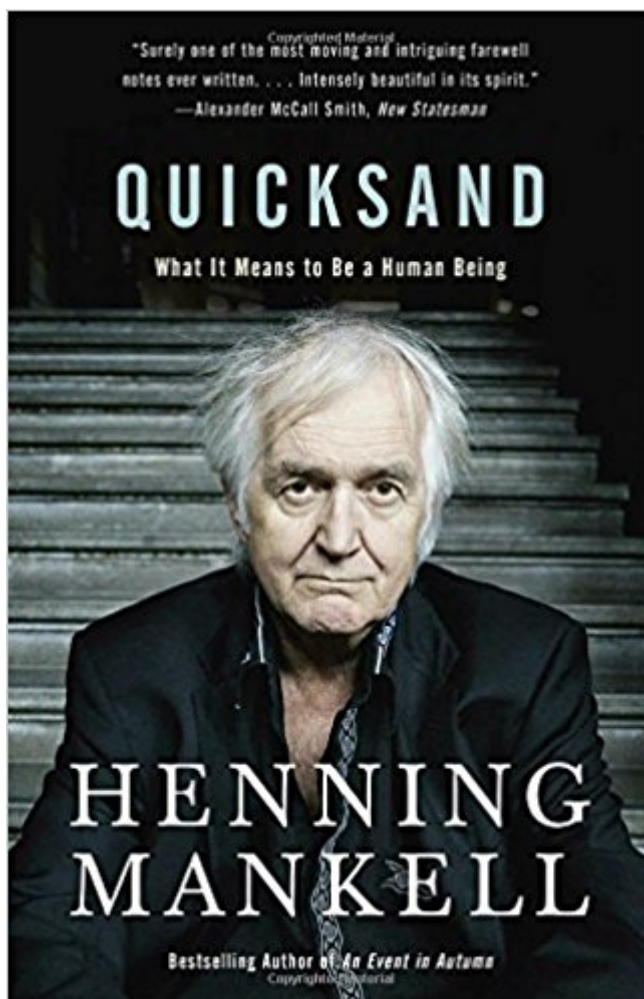


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# Quicksand: What It Means To Be A Human Being



## Synopsis

A stunning and poignant autobiographical look at the myriad experiences that shape a meaningful life, by the bestselling author of the Kurt Wallander mysteries. In January 2014, Henning Mankell received a diagnosis of lung cancer. *Quicksand* is a response to this shattering news—but it is not a memoir of destruction. Instead, it is a testament to a life fully lived, a tribute to the extraordinary but fleeting human journey that delivers both boundless opportunity and crucial responsibility. In a series of intimate vignettes, Mankell ranges over rich and varied reflections: of growing up in a small Swedish town, where he experiences a startling revelation on a winter morning as a young boy; of living hand-to-mouth during a summer in Paris as an ambitious young writer; of his work at a theater in Mozambique, where *Lysistrata* is staged in the midst of civil war; of chance encounters with men and women who changed his understanding of the world. Along the way, Mankell ponders the meaning of a good life, and the critically important ways we can shape the future of humanity if we are fortunate enough to have the choice. Vivid, clear-eyed, and breathtakingly beautiful, *Quicksand* is an invaluable parting gift from a great man.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Praise for Henning Mankell's *Quicksand*: "Surely one of the most moving and intriguing farewell notes ever written. . . . Intensely beautiful in its spirit." —Alexander McCall Smith, *New Statesman* "An extraordinary book. . . . Profoundly moving." —*The Guardian* "*Quicksand* defines life not by its ending but by

the creative and humanitarian content that filled and fulfilled Mankell's life. . . . The essays sharpen with resounding poignancy. Financial Times "An extremely moving swansong. . . . The reader realizes that Mankell has never really been driven by anger but by the tiny, fragile hope that his words and deeds will help in the fight for a fairer world. The Independent (London) "[An] absorbing addition to the work of Sweden's most internationally famous writer since August Strindberg. . . . Quicksand, a hybrid of essay and memoir, reflects knowledgeably on art, religion, childhood, and the æfinal insensibility that is our dying. Rarely has a writer contemplated the mystery of the end of life with such a wide-ranging curiosity. London Evening Standard "Uplifting and, as a memoir, as unusual a creation as [Mankell's] Nordic detective, Kurt Wallander. GQ (London) "Elegant, unflinching. Publishers Weekly (starred review)

Henning Mankell's novels have been translated into forty-five languages and have sold more than forty million copies worldwide. He was the first winner of the Ripper Award and also received the Glass Key and the Crime Writers' Association Golden Dagger, among other awards. His Kurt Wallander mysteries have been adapted into a PBS television series starring Kenneth Branagh. During his life, Mankell divided his time between Sweden and Mozambique, where he was artistic director of the Teatro Avenida in Maputo. He died in 2015.

We read this wonderfully different book in a men's reading group. I am a major fan of Henning Mankell and his Kurt Wallander detective books (read them all) and was so surprised to learn he died. His plan was to continue the detective series with Wallander's daughter as the prime character and his last book introduced her as the coming hero. I kept looking for the next book. I turned to this final book with uncertainty. It is described as an autobiography and memoir -- but it is very different. It is a collection of Mankell's thoughts after he is diagnosed with terminal lung cancer but the illness is seldom mentioned and it is never the center of his thoughts. Also not mentioned is his Wallander detective novels. Nothing about how he came to write such a large body of work and become the best detective writer. Mostly he explores his very early years as a playwright and producer but never any detail. We do learn more about Mankell but in a very indirect way. I am more convinced than ever that Henning Mankell was a unique force for good.

Just started this, and wish I had someone to whom to read it aloud. Every word from this wonderful man rings true. So heartbroken that he is no longer with us. I own every one of his books and will treasure them the rest of my life. Don't miss him - he has poured his life and huge heart into his books, the ultimate gift of a writer.

I cried at learning he had died and read this book so I could keep something of him in my life. His stories exemplify the meaningful life he describes in the last book. His work is timeless but this tome precious in its description of what makes such a powerful and humble and fragile individual.

For me this is his best ever book. Revelation after revelation. His last hurrah! So very worth a read. Not a happy book but a brilliant one.

No frills, no sensationalism, yet profound, easy to read, and to the soul of the matter. Not for the faint of heart, especially in the beginning. It's life. And in the end, it's death. Accepting our ultimate fate enriches our lives before we get there.

Hard to get through. I loved his fiction. So sad he is gone.

So sorry that he won't write any more novels....

one of my favorite authors

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