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GENERAL

The Quantum Enzyme Code: The Woman who Discovered the Cure for AIDS
David Frango
iUniverse
978-0-595-39381-7
Three Stars (out of Five)

Author David Frango presents a fascinating and modern challenge to medicine and ethics in his new science fiction novel *The Quantum Enzyme Code.* Could the cure for AIDS be lurking in the components that make up DNA? And if a cure were decrypted and produced would the world accept it with open arms?

Meet Dianna Utterson the determined scientist behind this wild hypothesis. Although raised in poverty in the Arizona desert she absorbed science and math with an enthusiasm encouraged and nurtured by her teachers parents and a favorite uncle. As a student in her school's Gifted and Talented program Dianna was introduced to the concepts of DNA Pascal's triangle and the quantum enzyme code among other scientific phenomena. At the age of twelve Dianna declared that she could create a protein using an approach she designed based on her studies in science math and music. Her success won her recognition as a child genius.

But it's her beloved uncle's death from AIDS-related complications that sets her on the warpath for a cure — a path that leads straight through enemy territory. During graduate school Dianna becomes involved with a medical student Benjamin Cashman. Cashman is rich spoiled arrogant a young man who has visions of building a pharmaceutical empire. He becomes obsessed with Dianna's work and is willing to do anything to possess her research.

Frango who majored in Soil and Water Science and Chemical Engineering in college has packed his six hundred page tome with a plethora of scientific references. Many chapters consist only of descriptions of scientific theory interrupting the flow of action in Dianna's story. This book could have been edited down to half its length had the author not been so enthusiastic about adding (what appears to be) every particle of scientific research accumulated in his lifetime.

While Dianna is presented as focused and passionate about her work the author's portrayal of her as "saint-like" is unrealistic and at times troubling. After Cashman assaults her and steals a significant component of her research Dianna says the following to herself: "O there

was so much beauty to life Dianna Utterson don’t die! Don’t die! Forgive Cashman! To try and pursue revenge by calling the police would only put a burden on your shoulders that you would have to carry for the rest of your life.” Revenge may be unsaintly yes but law and order are the marks of civilization.

The Quantum Enzyme Code is a hefty detailed book that will appeal to readers with an affinity for technology science and characters who inspire hope. In addition the author convincingly incorporates a political slant concerning the debate between different sectors of the Catholic Church concerning the eventual use and distribution of the AIDS cure.

Melissa Levine