

## Amazon Books Review

Miguel Angel Vila Casals

-*Leonardo, Guardian of The Egyptian Secret of Jesus* (thesis about Jesus Christ and Egyptian Religion written in the form of a Novel, 2019; originally published in Spain entitled *Leonardo, Guardián del Secreto Egipcio de Jesús*, 2012)

J. P. Knight

2.0 out of 5 stars (Two Stars)

Reviewed in the United Kingdom on 8 May 2016

Format: Kindle Edition

Note to the reader of this review: I was asked to write and HONEST review for this book by a third party and am not being paid to do so. The author sent me the book, I read it, and this is my review. I hope this is useful.

When I first sat down to read this book, I was quite excited. I had seen positive reviews and the plot seemed interesting. However, having now finished the book, I can see my excitement was misplaced.

The story follows Aiden Leonardo as he tries to recover his memories while on the run from the authorities after his mentor, Lazzaro de Medici, is killed and he is made a prime suspect. Also thrown into the mix is a mystery cult, which is working behind the scenes of world power, a lost bible and the titular secret. Though I dislike this book for many reasons, there are some positives.

The basic plot idea is an interesting one, if poorly executed. The shady corporation pulling the strings of all of the world's major politicians could have been made more interesting if they were expanded upon more, especially if the Magistrate, the head of the corporation, had been given a little more character. At

present he feels flat with no exceptional features about him, which is unfortunate because the name 'Magistrate' implies that he is a figure sat on a pyramid, doling out punishment to whoever he pleases with very little to no opposition. More could have been done with him. With regards to the other characters, I felt they were all very bland, possibly because there are so many characters that regularly have the spotlight put on them. Even at the end, in the final showdown, if you can call it that, when all the characters finally meet and the relationships between them are made and explained, it feels overwrought and too dramatic. It felt rushed and with the deaths of a few 'major' characters, I honestly didn't care. None of the characters piqued my interest. The main character, Aiden, for all his intelligence and instant connections to passages from a variety of religious texts, seems permanently confused by everything that is happening around him but, even after the aforementioned revelations, is rarely surprised except when it is required for a joke. Not only that, there are a number of similarities between Aiden and the protagonist of the first few Assassin's Creed games, Desmond Miles. Both characters are thrown out of their depth by something out of their control, are involved in government conspiracies and underground cults and receive revelations about their heritage. Obviously there are some differences too, but the similarities are there.

The number of religious passages, not just from the Bible, is excessive, to the point of annoyance. Whenever another passage came up, I found myself groaning and skipping them entirely in some places because they were just unnecessary. Yes, they relate to the plot and yes, it is important to have some of them to clear up certain plot points, but at some times this book feels like a theology dissertation than a novel I want to read for entertainment.

There appears to have been no editor for the book, not just unmentioned in the front of the book, but there are noticeable mistakes and questionable uses of indirect speech throughout.

Since there are some quite long scenes of dialogue in the novel, I can somewhat understand the decision to break up some of the dialogue with indirect speech, but this comes across as sounding odd and breaks away from the conversation, something which is not wanted. The author should keep their reader engaged at all times and swapping from direct to indirect speech without good reason is a sure fire way to disengage the reader. The noticeable mistakes? For my example I shall use something which appears right at the start of the novel. Which one of the following is correct, 'His only hope lied with her,' or 'His only hope lay with her?' If you said the second one, then congratulations, you can use tenses better than this author. Even if he wasn't sure of the correct tense to use, he should have noticed that the first one doesn't sound quite right, it certainly shouldn't have ended up in the published copy, especially not twice.

All of things aside, if we dig down, once again, to the basic idea, as interesting as it is and could have been, it isn't original. Anyone who has been within two feet of a Dan Brown novel and has also read this book would notice the similarities. The difference here is that this book contains none of careful intellect of Dan Brown and this idea wasn't split into multiple books. If 'The Secret of Heaven' had been split into two or more books then it may not have felt so rushed and busy.

In conclusion, this novel is the rushed lovechild of a Dan Brown novel, Assassin's Creed and amateurish writing. It had potential, but was ultimately mediocre so I would not recommend this book.