



The Christos Mosaic

Vincent Czyz

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This thrilling adventure with global, biblical implications is a fascinating read.

Drew Korchula, a disillusioned American in Istanbul, finds himself in possession of a Dead Sea scroll with earth-shattering implications in *The Christos Mosaic* by Vincent Czyz. Drew, along with a colorful group of allies, fights off assassins while attempting to decipher the scrolls and discover the truth, in a thriller that deftly balances history and fiction.

Half Romani and half Croatian, Drew drifts through life without really excelling at anything. Divorced and working as an English teacher in Istanbul, he befriends a Turkish dwarf named Kadir over their shared love of antiquities. A suspicious death prompts Kadir to leave a package with Drew. The package supposedly contains two scrolls. Being a cagey black-market dealer, Kadir manages to trick everyone, and the scrolls are safely hidden away. Drew and Kadir investigate the authenticity of the scrolls as their world crumbles. The two form an alliance with a former commando in the hopes of surviving long enough to either sell the scrolls or learn the truth, which may indicate that Jesus Christ never existed.

Drew's journey, despite involving exploding boats and guns galore, is largely intellectual. As new information is brought to light, the understanding is provided through Drew's eyes. This adds a helpful lens and context, especially since much of the information is deeply biblical and entrenched in history.

The secondary plot follows Drew's attempt to reconcile with his wife. The counterbalance between domestic troubles and thrilling adventures helps round out characters and function as a respite between harrowing encounters. Drew begins the story as an indecisive man with frequent bouts of rage, leading to his divorce. Following his narrow scrapes with sinister forces while doggedly trying to make amends is surprisingly effective at keeping the reader's interest through the more bogged-down parts.

Fans of *The Da Vinci Code* and similar books will want to pick up *The Christos Mosaic*. It has all the important benchmarks of a thrilling adventure: global conspiracy, shocking revelations, thrilling shootouts, and multiple betrayals. The story is well written with strong plotting and vivacious characters. Despite some occasional information overload, *The Christos Mosaic* is a fascinating read.

JOHN M. MURRAY (Spring 2016)

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