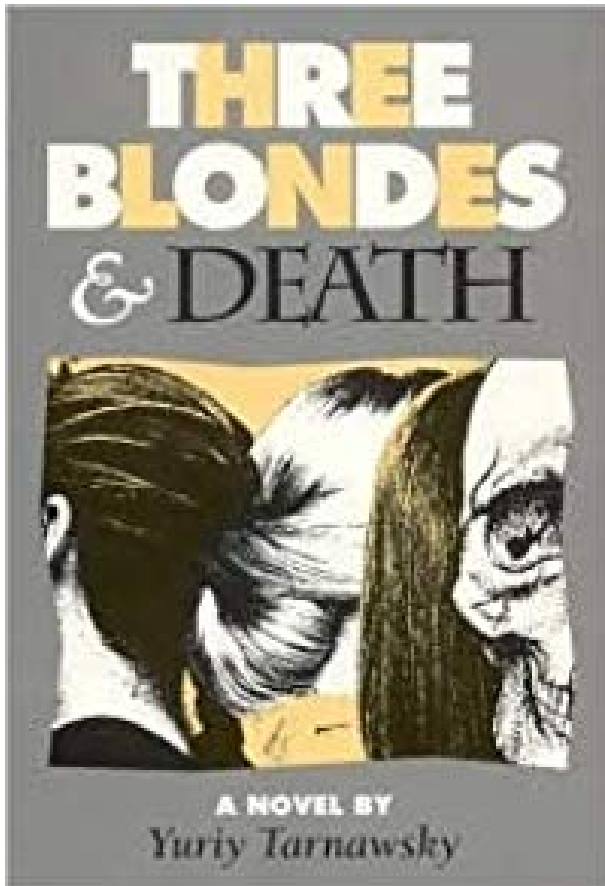


Three Blondes and Death



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| Author: | Yuriy Tarnawsky |
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Based on a complex mathematical scheme that the author, a computer scientist and linguist, developed as a substitute for the traditional architecture of a novel, and written in a deliberately sparse and structured syntax that ruthly compartmentalizes reality, *Three Blondes and Death* is an hermetic and hypnotic treatment of the classic themes of love and death. Its strange protagonist, with the literally unspeakable name Hwbrgdtsse, searches for meaning in life through the three women with whom he successively falls in love. He finds, however, only life's absurdity, ending in death—a death to which his quest eventually reconciles him. *Three Blondes and Death* takes place in an ambiguous time and geography that turn out to be present-day America. The relations between the protagonist and the objects of his love are totally perverse and destructive; the texture of their lives is deceptively simple but implies a dark and undecipherable complexity; and the angst of mortality hangs over every gesture. A lunatic simplicity governs the behavior of Hwbrgdtsse, which enables him to face issues of love and death more directly than is usually the case with romantic heroes. Tarnawsky's third work of fiction is unusually readable, even magnetic, once we are drawn in by its hypnotic repetitions.

The logical clarity of its style contrasts with the irrational, often dreamlike content.

The action is stark and at the same time mysterious.

Whether the strange sensibility that suffuses this story can be traced to the mathematically rigorous mind of its author, or to his Ukrainian roots, or to his multilingual background, *Three Blondes and Death* is an intriguing and unique work.