

The book cover features a stylized, hand-drawn illustration of a room. At the top, red and gold curtains are pulled back to reveal a light green wall. The title is written in large, bold, blue-outlined letters. Below the title is a decorative border. The main scene is set in a room with purple walls and a wooden floor. A bright pink spotlight shines down on a crystal ball resting on a small, ornate stand. To the left of the crystal ball is a dark, ornate table with a lit candle. To the right is a large, stylized figure of a person in a dark robe, possibly a wizard or a ghost, holding a staff. The overall style is whimsical and mysterious.

IF YOU'RE READING THIS, IT'S TOO LATE

CAUTION:
READ AT YOUR
OWN RISK!

pseudonymous bosch

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF
THE NAME OF THIS BOOK IS SECRET



graveyard at night.

On a mountainside. By a lake.

Our vision is blurred. Rain falls in sheets around us.

Everywhere there is water. Dripping. Dripping.

A strange song starts to play. It sounds far away, yet impossibly close.

Like the singing of fairies or sylphs.

Like the ringing of a thousand tiny voices inside our ears.

Above us, a crow flaps its wings against the rain and, screeching, disappears into the dark.

Lightning briefly illuminates the tombstones at our feet, but they are so old that no trace of name or date remains. They are no longer grave markers; they are just rocks.

What lies beneath is a mystery.

A mouse scurries between the stones, frantic. As if he's trying to get out of a maze. A deadly trap.

Soon he is joined by others of his kind. They swim against a tide of mud. Clawing at each other in their desperate attempt to escape.

Automatically, we look in the direction they are running from. There is a burial mound with a broken tombstone on top. Its jagged edge silhouetted as lightning strikes a second time.

The strange, eerie song wafts through the wind — 17
until it is drowned out by a crack of thunder.

As we watch, the broken stone topples — and lands
with a thud in the mud. A gaping hole is left in the
ground. Clods of dirt erupt. A mud volcano.

First one hand, then another — both very, very
large — emerge out of the hole, grasping at the mud to
find a hold.

And then: a nose.

At least, we think it's a nose; it could be a cauli-
flower —

"Cassandra . . . !"

We look down. A lone, stranded mouse is calling to
us — as if from a great distance.

"Get up, Cass — it's late!"

He sounds oddly like our mother —

Shivering, Cass lifted her head off her pillow.

She was a member of a dangerous secret society
now, the Terces Society, she reminded herself. Or
she would be soon. She couldn't let a little dream
scare her.

What had Pietro, the old magician, said in his
letter? That once she and Max-Ernest had sworn the
Oath of Terces, they would "face the hazards and the

18 hardships." And that they must "obey all the orders without the questions."*

If she couldn't face her own dreams, how could she face real enemies like Dr. L and Ms. Mauvais? Like the Masters of the Midnight Sun.

Even so, the strange song lingered in her mind, haunting her.

Again.

Each night a different dream. But always the same song.

Why?

"Cassandra!"

Her mother was calling up to her from downstairs. Cass couldn't hear every word but she knew what her mother was saying:

Get up – it's late! I'm off to work (. . . or to yoga . . . or to a meeting). There's oatmeal on the stove (. . . or granola on the counter . . . or a waffle in the toaster). Don't forget you have your math quiz (. . . or book report . . . or oboe lesson). Love you!

*IF YOU'VE NEVER SEEN THE LETTER, I RECOMMEND YOU READ IT YOURSELF. IT WAS WRITTEN IN CODE AND SIGNED P.B. PIETRO BERGAMO. CASS AND HER FRIEND MAX-ERNEST FOUND IT ETCHED ON A FOGGY WINDOW. BUT YOU WILL FIND IT AT THE END OF THE LAST CHAPTER OF MY FIRST BOOK, *CASS AND MAX-ERNEST AND THE SECRET OF THE ROTTEN EGG SMELL*, OR WHATEVER IT'S CALLED. WHETHER YOU READ THE WHOLE BOOK FIRST (WHICH IS THE HONORABLE THING TO DO) OR JUST SKIP TO THE LETTER AND THEN PUT THE BOOK BACK ON THE SHELF (WHICH IS BASICALLY LIKE STEALING) IS UP TO YOU.

BEWARE!

DANGEROUS SECRETS LIE BETWEEN THE PAGES OF THIS BOOK.

OK, I warned you. But if you think I'll give anything away, or tell you that this is the sequel to my first literary endeavor, *The Name of This Book Is Secret*, you're wrong.

I'm not going to remind you of our heroes, Cass and Max-Ernest, or the ongoing fight against the evil Dr. L and Ms. Mauvais. I certainly won't be telling you about the nefarious Lord Pharaoh, or how the kids stumble upon the Museum of Magic, where they finally meet the amazing Pietro!

Oh, blast! I've done it again. I really can't help myself, now can I? Let's face it—if you're reading this, it's too late.

READ ALL THE BOOKS IN THE SECRET SERIES!



*The Name of This
Book Is Secret*

#1



*If You're Reading
This, It's Too Late*

#2



*This Book Is Not
Good for You*

#3



*This Isn't What
It Looks Like*

#4

\$6.99 \$7.99 in Canada

ISBN 018-0-376-11368-7



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"Fans of Lemony Snicket...
will enjoy this slightly more
fleshed-out read."

—*School Library Journal*

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