



Black Rain

Graham Brown

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From Graham Brown, co-author of the *New York Times* bestselling thriller *Devil's Gate* with Clive Cussler, comes *Black Rain* . . .

Covert government operative Danielle Laidlaw leads an expedition into the deepest reaches of the Amazon in search of a legendary Mayan city. Assisted by a renowned university professor and protected by a mercenary named Hawker, her team journeys into the tangled rain forest—unaware that they are replacements for a group that vanished weeks before, and that the treasure they are seeking is no mere artifact but a breakthrough discovery that could transform the world.

Shadowed by a ruthless billionaire, threatened by a violent indigenous tribe, and stalked by an unseen enemy that leaves battered corpses in its wake, the group desperately seeks the connection between the deadly reality of the Mayan legend, the nomadic tribe that haunts them, and the chilling secret buried beneath the ancient ruins.

From the Paperback edition.

Black Rain Details

Date : Published (first published 2009)

ISBN :

Author : Graham Brown

Format : Kindle Edition 515 pages

Genre : Thriller, Adventure, Fiction, Mystery, Science Fiction, Suspense, Horror, Action, Mystery
Thriller, Fantasy



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From Reader Review Black Rain for online ebook

Leah says

I was excited to receive and read this book, it seemed there was a lot of positive "vibe" about it. I admit it, I like mythology books, set in the deep jungle where you are alone, cut off from any assistance from the outside world.

I think the author had a great idea, and the concept was in fact interesting, there were several moving parts to the story, and one would move between the mainly political intrigue in the US to the real action on the ground in the jungle.

I found the pacing to be uneven a bit, and, while I am the first to suspend belief for a good story, parts of the story pushed the envelope even for me.

All of that said, if you are looking for a nice travel read, or a book to sit by the beach as summer winds down, this packs plenty of action to keep you entertained and a story that will keep you engaged to the final page.

Denise says

When I first saw the title of this book I thought it would be about the chemical warfare used by the Russians against the Kurds in Afganistan. Much to my surprise when I started reading the book it was about the ancient Mayan superstitions and culture. A group goes into the Amazon to find a new technological breakthrough in power supply. The trials they had to deal with as in most thriller novels are great but the good guys (heros) overcome the obstacles in due course. They did this by coming up with innovations in self defense.

In rating the book I felt that the author created novel uses of standard military hardware against attack by gorilla forces. It was a very good read.

This is a guest review by Dan.

Wendy says

Really enjoyed the book, couldnt put it down!! action pack adventure that kept me on the edge of my seat!!

Michele says

I received this book on a goodreads giveaway. I set about reading it as soon as I could, so that I could review

it. I am so glad that I received this book, one reason is because it sounded so good and I know that my husband will enjoy it too. The title tells the tale this book is a thriller.

It is about Danielle Laidlaw an operative for a CIA type organization called the NRI. Danielle is in Brazil with her partner and mentor Arnold Moore until he is called away by their employer. At which point she is left to run the assignment on her own. She is there to find a mysterious power source that could change how we use energy. Danielle builds her crew starting with a ex-CIA helicopter pilot named Hawker. Hawker proves to be an invaluable member of her crew. She also recruits a linguist, a professor, an assistant for him, porters, and some guards. I am sure I missed some characters that were minor so that is why.

After a crazy situation with a ships crew that Arnold Moore had set up, and Danielle was lucky enough to have Hawker with her to help her. Soon they were on the Amazon with a new group of characters added to the mix including Verhoven who also is an invaluable member to the crew. As they travel the Amazon and in the jungle the story unfolds and Danielle wasn't completely honest with her crew. There are hostile natives who want the "black plague" out of their jungle. They have all of the modern things like gps and computers. It all escalates to a fevered pitch.

All I can say is read it, read it, read it. I want to go on but I do not want to put spoilers in there I want you to read it. It is supposed to come out on January, 2010, get it and read it. I look very forward to the sequel, I will be reading it.

Benjamin Thomas says

I love discovering new talent, especially in the genres I love to read. "Black Rain" is the first published book by Graham Brown and is written as an adventure/thriller novel with elements of science fiction and horror.

Right off the bat I'll say this is one very good book. It reads like an Indiana Jones adventure but in the present day and with some good solid speculative science weaved into the plot. If you are familiar with novels by James Rollins or Mathew Reilly then you'll have a good idea of the style...sort of like reading a movie. In a nutshell, the novel is about a covert government agency that is launched on a quest to find an ancient Mayan temple in the heart of the Amazon. But what they find there is a huge mystery and more action/adventure than I've read in a long time.

The scenes and characters are presented clearly, so clearly that you can "see" the movie unfolding in your mind. And the plot is heavy on the action, especially the second half. The first half builds up the mystery of just what is going on here, establishes the main characters and allows us to see what is motivating the competing groups looking for the temple. Intrigue abounds and it really keeps you turning the pages. And the second half just explodes with action. Very well done.

I was so impressed by this novel that I've added the name Graham Brown to my "Best Little-Known Authors" list on my blog. I daresay he won't be unknown for long as my copy of the book says he is working on a sequel to "Black Rain" and I can't wait to read it. If his work is marketed well, he could be the next "big thing" in this genre.

Scott Ireland says

A compelling read as the excitement builds, but jumped the shark early in the book and just went way off the end in terms of reality.

Still, I couldn't put it down and had to finish...worth reading.

Sanjida Alam says

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Pranta Ghosh Dastider says

Want action? Want horror? Want miracle and myth? And conspiracy mixed within?

There you go, The Mayan Conspiracy is the prefect answer.

This book has it all, based on a Mayan temple and a ruthless expedition to find something hidden but of great value. Two groups wants to have it and the person in charge of the expedition doesn't have the freedom to fail or let the companions know about the true goal of the mission.

First half of the book is slow. In this part, mostly the conspiracies were explained and took place. Next half is all about confronting the fear and survival. There are a few twists, but more than that horror is important. most of the story took place in the jungle. And when the darkness falls fear comes out. It's dangerous to be out there, for there is impossible vicious creatures, also a tribal race who are hostile as hell. Amongst all these chaos there is one lady, one spy, an specialist, a mercenary who must stand tall.

Either way, if you love adventure it can be a treat. But be informed, you have to stay patient and read through the slow parts.

For me it's a decent read.

Stacy says

Compelling and hard to put down.

Kathy Davie says

First in the Hawker & Laidlaw thriller series with a heavy dose of horror and revolving around Danielle Laidlaw and Hawker, ex-CIA. This story takes place primarily in Brazil.

Be sure to read the prologue!

My Take

It started off feeling same-same, but things developed into a story I could not put down. It sure kept my heart rate up!

I loved being inside Hawker's head as he analyzes what's happening and the likely reasons for it.

Man, Brown plays his characters well giving them unique personalities with unexpected deliveries. The professor is so sweet as he gets caught up in his subject while the innocent student holds up amazingly well. I love that Danielle has a heart and thinks the possibilities through, wanting to help people.

It's all positive and save-the-world until it descends into greed and the desire for power. It's the events in this that provide this series an uncommon beginning for the primary character: Danielle. I won't know until I dive into #2, but I have to wonder if she'll be changing employers. It's as if we came in on the tail end of

Danielle's current job just as she has a change of conscience, and her real world will begin in the next installment. Don't get me wrong. *Black Rain* is an excellent start, unique in how Brown introduces us to the two main characters. It's a lot like life, with meetings and new people affecting how we live.

Yeah, the usual tropes are here: the greedy backstabbers along with the greedy, power-hungry businessman with their inevitable endings. But Brown keeps it interesting 90% of the time with his Maya setting and the time traveler(s) who have such an effect on our past. It's the conclusions that the survivors reach that made me fearful of where our society is heading.

I do love how Brown plays on the guilt our good guys feel. Very nicely done. I also like how Brown portrays Hawker: intelligent, perceptive, and with lateral thought processes. He's like a grimy James Bond. As for the betrayal...oh, boy. It's hard to believe that there are people like that out in the world. Yet I know they are. What made it even more terrifying was how, how sympathetic the bad guy was. So warm and reasonable sounding, even as you knew he was simply setting them up for the kill.

The premise of Gibbs and his plans seemed a bit farfetched, but then again, this is Washington, D.C. Wouldn't put anything past them.

Then there's how Brown pulled in the Mayan culture and its legends. Wow. Very plausible and simply made the story even more intriguing.

Oh, boy. That ending. Brown knows how to play the tension and drama. I gotta get me the next in line, *Black Sun*.

The Story

It's been a hard slog investigating an expedition that occurred decades ago. It only gets worse with Moore's news from the head office, even with Laidlaw's discovery.

Still Gibbs is dangling a mighty fine carrot in front of Laidlaw, and she's too stubborn to resist it. Besides, if you could save the world, wouldn't you try?

The Characters

Danielle Laidlaw is being mentored by **Arnold Moore** for the **National Research Institute (NRI)**. Both are field operatives tasked with "examin[ing] cutting-edge projects and determin[ing] what technologies, if any, could be valuable to the United States".

The expedition

Private security is headed up by **Pik Verhoven**, a South African mercenary who has tangled with Hawker in the past. **Hawker** is ex-CIA and a pilot, disavowed for past activities. **Professor Michael McCarter**, a senior professor of archeology in New York City, has recently lost his beloved wife to cancer, and now he wants life to have meaning again. **Mark Polaski** handles communications tech while **William Devers** is a linguist who speaks several native languages. **Susan Briggs** is a student from McCarter's university about to enter the master's program in Archeological Studies. **Brazos** is one of the porters.

NRI

Stuart Gibbs is the paranoid director of operations, who runs the place like a private club. And he hates and distrusts Moore. **Matt Blundin**, one of Gibbs' Boys, is chief of security and the best in the business.

Chollokwan tribe

Putock leads one of the bands of warriors. **Ualon** is the Old One, the Great Father and leader of the tribe.

The **Nuree** tribe is one of many terrified of the Chollokwan.

The really bad guys

Vogel is also a mercenary, and almost impossible to fool as **Remo**, a hired thug, finds out. **Richard Kaufman** is CEO and principal owner of Futrex Systems, Inc., a defense contractor who rakes it in hand over fist. And it's still not enough. **Norman Lang** is his chief scientist in areas of unusual interest. Brilliant, he'd been caught falsifying data and now works for Kaufman. **Eric** is another mercenary.

Señor Duarte Medina is Moore's contact in Manaus for a charter boat. **Sven** is a pretty boy contact with a lethal streak.

Jack Dixon is a mercenary and good at it. **Blackjack Martin** was a wealthy fortune hunter back in 1926/27 who launched an expedition and returned a laughing stock. **Roche** was another South African SAS who went too far.

The Cover

The cover is a meaty looking, textured red that splits on a slight vertical diagonal in the background with the author's name and the title in a concrete-looking texture, pebbled with fat raindrops.

I have to wonder if Brown chose the title *Black Rain* for its association with acid rain. Something to think about.

Andrew says

This is a pretty good thriller, with some supernatural and scientific elements thrown in. I was surprised, because I was a bit disconcerted by the whole government-agency-in-Brazil-looking-for-Mayan-ruins angle. At the start, it was sounding like a plot from the Dan Brown random plot generator. Major religion: Mayan; location: Brazil; protagonist: beautiful, athletic, go-getter agent; number of competing groups: 3; etc, etc. As the story went on, though, Graham Brown threw in some neat "scientific" twists and a few potential supernatural elements. The action was pretty quick paced but wasn't totally unrelenting. I was amused that as characters were killed off (which they almost have to be in a thriller), they were killed off in unique ways. Highly entertaining! I wouldn't be surprised if this gets turned into a movie.

Shelly says

I won this book. This book was great! I had a hard time putting it down, very suspensful. I can't wait for the sequel. If you like thrillers combined with some history, then you will love this book.

Patrick Gibson says

What do you get when you cram a book with clichéd plots? *Black Rain*. The book has rainforests, Mayan ruins, covert operations, mercenaries, time travel, gun fights, helicopter crashes, primitive native tribes,

mysterious crystals, hieroglyphics, environmental consciousness, strange creatures, lions and tigers and bears, oh my! (okay, it doesn't have lions and tigers and bears. But hey, since it had everything else, why not throw in the lions and tigers and bears as well?). I guess the author couldn't decide whether he wanted to recreate Indiana Jones, Alien, or Jurassic Park, so he combined every story line he could think of and stuffed them all into Black Rain.

The book just tries too hard. The actions don't make sense. There is way too much going on, distractingly so. The characters are the typical, predictable bunch - the overweight cigarette smoking tech guy (hey, wasn't he in Jurassic Park?), the tough smart woman (only she isn't), the big bad brave black ops guy. The multiple action/science fiction story lines are overkill. What could have been a good read is just a very long book. Why have I been reading so many of these mindless thrillers lately? Uh, I don't know. Keep hoping to find a good one, I guess.

S.D. says

Danielle Laidlaw leads an expedition into the Amazon rainforest. She is part of a government entity working under the radar and does not disclose to the civilians traveling with her the true purpose of her mission. The guise is that they are searching for a legendary Mayan city. The truth is that they are looking for a new power source, a crystal which can be used for cold fusion power. The book starts out slow as the trip is discussed, all characters described and devious plans fleshed out, at least some of them. Legends and myths follow them along the way and real life assassins are on their trail to stop Danielle from succeeding. This book is part thriller, part horror as unseen beasts make their presence known as night falls. The "thriller" part had me hooked but the author swerves into the weary plot of the government and/or greedy humans are causing havoc, raping the earth of natural resources, polluting the earth, yada yada. He could have left it as aliens and I would have been happy. But it was still worth the read and speeded along once the characters reached the rain forest.

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