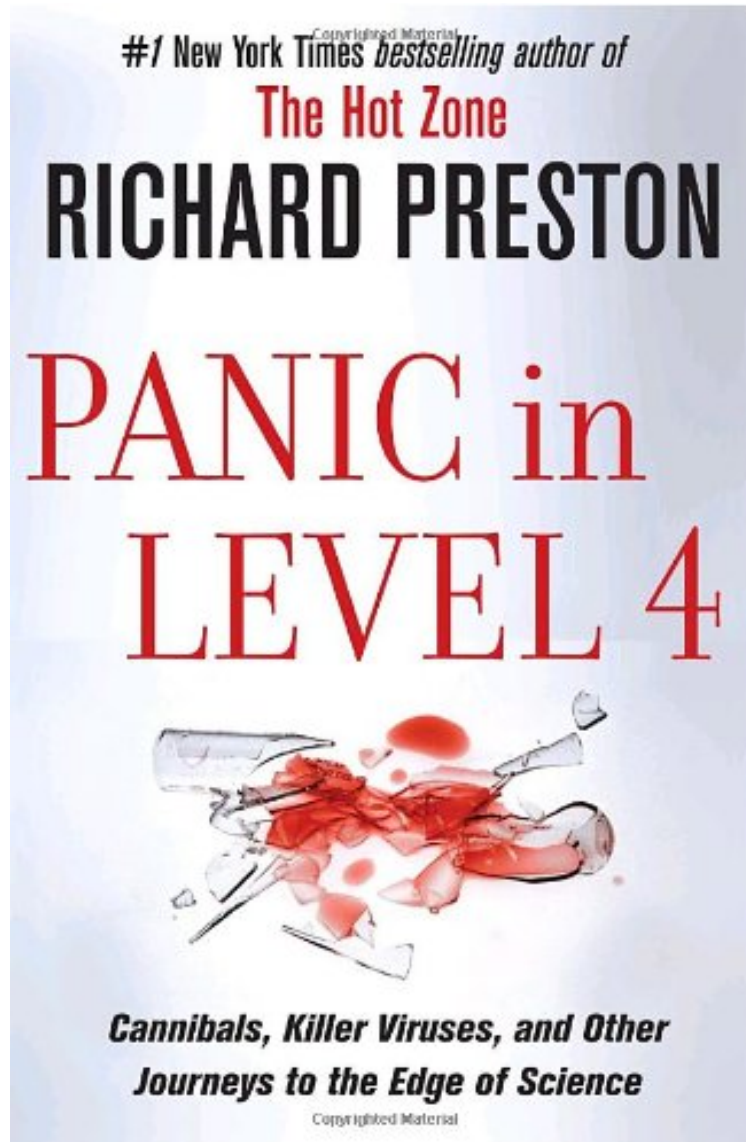


Panic in Level 4: Cannibals, Killer Viruses, and Other Journeys to the Edge of Science

Richard Preston

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Richard Preston : Panic in Level 4: Cannibals, Killer Viruses, and Other Journeys to the Edge of Science before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Panic in Level 4: Cannibals, Killer Viruses, and Other Journeys to the Edge of Science:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Some people will love this and some won't....By SenderaGypsyI

loved this book, but I'm also not surprised that the rating is a bit lower than his other stuff. You really have to have some hopeless nerd qualities to get into it, because it's not his typical scary ride, telling a true story so well you forget it's not fiction. These are vignettes, and the longest one is about 2 Russian brothers holed up in an apartment, with a supercomputer, attempting to calculate the value of Pi. I found it fascinating, and when I finished the book, I reread that section. But if you're looking for something along the lines of *The Hot Zone*, read *Demon in the Freezer* or even *The Cobra Event*. That last one is fiction, I believe, but the story is compelling anyway. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. *Panic In Level 4* By Angie N. I usually love Richard Preston but this book was only OK. Outside of some things about Ebola, I didn't really find it overly interesting. It is well written and written with obvious love. Preston has a way of explaining complex ideas in such a way so as not to speak down to the reader while educating them thoroughly. 4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Disappointed at the missing content. By CCmaterial omitted in the paperback that was in the hardcover. I purchased this book thinking it was the same as the hardcover borrowed from the library. When comparing the two it is quite obvious that the paperback book has interesting material omitted. One example is, the chapters are renamed and consolidated (i.e: the search for Ebola chapter is combined with blood kiss chapter" and the section in "Search for Ebola" chapter describing the twenty one year old Swedish medical student and his death associated with contracting the Marburg virus is totally left off!!) This is one example of a difference. I would prefer to pay the money for a complete edition for my collection in lieu of this shortened version. I feel cheated and returning the book.

Bizarre illnesses and plagues that kill people in the most unspeakable ways. Obsessive and inspired efforts by scientists to solve mysteries and save lives. From *The Hot Zone* to *The Demon in the Freezer* and beyond, Richard Preston's bestselling works have mesmerized readers everywhere by showing them strange worlds of nature they never dreamed of. *Panic in Level 4* is a grand tour through the eerie and unforgettable universe of Richard Preston, filled with incredible characters and mysteries that refuse to leave one's mind. Here are dramatic true stories from this acclaimed and award-winning author, including: The phenomenon of self-cannibals, who suffer from a rare genetic condition caused by one wrong letter in their DNA that forces them to compulsively chew their own flesh and why everyone may have a touch of this disease. The search for the unknown host of Ebola virus, an organism hidden somewhere in African rain forests, where the disease finds its way into the human species, causing outbreaks of unparalleled horror. The brilliant Russian brothers, a mathematician divided between two bodies who built a supercomputer in their apartment from mail-order parts in an attempt to find hidden order in the number pi (π). In fascinating, intimate, and exhilarating detail, Richard Preston portrays the frightening forces and constructive discoveries that are currently roiling and reordering our world, once again proving himself a master of the nonfiction narrative and, as noted in *The Washington Post*, a science writer with an uncommon gift for turning complex biology into riveting page-turners.

From *Publishers Weekly* The title of *New Yorker* contributor Preston's new collection refers to the subject of his bestselling *The Hot Zone*: a series of rooms in a government biohazard laboratory where scientists work with virulent pathogens like the Ebola viruses that would be devastating in the hands of terrorists. The essays (all from the *New Yorker*) cover such scientific matters as a profile of controversial genome mapper Craig Venter; a gene that leads people to cannibalize themselves; and two Russian-Jewish migrant scientists who built a monster computer in their cramped apartment to puzzle out patterns in the value of pi. Preston's essay on the destruction of large swaths of eastern U.S. forests by insect parasites accidentally brought into the country from abroad is the shortest but most compelling. Preston might have done more to update his pieces; for example, the Marburg virus was found in bats last year, supporting his hypothesis that they are the reservoir for Ebola. But Preston's fans will enjoy his showing how few degrees of separation there are between far-flung areas of scientific endeavors. Illus. (June) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From *School Library Journal* Adult/High School Preston gets to the heart of these nonfiction essays by placing himself in the center of the story. The "panic" of the book's title refers to his own when his biohazard suit was breached and he feared he may have been exposed to one of the deadliest known viruses. Two of the pieces involve the brothers Chudnovsky, mathematicians so closely dependent on one another that they refer to themselves as *The Mathematician*. The author was able to disappear as an interviewer to the extent that he became part of the brothers' portrait. At one point, one Chudnovsky says to the other: "The interviewer answers our questions. The interviewer becomes a person in the story." Preston used this skill of blending into his accounts to his advantage. Whether he was strapping on gear to climb mammoth hemlocks with arborists trying to understand the diseases killing the great trees of the world or acting as an off-road driver for a couple of men with the disease of self-cannibalization, Preston fit in like a good supporting actor who also happened to be the cameraman, writer, and director. Teens will find these stories compelling. The author has the eyes and language of a fine novelist, but he has the mind of a scientist who is trying to understand some of the most fascinating mysteries of our age. Will Marston, Berkeley Public Library, CA Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From *Bookmarks Magazine* ers had few complaints about *Panic in Level 4*, and they were usually of the sort that accompany any book assembled from a series of magazine pieces. They found much more

to be impressed by"from Prestons excellent, insightful character studies to his ability to master so many different kinds of knowledge. But perhaps more significant for readers who only know Preston from The Hot Zone was the absence of inside-the-cover blurbs like thrilling and action-packed. Critics clearly agreed that Panic in Level 4 is excellent science writing. But since it is science writing rather than a page-turner, readers looking for another Hot Zone may want to look elsewhere. Copyright 2004 Phillips Nelson Media, Inc.