



## Swimming with Sharks

*Nele Neuhaus*

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Die New Yorker Investmentbankerin Alex Sontheim hat sich durch Intelligenz und Zielstrebigkeit eine Position erarbeitet, von der andere nur träumen. Sie ahnt aber nicht, dass sie ihren Sachverstand und ihr Insiderwissen in ein Kartell von ausgeklügelter Wirtschaftskriminalität investiert. Selbst als Bürgermeister Nick Kostidis, unbeirrbarer Kämpfer gegen die Kriminalität in New York City, die junge Frau warnt, will sie nichts davon hören. Erst ein Attentat auf die Familie des Bürgermeisters und Unstimmigkeiten in ihrer Firma wecken ihr Misstrauen. Alex beginnt auf eigene Faust zu recherchieren und macht eine ungeheuerliche Entdeckung, die sie in tödliche Gefahr bringt ...

## Swimming with Sharks Details

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Author : Nele Neuhaus

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## From Reader Review Swimming with Sharks for online ebook

### Maren says

Die Idee, Liebesroman, Mafiakrimi und Wall Street-Thriller zu kombinieren, gefällt mir an sich gut – nur Sätze wie diese muss ich mir nicht antun: »Das Herz des Jesuitenparters wurde schwer vor Mitleid, als er erkannte, was das Schicksal diesem einst so energiegeladenen und furchtlosen Menschen angetan hatte. Vor ihm saß ein gebrochener Mann ... In seinen dunklen Augen standen das Grauen und Entsetzen, das er erlebt hatte und das ihn noch immer verfolgte.« Okay, haken wir diesen mal ab unter Erstlingswerk. Der Krimi »Schneewittchen muss sterben« hat mir schon viel besser gefallen.

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### Kate says

I couldn't finish this one. I LOVE reading Neuhaus' German thrillers in German, but the suspense in this one was so visceral, I simply couldn't bear to read it - it made me so anxious that I couldn't enjoy the story.

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### Mel Whittaker says

Really disappointing.

I'd just read 'Snow White Must Die' and loved it, so thought I'd try this one. Unfortunately I only got part way through before I gave up.

My issue was the main character. She's this successful, well paid woman in an important job who ends up mixing with some of the most powerful people in New York. I guess my issue was that I found her very flat and unbelievable. She didn't really have any flaws, even something like being a bit cut throat/willing to do something illegal which you'd think might work well with her chosen profession. The author tried to make her seem sensitive underneath, but it was unconvincing for this character.

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### Sylvia Haberland says

In diesem Buch geht es um Korruption, Mord und Bestechung in New York City. Der Bürgermeister hat sich das Ziel gesetzt, trotz aller Widrigkeiten seine Stadt von diesen Verbrechen zu säubern. Er lebt nur für ein Ziel, seine Stadt für die Bürger lebenswerter zu machen. Drohungen der Straftäter lassen ihn unbeeindruckt, bis die Katastrophe passiert.

Eine junge Frau möchte durch ihre Arbeit von den Mächtigen der Stadt wahrgenommen werden. Auf dem Weg oben, ist sie blind und nimmt die verbrecherischen Taten ihres Geliebten nicht. Auch sie schlägt die Warnungen ihrer Mitmenschen in den Wind bis sie durch Zufall erfährt, dass der Mann den sie liebt, Killer beauftragt, um Menschen, die ihm gefährlich werden können zu beseitigen. Auch sie gerät ins Fadenkreuz des Verbrechens.

Die Schriftstellerin versteht es, die Spannung immer wieder aufzubauen. Dieses Buch hat so viele Wendungen, dass der Leser das Buch schwer weglegen kann. Ich habe bei meiner Bewertung nur 4 Sterne

vergeben, weil die Passagen der Finanzwelt etwas trocken und langatmig ausgefallen sind. Für mich war dieses Buch ein Pageturner. Klasse!!

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## Thorn says

Was ich gut fand: 1 Die Beschreibungen der Umgebungen und des Wetters waren teilweise recht schön und gutgemacht. 2 Ich mochte, dass die Heldin, Alex, Persönlichkeitsmaken hatte.

Was mir nicht gefiel: 1 Die fast endlosen Wiederholungen des allwissenden Erzählers, der schon-erzählten Ereignisse. Das Buch hätte viel, VIEL kürzer gewesen sein, ohne dass überhaupt etwas verloren ging. 2 Der wiederholte, klatschende Fehler, Alex immer wieder mit der Anrede 'Mrs. Sontheim' vorzustellen. Auf Amerikanisch heisst 'Mrs. Sontheim' eindeutig, sie sei mit einem namens Sontheim verheiratet. Dass 'Ms.' in ihrem Fall korrekt ist, kann im New York Times nachgewiesen werden -- und auch, dass es gilt auch wenn eine Frau verheiratet ist. 3 Fast jeder im Buch begeht riesige, unmögliche, blöde Fehler, die den dargestellten Persönlichkeiten vollkommen ungereimt sind -- und immer genau rechtzeitig, unsere Helden entweder zu retten, oder in furchtbare Schwierigkeiten zu schmeissen.

Die Bodenstein und Kirchhoff-Romane habe ich noch nicht gelesen, denn sie sind von USA aus als EBooks (noch) nicht zu erhalten. Übersetzungen lese ich nie. Aber ich werde sie auf Jedenfall eventuell aussuchen. Unter Haien wurde von allen Verlagen ursprünglich abgelehnt, was ich gut nachvollziehen kann. Aber man sieht in diesem Buch, dass Neuhaus wirklich was darauf hat. Sie kann schreiben, und hat Phantasie. Es tut mir nicht Leid, es gelesen zu haben, aber ich kann es unmöglich empfehlen. Die guten Menschen bei Ullstein hätten Neuhaus helfen können, aus dieser Erzählung eine richtig schlichte und straffe zu formen. Schade, dass sie das nicht gemacht haben.

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## Taminski says

I bought this book because a friend of mine recommended it to me.

After having finished the books I have mixed feelings and only gave it 3 stars out of 5. I think that the plot of the book was quite good and the length of the book allowed the writer to introduce quite a lot of characters as the story went along and understanding their views and I feel like many things happened with these people along the story. I don't think it was the most inventive and innovative story line but I still liked it.

However, what I found horrible about the book at times was the way it was written. I felt like some things had been written there with the purpose of informing the reader about something rather than going with the flow of the book and presenting the characters' opinions along the story. For example, when Sergio Vitali's sons are introduced from his perspective, there were a couple of sentences outlining how he felt about them. To me as a reader this was not very well written since it seemed like something on a check list that had to be presented and sometimes came out of nowhere. Or many other conversations in the book just seemed a bit "staged" and awkward (e.g. the conversation between one of the main protagonists and the doctor who is an old friend towards the end of the book). A book with this length would have given plenty of opportunities for the relationships between the actors to evolve or for presenting why the protagonists felt a certain way.

All in all, despite my quite negative review I think it is a good book but I wouldn't read it again.

I hope this review helped other readers make a decision on whether or not to spend the time reading this book. :)

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## Jean says

(Audible; Justine Eyre, narrator) What a wallow! A real potboiler. A lot of bad choices, secrets, lies, and physical violence. The most high-value communication occurs via eye-contact. An unnecessary 'love' story. Alexandra Sondheim is the central figure, a mergers and acquisitions star, missing a moral center. Or maybe she does have one! Incredibly naive, power businesswoman who claims to get along better with men than women. She apparently spent her 20s rising through the financial ranks. She is now spending her late 30s sleeping with every man she meets. A long but compulsive listen with a good narrator (despite her weird NY accents that lack the R). Author's first book, self-published in 2005. An interesting dry run for her outstanding Bodenstein and Kirchoff series.

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## Sybille says

Alex(andra) Sontheim is a German investment banker specialized in M&A (Mergers&Acquisitions) in New York City. She starts a new job at MLI and everything looks good for a while: New job she loves, big income, and she is meeting the creme de la creme of the city. When she meets a rich construction mogul Sergio Vitali, she is immediately impressed and falls in love. She starts dreaming about a Happily ever after among the upper 10.000. Soon things at work and going ons in the City start raising her suspicions about the legitimacy of some of her projects and the origin of Sergio's wealth. She also starts wondering about the link between her new job, her company, and Sergio.

Then, one day, she meets the mayor of New York, Nick Kostidis, who is a sworn enemy of Vitali and trying to get her on his side to get Sergio behind bars for the rest of his life.

I will not give away to much, just so much: Embezzlement, blackmail, insider trading involving government officials, brokers, department heads and worse will keep you up at night even if you thought 600 pages is too long to keep you interested.

(Note: I read the original German version Unter Haien, which is over 600 pages long.)

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## Renate says

3-4 Sterne, zwischendurch etwas schleppend, ab der hälfte besser, weil es rasanter weiterging

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## Schuyler Wallace says

SWIMMING WITH SHARKS is a big book—600 plus pages, monster financial shenanigans, meaty personal relationships, profound conversations, and savage violence. The author, Nele Neuhaus, has stuffed a lot of action into this weighty novel, and done it well.

The theme is formulaic; a brainy and stunning woman makes it big in a man's world, woman is stricken with desire for a powerful egomaniac, woman steps in doo-doo because of said indiscretion, woman flees, man chases with evil intent, man catches woman and nearly kills her, woman is rescued by a different man with

better intentions, and the entire world is better off when it all ends.

The author takes this familiar story and fleshes it out with interesting details about corporate banking, graft and corruption, mobster activity, and political machination. She does it with apparent knowledge of big money manipulation and organizational dynamics. I couldn't find out much about Neuhaus except that she's German, wrote the book in German, had it translated, and is a best selling author of many German crime novels. She apparently self-published this book in 2005 with a print run of 500 copies and has since found interest at Amazon Crossing in professionally producing it.

It's a good book and entertaining to read. Details about big money as it flows through the world's banking systems are interesting and well presented. I learned a lot, presuming the details are reasonably accurate. The dialogue is crisp and carries the story forward with an even flow. The characters are well developed, although somewhat stereotyped. Anger plays a big part in most of the characters' behavior; some type of anger management would have helped their demeanor, but would have damaged the story. I had a little difficulty separating the characters, the governmental agencies, and the various financial institutions simply because of the sheer numbers and tangled web of involvement. But it really didn't matter because the central idea flowed along despite the minor confusion.

I enjoyed reading this book and felt a little more intelligent about money matters and widespread graft when I completed it. I recommend it to casual readers who are interested in sex, power, and money.

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## Pat says

German Audiobook. (The English translation is "Swimming with Sharks". I've read several other books by Neuhaus that were good, but this is my favorite. I was expecting another of the Bodenstein/Kirchoff detective stories, but this one was different. Some of the English Amazon reviews weren't positive, but I really liked it!

"Swimming with Sharks" follows Alex Sondheim, a German investment banker working on Wall Street, who begins working for Levy Manhattan Investments, only to uncover that the owner Vincent Levy and his right-hand man Zack St. John are involved in insider trading and are working together with Sergio Vitali, a billionaire real-estate tycoon who is known as the Godfather of New York because of his mafia kingdom.

To complicate matters, Alex gets romantically involved with Sergio before she finds out who he really is (by accidentally witnessing Sergio discuss the murder of a former colleague David Zuckerburg with one of his henchmen), and his involvement with her employer. For personal safety though, Alex must pretend to continue to be in the dark when she's with Sergio--who ultimately is on to Alex.

If Sergio Vitali embodies everything evil--hundreds of government officials are on his payroll, he orders his own son to be murdered when there's a danger that he might cooperate with the police and spill Sergio's secrets, he has a cold, psychopathic demeanor--the direct opposite and embodying goodness is New York's Mayor, Nick Kostidis. Kostidis has been fighting corruption in New York during his entire career, and he believes the keep to cleaning it up is by jailing Sergio Vitali--an almost impossible feat, since any possible witnesses are always murdered before they're able to testify.

Of course a love triangle develops between Alex, Sergio, and Nick--with the main problem being that Nick

and Sergio are archenemies. To complicate matters, there's an assassination attempt on Sergio, and later Nick almost gets killed. And Alex is in the smack center of it all.

New York, 1998: Die junge Investmentbankerin Alex Sontheim ist durch harte Arbeit und Zielstrebigkeit dort angekommen, wo sie immer hinwollte: ganz oben. Als sie den milliardenschweren Geschäftsmann Sergio Vitali kennenlernt, beginnt eine heiße Affäre. Alex genießt es, am Leben der wirklich Mächtigen teilzuhaben und gibt zunächst nichts auf die Stimmen, die sie vor Vitali warnen. Doch dann bringt eine ungeheuerliche Entdeckung Alex in tödliche Gefahr.

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## **Cheryl says**

Talk about a doorstopper of a book...

SWIMMING WITH SHARKS started out alright. I thought I was going to read this humorous book and learn all about financial matters and read a thriller on top of that. I did do that but, instead, at 600+ pages, this tome is about 450 pages too long.

Cardboard characters including protagonist Alex Sondheim, fifty words when ten would do, a predictable plot - I would suggest finding another book about Wall Street rather than enduring this monster-sized disappointment.

One bright side - the book was translated from German by Christine M. Grimm and she seemed to do a credible job. If she got paid by the word or by the page, she made out like a bandit.

NOTE: I received this book in exchange for my honest review.

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## **Linda Caminiti says**

Translated means Swimming with Sharks. Ok. I don't read German but the book is now in English and I got it on Amazon Kindle. Why Good Reads doesn't have it listed other than in German, who knows? Anyway, I read Snow White Must Die by this author and really liked it. This book is a slow starter but really picks up speed. All about high finance in NYC, corruption, the mafia, off shore bank accounts and of course the gorgeous Italian godfather and the beautiful blonde that falls for him with devastating results. Sometimes it's implausible but I would read it while on the treadmill and didn't realize I had been on for an hour. So, it does keep your attention.

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## **Michael says**

I became a fan of Nele Nuehaus through her mystery novel, "Snow White Must Die," so when I heard that she had another novel available to read, I immediately put it on my to be read list.

And while "Swimming With Sharks" is good, it's not quite on the same level as some of her other books I've read.

Alex Sondheim comes to the world of Wall Street from Germany and is soon a rising star in the marketplace.

She attracts the attention of Sergio Vitali, an older gentleman with whom she begins an affair. What Alex doesn't know is that Sergio is the head of the crime syndicate in New York City and the number one target of the new mayor.

As Alex slowly realizes that she's in too deep, she begins to try and find ways to get out of Sergio's clutches without losing all that she's worked for or worse.

In many ways, this novel reminded me of John Grisham's "The Firm" with a young, eager eyed novice brought into a high-stakes world and finding out there are unintended consequences to her actions and choices. This is one of those novels that has you eagerly turning the next page to find out what happens next and to see if and how Alex will survive the next issue that arises.

However, there are some points at which this novel doesn't necessarily work. One of those is in the characterizations. As a main character, Alex simply allows too much to happen to and either makes rapid, impulsive decisions or spends pages pondering the meaning of her actions and worrying about what she should or could do. Supporting characters aren't given any shades of gray either -- you're either a good guy or a bad guy, with little ground in between. After the nice character work done in "Snow White Must Die," I expected stronger characters here.

All in all, this is a good book, but not a great one.

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## **Amy Lignor says**

Every once in a while a translation appears that American fans will absolutely love. This novel, written by a German author, has no problem whatsoever identifying with the American public, especially seeing as that the mystery is 'homegrown' in the U.S.A.

For all those who love the financial game - the twists and turns that come with money, greed and power - this title takes place on the 'center stage' of greed; Wall Street (hence, the 'Sharks' in the title.) It is the late 90's and Alexandra Sondheim, who has a great reputation in the field of Mergers and Acquisitions, has been newly hired by the firm of Levy Management Investments. She's hired when the previous 'star' of M&A is killed in an accident.

Alex is extremely intelligent and upsets some of the men who have been working at LMI for many years. They've become just a tad bit jealous of the fact that a mere woman can command so much attention, and because she is so learned, she can name her own price.

Unfortunately, all that glitters is not gold, and she soon finds herself running up against some very unsavory characters. One is a major power player - a so-called silent partner in LMI who is also the head of a drug cartel.

Sergio Vitali, said to be a shark in the real estate realm, takes Alex under his wing although keeps his other business in the shadows. Sadly, dead bodies start piling up and Alex soon realizes that she is in way over her head and tries to get away from Vitali. As Alex does her best to gain freedom, her job and her reputation slowly turn to dust right before her eyes, and the only thing left is to find a way to save her own life before it's too late.

This is very different than most of the 'Wall Street' books that came out after the crash. It's much more personal and really makes the reader stop and think about what really goes on in these money factories. Nele

(and her translator) have done a fantastic job!

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