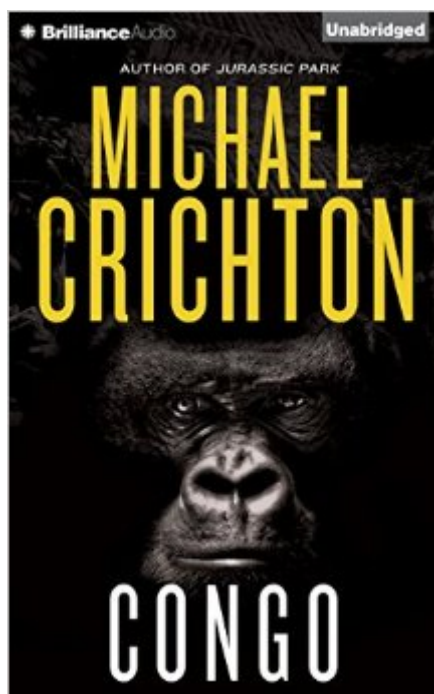


The book was found

Congo



Synopsis

Deep in the African rain forest, near the legendary ruins of the Lost City of Zinj, an expedition of eight American geologists are mysteriously and brutally killed in a matter of minutes. Ten thousand miles away, Karen Ross, the Congo Project Supervisor, watches a gruesome video transmission of the aftermath: a camp destroyed, tents crushed and torn, equipment scattered in the mud alongside dead bodies—all motionless except for one moving image—a grainy, dark, man-shaped blur. In San Francisco, primatologist Peter Elliot works with Amy, a gorilla with an extraordinary vocabulary of 620 signs—the most ever learned by a primate, and she likes to finger paint. But recently her behavior has been erratic and her drawings match, with stunning accuracy, the brittle pages of a Portuguese print dating back to 1642—a drawing of an ancient lost city. A new expedition—along with Amy—is sent into the Congo, where they enter a secret world, and the only way out may be through a horrifying death. Congo was made into a film directed by Frank Marshall.

Book Information

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Authors, A-Z > (C) > Crichton, Michael #3253 in Books > Books on CD > Mystery & Thrillers

#7088 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Action & Adventure > Mystery, Thriller & Suspense >

Mystery

Customer Reviews

I found myself on vacation with no book...tragic. I remedied this with a copy of Congo. As I read Congo, the story of diamond hunters in, yes, the Congo, I realized how much has changed since 1980. A cutting edge computer thriller, it has references pinball machines, five-inch floppies, 256K memory and portable cassette tape players. Yet it was also current, with its talk of DNA testing and the competitive threat of both the Japanese and Chinese in the world markets. Congo has it all: competing international diamond hunters, the Congo, African pygmies, cannibalistic tribes, various

warring countries and factions, lost cities of bygone centuries, active volcanoes, sign-language gorillas, geographic history, gorilla history, African and Congo history, a possible new species of gorilla with its own agenda, communications satellites, plane crashes, hot air balloons, and, well I'm sure I'm leaving something out. Michael Crichton's deft writing brings it all together for an enjoyable action romp that works...almost. If anything suffers in the book it is the characters. So much is packed into the story that the characters do not develop, and are almost relegated to following the action, which never ends. The author has to explain a lot to the reader so that we can follow along. He does this as the narrator and often includes it in character dialogue. So much information is presented as dialogue that I get the picture of very educated people, stuck in the Congo with killer gorillas and dead bodies, finally snapping and pummeling each other to the ground yelling, "Why are you being so redundant? I KNOW all this stuff!" The reader often won't, however, making it important but at times slowing the book down.

Paying attention to anecdotes and rumours can get you a long way - not just in developing fictional plots, but in anticipating by decades "discoveries" in science, such as the finding of the mysterious deadly hunting great apes of Congo near Bili, "found" and reported by actual scientists in 2004. The similarities to what was described in Crichton's book are notable. Cite is from BBC Science News 12 Oct 2004 (based on an article in New Scientist): "Primatologist Shelly Williams is thought to be the only scientist to have seen the apes. During her visit to DR Congo two years ago, she says she captured them on video and located their nests. She describes her encounter with them: "Four suddenly came rushing out of the bush towards me," she told New Scientist. "If this had been a bluff charge, they would have been screaming to intimidate us. These guys were quiet. And they were huge. They were coming in for the kill. I was directly in front of them, and as soon as they saw my face, they stopped and disappeared." "She also mentioned that some of them had gone gray, apparently fairly early in life, and completely gray rather than the gray-and-black of known gorilla species. The locals say they are very deadly, hunt cooperatively and silently, and will kill lions. That doesn't mean they talk -- just thought Crichton's research abilities should be commemorated with some clips from this discovery. UPDATE: In response to the comment asking for an actual review -- what, three stars wasn't 'nuff said? I have Crichton favorites: Andromeda Strain and Jurassic Park.

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