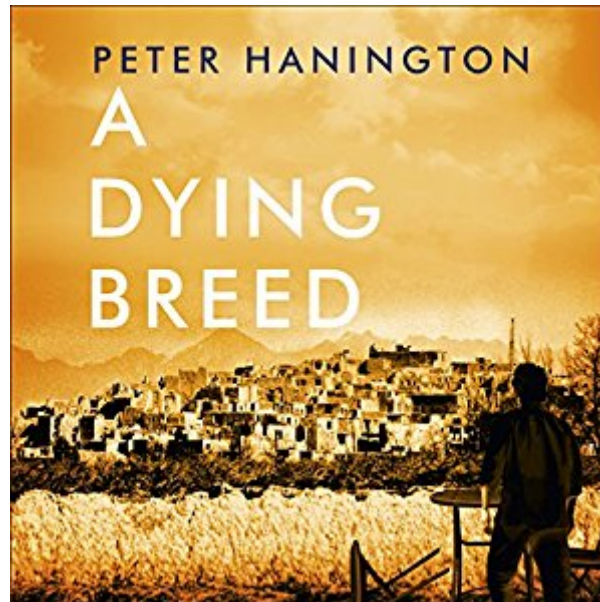




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A Dying Breed



Synopsis

A debut novel in the vein of Greene and le Carré, *A Dying Breed* is a brilliant and gripping story of the politics of news reporting, intrigue and blood set between the dark halls of Whitehall, the shadowy corridors of the BBC and the perilous streets of Kabul, in the shadowy le Carré-esque world of foreign correspondents reporting from war zones around the world. Carver, an old BBC hack, is warned off a story when a bomb goes off, killing a local official in Kabul, but his instincts tell him something isn't quite right, and he won't give up until he finds the truth. A junior producer sent out from London to control him is kidnapped, and as the story unravels it looks like there's collusion between the local consul, Whitehall and someone in the BBC to ensure the real story never sees the light of day.

Book Information

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#1106 in Books > Mystery, Thriller & Suspense > Thrillers & Suspense > Spies & Politics > Espionage

Customer Reviews

When a journalist for The BBC prefers to go out into the war fields instead of staying at the BBC, I think of someone who prefers the excitement and unknown. However, within the walls of BBC is a climate of war of sorts, looking for that story to make a big headline, competing for the best and the brightest, and the undercover, behind the scenes skulldiggery. Here we meet William Carver BBC journalist on his way to Afghanistan primarily for the elections, but really looking for that big story. He started out at the Today Programme, and now in his later years he works on his own. In Afghanistan, Carver picks up a lead on what turns out to be a very big story. His assistant, native Afghanistan, Karim Mumtaz, a would be journalist hears about a bombing at a wedding, the death of

a highly placed Afghan politician, and more interesting info to come. This is not a story that anyone in the intelligence service or in the UK or Afghan government wants him to pursue. And, this is the gist of the entire novel. Carver plows ahead, and then a young inexperienced producer, Patrick Reid from the BBC is sent to deter him. The story grows, and danger is not far behind. Most of the characters in this novel have some need for Introspection into their value systems. Their values are often mixed, what they think they are doing is for the greater good, or, at least that is what they force themselves to believe. British Ambassador David Lever loves Kabul, likes his job and wants to stay, but he can only stay under certain circumstances. William Carver, has the next great story, and many are trying to convince him to let it go, but he pushes on. He drinks a lot, a loner, difficult to work with, an Iraqi mess left behind. Patrick Reid, not a great journalist yet, he knows he is being pushed to stop the great story or lose his job. Rob Mariscoll, BBC managing editor, cheats on his wife, gambles. in debt up to his ears, sent to stop the great story. The General, narcotic trafficker and warlord in Afghanistan, out for revenge, and Karim Mumtaz, the one truly gentle soul who wants to help with that great story. This novel encompasses an amazing story and one that looks upon the history of Afghanistan, told in more detail by The General. At the same time, as I mentioned, we learn the ins and outs of the BBC business. The story of journalists who will go to any lengths to get their story, often at great peril to themselves and others, but need to question, is it worth it. The author, Peter Hanington, I have read, works at the BBC, and out in the field, and he knows of what he speaks. This is an engrossing storyline, and difficult to put down. Indeed, a dying breed. Recommended. prisrob 03-09-17

A compelling read.

Over the past months I've discovered some excellent storytellers but HANINGTON had me so totally absorbed I was genuinely sad to finish the book. I really hope he has more great books to come.

Well paced plot, reasonable character developments, feels authentic- a good read.

I enjoyed the book somewhat! Perhaps if it wasn't down as a book for our book club I may have abandoned it! I found the sequence of events hard to follow and I think there were too many characters, inhibiting me from really finding empathy or association with any of them, with the exception of Patrick, and he really wasn't one of the main characters.

A well written novel and looking for more

I agree with the almost universal praise this book has received. I thought it was very good indeed. It's well written, extremely well informed and very gripping. The book is set in London and Afghanistan and involves an old-school BBC reporter (the dying breed of the title) who has discovered a story which The Authorities don't want brought to light. Put that crudely, it sounds very hackneyed, but it is so well done that it felt very fresh and I became completely involved. The shady dealings and the journalist's attempts to expose them were very plausible and extremely well portrayed so they made a gripping story, but where this book really shines is in the characters and setting. Peter Hanington paints very convincing portraits of a variety of characters from his central protagonist, the world-weary, drink-addled but dogged reporter William Carver to an Afghan drug- and warlord. Even his most minor characters convince, and he creates a story in which believable people do believable things. It's something of a rarity in spy fiction. He also creates a wonderfully convincing backdrop of both journalism and of Afghanistan. These are both areas which Peter Hanington knows intimately, and it shows. I found the settings completely convincing, and a very involving part of the book. There are a couple of minor false steps like the quite lengthy and rather irrelevant details of the personal life of an editor, or the mercenary who informs Carver that this is his last job and talks of the peaceful life he has planned. Well, you just know what's going to happen when someone says that, don't you? Nonetheless, I thought this was a great read; it's intelligent, gripping and very well done and I can recommend it warmly.

This book made me sad, because my father died earlier this year and I think he would have loved it. If you like John le Carre's books or the TV series Homeland, you will enjoy this story of an alcoholic, cantankerous journalist who stumbles onto a conspiracy in Afghanistan that everyone is determined to keep a secret. It's an intelligently written book that assumes its readers are equally intelligent and I had to keep my wits about me when I read it. The author is himself a BBC journalist and his life experiences mean that both the parts set in the UK and the parts set in Afghanistan are full of authenticity and a palpable sense of place.

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