

# Diogenes

János Székely  
*Temptation*

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*Verlockung*

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Book factsheet

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English/world (Pushkin)  
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 **Bestseller**

Spiegel Bestseller

**Praise**

*Temptation*

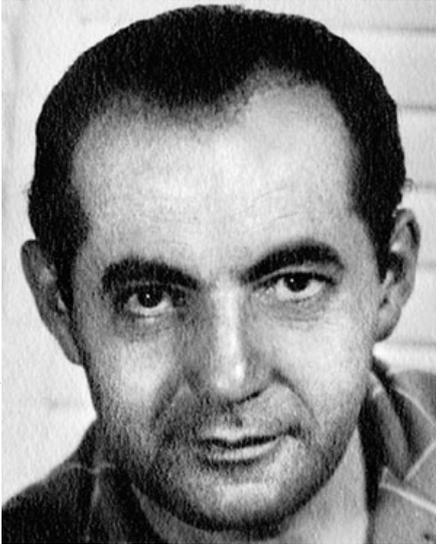
»So captivating that you'd like to devour these more than 800 pages in one single day? A gripping detective novel, as it is called in the first line? Well, yes. And a coming-of-age story? Also. An adventure, a popular tale like ›Simplicissimus‹. A proletarian version of ›Felix Krull‹. Bittersweet love comedy and pre-revolutionary pamphlet. This very entertaining read has something of it all.« – Volker Müller / Berliner Zeitung

»An incredible book!« – Elke Heidenreich

»This book can be read as a wonderful example of genre writing, in the tradition of *Oliver Twist* and *Felix Krull*.« – Fritz Göttler / Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich

»A truly great novel that brings everything together: narrative force, social history, wit, anger, grief, love and idealism.« – Angela Wittmann / Brigitte, Hamburg

Hungary between the wars. Bela has just escaped his village childhood, sleeping on straw and working for his supper. Now, at fourteen, he moves to Budapest to stay with his young mother, a woman as hungry for life as he is. His decision stands firm: he wants to leave poverty behind and conquer the fairytale world he is now getting to know as a lift boy in a grand hotel. When the mysterious wife of His Excellency rings for him one night, Bela thinks his hour has come.



János Székely (1901 - 1958) was born in Budapest and moved to Berlin at the age of eighteen to escape the Horthy regime. He wrote numerous screenplays for silent movie stars such as Brigitte Helm, Willy Fritsch and Marlene Dietrich. In 1934 Ernst Lubitsch invited him to work in Hollywood and Székely finally emigrated in 1938. Under the pen name John S. Toldy he was awarded the 1940 ›Academy Award for Best Story‹ for *Arise, My Love*. Persecuted again during the McCarthy era, he lived in Mexico with his wife and daughter for several years, before accepting an offer from DEFA in East Berlin in 1957, where he died in a year later.