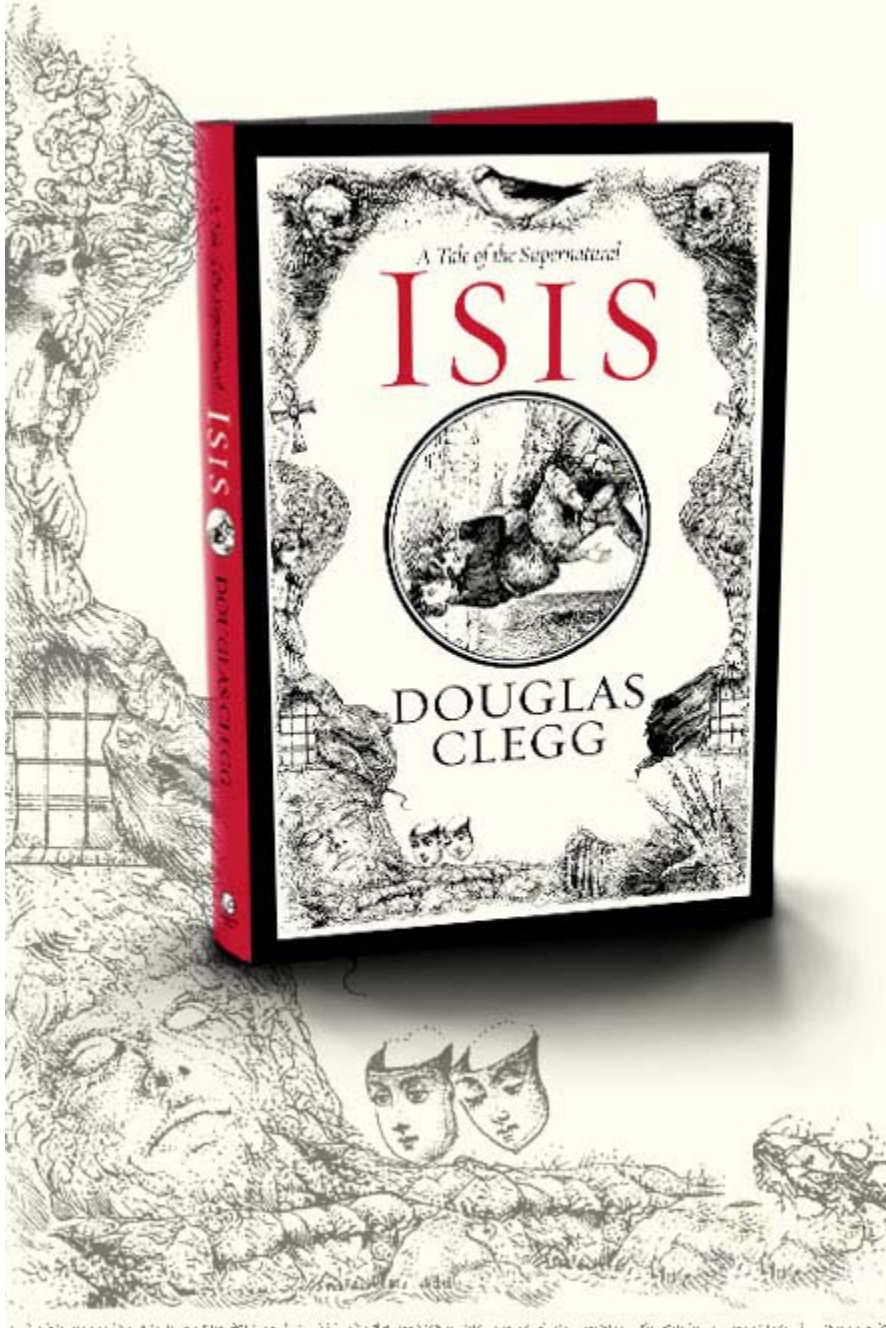


*A Tale of the Supernatural*

# ISIS

DOUGLAS  
CLEGG

**A Supernatural Excerpt from the Book**



## **BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU WISH FOR...**

*New York Times*  
bestselling author  
Douglas Clegg brings us  
[ISIS](#), a beautifully  
illustrated, unforgettable  
novella that is sure to  
become a classic tale of  
the supernatural.

**If you lost  
someone you  
loved,  
what would  
you pay  
to bring them  
back from the  
dead?**

This is a special excerpt from *Isis* by Douglas Clegg, with illustrations by award-winning illustrator, Glenn Chadbourne. It is a supernatural excerpt because it is haunted by the spirit of Isis herself.

See if you can find her hiding here...

*Isis* falls into bookstores by September 29, 2009 -- don't miss what has already been called "haunting beauty of a tale as chilling and dark as the shadows on an October night."\*

Print this ebook out, pass it around, re-post it, email it to friends.  
*Isis will haunt you, if you don't.*

## **Buy the Book:**

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## About the Book

*New York Times* bestselling author Douglas Clegg brings us [\*Isis\*](#), a beautifully illustrated, unforgettable novella that is sure to become a classic tale of the supernatural.

If you lost someone you loved, what would you pay to bring them back from the dead?

Old Marsh, the gardener at Belerion Hall, warned the Villiers girl about the old ruins along the seacliffs. “Never go in, miss. Never say a prayer at its door. If you are angry, do not seek revenge by the Laughing Maiden stone, or at the threshold of the Tombs. There be those who listen for oaths and vows.... What may be said in innocence and ire becomes flesh and blood in such places.”

She was born Iris Catherine Villiers. She became Isis.

From childhood until her sixteenth year, Iris Villiers wandered the stone-hedged gardens and the steep cliffs along the coast of Cornwall near her ancestral home. Surrounded by the stern judgments of her grandfather—the Gray Minister—and the taunts of her cruel governess, Iris finds solace in her beloved older brother who has always protected her. But when a tragic accident occurs from the ledge of an open window, Iris discovers that she possesses the ability to speak to the dead...

Be careful what you wish for.

"Clegg is the best horror writer of the post-Stephen King generation."

—Bentley Little, author of *His Father's Son*

## About the Author

**Douglas Clegg** is the *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Priest of Blood*, *Afterlife*, and *The Hour Before Dark*, among other novels. His short story collection, *The Machinery of Night*, won a Shocker Award, and his first collection, *The Nightmare Chronicles*, won both the Bram Stoker Award and the International Horror Guild Award. He lives with his husband, Raul, in New England, with a small menagerie of rescued animals.

Visit Douglas Clegg at [www.DouglasClegg.com](http://www.DouglasClegg.com)  
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## About the Artist

**Glenn Chadbourne** is an award-winning editorial cartoonist for *The Lincoln County News* (Maine) as well as a muralist and painter. In addition to *Isis*, he's illustrated Stephen King's *Secretary of Dreams* and *Colorado Kid*, as well as created the logo character "Doug E Graves" for King's rock 'n roll radio station, WKIT. Chadbourne's creation was featured in the movie *The Mist*. He lives on the coast of Maine. You can find out more at his website at [www.GlennChadbourne.com](http://www.GlennChadbourne.com)

## **Take Action Now -- Isis Awaits**

[Get the Book](#) - Read the ultimate Halloween tale of the year, with unforgettable illustrations by Glenn Chadbourne.

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[Get your Isis Avatar](#) - Watch Isis fall, see Isis walk, learn about the undead soldiers...and choose your avatar.



## **Excerpt from Isis by Douglas Clegg**

-- 1 --

“Beware a field hedged with stones,” our gardener, Old Marsh, told me in his smoky voice with its Cornish inflections, as he pointed to the land near the cliff. “See here? The hedge holds in. Will not let out. Things lurk about places like that. Unseen things.”

A house, I suppose, is a stone-hedged field.

A tomb, as well.

The place where the stone-hedges ended, as they grew round our house and the gardens, was an old cave entrance that had been turned into a mausoleum beneath the ground, carved out for centuries for the bones of my ancestors.

-- 2 --

The locals called it the Tombs, although it was much more than merely a series of subterranean burial chambers. It had been carved from rock by the local miners for some early Villiers ancestor and had been used just two years before my birth, when my grandmother had died. Her coffin was sealed up in granite and plaster within the Tombs, and there were spaces for other Villiers to come. My mother made me swear that I would never allow her to be buried there. “I don’t like that place,” she told me. “It’s cold and horrible and primitive. Put me in a churchyard with a proper marker. Do you promise me?” Certain that her death was years away, I promised her whatever she asked. I coaxed a smile from her when I demanded that upon my own death, she have the ragman cart me away to the rubbish pile.

What lay below the Tombs had once been a sacred site to the Cornish people, more than a thousand years earlier. It had been a cave, leading down the cliff-side through a series of narrow passages out to sea. It was believed to be an entrance to the Otherworld—the Isle of Apples, it was sometimes called—where a stag-god and a crescent-moon mother goddess ruled.

There had been a legend, once, of a Maiden of Sorrow, who had traveled deep in the earth to the Isle of Apples to find her lover who had died a terrible death in a distant battle. When she had returned, she brought him with her and held his hand as they emerged from the winding caves into the sunlight. But when others saw the couple, they cried out in terror—for her lover’s eyes were black as pitch, and he had no mouth upon his face, just a seal of flesh as if he had not formed completely upon his journey back to the land of the living. The villagers knew he was not meant to be among them, yet the Maiden would not allow him to return to the earth. The legend went that the Maiden lived with him there at the edge of the sea, but he could not speak, nor did his eyes return to life, nor could anyone look him in the eye, lest they be driven mad from seeing the Otherworld reflected in his glance.

When someone in the nearby village was near death, the Maiden's lover would appear at their doorway and seek entrance, as if trying to find his way back to his soul, which had remained on the other side.

There was also a large round granite stone in the field at the edge of the sunken garden, not ten paces from the Tombs. Called the Laughing Maiden, it was believed that once in early times of the Christians, another maiden went out and laughed at the priest on Sabbath day and was turned to stone there.

I went to this stone as a girl with our gardener, who believed all the old tales. Old Marsh was thought of as the local color—the crackpot old-wives-tale man of the earth who believed all the old stories and would walk backward around a graveyard to avoid upsetting the dead. He had been known to plant sheep-nettle at the stables when one of the horses had gotten sick, “to keep out bewitchments,” he'd say quite proudly. He knew a story for every stone, every fountain, every plant, and every tree at Belerion Hall. Old Marsh took it all seriously, and he warned me against upsetting spirits by changing the old gardens too much. “They like their flowers as they like them,” he said when I had been uprooting the weed-like milk thistle. “Bad luck to do that, for the saying goes, ‘Set free the thistle and hear the devil whistle.’”

At the Tombs, he gave me the most serious advice. “Never go in, miss. Never say a prayer at its door. If you are angry, do not seek revenge by the Laughing Maiden stone, or at the threshold of the Tombs. There be those who listen for oaths and vows, and them that takes it quite to heart. What may be said in innocence and ire becomes flesh and blood should it be uttered in such places.”

I looked upon the rock chamber with its small double doorways and its chains and lock, a ruins more than a mausoleum, sunken into the grassy earth with a view of the wide gray sea beyond it, and remembered such stories.

I did not intend ever to cross its threshold.



Illustration by Glenn Chadbourne, from *Isis* by Douglas Clegg, in bookstores Sept. 29, 2009

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## Early Praise for *Isis*

“ . . . a triumph . . . builds to a gripping finale.”

—*Publishers Weekly*

"Douglas Clegg knows the power of a ghostly whisper in the ear. In *Isis*, he creates a subtle yet scary spectral story; no screams are necessary....It doesn't shout to shock; it merely masterfully murmurs." -- *Hellnotes*

“‘Never sleep there, for the dead enter your dreams.’ Those frightening words froze me to the page. And when *Isis* dares to open the doors to the Tombs, I knew the dark legends and terrors of this book would stay in my dreams for a long, long time.”

—R.L. Stine, author of the bestselling *Goosebumps* series

\*"Douglas Clegg's *Isis* is a haunting beauty of a tale as chilling and dark as the shadows on an October night."

—Christine Feehan, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Murder Game*

“...a literary work for the ages. This story is Clegg at his absolute best. . . . lovely and powerful and profound. . . . a story that will live on for decades”

—*Cemetery Dance*

## Praise for Douglas Clegg

“Clegg's stories can chill the spine so effectively that the reader should keep paramedics on standby.”

—Dean Koontz

"Douglas Clegg has become the new star in horror fiction."  
—Peter Straub author of *Lost Boy*, *Lost Girl* and the *New York Times*  
Bestseller *Black House*

"Clegg approaches horror with a stark and vital simplicity that is utterly convincing. Fans of Stephen King and Dean Koontz will appreciate this atmospheric gem."  
—*Library Journal*

"Clegg is the best horror writer of the post-Stephen King generation."  
—Bentley Little, author of *The Policy*

"Clegg delivers!"  
—John Saul, bestselling author of *Faces of Fear* and *The Devil's Labyrinth*

"A master of the genre. Absolutely thrilling! Douglas Clegg is the future of dark fantasy."  
—Sherrilyn Kenyon, *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Dark-Hunters*

"Clegg is one of the best!"  
—Richard Laymon, author of *Savage*

"Clegg gets high marks on the terror scale."  
—*New York Daily News*

"Douglas Clegg is a weaver of nightmares!"  
—Robert R. McCammon, author of *The Queen of Bedlam* and *Speaks The Nightbird*



## **Discover Isis**

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**Let Isis haunt others.**