



Nobody's Home: An Anubis Gates Story

Tim Powers , J.K. Potter (Illustrations)

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For the first time in his esteemed career, Tim Powers returns to the setting (and a central character) from his landmark time travel novel, *The Anubis Gates*.

Tracking the murderer of her fiancée through 19th century London's darkest warrens, Jacky Snapp has disguised herself as a boy -- but the disguise fails when, trying to save a girl from the ghost of her jealous husband, Jacky finds that she has made herself visible to the ghosts that cluster around the Thames. And one of them is the ghost of her fiancée, who was poisoned and physically transformed by his murderer but unwittingly shot dead by Jacky herself.

Jacky and the girl she rescued, united in the need to banish their pursuing ghosts, learn that their only hope is to flee upriver to the barge known as Nobody's Home -- where the exorcist whose name is Nobody charges an intolerable price.

Nobody's Home: An Anubis Gates Story Details

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From Reader Review Nobody's Home: An Anubis Gates Story for online ebook

Audrey says

Tim Powers builds these wonderfully inventive "secret histories," and every single one of them just leaves me marveling at all the strange and wonderful and creepy ways just a couple of little events can create change in the world as we know it. His writing is always atmospheric with excellent characters -- my only complaint about this one was that it was too short (well, that, and the fact that it's been a long long time since I've read Anubis Gates, which means a rereading would have been helpful, just to ground me in this world again -- but that's my issue, not the novel's.)

Seawood says

Worth seeking out the original tale on the strength of this spin-off. Lovely universe.

Andrew says

So I finally managed to get my hands on this book after hearing that Tim Powers had finally decided to pen a story from the world of The Anubis Gates - one of my all time favourite books. So as you can imagine I instantly set out to get a copy of it to see what it was all about.

That was till I saw the price of it new for a book that is under 100 pages long. Now I will resist the urge to go on about how expensive Subterranean books are for the pages they contain or how difficult they are to buy in this country (to be honest I have some books from this publisher which are amazing just this I struggled to justify). So then the book went on to - maybe one day when I can afford it.

Well it seemed my luck was in (as compared to the Ghost in the shell artwork book but thats a story for another review) and I managed to get hold of a withdrawn from circulation ex-library book. So after a little TLC and the help of a few tools from work I have a near perfect edition and I love it.

Well the book at least- now adhering to my self imposed rule over no spoilers I will not go in to the story beyond what is given from the introduction on the cover. This is a story about Jackey one of the pivotal characters from the Anubis gates but set sometime before the book so you can already start to guess what will happen or not. Also you have the presence of ghosts - something that really was not referred to in the Anubis gates but sure okay they had their own problems to deal with. But I think where I really struggled is now those ghosts function - if you have read any of the fault lines stories you will see the start of similarities - now again I do not have a problem with this just are we seeing here the start of a possible drawing together the of the stories.

Okay maybe I am reading too much in to this very short hard back book - but what I will say is that it didn't feel like an Anubis Gates story apart from some throw away references which to me felt like there were there to just anchor the story. Now I know I am being overly critical of this story but I so love the Anubis gates so anything that is connected to it will have to be the upmost quality and I think subconsciously that is why I

struggled with it.

Now there are some amazing books from Tim Powers and I know he has more stories to tell I guess for me I am just glad I waited for the right moment to read this story.

Karl says

Way back in 1983 Tim Powers wrote a book titled "The Anubs Gate" which won the Philip K. Dick Award in 1983. that novel contained a minor character named Jacky. Apparently a moustachioed young beggar, Jacky is actually a woman from a noble family who has taken a new identity to search for Dog-Face Joe, who switched bodies with her fiancé and caused her to kill him.

For those who enjoyed his novel, this small novella continues Jacky's story.

The book is illustrated by artist J.K Potter throughout the book and provided a beautiful dust jacket.

The book was printed in three versions. Trade, signed limited and numbered, and signed lettered. I read the trade and do not know if the other versions of this book have additional materials.

Eero says

This was part of a Humble Bundle. I expected it to be a longer, more substantial piece, although I knew it wouldn't be a full novel. To read something by Tim Powers is to be in a state of confusion, even when the piece is a short story set in the world of a previous novel. There are ghosts, and ways of dealing with ghosts: one must avoid leaving footprints, and ghosts can be sent to purgatory by playing a kind of hopscotch in certain places. And smashing spectacles against a certain stone apparently has some effect. Even this short story is filled with weird tiny bizarre details that hint at a world with rules and structures that are not spelled out. This creates a kind of pleasant irritation. I think he is just making stuff up as he goes, and the details don't really add up to anything, but it is frustrating fun to try to figure things out, even if there is nothing to figure out, really.

Now I kind of want to reread The Anubis Gates, but there are tons of other books I have not read yet. There is not enough time to read all the books I want.

L.A. says

A wisp of a ghost story, here and gone in a puff of smoke.

Jacky Snapp is hunting the man who killed her fiance. Because it's 19th century London, she's dressed as a man and hanging around some pretty unsavory alleyways. When her quest brings her into direct contact with another woman in similar straits, their quest becomes a common one: putting their respective ghosts to rest. Nobody can help them, so it's a good thing Nobody lives on a river barge nearby. For a small price, he can solve their problems permanently...even though Jacky's not sure that's exactly what she wants.

It's complicated. It's also short, sweet, and most appealing to folks who already know from Tim Powers. For that reason, while it's an entertaining little tale, it's an optional purchase for most collections. Then again, it could be a nice point of entry into Powers' universe, so if you've got the funds and the room, you could pick it up and see what happens (just make sure you have enough backlist and read-alikes to give the folks who gobble this up and want more ASAP). Recommended for fans of historical fantasy, especially Victorian.

Sandy says

Tim Powers' fourth novel, "The Anubis Gates," was such a perfectly crafted, fully self-contained work that I doubt very much if any of his legion of fans could have reasonably expected a sequel. Released originally in 1983, the book has gone on to become a classic of sorts in both the "steampunk" and "secret histories" fantasy subgenres, deservedly earning itself both the Philip K. Dick Award and a pride of place in Jones & Newman's "Horror: 100 Best Books." Showcasing Powers' gift of seemingly limitless imagination combined with a staggering amount of historical research, the novel was a true dazzler; as I enthused after my initial read, its "way-out plot manages to conflate the brainwashed 'ka' of Lord Byron, a body-hopping werewolf, an underground criminal society headed by a deformed clown on stilts, a plucky young vengeance-seeking woman disguised as a man, Egyptian gods, 4" high 'Spoonsize Boys,' fire and wind elementals, the Mameluke slaughter of 1811, a menagerie of freaks, the Beatles (!) and on and on." But as I said, the novel wrapped up so perfectly, after almost 400 pages, that no one could have possibly expected more.

Well, there is some good news now and some bad news. The good news: After 31 years, Powers has finally come out, not with a sequel, but rather a prequel to his beloved work! The bad news: The prequel in question, "Nobody's Home," is so brief that I'm not even sure it qualifies as a novella. At around 80 large-print pages, including artwork, I would qualify Powers' work here as more of a longish short story...and whether a short story is worth Subterranean Press' somewhat hefty cover price for the limited hardback edition I leave to your own judgment. (It will probably be released later on Kindle for a fraction of the hardback's price.) I CAN tell you that the story here, which most readers should easily be able to devour in a single sitting, is a pretty darn good one, although ultimately the reader comes away with the feeling that this is just a footnote to a much greater work; a short, slight afterthought, as it were.

This time around, the tale centers on that vengeance-seeking woman disguised as a man, Jacky Snapp, who readers will recall actually bears the name Elizabeth Tichy; Professor Brendan Doyle, the original's central, time-traveling character, is perforce not even mentioned here. As in "The Anubis Gates," this story takes place in the London of 1810, and shortly prior to the events of the larger book. Jacky, in search of Dog-Face Joe, the body-hopping werewolf who had murdered her fiancé, Colin, here encounters a young woman named Harriet, who is being haunted and harassed by the ghost of her Indian husband. After Jacky rescues Harriet from a flaming spectral attack, it seems that Colin's spirit is somehow awoken, too, and so the pair of young women betake themselves to the Thames barge known as Nobody's Home, where the mysterious Nobody is said to work wonders at expelling spirits. But can this unusual personage assist the two desperate ladies before their exes' ghosts catch up with them?

And that, as they say, is about it. While "The Anubis Gates" featured a story line that was astounding in its complexity, its prequel reads almost like a very simple, straightforward fairy tale. Short as it is, it fails to leave much of an impact on the reader, but is at least fast moving and colorful. The slimness of the tale does not allow for the inclusion of the wealth of historical detail that made "The Anubis Gates" so utterly convincing, and yet, Powers does get to show off SOME obscure bits of London arcana, including references to the London Stone, Thorney Island, the Tyburn and King Canute. Besides Jacky, the only character here

who would also feature in "The Anubis Gates" is Skate, the legless beggar, although both Captain Jack and Horrabin (the deformed clown on stilts) are given passing references, and the backstory of Dog-Face Joe is naturally discussed. "Nobody's Home" is basically just one long night, one supernatural incident that takes place during Jacky's quest for vengeance, and I for one could have done with three or four more such Jacky stories; THAT would have made for one especially fine collection!

Tim Powers is a compelling writer, of course, Jacky/Elizabeth is a fascinating and likable character, and the supernatural and phantasmagorical London that is the backdrop for these tales is a terrific one. Ultimately, perhaps the single best thing about "Nobody's Home" is that it serves as a reminder of just what a wonderful read "The Anubis Gates" had been, effortlessly re-creating the milieu of that earlier masterpiece. Powers' prequel isn't a patch on that great work, but it is a fun and undemanding diversion, at least, and, oh, those marvelous pieces of art supplied by J.K. Potter! (Just wait until you get a gander at the picture of Nobody at "full inflation"!) Taken together, Powers' story and Potter's artwork make for one very cute little package; a perfect souvenir/present for yourself or for the Powers fan in your life. But like Jacky, who at one point swings her fist at that Indian ghost only to encounter empty air, I suppose that I was just hoping for something a little more...substantial.

(By the way, this review originally appeared on the Fantasy Literature website, an excellent destination for all fans of Tim Powers: <http://www.fantasyliterature.com/> .)

Thomas says

FACT: The Anubis Gates is one of my favorite novels. I recommend it to folks who haven't read Powers before when I think they might like his style.

FACT: I read The Anubis Gates over fifteen years ago. I have little recollection of the story other than some key points and scenes, and the feeling of having a hell of a good time with it.

FACT: Nobody's Home follows one of the characters from The Anubis Gates, Jacky Snapp.

FACT: Powers tells evocative stories, even when he's writing short works. Nobody's Home is no exception to the rule.

The problem is that this novella (short story, really; this book is 85 pages long, and counting all pages from the title page forward, with full-page illustrations and wide margins) has little to do with anything that happened in The Anubis Gates. Sure, the character and her tie with that story have a lot to do with her motivations here, but the action and plot have nothing to do with any of those events. There's no real continuation to that story (as there shouldn't be; The Anubis Gates isn't a story that requires a sequel), so I wonder why it's marketed so heavily as part of that universe.

I don't mind authors publishing novellas, nor do I mind them linking later stories to earlier ones. What I do mind is authors blatantly connecting a story to an earlier work when it could have just as easily been about new characters without losing anything in the telling. It feels too much like an attempt to cash in as opposed to writing a good story, so it's hard to stay positive about reading such a disappointing story. Nobody's Home is a decent enough story of the supernatural that's ruined by its forced connection to The Anubis Gates.

Dean Peake says

This is an excellent short story by one of my all time favorite authors. Tim Powers is master at the "dark, smokey, paranormal with historical characters and surprising twists" genre. My only regret with this book is that it would have been awesome as a full length novel. It is a follow up to his outstanding (and my favorite time travel story of all time), "Anubis Gates". It is a stand alone story with just enough reference to the original story to keep the reader checking their memory of the original. Highly recommended.

Michael says

I'll admit up front that this isn't my kind of story. But I do like to read different genres. From reading reviews about Mr. Powers others books, I found that this novella is part of "The Anubis Gates" series. This story revolves around Jacky and Harriet as they deal with the ghosts of loved ones. They seek assistance from a person known as Nobody. They have unpredictable outcomes. Powers is descriptive in his writing and the story moves along at a good pace. I recommend this novel for those who enjoy paranormal/dystopian stories.

Joel Neff says

Excellent adventure on the streets of a London populated by ghosts, hunters, creatures, and a young woman set on revenge. The atmosphere is gothic without being overwhelmingly dark, the world fully realized, and the characters interesting. Good stuff.

Moudry says

My copy is 209/474 signed, numbered, & leather bound in slipcase edition that doesn't show up via an ISBN search. More Powers magic to be read slowly, the better to enjoy.

Pedro Marroquín says

Muy bien escrito relato que en realidad es una precuela a Las Puertas de Anubis. Precuela porque sale un personaje del libro, y mencionan a varios mas. La historia transcurre en una noche londinense donde dos mujeres se unen para deshacerse de su novio/marido fantasma que las persigue. Y para ello van a ver al señor Nadie, que vive en un barco en el Tamesis. Muy corto relato que no tiene la profundidad del libro, pero que se lee en un rato y te deja con buen sabor de boca. Aunque me hubiese gustado que fuese más largo, o que hubiese metido algún relato mas.

John says

Just a quickie, but an atmospheric London ghost story with a good degree of squickitude and several bizarre

photoshopped illustrations as a bonus.

Fantasy Literature says

3 stars from Sandy: <http://www.fantasyliterature.com/revi...>
