

# The Book of the Dead (The Secret Books of Paradys)

Tanith Lee



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The Book of the Dead (The Secret Books of Paradys) Tanith Lee A macabre dark fantasy of enchantment, misfortune, corruption, and death

The unnerving third volume of the Secret Books of Paradys begins with a fable of two doomed weddings. In "The Weasel Bride," a white weasel transforms into a fair maiden under the light of a full moon. A local trapper releases the animal from its curse by marrying it, but on their wedding day, the weasel inflicts the groom with a fatal wound. This tale flows into the story of a bride who is brutally strangled in the nuptial bed after giving her husband a small nibble on the hand. Decades later, his motive comes to light when the woman's unearthed tomb reveals a ghastly truth.

In the second narrative, "The Nightmare's Tale," Jean de St. Jean is an orphan of the Revolution who grows up with a deep yearning for revenge. Determined to kill the man responsible for his parents' death, he sets off for the colonial island of Black Haissa. But he arrives on distant shores only to find that his adversary is already dead and that the isle is a country of wild nightmares, supernatural possession, and petrifying beasts. And in "Beautiful Lady," small, shabby Julie d'Is lives in a tiny apartment near Temple Church that no one ever visits. Some refer to Julie as *Bella Donna*, but she has other nicknames—for wherever she goes, the Grim Reaper follows close behind.

Five additional fantasies entrance the reader with the gothic and tortured plights of the citizens of Paradys—a mythic city where vampire owls, occult conjurors, and femmes fatales abound.



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