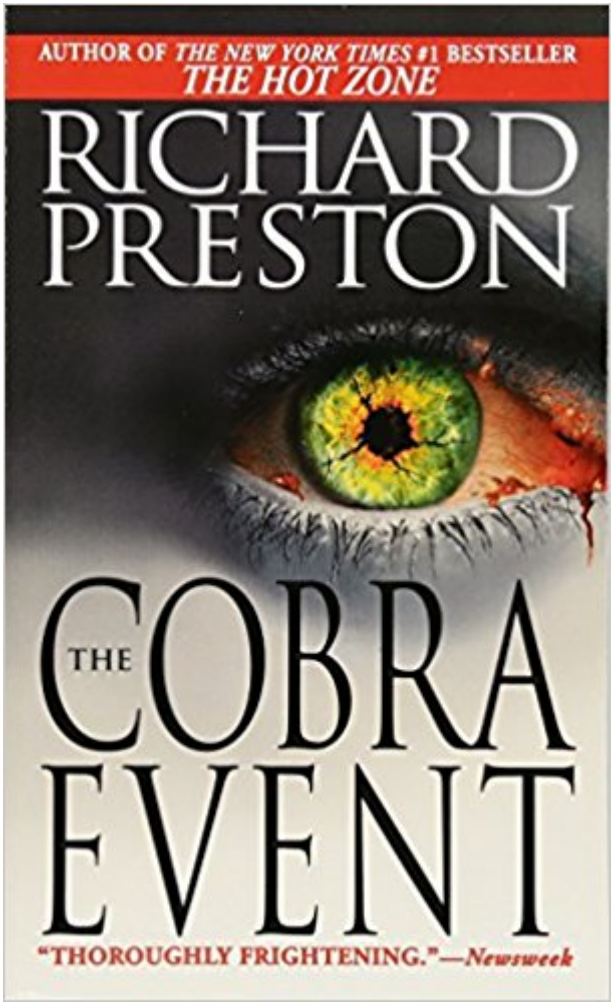
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The Cobra Event



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Synopsis

"A PAGE-TURNER . . . THOROUGHLY FRIGHTENING."--Newsweek"ENORMOUSLY ENTERTAINING."--The New York Times Book Review"THIS BOOK SCARED THE LIVING DAYLIGHTS OUT OF ME. . . . Manages to grab you with the authenticity of its scientific detective work and haunt you with its sheer plausibility."--Entertainment WeeklyFive days ago, a homeless man on a subway platform died in agony as startled commuters looked on. Yesterday, a teenager started having violent, uncontrollable spasms in art class. Within minutes, she too was dead.Dr. Alice Austen is a medical pathologist at the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta. What she knows is that the two deaths are connected. What she fears is that they are only the beginning. . . .

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In New York City in the late ’90s, a 17-year-old girl heads off to her private school even though she has a cold. By art class her nose is gushing mucus and she’s severely disoriented. Within seconds, it seems, she’s in convulsions and, most bizarrely, can’t stop biting herself. All the reader can do is hope she’ll die quickly, but Kate Moran’s body still has a few more disgusting turns to undergo, and Richard Preston--a Jacobean master of ceremonies par excellence--takes us through them in bizarre and bloody detail. Clearly, whatever Kate had was a head cold with a scientific vengeance. Preston’s heroine, Alice Austen, a doctor with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, realizes--in the first of several gripping autopsy scenes--that the girl’s nervous system had been virtually destroyed. So far, only one other person is known to have died in the same way, but he was

a homeless man. Austen must connect the two cases, seemingly linked only by the subway, before the media gets hold of them and drums up a paranoia-fest--and before the virus's creator can kill again. The Cobra Event is itself a paranoia-fest, a provocative thriller that makes you wonder exactly how much bioterrorism is taking place in the real world. Preston, best known for his terrifying chronicle of the Ebola virus, The Hot Zone, and other impeccably researched nonfictions, is not content to create fast-paced nightmarish scenes. His novel is instead a complex morality tale anchored in uncomfortable fact. Preston is keen to convey the "invisible history" of bioweapons engineering and, equally, to show the unsung heroism of his scientific detectives (along with that of the nurses and technicians who literally sacrifice their lives for medicine). Like their creator, these characters are not without a sense of humor. One calls the manmade virus "the ultimate head cold." Readers will never forget literally dozens of scenes and will never again see the subway, rodents, autopsy knives, and--above all--runny noses in the same light. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

YA?What happens when one crazed scientist takes it upon himself to develop and release a new biological weapon that will "thin out" the human race? A doctor working for the Centers for Disease Control first notices some strange evidence in a young girl's death. Soon other bodies are arriving at the morgue in similar condition. The police, the FBI, and national medical and science personnel become involved in trying to get to the bottom of the deadly disease that is attacking New York City. Though the details in this novel are fictional, they are based on the history of biological weapons and the advanced genetic engineering and biotechnology that is available today. Despite the use of potentially confusing technical terms, the story line is easy to follow and fast paced. Sections of the narrative that sideline into history and worldwide political events are not crucial to the plot and may be skipped over. Realistically rendered characters hold center stage. The symptoms described in this story are frightening, and often presented in morbidly graphic detail. Fans of the horror genre are bound to enjoy this one.?Anita Short, W. T. Woodson High School, Fairfax, VACopyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

I LOVED the Hot Zone. Brilliant work that was beautifully well-written. It was a nonfiction that read like a novel. Unfortunately, this is fiction that reads like nonfiction which is not so good. Flat characters, stilted diolague, and way to much detail. I now feel as if I could actually preform an autopsy, if I needed to. Pages and pages of detailed description on just about everything and then a jarring jump back to the storyline. It felt as if the book couldn't decide what to be. You keep having to

switch back and fourth; is this a story now, or is this a dissertation on the many subjects that Mr Preston obviously has extensive knowledge. Fascinating and terrifying subject that, in this case, would have been better served as nonfiction.

I loved the Hot Zone. Tight writing, non fiction, with a scary message. I've heard the author speak, at the NIH, and was impressed. Finally decided to read The Cobra Event - a quick read, easy to follow, with what felt like facts interspersed - frightening ones, if true. But the writing was so stilted - a cascade of short declarative sentences that really started annoying me early in the book and bothered me the whole way through. Disappointing.

I suggested this book for my club thinking it would be a great beach book. It was exactly that. Fast-paced, easy reading, but still thought provoking. Definitely not "mind-candy." I devoured it with the same enthusiasm as last summer's book, "Gone Girl." In fact, I saw many parallels between the two, not least the illustration of the frightening amount of damage that one individual can inflict upon the lives of others. Fortunately for the vast majority of humanity who are not sociopaths, circumstances very rarely converge as they do for the antagonists of both of these novels, bestowing them with brilliance and insatiable neediness and immorality and blind ambition and vast amounts of idle time.The novel begins with the grisly death of a seventeen-year-old girl in Manhattan. Cause of death is determined to be due to a pathogen of unknown origin. Similar deaths follow, which sets us on the course of a "bio-investigation" (for lack of a better word) which in turn becomes a full-scale operation including the FBI, NYPD, CDC and NSA. There is much historical and scientific information given by way of backstory, sometimes a little awkwardly. While the book itself is fiction, the science and history upon which it is based are accurate, making it that much more alarming.Preston is a Science Journalist by profession, not a novelist. This is evident in the style of the work. It can be awkward, as stated above, maybe even a little cheesy...not Dan Brown cringe-inducingly bad, just not crisp. In spite this, there are some passages that are brilliant, almost poetic. These are always in his descriptions of forces of nature, which clearly evoke passion in the writer.Bottom line: a fun (well, as much fun as gruesome illness can be), exciting trip to the world of forensic pathology. Club meeting should include other guilty pleasures such as cheap Chianti, Velveeta dip and raw cookie dough (c'mon, we all love it.)

Frighteningly real. Will haunt you for a long time afterward. In fact-checking many events, research is "spot on". Exploring the internet and clicking on wikipedia re the subject matter I saw images I

wish I had never seen, as those images will be seared into your brain and you'll see why biological warfare is far worse than a nuclear option. Author's previous book "The Hot Zone" was a true story and I heard that it may be a mini-series sometime in the future on the FOX network (some 20 years after the book was published).

Great book. To have been written in 98-99, and then look at what is going on today with CRISPR-Cas9, succesfull DNA/RNA edits, and research into forms of writing executable 'code' to DNA, it'll scare you a bit. Must read for any Bio-Hackers. At times can go into some gruesome details.

If you want to read about a horror that has potential to become true....This is it. If this book scared Clinton into having the Secret Service look into the chance of this happening, it'll scare the pants off of you.Honestly, this is quite a frightening book, and very well written by Richard Preston.I am a huge fan of his other books as well! I highly recommend this book if you like mystery, action, and a virus that kills on contact.

A fast paced ride based in science and so believable that anyone reading this book could not escape the conclusion that it could happen at anytime. Biological terrorism is a demon that hangs over the our world today. It's only a matter of time.

Highly recommended author. The medical research is done very well and good description of what an outbreak could entail

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