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GENRE / TRIM SIZE (PB+HC)

Thriller / 5.5" x 8.5"



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Gary McAvoy is author of both fiction and nonfiction, including his bestselling thriller series "The Magdalene Chronicles," and its sequel series, "Vatican Secret Archive Thrillers."

His nonfiction work "And Every Word Is True" has been hailed as a sequel to Truman Capote's landmark book "In Cold Blood." Gary is also a professional collector of ancient manuscripts and historical documents, much of which informs his writing projects.

THE JERUSALEM SCROLLS

(VATICAN SECRET ARCHIVE THRILLERS BOOK 5)

In an epic struggle of faith, knowledge and power, the discovery of a mysterious silver scroll in the Judean Desert pits rival factions against one another in a thrilling race to uncover the secrets it holds.

When a mysterious parchment about Jesus Christ's last days surfaces from a cave in the Judean Desert, a young priest must keep it safe. But dark forces around the world want it for themselves...and they're breathing down his neck at every turn.

Father Michael Dominic is called to Jerusalem after two Israeli boys dig up an ancient clay jar that hides several scrolls dating back thousands of years, including one that could upend the Church—a manuscript penned by Saint Paul the Apostle himself—an explosive parchment that stands to rewrite religious history.

Father Dominic arrives to authenticate the relic, but his plans are foiled when a mysterious secret sect wants it in their clutches. His mission kicks off a breakneck pursuit through the wild bazaars of Cairo and the holy city of Jerusalem in a desperate attempt to keep the relic from enemies who would use it for their own wicked purposes. Can the priest find a way to preserve history and stay alive, or will the forces of evil prevail?

EDITORIAL REVIEWS

"This job isn't always just prayers and parchments," Father Michael Dominic quips, as he and his cohort of experts in ancient religious documents and artifacts face a theft, a murder, and a race to unearth "the largest known buried treasure in world history." So it goes in McAvoy's fifth book in the Vatican Secret Archives series, which again pits VSA prefect Father Dominic, his wealthy friend Hana Sinclair, and other allies against ancient mysteries and the people today who will kill to protect them. This time, the adventure is kicked off by young men in the Judean Desert finding a cache of scrolls and coins dating back to the mystic Jews called the Essenes, authors of what is known as the Dead Sea Scrolls.

McAvoy, as always, makes such discoveries a thrill, as he blends quick, informative passages on religious history with exciting accounts of the retrieving, handling, and interpretation of artifacts— and, inevitably, the scheming of various parties to claim them for themselves. Readers will not be surprised to learn that a millenia old cult mentioned in the freshly found scrolls—the Mithraists, an early rival of Christianity dedicated to the Roman gods of war and the sun—still thrives and is on the hunt. Also in the mix: an American megachurch preacher in his Gulfstream jet, a high-rolling figure who's presented with a familiar but effective satiric edge.

As Mossad and the Mithraists enter the fray, revelations, betrayals, and bursts of clever action and suspense follow, all presented with crisp professionalism and McAvoy's customary light touch. The story builds strong momentum without sacrificing the hallmarks of McAvoy's genre: the sense of awe and of history remains potent throughout, even amidst the cobra attacks, stun gun maneuvers, and occasional flayings. Quality control remains high in this series, and McAvoy plants seeds, after a winning conclusion, for more adventure to come.

Takeaway: This lost-artifact adventure exemplifies the genre with thrills, history, and a sense of awe. Great for fans of: Steve Berry, Ian Caldwell.
— PUBLISHERS WEEKLY/BOOKLIFE; Quarter-finalist for Booklife Prize