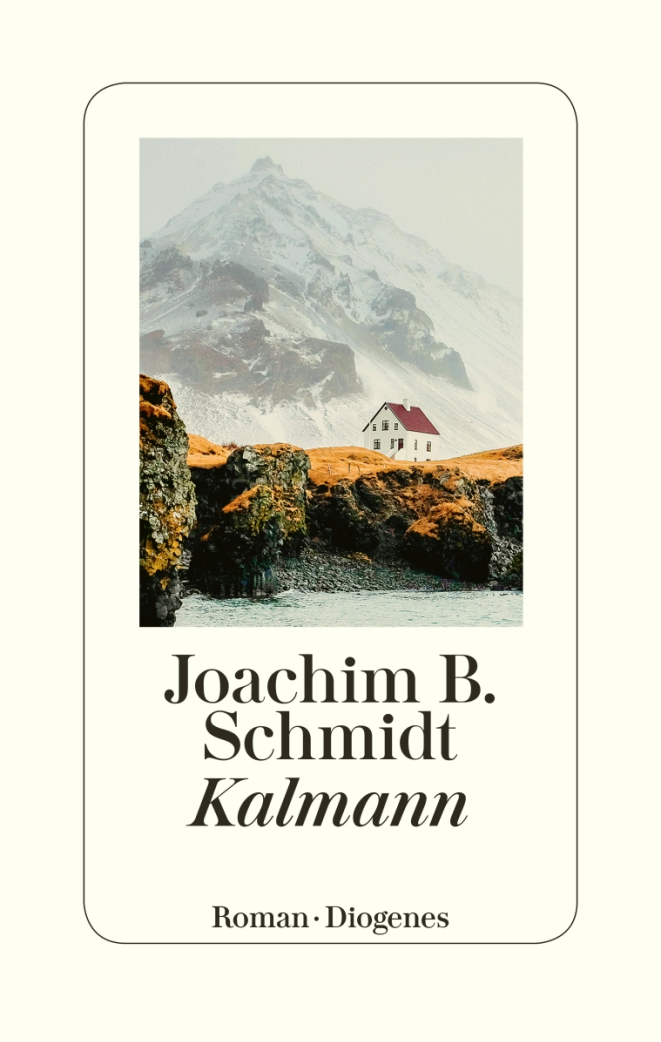
Diogenes

Book factsheet

Joachim B. Schmidt
Kalmann

Published by Diogenes as *Kalmann*
Original title: *Kalmann*



He is the self-appointed sheriff of Raufarhöfn, and has everything under control. There's no need to worry. Day by day, he treks the wide plains which surround the almost deserted village, hunts Arctic foxes and lays shark bait in the sea — to process the fish into the Icelandic fermented delicacy, hákarl. But inside Kalmann's head, the wheels sometimes spin backwards. One winter, after he discovers a pool of blood in the snow, the swiftly unfolding events threaten to overwhelm him. But with his naive wisdom and pure-hearted courage, he makes sure everything takes a turn for the better. There's no need to worry.
»It can get pretty dark beneath a polar bear.«
Kalmann

Contemporary Literature
352 pages
11.6 × 18.4 × 2.4 cm
September 2020

World rights are handled by Diogenes

Film rights are handled by Diogenes

Rights currently sold:
Arabic (Al-Arabi)
Czech (Prostor)
English/world (Bitter Lemon)
French (Gallimard)
Greek (Metaichmio)
Hebrew (Keter)
Icelandic (Forlagið)
Italian (SEM Libri)
Persian (Nam Books)
Spanish/world (Gatopardo)
Ukrainian (The Old Lion)

Bestseller

Spiegel Bestseller
Swiss Bestseller

Awards

2024	›GLAUSER-Preis‹ in der Kategorie Roman für *Kalmann und der schlafende Berg*
2023	›Bündner Literaturpreis‹ für *Tell*
2022	*Tell* ist SBVV-›Lieblingsbuch 2022‹ des Deutschschweizer Buchhandels
2021	*Kalmann* auf dem 3. Platz des zum ersten Mal verliehenen ›Schweizer Krimipreises‹
2021	›Crime Cologne Award‹ für *Kalmann*

Praise

Kalmann

»A novel that reads like an Icelandic Fargo drama. Crude, droll, bloody, very funny and with a multitude of surprising twists.« – Radio Ö1, Vienna

»Kalmann, more Forrest Gump than Miss Marple, takes on the challenge. It's as lively as it is icy.« – Spiegel, Hamburg

»This is an incredibly funny, highly suspenseful, very beautiful and affectionate novel.« – Johannes Kößler / ORF, Vienna

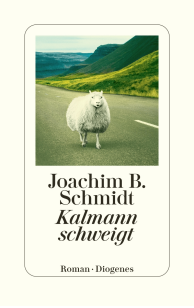
»A gripping novel with a light criminal plot.« – Pia Zesilsky / WDR 2 Lesen, Cologne

»He lets the Icelandic world shine from within and you grow fond of the main character.« – Manfred Papst / NZZ am Sonntag, Zurich

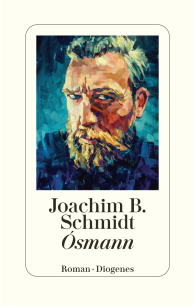


Photo: Eva Schram / © Diogenes Verlag

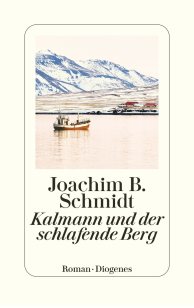
Joachim B. Schmidt, born in 1981, grew up in the Swiss canton of Grisons before emigrating to Iceland in 2007. His novels are bestsellers and have won numerous awards, including the ›Crime Cologne Award‹ and, most recently, the ›Glauser Prize‹. A dual citizen, Schmidt lives in Reykjavík with his wife and their two children.



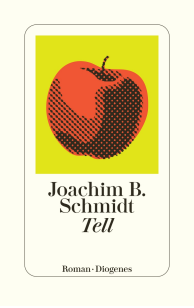
Kalmann's Silence
320 pages
2026



Ósmann
288 pages
2025



Kalmann and the Sleeping Mountain
304 pages
2023
Award winner
Bestseller



Tell
288 pages
2022
Award winner
Bestseller

Praise (cont'd)

»Joachim B. Schmidt's novel is more than a crime novel; it's a meticulously researched, unpretentiously narrated reportage of everyday life in a far, icy corner of the earth.« – Martin Halter / FAZ, Frankfurt

»To know Kalmann is to love him.« – Stefan Keim / WDR 4, Cologne

»Joachim B. Schmidt's novel *Kalmann* sensitively depicts Iceland's answer to *Forrest Gump* – a guy who may be slow on the uptake, but who is, in his own unique way, a connoisseur when it comes to the art of living.« – Augsburger Allgemeine, Augsburg

»That a Swiss author could write the best Iceland mystery novel of the year is something you deem improbable only until you read this book.« – Tobias Gohlis / Krimibestenliste, Hamburg

»Schmidt reveals himself to be an incredibly empathetic and skilled narrator with a strong sense for light humour.« – Hanspeter Eggenberger / Tages-Anzeiger, Zurich

»There isn't much that Kalli doesn't know.« – Sylvia Staude / Frankfurter Rundschau, Frankfurt

»*Kalmann* is a remarkable portrayal of a remote Icelandic community and the devastating impact of the decline of the herring and fishing industries. The tensions between this rural community and the latte-drinking townies of Reykjavík are sensitively depicted, as well as hostility and racism towards the Eastern European migrant workers.« – New Books in German, London

»An incredibly vivid sense of place, and a gifted storyteller.« – Welt am Sonntag, Berlin

»What makes Kalmann so unique is the language.« – Peter Zander / Berliner Morgenpost, Berlin

»Joachim B. Schmidt, who lives in Iceland, has written an incredible, moving book with an unusual hero who instantaneously wins the reader's heart.« – Kester Schlenz / Stern, Hamburg

»Just because an idiot says something, that doesn't mean it's meaningless.« – Nicolas Freund / Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich

»*Kalmann* is a wonderful non-crime novel, which, because the negated can persist in the negation, is nonetheless a wonderful crime novel.« – Thomas Wörtche / Deutschlandfunk, Cologne

»Kalmann's thoughts are often philosophical pearls, which amaze not just for their simplicity, but also their truth.« – Constanze Matthes / Mitteldeutsche Zeitung, Halle

»A captivatingly charming blend of Fargo und Parsifal.« – Hörzu, Hamburg

»What makes this novel especially stand out is its linguistic style. Schmidt narrates entirely from Kalmann's perspective.« – Tiroler Tageszeitung, Innsbruck

Praise (cont'd)

»Joachim B. Schmidt depicts his central character with great empathy, psychological tact – and humour. He pulls off his protagonist's seemingly naive narrative style with great success.« – Christel Wester / Deutschlandfunk, Cologne

»This is a social novel, and a sensitive portrait of Kalmann – a young, self-aware Icelander who is very different to everyone else.« – Denis Scheck / ARD, Munich

»Gripping, funny, empathetic, and cleverly structured.« – Die Presse am Sonntag, Vienna

»An unusual tale from the edge of the world.« – Kleine Zeitung, Graz

»Kalmann, the 33-year-old neurodivergent man and self-proclaimed sheriff of the remote village of Raufarhöfn, who narrates this endearing slice-of-life mystery, Schmidt's English-language debut. The narrative charms of Schmidt's unlikely detective will keep readers turning the pages.«

– Publishers Weekly, New York

»The brushstrokes of humour are impeccable; the attention to detail turns this work of fiction into a tender portrait of the Icelandic landscape and its inhabitants.« – Marta Marne / El Periódico, Barcelona

»There's a crime to solve, certainly, but that's only a small part of this powerful novel.« – El País, Madrid

»His abilities may appear impaired, but he impresses through his kindness and courage; attributes which are more important to solving the case than all the usual police paraphernalia.« – Verónica Piñera / El Comercio, Gijón

»A protagonist who is hard to forget, and who occasionally finds his wires crossed .« – El Periódico, Barcelona

»*Kalmann* (Gatopardo) is quite a character in his Icelandic small town, the likeable, not entirely normal – nor stupid – boy that everyone knows. But when it comes to a missing person investigation, he can offer the best explanation.« – La Vanguardia, Barcelona

»This is a thriller in its form; [...], but the main strengths are the portrayals, the humor, the scenery, the good conversations and the nature experiences. [...] I did not get up from the couch until the last page had been flipped.« – Einar Kárason / (Icelandic Author)

»The thriller is light and fun, although the undertone is black and cruel.« – Steinþór Guðbjartsson / Morgunblaðið, Reykjavík

»A welcome addition to the Icelandic literary flora.« – Egill Helgason / Kiiljan, Reykjavík

Praise (cont'd)

»Joachim B. Schmidt's novels show a sensitivity to how the accumulation of seemingly small events makes up the drama of human life« – Sjon / (Icelandic artist)

»Your book is absolutely great!« – Hildur Knútsdóttir / (Icelandic Author)

»A Swiss author writes a book that takes place in Raufarhofn (!) and creates characters that are more Icelandic than anything Icelandic. What kind of magician is this?« – Hallgrimur Helgason / 101 Reykjavik

»A very enjoyable read, and the protagonist is a wonderfully drawn character.« – Einar Kárason / (Icelandic author)

»The narrative charms of Schmidt's unlikely detective will keep readers turning the pages.« – Publishers Weekly, New York

Joachim B. Schmidt

»An incredibly vivid sense of place, and a gifted storyteller.« – Welt am Sonntag, Berlin

»Schmidt reveals himself to be an incredibly empathetic and skilled narrator with a strong sense for light humour.« – Hanspeter Eggenberger / Tages-Anzeiger, Zurich

»Joachim B. Schmidt is a genius narrator and author who pulls his readers into the action, along with his characters and their complex inner lives.« – Lisa Wieser / Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung, Heidelberg

»A welcome addition to the Icelandic literary flora.« – Egill Helgason / RÚV, Reykjavík