



# Manifesto for the Dead

*Domenic Stansberry*

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## **Manifesto for the Dead** Domenic Stansberry

*Manifesto for the Dead* is a surreal noir that takes as its main character the master of noir, the late crime novelist Jim Thompson at the end of his career, suspecting he has been framed by a Hollywood producer for the murder of a young starlet. An intricate blend of biography, fiction, and suspense, this literary thriller offers a hair-raising portrait of one of crime fiction's most notorious true-life figures—and a brutal satire of the entertainment industry in the tradition of *The Day of the Locust*.

As the novel opens, the aging writer is at the end of his string—a habitué of Hollywood bars and endless drinking sessions at the Musso & Frank Grill. Here he is approached by a small-time producer, Billy Miracle, with an offer to work on a project designed to resurrect the career of a fading screen star.

Thompson accepts, and soon finds himself at the center of a lurid triangle, inadvertently following a trail that leads from a dead starlet—found strangled in the back of a Cadillac—to the doorstep of one of the most powerful men in Hollywood.

Set in the seamy back streets of Los Angeles, in 1972, *Manifesto for the Dead* tells the story of legendary crime writer Jim Thompson in his darkest hour. It is a book about desire and lust, about a writer struggling with illusion, disillusion and fate on the back lots of Hollywood. But the *Manifesto* is also a novel-within-a-novel, telling two stories that intertwine—one set in Hollywood, the other in Thompson's imagination—each rushing headlong into the other, into that area where fact and fiction are no longer distinguishable, and the darkness is inseparable from the light.

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