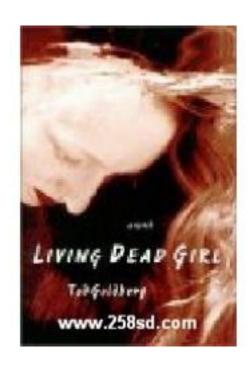
Living Dead Girl



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From Publishers Weekly Goldberg's second novel (after 2000's Fake Liar Cheat) comes within a spit-and-a-holler of success but, alas, it's short on spit and overlong on holler. The tale could be glibly described as Hitchcockian, but it has more of the feel and texture of a European film one that takes its audience from obscurity to obfuscation without apology and closes with an abiding chill. Thankfully, unlike a European film, the author makes everything clear by the end. Paul Luden, a professor of anthropology, and his adoring wife, Molly, had a child they worshipped. They bought a cabin on Granite Lake in Washington state and were prepared to live a bucolic existence. But a serpent in their Eden first killed their daughter, then drove them to the brink of madness. Both feeling responsible for their daughter's death, they separated. Later, Paul is back on his feet and is dating a

19-year-old student, Ginny, who, like his estranged wife, loves him enough to make him crazy. When he receives a call from a friend that Molly has disappeared from their place at the lake, he returns to the cabin and to a blizzard of bad memories about the death of their child and the breakup of their marriage. The reader, like Paul, soon wonders if Paul has actually killed Molly in the midst of some kind of fugue fit. While this is engrossing and atmospheric stuff, it is too painfully drawn out. That said, Goldberg shows plenty of promise and may yet become a leading suspense writer. Agent, Jennie Dunham. (May 20)Miramax.Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal When narrator Paul Luden travels to his isolated summer lake house with his 19-year-old girlfriend, he discovers that his estranged wife has apparently gone missing. Because Paul has a suspect history (his daughter died at the house under strange circumstances), he is arrested. Paul subsequently unravels mentally, his relationship breaks up, he falls into self-destructive trances, and he ultimately discovers the truth about his wife. The author of Fake Liar Cheat has produced an evocative read full of seductive prose, sharply focused characters, and a microcosmic world fraught with human sadness. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. See all Editorial Reviews

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