



# The Business of Death

*Trent Jamieson*

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## **The Business of Death** Trent Jamieson

Steven de Selby has a hangover. Bright lights, loud noise, and lots of exercise are the last thing he wants. But that's exactly what he gets when someone starts shooting at him.

Steven is no stranger to death - Mr. D's his boss after all - but when a dead girl saves him from sharing her fate, he finds himself on the wrong end of the barrel. His job is to guide the restless dead to the underworld but now his clients are his own colleagues, friends, and family.

Mr. D's gone missing and with no one in charge, the dead start to rise, the living are hunted, and the whole city teeters on the brink of a regional apocalypse - unless Steven can shake his hangover, not fall for the dead girl, and find out what happened to his boss - that is, Death himself.

THE BUSINESS OF DEATH includes the first two volumes of the Death Works trilogy, Death Most Definite and Managing Death, as well as the third volume.

## **The Business of Death Details**

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Author : Trent Jamieson

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# **From Reader Review The Business of Death for online ebook**

## **S.B. Wright says**

I have a special affection for The Death Works series. It was Trent's books that got me into this book reviewing gig. A fact for which my gratitude swings dependant on the books I get sent.

But seriously it's been a pleasure reading the series and getting to the end.

## **Clearing things up**

To clear up any confusion, the Death Works series was originally released as a trilogy, I reviewed the first two books earlier thisyear (Death most Definite and Managing Death).

Business of Death was to be the title of the third book. But to my knowledge it was never released as a single volume. Instead Orbit decided to release the third and final book in the series as part of a Omnibus edition(including the other two novels). Business of Death became the title for the Omnibus as well as the title of the third instalment.

## **The Story continues...**

At the end of Managing Death, Stephen De Selby ended up being the Orcus, the 13 Regional Managers in one. He held the Hungry Death within him and managed to finish off his nemesis Rillman. Now he hears the heartbeat of the world, feels each of the departed souls that his minions pomp.

But this is Stephen we are talking about and he's got that lackadaisical, "avoid the uncomfortable part of the job until the last minute" thing going. If he wasn't trying to avoid asking Lissa to marry him I fear nothing would get done.

But things need to be done, hell is beginning to freeze over, the Stirrer god is coming - now appearing in the sky as a blazing comet. If this wasn't enough he's pissed off the Death of the Water. To say things are looking bleak is an understatement.

Ultimately Stephen grows up and begins directing action rather than letting circumstance dictate it. It's a heroic ending and like all heroic endings infused with some tragedy.

## **What I enjoyed...**

Stephen's growth as a character. From loser to reluctant participant to world saving demi god. I really did think he'd come of age by the end of the book. I also liked and was frustrated by his relationship with Lissa. I had to refrain from yelling at the character to just "ask her already".

I appreciated the subtle referencing and remixing of myth and legend- Charon building an Ark. There was a distinct impression that the events in the book had all happened before, that echoes had reverberated down through history. I felt centred me as a reader while still being treated to a fresh and original backdrop.

## **What I didn't...**

I didn't enjoy the ending, it was perfectly executed though. I just wanted it to end differently (an old romantic at heart). The ending is what made the story more dark/urban fantasy than paranormal for me.

## **Recommendations**

I heartily recommend the whole trilogy to anyone who wants to read some fast paced, original, Australian flavoured urban fantasy. I found the book to be visually enticing and think it would translate well to television. Jamieson manages to deliver something that is both mile-a-minute and morbidly evocative.

This copy was provided to me at no cost by the publisher.

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## **Jason says**

4 Stars

The Business of Death by Trent Jamieson is a very uneven conclusion to a really fun trilogy. This book starts off with a big mistake in that you can only read it in the omnibus format. Hmm, buy all three books again. What? So after I got over that fact and started reading this one, I was taken aback by the drawn out rehashing of the first two books. It was so slow and redundant and long...why?

OK, after that, it starts the conclusion with some interesting twists. Steven as Death with Mog and Wal are simply too cool. I thoroughly enjoyed where the Stirrer God story line was going. The book has a lot of

action that brings everything to a head.

Jamieson has created a fun series In a genre that I truly love.

Highly recommend...

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### **S.G. says**

4.5 stars.

Trent manages to balance humour with darkness in his Death Works books. Great pacing, an awesome read.

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### **Jo Trelfa says**

Awesome trilogy

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### **Yolanda Sfetsos says**

This edition actually contains the three books in the *Death Works* trilogy. I've already read DEATH MOST DEFINITE and MANAGING DEATH. So I was looking forward to reading the third book, THE BUSINESS OF DEATH.

Steven de Selby's life is very complicated. He's Death, which means dealing with a very dark power from within, the Hungry Death. There's also the Stirrer god very close to breaching our world. And the Death of the Water is also very angry with Steven and wants revenge.

That's a lot for one man to deal with, but he has no choice. Of course, there are other distractions. Like never finding the right time to ask Lissa to marry him. Or finding out that an old enemy has returned and is determined to make sure the approaching Stirrer god is unleashed...

*The Business of Death* is another thrilling ride, with Steven in the driver's seat. He makes one hard decision after another and although he sometimes doesn't believe in himself, he always pulls through. Even when he's got no choice but to lead the Poms into war. Also, his decisions in this installment lead to some very unhappy--yet self-sacrificing--consequences, but the story was action-packed and the conclusion is heartbreaking.

I *really* enjoyed this book. But can't help but wonder if there'll be more Steven de Selby adventures in the future...

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### **Kristin says**

What the hell?!

So I purchased the first two books separately and now I'm expected to pay \$16 for an omnibus if I want to read the third and final book?

Nice try, but I don't think so. This is one series that I loved but won't finish unless I can get the third book by itself, though it doesn't seem like that's going to be happening. If I had known they'd be doing this, I would've just waited for *The Business of Death* instead of buying the first two books.

Thanks Orbit!

10/23/13

Un. Fucking. Real. Review will *definitely* follow.

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### **Shelley Nolan says**

I really enjoyed this series. I liked Steven and Lissa and the host of other characters. Each book kept me wondering how Steven was going to get out of the mess he landed in and it kept me hooked page by page. Now that its finished, I want more. Not ready to say goodbye to the intriguing story world Jamieson created and the refreshing take on Death.

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### **Fangs for the Fantasy says**

Steve is the last RM – he is the Orcus. He is Hungry Death. He is not just the head of Death, but the very embodiment of it.

And the end of the world is looming closer – a monstrous creature of the void is looming not just in the underworld but in the real world as well. The apocalypse is nigh

Unless Steven can stop it. Which means getting himself together and his life in order and finally working with Lissa and Tim and acting like the head of the Orcus.

Oh, and trying to make peace with the Death of Water who is not happy with Steven, not happy at all.

We have an interesting development in Steve's character – I've complained before that he didn't seem to do anything in the second book except mope and drink. I can understand why he did because he went through a lot – but then so did everyone else, and there's Lissa and Tim moving mountains to keep everything together while he... mopes until the big power and plan lands on him.

And this book? We have some consequences of that. He's still woefully ignorant of his abilities and his dodging that has left him with regrettable gaps in his skills and knowledge – which costs him until he gets himself together and starts working. More, he has lost the respect of many people and, because of who he is, that in turn has reduced people's morale and faith in him. No-one has a lot of confidence in a boss and world

saviour who spends all day drinking and whining without doing anything. Now Lissa and Tim? The other Ankous from around the world deeply respect them – but Steve, the Hungry Death himself, is tolerated because he didn't get up and get things done. Winning their respect, rebuilding that confidence and turning himself around. I appreciate that – a character who has flaws that he then has to pay for is something I can respect.

Though I do think he recovered from his alcoholism awfully quickly part of that is down to being Hungry Death himself and the wonderful intervention of the death of the sea which was pretty major.

So it's nice that there was some attempt to address that Steve was a pretty useless article the last book. And that was coupled with some excellent conflicted morality over what he's done and what he's become – as well as Lissa and Tim not being patient saints around him. I have a little frustration that I kind of want a book in the middle. Steven is useless last book. He gets called out and sorts his stuff out in the book after. Then in the last book Steven would be running around all epic and awesome and totally kick arse even if he is against an overwhelming force. And we never really got that last bit.

This isn't just my shallow love for all things epic – and don't get me wrong, Steve does pull a level of epic here – but the fact that Steve is the complete avatar of Earthly death just didn't seem to mean anything. Especially since there's a scene where Steven truly seems to master himself and what he has become – and that sets you up. I read that and think “oh yeah, now it begins...” And it didn't. Sure he fought and he was powerful but it was... lacking the oomph. It's like if Zeus came down from Olympus and carved a hole through the enemy with a big sword – it doesn't matter how epic a fighter he is, part of me is always going to ask “where's the damn thunderbolts?” There were no thunderbolts. And the scythe of death was just... a scythe. He was a great hero – but was he Hungry Death?

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### **Thannia says**

The book was not boring, but I didn't like it so I left it halfway, maybe I'm too old for Young Adult :/

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### **Juliet says**

So the first in this series took a bit to get into and for me that really was the peak of the series as a whole. Book 2 skims along where you think the protagonist, Steven de Selby is gonna actually get his shit together but for the rest of the series he doesn't. I found through books 2 and 3 I was hoping for him to actually man up and do something but ultimately it is a huge disappointment and rather dull. If I wanted to waste my time reading about mediocrity there are a bunch of real people I could waste my time with. Part of the frustration is that since Steven de Selby knows nothing, you the reader knows nothing too. The catch is that as the reader you want to know and keep reading thinking maybe Steven does too but he doesn't so the story itself is flat and dull. The vaguely interesting thing is Steven's relationship with Lissa, though I am not sure why she bothered. The only redeeming portion of the final book is when Steven says goodbye to Lissa but even then I was glad we would finally be done with him mucking things up.

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## Alexandra says

I really enjoyed the first of the Deathworks trilogy, *Death Most Definite*. I was more lukewarm towards the second, *Managing Death*, but I got a bit more excited about this final instalment. Mostly, it must be said, because of the ending, which I have no intention of spoiling here. It should be taken for granted that there are spoilers for the first two books in this little review.

*The Business of Death* opens with Steve having the entire Hungry Death inside of him, and as the only Regional Manager left alive. Plus the Stirrer God is getting closer. Oh, and Steve took some deaths that weren't rightfully his but the Death of the Water's, so now that ancient being is also pissed at him. Oh yes, this is going to be a great few weeks in the offices of Mortmax.

This is absolutely a final book in a trilogy. I don't imagine it would make much sense by itself, it ties together all sorts of loose ends, generally in interesting ways, and there are only one or two minor new things introduced. It sees the important relationships change towards a generally better place - misunderstandings cleared up, differences resolved or accepted. And some more of the history of Mortmax, and the business of death, is revealed, filling in a few more gaps to interesting effect.

I grew pretty apathetic towards Steve in the second book. He was just a bit too much of an anti-hero, a bit too whingy and a rather annoying slacker. He improves here. He still whinges a bit, but he takes action when it is necessary - sometimes even before the world is threatening to collapse around his ears! (/snark)

Look, overall it's a really clever trilogy, as a take on Death and how it might work. Plus, set in Brisbane! Not many sf novels set in Brisbane, friends.

OK, I do want to say something about the conclusion... (view spoiler)

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## Mike says

The ultimate horror, a thing that seeks not only your death but to consume your soul. Reaming your most essential essence that makes you who you are. It draws ever closer. Everything that Steven de Selby has faced in just a few months won't make a difference.

As our story winds to a close, Steven has nigh ultimate power. Even so, the approaching deity has even more. Steven was given a tremendous ace in the hole in the last novel and yet, the problems that he must face are almost more than he can bear. The darkness is coming and Steve must rally the troops and lead them against an unstoppable force.

His world is spirally into unreality and yet the real worries on his mind are whether or not to propose. To some this might seem like your standard paranormal romance pablum. On the contrary, Steve doesn't waste



time analyzing his feelings for Lissa or hers for him. In light of everything they've been through, they are sure of their love for one another so the "normal" paranormal romance rules don't really apply here. Steve's worries are more adult. He worries more about responsibility, a growing dependence on alcohol and his job.

This is a dark and gritty series. Jamieson pulls it off much better than others writing today. The darkness doesn't revolve around Steve's determination to be darker or edgier or to do whatever it takes no matter who it hurts. Part of it has to do with Steve being offered up as a sacrificial lamb and instead of living down to the expectations of slackerdom that his family and co-workers had of him, he learns and grows and lives up to the demands of his ever-growing responsibilities.

(view spoiler)

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## **Lauren K says**

This review was first posted at The Australian Bookshelf

The conclusion to the trilogy continues with the adventures of Steven de Selby, the regional director (a.k.a Death) of all poms in Australia who help those who die move into the afterlife. Once again Lissa and Steven are at each other's throats in a love/ hate relationship. Lissa is dedicated to the company and Steven always needs a little push and motivation to fulfil the role he was assigned to manage.

I was surprised by the ending, a little proud at the lengths that Steven went to for Lissa but also disappointed by how the series ended.

The Death Works Trilogy is a great read for urban fantasy fans who want an intelligent spin and interesting characters in an Aussie setting.

3/5 rating

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## **Ami says**

My first reaction when I finished this one was muttering to myself, *"I hate you Trent Jamieson, I hate you for making me cry with the ending"*

This is the last book of The Death Works Trilogy. Over the course of two books, I fall in love with Steven de Selby, because I think he is different from other male protagonists in urban fantasies that I have read so far. I always see him as a slacker, and even in book #2, I write in my opinion that he comes as a bit incompetent (he seems to need a lot of help from others, especially his girlfriend Lissa, and his cousin Tim). I remember he drinks much in the beginning of the series. But he has a kind heart and I find him endearing; his humor is

never sarcastic but feels more down to earth, like this, for example ...

*When you decide to do something, you're better off just doing it. That was my mum's philosophy. Mine was, and still is: think about it, procrastinate, check email, post a couple of witty tweets, check email, check hair in the mirror by my filing cabinet, consider filing, consider employing someone to do my filing, see if anyone's relationship status has changed on Facebook ... (Chapter 6)*

I mean, that is so what most of us usually do, right??

Anyway, in this book, with the End of Days coming, as the Stirrer God approaches and threat to wipe away all lives, in addition to an ancient entity, The Death of Water, is pissed at Steven because he pumped 150 lives of plane crash that were supposed to be dead in the water (in book #2), the first thing that come in the book is that Steven is thinking to propose to Lissa. I mean, what-the, right?? But that is how I love him so. He is still human -- he has the loving heart, he refuses to let his Ankous make sacrifice for him, in order to stop the End of Days. In the end, Steven is doing his best -- he makes a deal with Death of Water and he is able to send back the Stirrer god ((view spoiler)).

Then comes the end ... oh, God, how bittersweet. I admit that I take a peek because, that's what I do, I'm a peeker. Still, even if I know how the ending is, it doesn't stop my tears from flowing HARD when I reach those final chapters. (view spoiler)).

It's a wonderful ride (even with the tears that I shed). It's refreshing to have a great urban fantasy series from Down Under. So, thank you for the trilogy, Mr. Jamieson. Now, excuse me while I'm being mellow ...

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## **Michelle says**

I hate you and love you at the same time. I had the same reaction with your books that I would have had if Patrk Rothfuss decided to end his series like yours, and with books that are as long as all three of yours put together. And can I just say, the model on the cover? H. O. T. Looking back, I have decided that it is nice to think that someone can always step up and become a great leader, even if they were a lazy, mokey, alcoholic before. I don't know, I can't really find the words to do this story justice. It's not as complex or long-winded as Rothfuss's, and it's not as dense and arrogant as Simon R. Green's Nightside. It's beautiful in its simplicity. It's just a guy doing what he has to. I'm still not finding words, and wow, how hormonal and emotional am I right now? Loved it. That's all. Loved it.

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