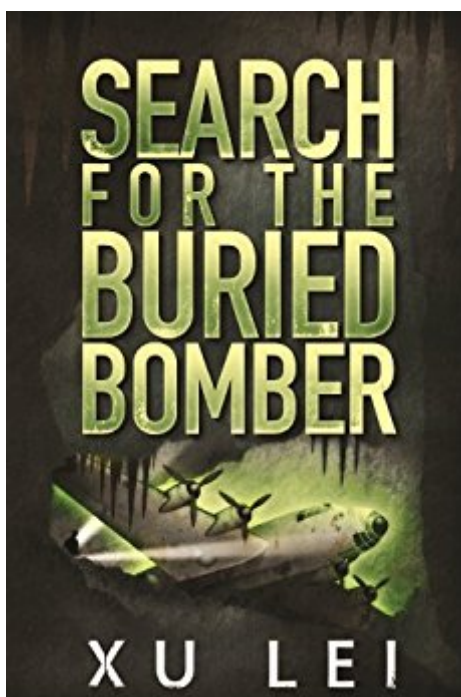


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Search For The Buried Bomber (Dark Prospects Book 1)



Synopsis

The X-Files meets Indiana Jones in *Search for the Buried Bomber*, the first in Xu Lei's Dark Prospects series of thrillers steeped in archeological myths and government secrets. During China's tumultuous Cultural Revolution, the People's Liberation Army dispatches an elite group of prospectors famous for their work uncovering rare minerals to the mountains of rural Inner Mongolia. Their assignment: to bring honor to their country by descending into a maze of dank caves to find and retrieve the remnants of a buried World War II bomber left by their Japanese enemies. How the aircraft ended up beneath thousands of feet of rock baffles the team, but they'll soon encounter far more treacherous and equally inexplicable forces lurking in the shadows. Each step taken and each life lost brings them closer to a mind-bending truth that should never see the light of day. Pride sent them into the caves, but terror will drive them out. Through the eyes of one of the prospectors, bestselling Chinese author Xu Lei leads readers on a gripping and suspenseful journey.

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Customer Reviews

'Search for the Buried Bomber' begins in an interesting way. The first is that it is written by one of China's most popular novelists and this book is said to be hailed as China's most spectacular suspense novel. We begin by reading the memories of a retired geological prospector who was sent on a mission in 1962. He says he swore to never reveal what he saw and he will not break that oath - he accomplishes that to a great degree. We learn a lot about caves and geological prospecting, step by step it is described, their journey and the problems inch by inch. The improbability of what is happening, with doors welded shut and bodies entangled in wire and sacks, wide rivers and endless spaces are cursorily described but it is extremely difficult to picture the surroundings. There are just too many questions and too many unknowns. At almost every step the narrator is at death's door and escapes from that situation to land in another one. People are lost from the expedition and some found again, they come into the storyline and out again, which does not lend to a smooth plot; it just makes understanding what is really going on more difficult. Why would a real group act in this manner? The setting and the plot are so odd that it is hard to distinguish what is really happening. We are never given a satisfactory ending or explanation of the bomber they find - oh we are told it has made a flight, but the reason and results are not for us to know. We are simply told that what he has seen makes his blood run cold and possibly is the most incredible thing in human history. When so much is hidden from the reader and we are not even left in on a conclusion ...why tell the story? It's like a slap in the face to the reader, we are worthy of reading and taking the time to listen but not respected enough to be given an answer.

Xu Lei's SEARCH FOR THE BURIED BOMBER held my interest right up until the end. The story deals with Chinese prospectors investigating an underground Japanese base abandoned beneath China. As the prospectors go deeper and deeper underground, they find strange evidence in the camp, including a huge Japanese bomber that was assembled, and flown, underground. Along the way their number begin to succumb to various accidents and treachery, plus they find the corpses of a team sent in earlier that they knew nothing about. While the book is definitely Indiana Jones-esque in its over the top archeological traps and discoveries, as entertainment I enjoyed reading it right up until the end. Mostly because there IS no end. The book just stops, leaving the reader wondering why they just wasted their time reading the book! No indication that conclusion will be presented in sequels either, so I was just left hanging and frustrated. In addition, the book appears to be written in formal English, meaning it doesn't flow very well and seems somewhat staid, no doubt because the author is native Chinese. Not worth the effort, considering the ending. If you don't find the review helpful, please leave a comment so I may continue to improve my reviews.

I decided to give this book a try, because it was written by an up and coming Chinese author, and I was curious to see what he might have to offer in the way of action adventures. Without giving anything away, I found the story telling to be smooth, and the writing did not get in the way of the story. The story is, like many action books, plot-driven, with one event leading to the next, to the next, and so on. The character development was adequate for the story, but certainly not outstanding. I will say that in order to enjoy this book you have to be able to suspend reality and willingly move into the realm of the extraordinarily unlikely. When I finished reading the last page and the afterward, it became clear that this book has to be the first of a series...either that or the author just ran out of ideas and quit. It was that abrupt. My main criticism of this book is that when you expected the loose ends to be tied up and answers to be provided I was left cold, flat, and alone as a reader, with nothing to go on except the expectation that another book might clear things up. That is, this book didn't provide any sort of satisfying, stand-alone resolution. While I would be moderately interested in discovering what the author left hanging at the end of this book, I am not willing to read on, because there is no guarantee that the same thing won't happen at the end of book 2 or 3 or...plus the story was not compelling enough for me to invest time to read the next installment in the series. The book does not sufficiently stand alone to recommend it on its own merits, and I felt abandoned by the author in the end. Just so you know. For this reason, the best recommendation I can award is 2 or 3 stars. I'll go ahead and award 3 stars.

Totally fascinating premise. Very interesting time and place. Well written (translated) technically. We're even given a locked room mystery. I read a lot of Oriental fiction (in translation). I am used to the style being different from "our" style. I am really interested in that area and enjoy learning about it, even through fiction. This is apparently the first in a series of some length. Unfortunately, it went to great lengths to not give the reader enough of the story. There were too many times the author lit the bulb for the reader hours after leaving us in the dark. It was disappointing that it ended in the way in which it did. This deserves five stars for concept and one star for delivery of the story. That averages to three stars. I'm not sure I'm willing to spend this much time on a sequel. Fool me once and all that.

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