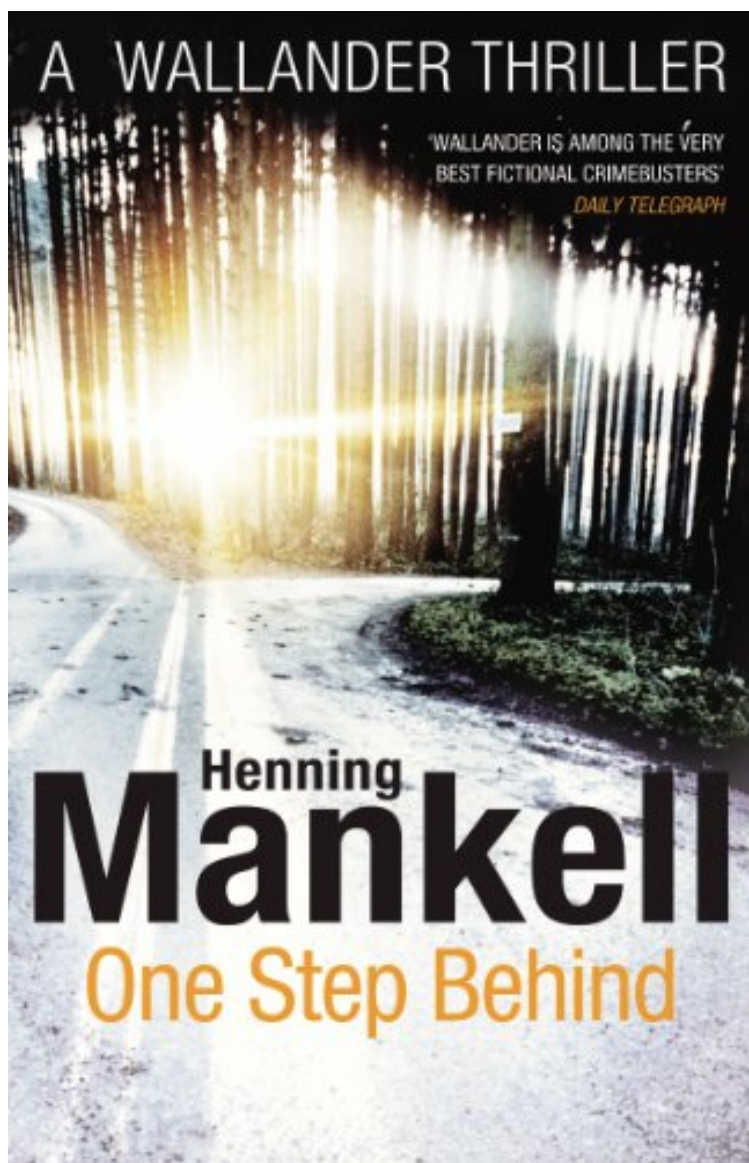


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# One Step Behind: Kurt Wallander



*Par Henning Mankell*  
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**Description :** Description du produitOn Midsummer's Eve, three friends gather in a secluded meadow in Sweden. In the still-sun-lit northern night, they don costumes and begin to role play. But an uninvited guest soon brings their performance to a gruesome conclusion. His approach is careful; his aim is perfect. Three bullets, three corpses. The murderer then carefully photographs the grisly tableau. Meanwhile, the Ystad police station is experiencing a summer lull. Inspector Kurt Wallander is focusing on living healthier, but his peace of mind is shattered when a fellow officer is murdered. The police slowly realize how little they know about what is going on in their seemingly serene town. An unknown killer is on the loose, but their only lead is a photograph of three dead young people in costume. Forced to dig more deeply than he'd like into the personal life of one of his colleagues, Wallander's investigation uncovers something he could never have imagined. One Step Behind is the fifth book to appear in English in what the Los Angeles Times Book

Review calls the "exquisite" Kurt Wallander series.

Prsentation de l'diteurIt is Midsummer's Eve. Three young friends meet in a wood to act out an elaborate masque. But, unknown to them, they are being watched. Each is killed by a single bullet. Soon afterwards, one of Inspector Wallander's colleagues is found murdered. Is it the same killer, and what could the connection be? In this investigation Wallander is always, tantalisingly, one step behind. From Publishers WeeklyIn his fifth U.S. appearance in this taut, intricately plotted series (*The Fifth Woman*, etc.), Swedish detective Kurt Wallander pursues a long, complex case sure to please those who like weighty police procedurals. Six weeks after three college students are murdered during a Midsummer's Eve party, their bodies hidden to prevent discovery, Wallander's secretive colleague Svedberg is found at home with half his head blown off. Wallander's persistent, occasionally brilliant, investigation points to a connection between Svedberg and the disappearance of the three young people. Soon after their bodies surface, a fourth friend, who was too sick to attend the party, is killed. More murders follow, with the exhausted, understaffed detectives just too late each time to prevent the next crime. Eventually the reader meets the killer, whose bizarre motive and methods the author gradually reveals. The dyspeptic Wallander, whose frazzled personal life is further impaired by the diabetes he ignores, works himself to exhaustion, sidestepping official procedure and making intuitive leaps to find the cold-blooded killer. The glum tone of the book, despite the setting during a warm and luxuriant late summer, reflects a crumbling Swedish society: government corruption is widespread; honest cops are disillusioned by abuses in high officialdom; rifts among social classes and between Swedes and recent immigrants abound. Mankell's writing is deadpan and stark, the plotting meticulous and exacting. (Feb. 28)Forecast: Though a bestseller in Europe with both film and TV adaptations to his credit, Mankell has so far failed to take off here. Alas, Scandinavian dreariness just doesn't seem to have broad appeal to American readers. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. From Library JournalDevotees of Inspector Kurt Wallander can only bemoan the fact that this is just the fifth (out of nine books) in this Swedish mystery series to be published in the United States. Here, Wallander confronts perhaps his most horrific case, when the murder of a trusted colleague, Svedberg, and the disappearance of three young people begin to merge. Battling his own fatigue and illness, Wallander assiduously strips away layer after layer, dredging up fragments of conversations and crime-scene clues that lead him closer and closer to the killer, who plays him cleverly and remains one step ahead until the brutal end. Mankell focuses less on Wallander's personal relationships and on what he sees as the deterioration of Swedish quality of life than in the previous books, but nevertheless the subtext is there. Essential for public libraries, though newcomers may want to start earlier in the series (with *The White Lioness* or *Sidetracked*). Francine Fialkoff, "Library Journal" Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc.