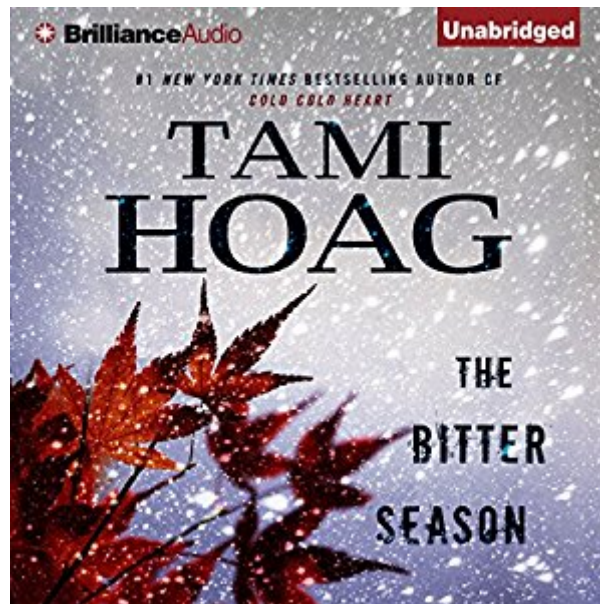


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# The Bitter Season



## Synopsis

#1 New York Times Bestselling author Tami Hoag returns to the bestselling series of her career with a Kovac and Liska case that will delight fans and new listeners alike. A murder from the past. A murder from the present. And a life that was never meant to be.... As the dreary, bitter weather of late fall descends on Minneapolis, Detective Nikki Liska is restless. After moving to the cold case squad in order to spend more time with her sons, she misses the rush of pulling an all-nighter, the sense of urgency of hunting a murderer on the loose. Most of all she misses her old partner, Sam Kovac. Sam is having an even harder time adjusting to Nikki's absence, saddled with a green new partner younger than pieces of Sam's wardrobe. Sam is distracted from his troubles by an especially brutal double homicide: a middle-aged husband and wife bludgeoned and hacked to death in their home with a ceremonial Japanese samurai sword. Nikki's case, the unsolved murder of a family man, community leader, and decorated sex crimes detective for the Minneapolis PD, is less of a distraction: twenty years later, there is little hope for finding the killer who got away. On the other end of the spectrum, Minneapolis resident Evi Burke has a life she only dreamed of as a kid in and out of foster homes: a beautiful home, a family, people who love her, a fulfilling job. Little does she know that a danger from her past is stalking her perfect present. A danger powerful enough to pull in both Kovac and Liska and destroy the perfect life she was never meant to have.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I normally love the relationship between Kovac and Liska, especially the repartee between them, but

this book has them no longer partners. They are each pursuing murder investigations, Liska's being a cold case from 25 years ago. Where things really fell apart for me was when their cases turned out to be related. The coincidences were not credible, and it was actually hard to keep the old and new stories and characters sorted out. I mean, it's just hard to believe that the brother and sister in Kovac's case happen to be the adopted biological children of characters in Liska's case, one of them fathered by the murder victim. C'mon!! I finished the book since I wanted to know how things all turned out, but would not recommend it.

The old partnership of homicide detectives Liska and Kovac has dissolved because Nikki wants to spend more time at home with her boys. She is working an infamous cold case of the murder of a sex crimes detective from twenty five years ago. Her investigation stirs a hornet's nest and intersects with a highly publicized double murder case which Kovac and his latest new partner are knee deep in a "really messed up" family. The book leaves the reader guessing the next development throughout. The unexpected conclusion is a terrifying and totally not what I predicted. The author's foreshadowing will throw the reader off!! If you've never read Tami Hoag, give this book a try. Be forewarned! If you are squeamish, there are some gory descriptions of crime scenes. You may want to skim over those sections!

In *The Bitter Season* the biting cold days in the run-up to Thanksgiving in Minneapolis the news is dominated by the gruesome home invasion murder of a university professor and his wealthy wife. The homicide detective assigned to the case, Sam Kovac, is a veteran of the police force for whom "the big five-oh was looming large on the horizon. Liska and Kovac are a mismatched pair who have worked together successfully as partners on the Minneapolis police force for a number of years.

Liska's ex-husband, also a cop, appears to have the emotional maturity of a seventeen-year-old himself, leaving Liska to raise the boys with little support. To replace Liska, Kovac has acquired a promising young rookie as his partner, a former MP. "He didn't want a new partner. He was too old and cranky to break one in. And as the story unfolds, Kovac proves himself right. Meanwhile, the force is abuzz with the creation of a new cold case unit, and Liska has opted to join it in hopes she can avoid round-the-clock investigations and spend more time with her two teenage sons. However, against her will she is assigned to a quarter-century-old case that she believes to be unsolvable. And, as luck would have it, the investigation requires far longer hours than she could

hoped. It's cold in Minneapolis. This being fiction, and genre fiction at that, you won't be surprised to learn that eventually the two cases prove to be related. But the path from here to there is full of surprises. The Bitter Season features two engaging protagonists with a colorful, bantering relationship; not one but two fascinating murder mysteries; exotic background information; plus a couple of bad cops, two key characters who are unspeakably obnoxious, and running dialog among the cops that is worthy of Elmore Leonard. This is not a morality play. As Liska notes, "No heroes in this story . . . Just humans, good, bad, and otherwise. Amen to that. About the author If you check out the New York Times bestseller lists from time to time, as I do, you've probably noticed the name Tami Hoag. As Wikipedia notes, "She has had thirteen consecutive New York Times bestsellers, including five in a 20-month span. Hoag wrote some two dozen romance novels before turning to writing thrillers, many of them standalone titles. The Kovac and Liska series of (now) five books is one of several short series of crime novels. Hoag was raised in Minnesota but now lives in California and Florida.

I have read a few of Tami Hoag's books in the past and really enjoyed them. My book club chose this book to be the book of the month to read. As much as I enjoyed her other books, I was really excited to start this one. I first liked that even though the main characters in the book are part of a series, I didn't have to read the others before this one. This book is a stand alone. The first few chapters were a little slow and at times I did get somewhat overwhelmed by the introduction of so many characters in the beginning. The more I read, the easier it got to keep everyone straight. Once I hit chapter 7, I could not put this book down. Detective Liska is working on a cold case that is connected to a murder case her old partner is working, which happens to be a double murder of a professor and his wife but a suspected ninja. The ending was not what expected at all. It is hard to explain the book without giving anything away. Great book!!

I love Kovac & Liska... I've read them all and each one is very good. I could hardly put this down. In fact didn't until I had to go to sleep then started in again with morning coffee. I look forward to the next one. I do hope Liska goes back to homicide partner with Kovac. These two as partners are so good together. I must say Taylor was an excellent 'fit' within this book and with Kovac. I'm not going to say anything on the story itself- read it- you won't regret it. I will say a couple of things that stood out to me. I was constantly stumped until the reveal as to what the heck happened to Jeremy and who Charlie turned out to be. Through every one of Tami Hoag's Kovac and Liska books I find

myself thinking how can these cops in like Homicide or sex crimes or narcotics divisions do these jobs day after day for years and not be impacted in profoundly harsh dark ways all the days of their lives.

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