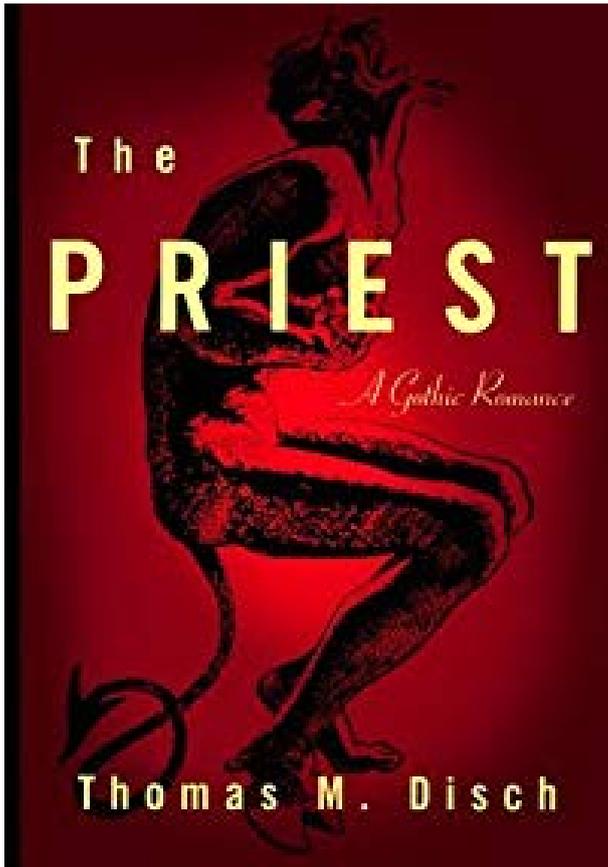


# The Priest



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<b>ISBN10:</b>	0679418806
<b>Author:</b>	Thomas M. Disch
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Since his work first began to appear in the early 1960s, Thomas Disch has proven himself, again and again, to be one of the most prodigiously talented novelist/playwright/poets of our time. In Newsweek he was saluted by Walter Clemons as "the most formidably gifted unfamous American writer." But in 1991, with the publication of *The M.D.*, Disch's remarkably various gifts converged in a horror novel that propelled him into the mainstream even as it remade the genre in its own startling image.

Now, in *The Priest*, Disch gives us an even more potent, darkly hypnotic, and fiendishly comic novel - a gothic romance like no other. At the center: Father Patrick Bryce, a Catholic priest with a present-day Minneapolis parish - and a pedophile past. He's spent time at a church-run retreat for priests of his persuasion and returned "rehabilitated": even better equipped to keep his vice active and hidden.

Until the blackmail begins. It comes from three different sources (his own bishop being one), and each tops the next in imaginative proposals: Father Pat must head a militant (and probably illegal) anti-abortion campaign; Father Pat must apologize to each of his victims, face-to-face; Father Pat must read, and be ready to discuss, the work of a bizarre cult science fiction writer, and get the face of Satan tattooed on his chest. But the blackmailers and their demands are the least of Father Pat's problems. More dire is his increasingly incontrovertible sense that the nightmares in which he has been leading the life of a thirteenth-century bishop

are not dreams at all. And that the Church, rife with corruption and scandal in both eras, is the only realistic sanctuary for him and his doppelganger, Bishop Silvanus de Roquefort, as they move - at once separately and together - through their own centuries-spanning maze of soul-killing horrors toward a distinctly hellish destiny. The astonishments, mayhem, and villainy they encounter along the way come brilliantly to life in an ee