



# Without Pain

Rüdiger Opelt

Without Pain is a murder mystery that depicts the circumstances surrounding the murder of an unidentified woman who is found in the bed of her suspected murderer. The narrative focuses on the relationships between the murder, Nazi concentration-camp crimes, secret genetic experiments conducted on human subjects, and the present-day family relationships of the protagonists. Developments within the novel serve to illustrate the author's personal theories concerning the psychology of hereditary violence.

A young man wakes up next to a dead woman who is covered with blood. The victim is lying on his bed and the murder weapon is in his hand. He immediately becomes the primary suspect in the woman's slaying, although he insists that he knows neither the woman nor how she came to be in his bed. The path to solving the mystery follows a winding course through time and space. Important scenes occur in Linz, Austria in 1991, Prague in 1968, the Nazi concentration camp at Terezin during World War II, and a psychiatric ward in Moscow in 1991. The major characters range from the police inspector and his suspect to ruthless villains, helpless victims, and a KGB hit man, all of whom are involved in a complex story line dealing with terrible family secrets, diabolical genetic research projects, a love affair that has gone sour, and crimes with international repercussions. The result is a powerful portrait of the psychology of violence.

Rüdiger Opelt is a professional psychologist. His first book, *Die Kinder des Tantalus* [The Children of Tantalus], outlines the psychological theory of family relationships that serves as an important basis for ideas that are developed in *Without Pain*, which is his first novel.