

## A biographical novel about the last years of Arthur Schnitzler's life



Dr. Volker Hage  
**Life's Fifth Act**  
[Des Lebens fünfter Akt]  
Novel

Luchterhand HC  
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**Volker Hage**, born in 1949, worked for the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and *Die Zeit* before joining the *Spiegel* team, where he has been the literature editor since 1992. He has also been a visiting professor at universities in Germany and the USA. As an editor and author of numerous books, he is a critical observer of and commentator on the development of literature in Germany and internationally. He is one of the best-known literature critics in German-speaking countries.

He is at the peak of his fame. His works are in high demand, Hollywood is courting him, and women adore him even in the advanced years of his life. By summer 1928 Arthur Schnitzler has in effect achieved everything. But then his daughter Lili commits suicide when she is only 18, and with her Schnitzler loses the person who was remarkably close to him. What still remains for him in life is his attraction for women, and women have always been important for him. Love is his support and at the same time consternates him and is with him when he takes his last breath.

Volker Hage has closely examined Schnitzler's diaries and those of his daughter, along with numerous contemporary documents. His biographical novel draws an intimate portrait of this successful writer, whose final years were marked by feelings of insecurity and contradictory emotions: by the happiness of a late love and also a deep melancholy. Volker Hage has also created a panorama of Vienna on the eve of the takeover of power by the Nazis.

### Press

"Never before has Schnitzler been so close to readers as here in *Life's Fifth Act*." *Wiener Kurier*

"Volker Hage succeeded quite well in reflecting Schnitzler's language. ... This book is a linguistic feast." *NDR Kultur Bücherleben*

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