



by
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Fiction

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How to Sleep

Wie man schlafen soll

review

Three men struggle for survival in this unique blend of dystopia and social critique.

Set in a nameless steppe after the earth has been destroyed by an ecological catastrophe, three men seek a better life in Lightraff, a city built around a huge oil refinery. Lightraff is a tightly controlled ecosystem, entirely organised around eight-hour shifts designed to keep people from interacting with each other. Koslov, Schreiber and Haye share an apartment, but only meet when all three suddenly lose their jobs, as apocalyptic events become more and more frequent. Suddenly the apartment is overcrowded and Lightraff, a place that seemed utopian to the three men, reveals itself as a trap.

Simon's third novel is both a compelling dystopia and an incisive critique of capitalism. Her artificial city is an intriguing take on life in a megacity, familiar to today's city-dwellers who often navigate life and work in a hostile environment without sufficient social safety nets. For the people of Lightraff, not being in work equals a death sentence. As such, this is very much a book of and for our time.

rights information

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Residenz Verlag was founded in 1956 in Salzburg. Early publishing lists concentrated on fine art and non-fiction titles. During the 1960s a fiction list was added, and leading Austrian authors including H.C.Artmann, Thomas Bernhard, Barbara Frischmuth and Peter Handke published their first work here. German and Swiss writers were gradually included, followed in the 1980s by international authors in translation. The non-fiction list includes books on contemporary history as well as monographs of nineteenth- and twentieth-century artists and books on music, theatre and architecture. Since 2001 the Residenz Verlag has been publishing literary and artistic picture books and fiction for young readers, too, in the 'Nilpferd' imprint.