



Lumen (Martin Bora)

Ben Pastor

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"Pastor's plot is well crafted, her prose sharp. . . . A disturbing mix of detection and reflection."—*Publishers Weekly*

"A mystery, it rivets the reader until the end and beyond, with its twist of historical realities. A historical piece, it faithfully reproduces the grim canvas of war. A character study, it captures the thoughts and actions of real people, not stereotypes."—*TheFree Lance-Star*

Part wartime political intrigue, detective story, psychological thriller, and religious mystery, Ben Pastor's debut follows a German army captain and a Chicago priest as they investigate the death of a nun in Nazi-occupied Poland.

In October 1939 Captain Martin Bora discovers the abbess, Mother Kazimierza, shot dead in her convent garden. Her alleged power to see the future has brought her a devoted following; her work and motto, "Lumen Christi Adiuva Nos" ("Light of Christ, help us"), appear also to have brought some enemies.

Father Malecki has come to Cracow, at the pope's bidding, to investigate Mother Kazimierza's powers. The Vatican orders him to stay and assist Bora in the inquiry into her killing. Stunned by the violence of the occupation and the ideology of his colleagues, Bora's sense of Prussian duty is tested to the breaking point. The interference of seductive actress Ewa Kowalska does not help matters.

Ben Pastor, born in Italy, has lived for thirty years in the United States, working as a university professor in Vermont. She is the author of other novels, including *The Water Thief* and *The Fire Walker* (St. Martin's Press).

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