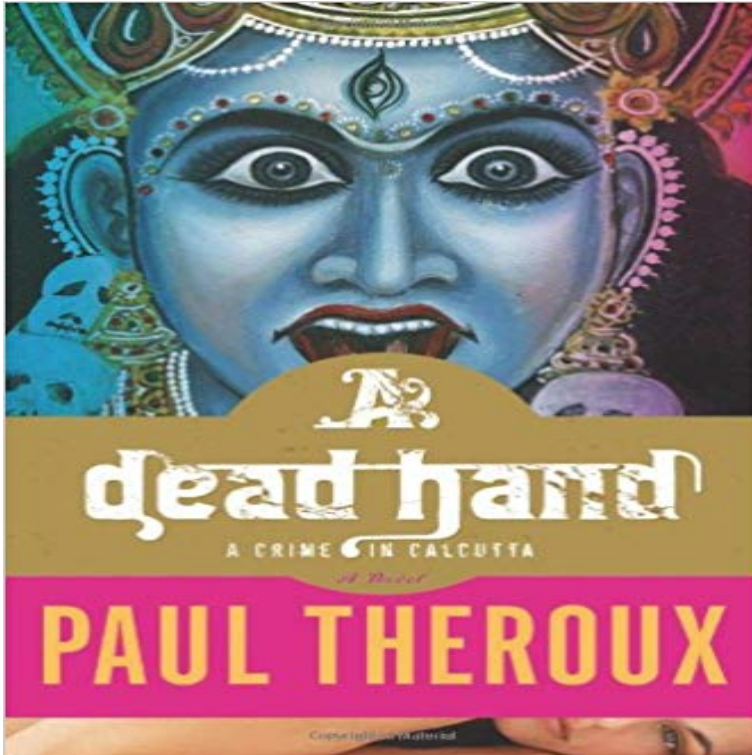


A Dead Hand: A Crime in Calcutta



Jerry Delfont leads an aimless life in Calcutta, struggling in vain against his writers block, or dead hand, and flitting around the edges of a half-hearted romance. Then he receives a mysterious letter asking for his help. The story it tells is disturbing: A dead boy found on the floor of a cheap hotel, a seemingly innocent man in flight and fearing for reputation as well as his life. Before long, Delfont finds himself lured into the company of the letters author, the wealthy and charming Merrill Unger, and is intrigued enough to pursue both the mystery and the woman. A devotee of the goddess Kali, Unger introduces Delfont to a strange underworld where tantric sex and religious fervor lead to obsession, philanthropy and exploitation walk hand in hand, and, unless he can act in time, violence against the most vulnerable in society goes unnoticed and unpunished. An atmospheric and masterful thriller from the most gifted, the most prodigal writer of his generation (Jonathan Raban).

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