

## THRILLERS

### **Blackout**

**Marc Elsberg**

Black Swan, pbk,  
448 pages, €11.19



On a freezing winter night in Milan, IT consultant and former hacker Piero Manzano's car is involved in a huge pile-up, when the road lights and traffic lights suddenly fail.

But after he scrambles to safety, he becomes aware that this is not just a local power failure — the lights have gone out all over Italy and throughout Europe as power grids fail, crashing like a row of dominoes. The unthinkable has happened. Hackers have engineered a staggering catastrophe.

People are freezing, food and water supplies dry up, petrol can't be pumped, telephones don't work, nuclear power stations begin to overheat, chaos reigns and the death toll rises exponentially.

Manzano must persuade the authorities he's on their side if he is to help unmask the conspirators. Austrian first-time novelist Marc Elsberg's startling disaster thriller, already a million-seller in Europe, demonstrates all too clearly how our dependence on electricity contains the seeds of catastrophe.