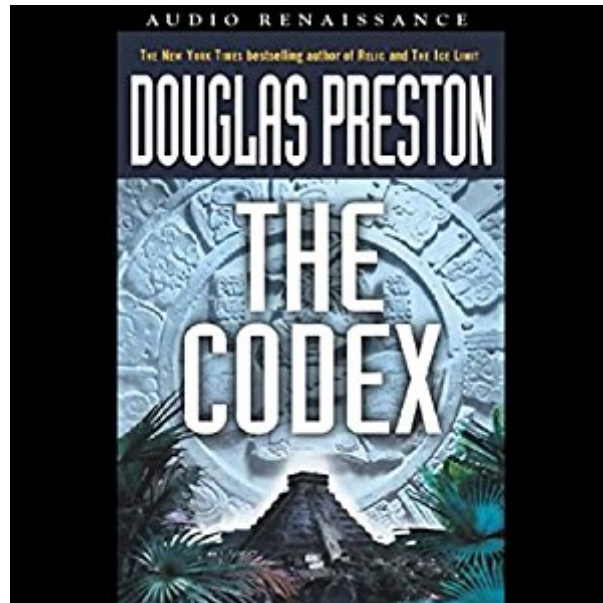


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The Codex



Synopsis

A New York Times Bestselling AuthorA notorious treasure hunter and tomb robber, Maxwell Broadbent accumulated over a half billion dollars' worth of priceless art, gems, and artifacts before vanishing - along with his entire collection. At first, robbery is suspected, but the truth proves far stranger: As a final challenge to his three sons, Broadbent has buried himself and his treasure somewhere in the world, hidden away like an ancient Egyptian pharaoh. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 6 hours and 39 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Abridged

Publisher: Macmillan Audio

Audible.com Release Date: January 15, 2004

Language: English

ASIN: B0001DBHOE

Best Sellers Rank: #13 in Books > History > Ancient Civilizations > Mayan #7927 in Books > Mystery, Thriller & Suspense > Thrillers & Suspense > Suspense #21112 in Books > Audible Audiobooks

Customer Reviews

As a team, Douglas Preston and Lincoln Child have produced some great thrillers. And it turns out that their solo efforts are every bit as fast-paced and exciting. Max Broadbent, who is dying of cancer, leaves a videotape to his three sons announcing that he has buried himself and his half-billion dollar art and antiquities collection in a tomb in an undisclosed location. If the sons want their inheritance, they must track down the tomb. This begins a long treasure hunt through the jungles and rain forests of Honduras. The title refers to a codex, a Mayan compendium of plant pharmacology that becomes the most hotly contested object of the treasure hunt. The story line switches between the separate treasure hunting parties and the pharmaceutical company executive who desperately needs the codex to keep his company from going bankrupt. The action converges in a final showdown over the treasure. This story has vivid descriptions of the jungle and its dangers. There are so many exotic natives, battles between man and beast, chases, narrow escapes, and ancient ruins that it resembles an Indiana Jones film. In fact, the story is perfectly

suited to become a movie. The premise of this story might be far-fetched, but stay with it and you will be rewarded with a grand adventure, full of danger, treachery and surprises. I recommend this novel for those who enjoy pure escapism and armchair travel to exotic places. Eileen Rieback

After a business meeting ended earlier than expected and not finding any earlier flights out of Dallas, I was facing an eight-hour wait in the airport. I spent some time eating in one of the restaurants there, but after that there wasn't much else to do. Luckily I had this book with me! Time flew by while I was immersed in the story that took me through the jungle in Honduras. Maxwell Broadbent summons his three sons to his house to talk about their inheritance because he is a dying victim of cancer and has a collection of art and jewels worth half a billion dollars. When Phil, Tom and Vernon get there they find no sign of their father or of the valuable collection. What they do find is a video in which Max explains that he has done a bad job as a father and that as a result his kids have no goals other than wait for their inheritance. Therefore, he has sealed himself in a tomb somewhere in the world with his collection and his sons will have to find him if they want their inheritance. This is supposed to teach them independence, the value of work, self-reliance and how to take care of each other. From this point on, a race that involves the brothers, the police officers that were in the house investigating the "theft" and Maxwell's previous partner in treasure hunting. The participants in the quest soon find out that one of the items in the collection is a Mayan Codex that contains the secrets resulting from centuries of experimenting with plants and animals found in the jungle. The value of this work is priceless, especially for pharmaceutical companies, which spend millions in research and development. The situation starts getting more and more dangerous as all these elements come into play and the fast-paced action will grab you and not let go until the end. This story has it almost all, action, suspense, love, dismay, hope, betrayal and even humor! The only weak point I found is that the author was careless in some Spanish expressions he used throughout the book. For example he uses "Veinte cuatros" instead of "Veinticuatros" or "Buenos tardes" instead of "Buenas tardes". Anyway, this is a very minor issue and the book is really great. The reason why I gave the book four stars instead of five is that the story line is not very original. However, if I were you I would not hesitate to give this book a try!

I'm a big Preston/Childs fan. But after successive reads of Lincoln Child's "Utopia", and Douglas Preston's "The Codex", it's becoming clear that these two do much better as a team than when going solo. While "Utopia" had its moments (and even gets a cameo in "Codex"!), Preston's implausible "Codex" falls short on virtually all counts. In a nutshell, "Codex" is the story of an

eccentric father, who, dying of cancer, decides to bury with him a fortune in rare art he has collected over a lifetime. The catch is that his choice of a burial spot is his secret, leaving it to his three insufferable sons to locate and claim their inheritance. It goes downhill from there. The brothers are chronically whining about the injustice of "father's" scheme, while reminding the reader every page or so what a rotten childhood they had. About the time this banal sibling chatter becomes unbearable, Preston subjects the reader to a steady stream of pidgin English from one of the natives in the jungle in which the boys inevitably end up ("Thankee, brother. We talkee later". I'm not making this up). Preston throws in the standard love interest - blond, brainy, handy with a horse and rifle, and initially while hard to get, there are no surprises to where this "Laura Croft" will end up. Stashed away with "father's" treasure is the lost Mayan Codex, the document that will unlock the mysteries behind all diseases human. Right. So while the boys and girl are running around the Central American jungles looking for the lost tomb and its Codex, the stereotypical evil CEO - in the case from a pharmaceutical giant - has his even more evil henchman chasing them through the swamps. In summary, a silly plot, cardboard characters that still manage to annoy, and lame dialogue, and a predictable ending add up to a pretty disappointing read. Skip this one, and save your time and money for (hopefully) a rebound when Preston and Childs team up again for this summer's "Brimstone".

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