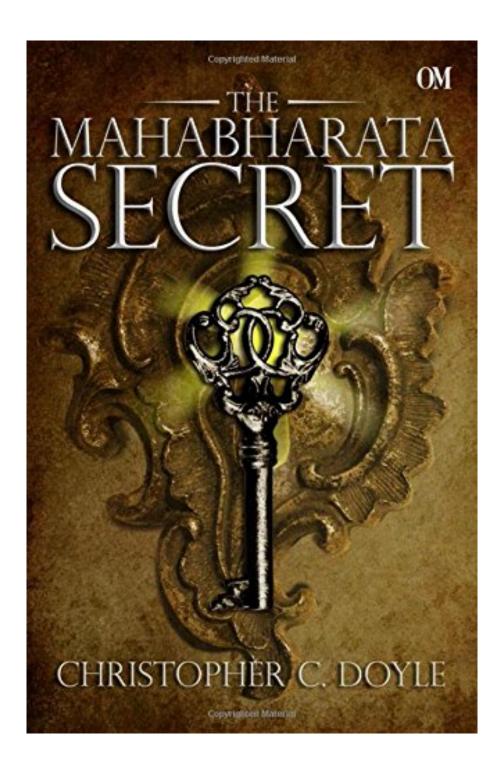


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244 BC Asoka the Great discovers an ancient and terrible secret-a secret buried deep in the Mahabharata; a secret that could destroy the world; a secret hidden away for over 2300 years... Present Day A retired nuclear scientist is murdered. He leaves only e-mails with clues for his nephew. He and his friends follow a trail through ciphers and 2000-year-old ruins. Pursued by powerful dark forces, caught between the secrets of the past and the intrigues of the present, can they unravel the mystery before an unspeakable horror is unleashed on the world... CHRISTOPHER C DOYLE graduated from St. Stephens College, Delhi, with a degree in Economics and studied Business Management at IIM Calcutta. Since childhood, his literary mentors have been Jules Verne, HG Wells, Isaac Asimov, Robert Heinlein, JRR Tolkein, Robert Jordan and Terry Brooks. Christopher has written articles on management and business for several publications, and is regularly invited to speak at conferences. He worked with leading multinationals before setting up a strategic consultancy in India in partnership with a US-based firm. He is also a certified Executive Coach and works with senior executives to help them achieve better results in the workplace. Work aside, Christopher is a musician and lives his passion for music through his band called Mid Life Crisis which plays classic rock. He lives in Gurgaon with his wife, daughter and two dogs. The Mahabharata Secret is his debut novel. USP An IIM graduate-turned-author, Christopher C Doyle is in the same league as Chetan Bhagat and Amish Tripathi Mahabharata Secret blends mythology and history with modern science and cutting edge technology A page turner with hi-octane suspense and intrigue Readership All fiction lovers, thriller junkies, history buffs, corporate yuppies, educational institutes, libraries and general trade readers.

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• Binding: Paperback

• 386 pages

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7 of 7 people found the following review helpful.

Could have been made much better

By Prasanjit

I am fond of history tangled fictions and bought this book as it featured both Ashoka and Mahabharata. The book started off well but then the plot starts losing grip with the reader and strays into unnecessary details and events. The big secret that the author tries to build momentum to, really fizzles out at the end. All in all this is a mere time killer read, nothing great.

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful.

total waste of time

By Monika A.

Author tried to mimic Dan Brown style of creating puzzles and clues. The comparison ends there, as Dan

Brown accompanies it with a solid historical reference to support his theories. Chris on the other hand just describes the streets of Gurgaon, wild car chase (James Bond movie style), and caves. The conversations between the characters are meaningless. I regret spending my time reading all through the book to come to a pathetic, unbelievable secret.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

A sincere attempt--but very disappointing due to far too many holes in the plot.

By Vijay

Reading the synopsis of the book, I felt I was in for a taut, gripping thriller. The book's concept is fascinating--Emperor Asoka discovers a secret from the times of the Mahabharata, contained in the so-called "Vimana Parva", detailing flying weapons capable of inflicting immense damage on enemies. Emperor Asoka then forms the "Brotherhood of the Nine" to safeguard this secret, (as well as the storehouse of these "vimanas" that they discover), to ensure it never falls into the wrong hands. The brotherhood thereby becomes a secret society of sorts, erasing all records of the "Vimana Parva" and handing down the secret within the society from generation to generation.

So far, so good. But cut to the present, and the plot and the riddles that have to be solved in order to get to the secret, become so repetitive after a point, its almost ridiculous. There are yawning holes in the plot, which, even if you work very hard to suspend disbelief, are way too irrational/unbelievable/fantastic.

- A) Why on earth would any Indian member of the "Brotherhood of the Nine" willingly admit a Pakistani to share the secret? That too, a Pakistani scientist who has been involved in that country's nuclear program. It is unbelievable, given current geopolitical realities, that an Indian scientist would not see the risks inherent in so badly compromising India's security concerns.
- B) One question which one keeps mentally asking is, Why could Asoka not have simply got the vimanas destroyed himself? There is no logical explanation given, as to why a storehouse of lethal weapons should be kept hidden, with supposedly difficult-to-solve clues pointing to where the site is. If such was the security in place, the only surprise of the novel is, why the vimanas were not discovered 1000, if not 2000 years ago!!
- C) During the last stretches in the novel, the main protagonist and his sidekicks are held hostage by the LeT and forced to help them locate the weapon's hiding place, under duress. But this sense of blackmail, their abject fear for their lives, hardly comes through. It seems as if they are so fired up by solving the clues, they want to decipher it anyway. It is shown almost as an intellectual challenge, no attempt is made by them to slow things down, no hesitation shown at all in thinking what would happen if such powerful weapons falls into such villainous hands. By this time, it is pretty clear that the LeT is not going to let them go alive, so their feverish enthusiasm in finding the weapon's hiding place is just too illogical.
- D) There is a completely redundant romance track which is shoe-horned in for God alone knows what reason.

To add to the above, there is a key error in the historical plotline of the novel, which would have us believe that the vimanas were manufactured on orders of the King of Magadha, who was fighting on the side of the Kauravas and who wanted to wreak havoc on the Pandava army. The only problem with this story: as per the Mahabharata, the King of Magadha fought WITH the Pandavas, AGAINST the Kauravas. Granted, the Mahabharata refers to Magadhan princes on both sides of the Great War, (probably different brothers/cousins of the Magadhan royal family chose different sides), but the King himself is shown as having joined the Pandavas. The author could have easily chosen to base this plotline on another King who was unambiguously on the Kaurava side. One wonders why this wan't done, probably pointing to insufficient

research on the Mahabharata itself.

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