Funny, Weird, And Wild, Stahl Tells A Crazy Story.

From the acclaimed and controversial author of Permanent Midnight comes one of the most vividly subversive, savagely funny, and explosive novels yet unleashed in our tender century. Pain Killers is a violent and mind-wrenching masterpiece in the gonzo noir style that has earned Jerry Stahl his legion of avid fans.

Down-and-out ex-cop and not-quite-reformed addict Manny Rupert accepts a job going undercover to find out if an old man locked up in a California prison is who he claims to be: the despicable—and allegedly dead—Josef Mengele, aka the Angel of Death. What if, instead of drowning thirty years ago, the sadistic legend whose Auschwitz crimes still horrify faked his own death and is now locked up in San Quentin, ranting and bitter about being denied the adulation he craves for his contribution to keeping the Master Race pure—if no longer masterful?
After accidentally reuniting with ex-wife and love of his life, Tina, at San Quentin—they first met at the crime scene where Tina murdered her first husband with Drano-laced Lucky Charms—Manny spends a bad night imbibing boxed wine and questionable World War One morphine, hunched over a trove of photos showing live genital dissections that plant him in the middle of a conspiracy involving genocide, drugs, eugenics, human experiments, and Americas secret history of collusion with German believers in Nordic superiority.

Mannys quest sends him careening from one extreme of apocalypse-adjacent reality to the other: from SS-inked Jewish shotcallers to meth-crazed virgin hookers, from Mexican gangbangers to Big Pharma–funded prison research to an animal shelter that gasses more than stray dogs and cats . . .

Pain Killers captures one mans struggle against a perverse and demented scheme of global proportions, in a literary tour de force as outrageous, compelling, and dangerous as history itself. Not for the faint of heart, the novel hurtles readers into a disturbing, original, and alarmingly real world filled with some of the kinkiest sex, most horrific violence, and screaming wit ever found on the page—proving yet again that Stahl is, as The New Yorker described him, a better-than-Burroughs virtuoso.

Features:
* ISBN13: 9780060506650
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* Click here to view our Condition Guide and Shipping Prices

I have a nasty habit of discovering excellent series in the middle. Very seldom am I lucky enough to read a novel with characters and situations that I thoroughly enjoy, and then later discover that they have been carried over into new novels. Instead, what often happens is that I find out a book I liked is from the middle (or sometimes end) of an excellent series, and I am forced to backtrack and collect the previous books.

Needless to say, I was not lucky enough to catch Manny Rupert, Jerry Stahls flighty ex-cop drug addict turned private detective, in his first book, Plainclothes Naked. However, Pain Killers is only the second novel in a what will hopefully be a longer series.

Stahls writing has always had an edge to it. Not surprising, considering that his real life exploits (as recounted in Permanent Midnight: A Memoir) have been a tad edgy themselves. But it isnt the edge that makes Stahls writing so good. It is the way he manages to combine it with a dark humor that doesn't flinch at the ugliness unfolding around it. A drug addict ex-policeman posing as prison rehab counselor in order to investigate a
possible ex-Nazi in hiding shouldn't be funny. But then Stahl throws lines at you like If I were a pedophile, I'd paint kittens. He knows what shouldn't be funny, and he knows how to make you laugh at it.

Manny Rupert isn't the kind of hero you root for because he's one of the good guys. He's the guy you root for because, as depraved as he is, he's nowhere near as bad as the people he is surrounded by. Besides, at least he can see the humor of it all, as bitter as it may be. If you're like me, and prefer your leading man to be less than perfect, you'll definitely want to pick up a copy of Pain Killers.

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