



# You're Not Dead (The Midnight Books) (Volume 1)

*Geoff Ward*

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Geoff Ward's glitteringly funny and scary novel sends his hero Miles on a wild pursuit, through this world and the next, of one of only three known copies of the rarest book in existence. Like the object of his obsessive quest, *You're Not Dead* is both supreme fiction and grail, a one-off exemplar of a lost original. – **John Ashbery**, winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry, the National Book Award, and the National Book Critics Circle Award.

*You're Not Dead* is a darkly comic fantasy, with elements of romance. The hero Miles Proctor is a young college lecturer, on the trail of the last remaining copy of a notorious Victorian book. *Transmutations: The Book of Magic* is an occult treatise, which claims to be not merely about Magic, but about how to perform spells and become adept at enchantment.

A series of hilarious accidents takes Miles to New York, California and Death Valley before he finally locates it. By this time he has begun a romance with Becky Morrell, bookseller and co-traveller. On reading the book Miles finds that it has the property of appearing to change its words, each time it is read. He develops his own occult skills, including the ability to alter events, and to travel to the destinations pictured in photographs by focussing on the photograph.

However a presence from beyond, a murderous (if comic) Glaswegian gangster trapped in limbo, begins to invade his consciousness in search of the book as a means to escaping his own twilight zone. Miles' adventures lead him back into the past and the mysteries of his father's double life. Miles has joined a coven of magicians in London who discover that he is working more for himself than for the benefit of their capers, which include the quest for an ancient amulet with the power to buy time, but even as they attempt revenge the group comes explosively apart. Weighing in on Miles' side are a number of supernatural presences, including the ghost of legendary bluesman Robert Johnson, but the story still has many surprises in store. Things are not always what they seem, in the worlds of either white or black magic – especially when Miles' magic manual starts to work in unexpected ways..

*You're Not Dead* is the first of the Midnight Books, in which magic, dreams, romance and crime are the ingredients in the fictional spell.

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