



The Hangman's Daughter (Hangman's Daughter Tales)

Oliver Pötzsch

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Germany, 1660: When a dying boy is pulled from the river with a mark crudely tattooed on his shoulder, hangman Jakob Kuisl is called upon to investigate whether witchcraft is at play. So begins *The Hangman's Daughter*--the chillingly detailed, fast-paced historical thriller from German television screenwriter Oliver Pötzsch, a descendant of the Kuisls, a famous Bavarian executioner clan.

Magdalena, the clever and headstrong daughter of Bavarian hangman Jakob Kuisl, lives with her father outside the village walls and is destined to be married off to another hangman's son—except that the town physician's son is hopelessly in love with her. And her father's wisdom and empathy are as unusual as his despised profession. It is 1659, the Thirty Years' War has finally ended, and there hasn't been a witchcraft mania in decades. But now, a drowning and gruesomely injured boy, tattooed with the mark of a witch, is pulled from a river and the villagers suspect the local midwife, Martha Stechlin.

Jakob Kuisl is charged with extracting a confession from her and torturing her until he gets one. Convinced she is innocent, he, Magdalena, and her would-be suitor to race against the clock to find the true killer. Approaching Walpurgisnacht, when witches are believed to dance in the forest and mate with the devil, another tattooed orphan is found dead and the town becomes frenzied. More than one person has spotted what looks like the devil—a man with a hand made only of bones. The hangman, his daughter, and the doctor's son face a terrifying and very real enemy.

Taking us back in history to a place where autopsies were blasphemous, coffee was an exotic drink, dried toads were the recommended remedy for the plague, and the devil was as real as anything, *The Hangman's Daughter* brings to cinematic life the sights, sounds, and smells of seventeenth-century Bavaria, telling the engrossing story of a compassionate hangman who will live on in readers' imaginations long after they've put down the novel.

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