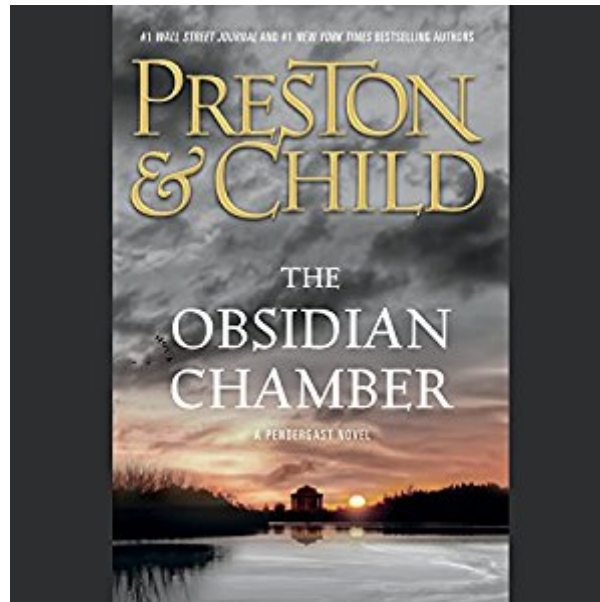




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The Obsidian Chamber



Synopsis

A Tragic Disappearance After a harrowing otherworldly confrontation on the shores of Exmouth, Massachusetts, Special Agent A.X.L. Pendergast is missing, presumed dead. A Shocking Return Sick with grief, Pendergast's ward, Constance, retreats to her chambers beneath the family mansion at 891 Riverside Drive - only to be taken captive by a shadowy figure from the past. An International Manhunt Proctor, Pendergast's longtime bodyguard, springs to action, chasing Constance's kidnapper through cities, across oceans, and into wastelands unknown. But in a World of Black and White, Nothing Is as It Seems And by the time Proctor discovers the truth, a terrifying engine has stirred - and it may already be too late....

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

It's like intentionally selecting a five star restaurant to enjoy great Fettuccine Alfredo and they serve you macaroni and cheese. The authors raised the bar with the quality of the older works in the series. And, they apparently got lazy because, instead of relying upon the excellence of one book to sell the next, they have been resorting to tawdry marketing tactic of a principal character dying, disappearing, etc., only to leave the door open for resurrection ad nauseam. If you believed Pendergast died at the end of *Crimson Shore*, you should be coloring books, not reading them. He isn't the only one to rise from the dead for this farce as the authors dig up Diogenes to make mischief. Forget, if you will, that the last time we saw him, he was shoved into a volcano. He creates a seduction to marry Constance and fabricates a ludicrous ruse to throw

Procter off the trail. Pendergast returns from the dead and, with the help of a compatriot from some black ops group of the past, takes pursuit. That's the nub of it without spoilers. If you don't mind them, continue reading. Diogenes stages a false abduction of Constance that has Procter off and running after it, only to be marooned deep in Africa. There, he is stalked by hungry lions so he does the only logical thing. He goes to sleep. In the meantime, Diogenes persuades Constance to accompany him to a private island in the Florida Keys where they can live happily ever after. The fact that she killed him (or, supposedly did) upon their previous encounter does not make him at all suspicious when she readily agrees to go. Part of his plan is to update the Arcanum that has preserved her youth. To do that, he requires fresh human body parts. To acquire there, he's established an identity as a doctor which works well because, of course, no hospital or similar institution ever verifies credentials. Right. The last we saw Pendergast, he was in a life and death struggle with a superhuman creature that took the combatants into the frigid waters of the Atlantic off New England. Hypothermia would claim a healthy specimen in a matter of minutes, much less an exhausted one. But, not so for him. He bobbed around long enough for a ship full of drug runners to fish him out. They hit upon the brilliant plan of contacting the FBI to demand a ransom. And, of course, the depleted Pendergast dispatched the boatload of armed criminals before that concluded. This reunited him with a compatriot from an old special ops unit with a common goal. Diogenes had killed a member of their clan and it was their sworn oath to avenge him in kind. They track him down, at the expense of the deaths among those in their strike force, and manage to capture him. He is already devastated because Constance had decided to raise his hopes on the island with an ethereal night of sex and then dump him. Like, she couldn't have done that back at the Pendergast mansion? Diogenes has killed many people, including their fellow agents, so what do they do? Kill him per their oath? Not a chance. Arrest him for his litany of crimes? Child, please. They simply let him go because he's a changed man. Absolutely ludicrous. In the end, Constance decides to go off and live with monks because Pendergast won't agree to a relationship with her. Gee, do you think she and Diogenes might reappear in a later book? Oh yes, and Procter shows up on the doorstep encrusted in dried blood (from the lion attack) and caked with mud, as a result of his misadventure. You are to believe that, in his two-day (give or take) journey home, he didn't encounter one water faucet. The bottom line is that, instead of crafting fascinating new characters, the authors simply brought some back from the dead and forced them into an unimaginative plot that was simply a pedestrian extension of the beat-to-death sibling rivalry. It has all the earmarks of something that was done for a paycheck, not the art.

Ok, let me first say. I have read every book in this series and love the character. Such an original. But I am losing patience with this plot line of bringing people back from the dead. I long for the old days of Pendergast doing what he does best solve murders. Am I ready to give up the series no. But enough of the dysfunctional family drama.

Spoiler Alert ahead: I have read and loved the whole Pendergast series, with some of the books being great and some that I liked but didn't love. However, each of the previous books either solved a mystery, a murder, or dealt with their own great series (Diogenes). This book did none of the above. As far as the overall progress of the lives and times of Pendergast/Constance/Diogenes goes, this book can be summarized in one sentence: Constance gets mad at Pendergast and decides to go live with her son. That's it... That's all. After the whole book is said and done, this is the biggest development that occurs in the lives of the three romantics. Oh, and a bunch of innocent people die with no justice and we're expected to just say "Oh, that silly Agent".

This is, by far, the most disappointing Pendergast book I have had the misfortune of reading. Let me be clear: I've read all of them. And the downward, horrible spiral of the series is making it plummet solemnly to its death. I'll say here that I am almost 100% convinced that Douglas Preston and Lincoln Child are paying a ghost writer to churn out Pendergast books while they get a percentage. How else to explain the absolute nosedive of quality? How else to explain the sudden changes in the fundamental aspects of familiar characters, including, to their shame, Pendergast? How else to explain that the books of late read more like fanfiction than anything like their earlier works? This is the first review I've written for one of these books, and it should stand for something that I've gone out of my way to finally write one. From Relic to at *least* Wheel of Darkness, perhaps even Cemetery Dance, the authors could write immersive, thrilling mysteries. Reliquary ruined the NYC subway system for me (but I was excited!). Still Life with Crows ruined cornfields (but I was gleefully unnerved!). They could instill anxiety and fear. Brimstone remains my favorite, and the Diogenes Trilogy generally was a rush, and I couldn't get enough of it. In those three books, Pendergast was pushed by those who were his equals. And yet, he remained graceful, cool, intelligent, never one to rush, perceptive, deducing, and most importantly, interesting. Wheel of Darkness and Cemetery Dance also had their merits, but I was still riding high on the Diogenes Trilogy. But from Fever Dream to this wretched, pitiful, soulless book, the steady erosion of quality and the maddening changes to characters *scream* that the authors willingly or unwillingly lost control of their books.

Pendergast now becomes a bland Jason Bourne style action hero who lost almost all the qualities we most enjoyed, and those around him become their own kinds of action heroes, with the concept of 'compelling storytelling' falling by the wayside. The depth of each successive book from Fever Dream on becomes shallower, and shallower, and shallower, until we stand in the evaporating puddle of The Obsidian Chamber and wonder where it all went. The absolute worst aspect of this enraging time-waster book The Obsidian Chamber is that almost nothing important happens, except for tasteless drama. There is no real mystery to be solved. There is nothing touching on the supernatural. There is no real anxiety-inducing rush or fearfulness. There is nothing to distinguish this book as a Pendergast book. Honestly, replace the main characters' names with other random names and it will read as a somewhat action-y soap opera episode with no relation whatsoever to the older Pendergast books, with such a horrible use of the 'let my enemy live because maybe he's going to be good now' trope. In the world of literature, this book cannot even be considered to be heavy lifting. All the authors ask of you is to waste your time and money on a story that could be summed up in a paragraph, with absolutely nothing lost. The quality of this story is akin to the quality of online fanfiction, and it is nauseatingly disappointing. And please don't get me started on this juvenile reliance on colors in titles. White Fire, followed by Blue Labyrinth, followed by Crimson Shore, followed by Obsidian Chamber, and, honest to God, the next book has 'Green' in the title. If you are a fan of what the Pendergast books once were, and not a shambling Smithback-ian fan plodding along in the hopes of returning to the glory days, or a reader who is not looking for something so simplistic that it can be read in one day without any effort whatsoever, do NOT even consider purchasing this book. Do not contribute one cent to this collapsing book series, only to fill the pockets of who knows who to fund yet more disappointing ventures into a world you once cared so much about. SPOILER FOLLOWS BELOW (But honestly, I would no doubt be doing you a favor) If you enjoyed Diogenes as much as I did... Friend, comrade, brother or sister, walk away. Walk away now, and cherish the memories that you have. Hold them close and let not one word of this earth-shatteringly embarrassing display by these authors take that all away from you. At the end of the Dark Tower series, Stephen King warns you. He warns you to read no further, for you may likely not enjoy what you read. He stops you dead in your tracks. Let me be this person for you. Let me stop you, bar the door with my body, scream madly at you to not enter, to not go further, to not read what comes next. Here I leave you, with one last, hopeful plea: Wait until these authors care enough to write well once more, before giving them any more of your hard-earned money. You worked hard for your money; let the authors work hard for theirs.

The most disappointing Prendergast novel yet. I have been a fan of the Prendergast novels since they came out and always preorder. I have never written a review before but this novel was totally disappointing. The adventure with Proctor in the beginning is nothing but filler. Constance ranks as one of my least favorite characters. Spoiler Alert. How many times in recent novels are we going to bring back people from the dead? Can we not come up with new protagonists. The very thought that Prendergast would release a serial killer (Diogiones) who supposedly is reformed by love and is family (even though his kills 3 more people) is ridiculous. The epilogue tries to hastily tie all loose ends.

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