street I received this book as part of a Goodreads Giveaway.

It's Tallin, 1419. The question is what links The Master of the Quad Dack Tower, a prostitute and a Flemish painter to a haunted house on Rataskaevu Street. All three of them claim to have seen the ghost near the house and then were found dead soon after.

Melchior Wakenstede, apothecary and assistant bailiff, takes it upon himself to get to the bottom of things and find out exactly what is going on. But what he uncovers shocks everyone.

It involves the religious orders, the merchant's guilds and the Teutonic Knight's as they vie for control together. He finds himself in all sorts of places, witnessing all sorts of things until finally, he comes up against the ghost of Rataskaevu Street itself.

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## **Reelika Raimet says**

<https://raamaturiulike.wordpress.com...>

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## **lézeng? reader says**

Nemhogy belejött volna a Szent Olaf óta, inkább még gyengébb. Harmadik esélyt nem kap, pedig amúgy jó hely lenne a tizenötödik századi Tallinn, hogy ott csángáljon az ember.

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## **Britta says**

Täitsa normaalne kriminull. Meeldis rohkem kui eelmine osa. See keskaegne miljöö mind ikka tõmbab, nii et proovin järgmisi osi ka.

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## **Andy Weston says**

Set in Tallinn in 1419 this is a crime mystery novel with the highlight very much being the period and the setting. This is the second book in the Apothecary Melchior series, but it really is not necessary to have read the first one to enjoy this. It is therefore something quite different, and hugely enjoyable for it.

Tallinn in the early 1400s is an important and lively city. From Hargla's careful research its inhabitants work hard and enjoy a busy social life that tends to involve beer. In the first Melchior novel my favourite chapter was the one in which the Apothecary and those involved with the case go to a beer tasting - it is key in them solving the mystery. Here, the tavern that they prefer most is in the Nunnery, and run by a older and solidly built nun, who stands no messing around from the clientele. It is great stuff. Of course though, there is crime, though not much as the penalties are the pillory, torture and execution. The novel does contain some pretty violent scenes, as that period did indeed do.

The plot is somewhat second-place to the backdrop. Hargla's characters are full of life and form an instant image in the reader's mind. The translator, Adam Cullen, has done a great job and I hope he is soon tasked with the job for the other four (maybe there's more...) Estonian Melchior books, *The Hangman's Daughter*, *The Strangler of Pirita*, *The Chronicles of Tallinn* and *The Gotland Devil* . This was tremendous fun.

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## **Kristine says**

Šis bija labi. Kaut kas absol?ti svaigs. L?dz šim nebiju las?jusi nevienu viduslaiku krimin?lrom?nu, iz?emot Eko "Rozes v?rds". Mistiskie notikumi un to atrisin?jums aptiek?ra Melhiora p?rraudz?b? norisin?s tepat kaimi?os, Tallin?, kur aizdom?gos apst?k?os mirst cilv?ki, kas redz?juši r?gu. Bija saistoši un lika ieskat?ties v?stures terminolo?ij?. Iesaku!

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## **Alan says**

Unfortunately this is a repeat of the botched job done with the publication of Apothecary Melchior and the

Mystery of St Olaf's Church, which was the English translation of the 1st book of the Estonian language Apothecary Melchior mediaeval mystery series by Indrek Hargla. Similar errors of incorrect tense, missing words, doubled words, misspelled words, odd translations and no translations (with no explanations via a glossary) are present throughout and a sample selection is provided below. There were several minor points which I've let slide from the errata (e.g. Brother Hinricus was left with his full name in the first translated book, but is named Brother Hinric here - shouldn't there be some consistency in the supporting character names between books in an ongoing series?)

The translators of the 2 Melchior books are different, Adam Cullen in the case of St. Olaf's and Christopher Moseley in Rataskaevu. Both translators have been represented by excellent typo-free books translated from Estonian in the past (e.g. Cullen for Mihkel Mutt's The Cavemen Chronicle, Moseley for Andrus Kivirähk's The Man Who Spoke Snakish) so this really confirms the case of sloppy work by the present Publisher and their Editors.

Rataskaevu somewhat follows the pattern of St. Olaf's in presenting several murders and mysteries which the inquisitive apothecary is able to solve with his queries and the occasional aid of his Estonian wife Keterlyn and the town magistrate Wentzel Dorn. The town executioner and torturer also makes a (thankfully brief) appearance. It is the often very brutal killings or torments along with the occasional explicit sex scene that takes the Melchior series into more noirish territory than Ellis Peters's Brother Cadfael series which is probably its closest parallel in mediaeval mysteries. The solution at the end of Rataskaevu may seem like quite a stretch, but Hargla does drop all the appropriate clues along the way, often in a single, easily overlooked sentence. I gave the original Estonian a 4 rating, but my continued distress and distraction with the typos here are the reason for a 2 this time.

I have heard that the current plans are for only the first 2 books of the Apothecary Melchior series to be translated into English. More may come if the first 2 are successful, but based on the lack of care that went into them, I'm not very hopeful. Meanwhile the French are zipping along with No. 4 L'étrangleur de Pirita (Apothecary Melchior and the Strangler of Pirita) released early in 2016, topped only by the Finns who are completely up to date with No. 5 Apteekkari Melchior ja Tallinnan kronikka (Apothecary Melchior and the Chronicles of Tallinn).

#### Stray Observations

- This book jumps to the year 1419 from book 1's 1409 which was necessary to stay historically accurate with the preliminary building dates of the St. Bridget's Convent which is a subplot of the book. See an English language history of the St. Bridget's Convent at <http://www.piritaklooster.ee/index.ph...>
- The 3D City Map seen in cut-out squares on the cover has nothing to do with the Tallinn (Reval) of 1419. The excerpts are actually redrawn from the 1561 "Woodcut" map of London, England (once attributed to Ralph Agas), specifically the City of Westminster in the extreme lower left hand corner. See the full 1561 map here <https://mapoflondon.uvic.ca/agas.htm> (you can zoom in on the City of Westminster).
- Similarly, the sketch portraits shown on the cover have no relationship to the characters in the book. The source of the sketches is unknown to me.
- The Curse of the Wakenstedes update: There is no further clarification in this book about the occasional inherited pains that Melchior refers to as the curse of the male line in his family. The pain is throughout his body though and is not specifically localized, so my idea of migraine headaches based on reading book 1 seems to be a non-starter.

#### ERRATA

pg. 34 "a woman can been an alleviator"

pg. 38 "and it wouldn't be long before didn't have enough money"

pg. 47 "..., but this boy really in too poor a shape."

pg. 68 "Those had been the Dorn's words,..." (translates "kohtufoogt" (which is translated in the rest of the book as "magistrate" or occasionally as the old high german "vogt") as "the Dorn" as if Magistrate Wentzel Dorn's last name was his position or title)

pg. 74 "once could access the strip of land" (should be "one could access...")

pg. 74 & 80 inconsistently capitalized "Apothecary" sometimes written simply as "apothecary" even on the same page.

pg. 81 "...heard that thge Master of Jackewolde..."

pg. 86 "...and the she had been to the saun..."

pg. 115 "...where crew were needed..."

pg. 116 "kogge ships" is left untranslated ("kogge" is German), could have been translated as "cog ships". There is no glossary to explain this.

pg. 145 etc. "But Dorothea was insane." (translates the Estonian "nõdrameelne" as "insane", which is technically a correct translation, but seems very harsh in the context of the story, where the daughter is portrayed as more of a simple-minded soul)

pg. 149 "cheeseparers" (translation of the Estonian "peenikesed"?)

pg. 151 "...for where would a holy brother being going in the morning..."

pg. 166 "dörnse" not translated, Old High German?. No web translation found, but in the context this seems to be a living room which the merchant is also using as a bedroom. No glossary to explain this.

pg. 166 "diele" not translated, Old High German "hallway in a private residence". No glossary to explain this.

pg. 177 uses the archaic "horary prayers" instead of "hourly prayers" for the translation of the Estonian "tunnipalvuseks", technically correct, but just seems off. There is nothing archaic about the Estonian wording.

pg. 181 "The brothers at my biscuits last night, did they?" (should be "ate my biscuits")

pg. 182 "They Swedes used to call it Mariendal,..." ("Swedes" wasn't even in the original Estonian, this could have been "They used to..." or "The Swedes used to...", but not both)

pg. 183 "...was deeply rutted by wagons wheels..."

pg. 188 "..., be he decided that he was invited..."

pg. 188 inconsistent spelling of "Bridget", sometimes as "Brigit".

pg. 190 "...some of these men went Rome and to the Council of..."

pg. 194 "...and they had hang back even further..."

pg. 267 "...taken to a prison cell in the in the Bremen Tower."

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## Joonas says

Indrek Hargla on minu ideaalseks kirjanikuks. Tema teosed pakuvad emotsionaalset ja intellektuaalset naudingut ning viimast just mulle sobival määral. Kriminaallood apteeker Melchiorist ei käi mulle üle mõistuse, ent pakuvad piisavalt auke, mida kogu lappida. Pidevalt keeran mitmekümneid lehekülgi tagasi, et kontrollida fakte ja saada vastus oma küsimusele "kas see tõesti oligi nii?". "Rataskaevu viirastus" on sarnaselt eelkäijale, "Oleviste mõistatuselegi" pingeline ja põnev. Kui nuriseda, siis ainult selle üle, et kuigi Hargla on oma žanri kindlaks määratlenud ja tunneb seda, võiks Melchiori jubedate müsteeriumite kõrval esineda teostes ka mõnevõrra humoorikamat külge.

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