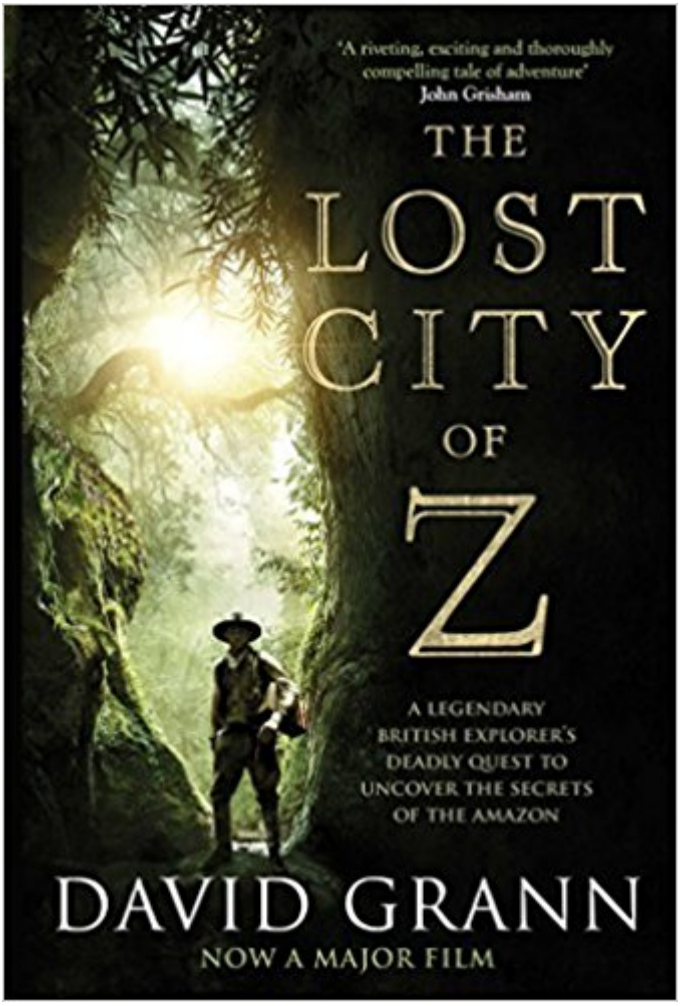
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The Lost City Of Z: A Legendary British Explorer's Deadly Quest To Uncover The Secrets Of The



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Synopsis

NOW A MAJOR FILM STARRING ROBERT PATTINSON, CHARLIE HUNNAM AND SIENNA MILLER`A riveting, exciting and thoroughly compelling tale of adventure'JOHN GRISHAMThe story of Colonel Percy Harrison Fawcett, the inspiration behind Conan Doyle's The Lost World Fawcett was among the last of a legendary breed of British explorers. For years he explored the and came to believe that its jungle concealed a large, complex civilization, like El Dorado. Obsessed with its discovery, he christened it the City of Z. In 1925, Fawcett headed into the wilderness with his son Jack, vowing to make history. They vanished without a trace. For the next eighty years, hordes of explorers plunged into the jungle, trying to find evidence of Fawcett's party or Z. Some died from disease and starvation; others simply disappeared. In this spellbinding true tale of lethal obsession, David Grann retraces the footsteps of Fawcett and his followers as he unravels one of the greatest mysteries of exploration. `A wonderful story of a lost age of heroic exploration' Sunday Times `Marvellous ... An engrossing book whose protagonist could out-think Indiana Jones' Daily Telegraph`The best story in the world, told perfectly' Evening Standard `A fascinating and brilliant book' Malcolm Gladwell

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Customer Reviews

Exclusive: John Grisham Reviews The Lost City of Z Since first publishing A Time to Kill in 1988, John Grisham has written twenty novels and one work of nonfiction, The Innocent Man. His second novel, The Firm, spent 47 weeks on the New York Times bestseller list, becoming the bestselling novel of 1991. The success of The Pelican Brief, which hit number one on the New York Times

bestseller list, and The Client, which debuted at number one, confirmed Grisham's reputation as the master of the legal thriller. His most recent novel, The Associate, was published in January 2009. Read his exclusive guest review of The Lost City of Z: In April of 1925, a legendary British explorer named Percy Fawcett launched his final expedition into the depths of the in Brazil. His destination was the lost city of El Dorado, the Ã¢â ¬Å“City of Gold,Ã¢â ¬Â• an ancient kingdom of great sophistication, architecture, and culture that, for some reason, had vanished. The idea of El Dorado had captivated anthropologists, adventurers, and scientists for 400 years, though there was no evidence it ever existed. Hundreds of expeditions had gone looking for it. Thousands of men had perished in the jungles searching for it. Fawcett himself had barely survived several previous expeditions and was more determined than ever to find the lost city with its streets and temples of gold. The world was watching. Fawcett, the last of the great Victorian adventurers, was financed by the Royal Geographical Society in London, the worldÃ¢â ¬â„¢s foremost repository of research gathered by explorers. Fawcett, then age 57, had proclaimed for decades his belief in the City of Z, as he had nicknamed it. His writings, speeches, and exploits had captured the imagination of millions, and reports of his last expedition were front page news. His expeditionary force consisted of three men--himself, his 21-year-old son Jack, and one of JackÃ¢â ¬â„¢s friends. Fawcett believed that only a small group had any chance of surviving the horrors of the . He had seen large forces decimated by malaria, insects, snakes, poison darts, starvation, and insanity. He knew better. He and his two companions would travel light, carry their own supplies, eat off the land, pose no threat to the natives, and endure months of hardship in their search for the Lost City of Z. They were never seen again. FawcettÃ¢â ¬â„¢s daily dispatches trickled to a stop. Months passed with no word. Because he had survived several similar forays into the , his family and friends considered him to be near super-human. As before, they expected Fawcett to stumble out of the jungle, bearded and emaciated and announcing some fantastic discovery. It did not happen. Over the years, the search for Fawcett became more alluring than the search for El Dorado itself. Rescue efforts, from the serious to the farcical, materialized in the years that followed, and hundreds of others lost their lives in the search. Rewards were posted. Psychics were brought in by the family. Articles and books were written. For decades the legend of Percy Fawcett refused to die. The great mystery of what happened to Fawcett has never been solved, perhaps until now. In 2004, author David Grann discovered the story while researching another one. Soon, like hundreds before him, he became obsessed with the legend of the colorful adventurer and his baffling disappearance. Grann, a lifelong New Yorker with an admitted aversion to camping and mountain climbing, a lousy sense of direction, and an affinity for take-out food and air conditioning, soon found himself in the

jungles of the . What he found there, some 80 years after FawcettÃ¢â ¬â„¢s disappearance, is a startling conclusion to this absorbing narrative. The Lost City of Z is a riveting, exciting and thoroughly compelling tale of adventure. (Photo Ã Â© Maki Galimberti) A Q&A with Author David Grann Question: When did you first stumble upon the story of Percy Fawcett and his search for an ancient civilization in the Ã¢â ¬â •and when did you realize this particular story had you in Ã¢â ¬Å“the gripÃ¢â ¬Â•? David Grann: While I was researching a story on the mysterious death of the worldÃ¢â ¬â„¢s greatest Sherlock Holmes expert, I came upon a reference to FawcettÃ¢â ¬â„¢s role in inspiring Arthur Conan DoyleÃ¢â ¬â„¢s novel The Lost World. Curious, I plugged FawcettÃ¢â ¬â„¢s name into a newspaper database and was amazed by the headlines that appeared, including Ã¢â ¬Å“THREE MEN FACE CANNIBALS IN RELIC QUESTÃ¢â ¬Â• and tribesmen Ã¢â ¬Å“Seize Movie Actor Seeking to Rescue Fawcett.Ã¢â ¬Â• As I read each story, I became more and more curious--about how FawcettÃ¢â ¬â„¢s quest for a lost city and his disappearance had captivated the world; how for decades hundreds of scientists and explorers had tried to find evidence of FawcettÃ¢â ¬â„¢s missing party and the City of Z; and how countless seekers had disappeared or died from starvation, diseases, attacks by wild animals, or poisonous arrows. What intrigued me most, though, was the notion of Z. For years most scientists had considered the brutal conditions in the largest jungle in the world inimical to humankind, but more recently some archeologists had begun to question this longstanding view and believed that a sophisticated civilization like Z might have existed. Such a discovery would challenge virtually everything that was believed about the nature of the and what the Americas looked liked before the arrival of Christopher Columbus. Suddenly, the story had every tantalizing element--mystery, obsession, death, madness--as well as great intellectual stakes. Still, I probably didnÃ¢â ¬â„¢t realize I was fully in the storyÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Ã¢â ¬Å“gripÃ¢â ¬Â• until I told my wife that I planned to take out an extra life insurance policy and follow FawcettÃ¢â ¬â„¢s trail into the . Q: Tell us about the discovery of FawcettÃ¢â ¬â„¢s previously unpublished diaries and logbooks. DG: Researching the book often felt like a kind of treasure hunt and nothing was more exciting than coming across these materials in an old chest in the house of one of FawcettÃ¢â ¬â„¢s grandchildren. Fawcett, who had been a British spy, was extremely secretive about his search for Z--in part because he didnÃ¢â ¬â„¢t want his rivals to discover the lost city before he did and in part because he feared that too many people would die if they tried to follow in his wake. These old, crumbling diaries and logbooks held incredible clues to both FawcettÃ¢â ¬â„¢s life and death; whatÃ¢â ¬â„¢s more, they revealed a key to his clandestine route to the Lost City of Z. Q: In an attempt to retrace FawcettÃ¢â ¬â„¢s journey, many scientists and explorers have faced madness, kidnapping, and

death. Did you ever hesitate to go to the ? DG: I probably should have been more hesitant, especially after reading some of the diaries of members of other parties that had scoured the for a lost city. One seeker of El Dorado described reaching a state of Ã¢â ¬Å“privation so great that we were eating nothing but leather, belts and soles of shoes, cooked with certain herbs, with the result that so great was our weakness that we could not remain standing.Ã¢â ¬Â• In that expedition alone, some four thousand men perished. Other explorers resorted to cannibalism. One searcher went so mad he stabbed his own child, whispering, Ã¢â ¬Å“Commend thyself to God, my daughter, for I am about to kill thee.Ã¢â ¬Â• But to be honest, even after reading these accounts, I was so consumed by the story that I did not think much about the consequences--and one of the themes I try to explore in the book is the lethal nature of obsession. Q: When you were separated from your guide Paolo on the way to the Kuikuro village and seemingly lost and alone in the jungle, what was going through your mind? DG: Besides fear, I kept wondering what the hell I was doing on such a mad quest. Q: Paolo and you made a game of imagining what happened to Fawcett in the . Without giving anything away about The Lost City of Z, I was wondering if you came away with any final conclusions? DG: I donÃ¢â ¬â„¢t want to give too much away; but, after poring over FawcettÃ¢â ¬â„¢s final letters and dispatches from the expedition and after interviewing many of the tribes that Fawcett himself had encountered, I felt as if I had come as close as possible to knowing why Fawcett and his party vanished. Q: In his praise for your book, Malcolm Gladwell asks a Ã¢â ¬Å“central question of our ageÃ¢â ¬Â•: Ã¢â ¬Å“In the battle between man and a hostile environment, who wins?Ã¢â ¬Â• Obviously, the jungle has won many times, but it seems man may be gaining. What are your thoughts on the deforestation taking place in the ? DG: It is a great tragedy. Over the last four decades in Brazil alone, the has lost some two hundred and seventy thousand square miles of its original forest cover--an area bigger than France. Many tribes, including some I visited, are being threatened with extinction. Countless animals and plants, many of them with potential medicinal purposes, are also vanishing. One of the things that the book explores is how early Native American societies were often able to overcome their hostile environment without destroying it. Unfortunately, that has not been the case with the latest wave of trespassers. Q: You began this journey as a man who doesnÃ¢â ¬â„¢t like to camp and has Ã¢â ¬Å“a terrible sense of direction and tend[s] to forget where [you are] on the subway and miss[es] [your] stop in Brooklyn.Ã¢â ¬Â• Are you now an avid outdoorsman? DG: No. Once was enough for me! Q: Early in the book, you write, Ã¢â ¬Å“Ever since I was young, IÃ¢â ¬â„¢ve been drawn to mystery and adventure tales.Ã¢â ¬Â• What have been some of your favorite books--past and present--that fall into this category? DG: IÃ¢â ¬â„¢m a huge Sherlock Holmes fan, and every

few years go back and read the stories again. I do the same with many of Joseph ConradÃ¢â ¬â„¢s novels, including Lord Jim. IÃ¢â ¬â„¢m always amazed at how he produced quest novels that reflected the Victorian era and yet seem to have been written with the wisdom of a historian looking back in time. As for more contemporary authors, I read a lot of crime fiction, especially the works of George Pelecanos and Michael Connelly. I also relish books, such as Jonathan LethemÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Motherless Brooklyn, that cleverly play with this genre. Finally, there are the gripping yarns written by authors like Jon Krakauer and Nathaniel Philbrick-Ã¢â ¬â •stories that are all the more spellbinding because they are true. Q: Brad Pitt and Paramount optioned The Lost City of Z in the spring. Any updates? DG: They have hired a screenwriter and director and seem to be moving forward at a good clip. Q: What are you working on now? DG: I recently finished a couple of crime stories for The New Yorker, including one about a Polish author who allegedly committed murder and then left clues about the real crime in his novel. Meanwhile, IÃ¢â ¬â„¢m hoping to find a tantalizing story, like The Lost City of Z, that will lead to a new book. Q: Anything else youÃ¢â ¬â„¢d like to add? DG: Just that I hope that readers will enjoy The Lost City of Z and find the story of Fawcett and his quest as captivating as I did. (Photo Ã Â© Matt Richman) Look Inside The Lost City of Z Click on thumbnails for larger images Percy Harrison Fawcett was considered Ã¢â ¬Å“the last of the individualist explorersÃ¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •those who ventured into blank spots on the map with little more than a machete, a compass, and an almost divine sense of purpose. He is seen here in 1911, the year of his fourth major expedition. (Copyright Ã Â© R. de Montet-Guerin) Fawcett mapping the frontier between Brazil and Bolivia in 1908. (Courtesy of the Royal Geographical Society) Dr. Alexander Hamilton Rice, FawcettÃ¢â ¬â„¢s main rival, was a multimillionaire Ã¢â ¬Å“as much at home in the elegant swirl of Newport society as in the steaming jungles of Brazil.Ã¢â ¬Â• (Courtesy of the Royal Geographical Society) A member of Dr. RiceÃ¢â ¬â„¢s 1919-20 expedition deploys a wireless telegraphy setÃ¢â ¬â •an early radioÃ¢â ¬â •allowing the party to receive news from the outside world. (Courtesy of the Royal Geographical Society)

Starred Review. In 1925, renowned British explorer Col. Percy Harrison Fawcett embarked on a much publicized search to find the city of Z, site of an ancient ian civilization that may or may not have existed. Fawcett, along with his grown son Jack, never returned, but that didn’t stop countless others, including actors, college professors and well-funded explorers from venturing into the jungle to find Fawcett or the city. Among the wannabe explorers is Grann, a staff writer for the New Yorker, who has bad eyes and a worse sense of direction. He became interested in Fawcett while

researching another story, eventually venturing into the to satisfy his all-consuming curiosity about the explorer and his fatal mission. Largely about Fawcett, the book examines the stranglehold of passion as Grann's vigorous research mirrors Fawcett's obsession with uncovering the mysteries of the jungle. By interweaving the great story of Fawcett with his own investigative escapades in South America and Britain, Grann provides an in-depth, captivating character study that has the relentless energy of a classic adventure tale. (Feb.) Copyright Ã Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

I loved reading this book because of its diversity. You get a well rounded history from multiple accounts of the many cursed expeditions into the . The crazy men who dared to do it (both present and past), violent tribal peoples (though you understand why they're so hostile to foreigners), the nearly impassable terrain, the odd and bizarre creatures that reside their, and in the end, a plausible archaeologically based theory behind why people thought there was a large rich city once in the . Like all things, people's imaginations run wild, but the author also brings you back down the earth with the reality of the jungle which left me with the overall conclusion that these grandiose theories of a Lost City of Z were really just grand exaggerations of much more practical evidence of a fairly developed, but long lost, past civilization.Some people criticize the book for only getting to the final expedition at the very end of the book. But I believe this criticism is unwarranted. You can't just jump into the final expedition without getting the backstory and context of the people, place, and time. I feel the author did a marvelous job of jumping around and pacing the book, so that when you get to the final expedition, you're well versed in the context and prepared to understand why things went down the way they did.Fantastic read, and I shall keep this book as a permanent fixture in my collection. Too bad I only got it in paperback... dang.

I rarely read nonfiction and did not plan to read this book, but my husband insisted I read it before our recent trip to the and I'm glad I did. The book is really two stories. The first one is the life story of Victorian explorer Percy Harrison Fawcett who was a member of the Royal Geographical Society. Originally, Fawcett was hired to map the borders between Bolivia and Brazil, but he mapped far more than that over the years.Fawcett and his crew of explorers faced great dangers. In those days the jungle or rain forest was home to many insects such as mosquitos that carried horrible diseases, such as dengue fever, malaria, yellow fever, and maggots that invaded their bodies. There were no preventatives, no antibiotics. Fawcett rarely got sick, but his men did and many died. It didn't help that he drove his men to hike through the thick jungle and mud for unreasonable long

hours with little or no food even when they were extremely illIn addition, they had were exploring in uncharted rain forests and rivers without the aide of a GPS or a cellphone or satellite phone. There were no computers or Internet. Furthermore there were tribes who liked to kill outsiders.During these years, Fawcett heard tales of a lost city in the interior of the basin that many called El Dorado. Fawcett called it Z. He became obsessed with finding this lost city. On his final exploration, he took his son and his son's friend and they looked for the lost city. Much of what happened during Fawcett's trips was documented in journals kept by him and those who were with him. Furthermore they sent letters home occasionally.David Grann who was writing for The New Yorker, decided to go to the in the 1990s to learn what happened to Fawcett 70 years previously and to see if the lost city even existed. Grann spent much time doing research and got access to letters and other documents that others never had seen. Despite medical and technological advances and the destruction of much of the rain forest, Grann had some harrowing times and became about as obsessed with his mission as Fawcett had. I actually became more engrossed in Grann's story.It was interesting to see how even more rain forest had disappeared when we went on the and Ucayali rivers this summer. I highly recommend this book for those planning a trip to the basin and for those interested in the history of the area.

This was a great book, in my opinion. The way the author wove the history behind the disappearance of Colonel Fawcett with his own journey to find out what happened to Fawcett was perfectly executed. I enjoyed the way the author filled the book with information about South America, the changing views on the tribes there, and the obsessiveness of early explorers. One reader felt that the conclusion was a let down, but I found it to be very satisfactory. It made me want to find out more! I can see why it has been developed into a movie, but I can't imagine a movie being able to so much as touch all of the fascinating side-stories contained in the book. I both read and listened to the book and the reader was good, although he did have some odd pronunciations at times.

This is a weird and amazing tale that blends history, ethnography, geography and a dash of good old-fashioned Kiplingesque fun. There are so few facts available here, that David Grann had to jump back and forth among these fields. I found the transitions a bit strained at time, but the book is still a wonderful read. I can certainly see why Hollywood purchased the story. Great summer reading, for sure!

Absolutely fascinating book. The highest accolade that I can give is that it makes me want to read more about Colonel Fawcett and about the exploration of the past and present.

This is an excellent book. The adventure is interesting, engaging and thrilling. The best part of the novel is that it ends satisfactorily. I doubt the movie will be up to the level of enjoyment of the novel, however, I will go see. Loved the research that went into this novel.

Really enjoyed the two stories that this book told; the past converging with the present. I learned quite a bit about how race shaped early exploration and how our knowledge of the complexities of native cultures is expanding today. I look forward to watching the film.

Although I love history and non fiction, even detail (ie The Great Bridge), this book took me down too many fact finding journeys to justify the gratifying ending. I never want to give spoilers and keep someone from reading a book themselves so I will simply say it was an interesting read, with personally uncomfortable character reveals, and an abrupt ending. I struggled, admittedly for personal reasons, therefore three stars.

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