



Peter Henisch

# THE PREGNANT MADONNA

Novel

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Ein Mann, ein Mädchen, ein gestohlenes Auto: die Geschichte einer abenteuerlichen Fahrt quer durch Italien. Nominiert für den DEUTSCHEN BUCHPREIS 2005

Josef Urban's one thought is to get away – so a car with the key left in the ignition offers the very chance. It is not his car, but this matters to him just as little as the fact that he has no driver's licence. He soon realises, however, that there is a girl asleep on the back seat. When she wakes up he tells her to get out, but she refuses. Maria, a schoolgirl, is the lover of the RI teacher to whom the car belongs. She is pregnant, and has little sympathy with the victim of the theft. She can understand Urban's escape attempt, however. The border is closer that they realise, and they suddenly find themselves in Italy. Josef is enjoying the trip and the company; but he cannot avoid feeling responsible for the girl – a thankless role, especially as it is hardly consistent with his love ...

## PETER HENISCH

Born 1943 in Vienna; post-war childhood followed by reconstruction-era puberty; studied philosophy and psychology; co-founded "Wespennest" literary magazine with Helmut Zenker in 1969; a footloose author since the 1970s. Henisch's debut novel "Die kleine Figur meines Vaters" was first published in 1975 (English translation "Negatives Of My Father" published in 1990). Many novels followed, including "Die schwangere Madonna" (2005), "Eine sehr kleine Frau" (2007), "Mortimer und Miss Molly" (2013), and "Suchbild mit Katze" (2016). He has received numerous awards, including the Austria Kunstpreis. Most recently published by Residenz Verlag: "Der Jahrhundertroman" (2021).