

Kruger's Choice: A Seekers after Lost Treasure Adventure

C. L. Decker

C. A. Scribner

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In the globe-trotting adventure novel Kruger's Choice, a team of treasure hunters competes to reach an alluring cache first.

In C. L. Decker and C. A. Scribner's thriller *Kruger's Choice*, treasure hunters race to find a gold cache, hoping to prevent a civil war.

The Seekers after Lost Treasure, or SALT, just had a search end in disaster: one of their members, Shiloh, was captured by an unknown group. Both the group and she have vanished. In her absence, Ren leads their team with fierce determination, though inside he feels broken.

When the team is hired to find a treasure in South Africa, they find themselves competing with a murderous guerrilla group that hopes to get there first. Ren sends the team off without him; his singular focus is on rescuing Shiloh in Asia. Meanwhile, another SALT member steps away to help an ally with their ailing child; their story line is ultimately a distraction from the more exciting primary plot lines.

Ren's work to rescue Shiloh, and his ultimate failure to do so, is used to center this volume and its presentation of the members of SALT. Ren's memories of Shiloh are a recurrent presence, even as he buries himself in his work, hoping to save other innocents. His abrupt conversational digressions from her ensure that his exchanges with the team remain germane to their treasure hunt. His struggle between grief and duty is compelling.

While the narrative plods when not focused on SALT's treasure hunt, the search itself is enlivened by a series of escalating obstacles. The mystery around the missing gold is a layered one, and the danger posed by SALT's adversaries is sobering. SALT also faces natural threats, as with a vicious crocodile that strikes while the team digs for clues. Such scenes are brisk and exciting, if their stakes often seem low because of SALT's skills and luck. Still, Kruger, a historical figure in South Africa, is underdeveloped as a background influence; his importance and relevance are not sufficiently explained, and why the treasure is so important, beyond its monetary value, is not always clear.

The book's various settings are covered in too spare a manner. Other complementary details are also foregone, so that the focus is most on SALT's discussions and interactions. The team proves to be larger than life—less concerned with the monetary value of the treasure than they are with protecting innocent people and preserving history.

In the globe-trotting adventure novel *Kruger's Choice*, a team of treasure hunters competes to reach an alluring cache first—and to preserve innocent lives.

JOHN M. MURRAY (August 10, 2021)

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