



## Cemetery Dance

*Douglas Preston , Lincoln Child*

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## **Cemetery Dance** Douglas Preston , Lincoln Child

Pendergast-the world's most enigmatic FBI Special Agent-returns to New York City to investigate a murderous cult.

William Smithback Jr., a prominent New York Times reporter, was killed in a brutal attack in his Upper West Side apartment. His wife, Nora Kelly, an archeologist at the Museum of Natural History, was injured as well. Multiple eyewitness identified the assailant as a neighbor n the building, Colin Fearing: a man who, by all reports, dead and buried ten days ago.

While Captain Laura Hayward leads the official investigation, Pendergast and Lieutenant Vincent D'Agosta undertake their own private-and decidedly unorthodox-quest for the truth. Their serpentine journey takes them to an enclave of Manhattan they never imagined could exist: a secretive, reclusive cult of Obeah and voodoo which no outsiders have ever survived.

## **Cemetery Dance Details**

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Author : Douglas Preston , Lincoln Child

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## **From Reader Review Cemetery Dance for online ebook**

### **Miloš says**

Pure 5 stars. As usuall...

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### **Ken Kugler says**

“Cemetery Dance” is the latest book in a series that started with Relic. In this latest installment the setting is NYC and the story is centered on Voudou, zombiis, animal rights, greed, as well as the dance that is always played between people in relationships. The relationship between the main characters, which the authors Douglas Preston and Lincoln Child have developed into complex have invested us with deep interest. The people that populate this series are FBI agent Aloysius Prendergast, Lieutenant Vincent D’Agosta, Nora Kelly, and archeologist for the Museum of Natural History, her husband William Smithback, a reporter for the New York Times, Captain Laura Hayward. They play their parts in investigating murder, animal ritual killings, and a religious cult set in the Inwood Hill Part section of upper Manhattan at a place called the Ville. The twists and turns keep you on the edge as the story speeds up and slows down. I loved this book and recommend that you read the entire series. The authors claim that the book can be read as a stand alone but I feel that while this may be true, the reader’s enjoyment will benefit from getting to know the people populating this series.

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### **Dustin Crazy little brown owl says**

Really enjoyed this. The opening of the story really grabbed my attention. There were some far-fetched, unrealistic elements but also some beautifully described settings. It's the first book I've read in this series but won't be the last :-)

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### **Matthew says**

Action packed mystery and suspense! Another great Pendergast novel. This one will have you guessing and second guessing the whole time.

While this is a standalone story, it does have its place in the series (after the Diogenes trilogy) and enough references to the previous actions of the characters (especially Thunderhead), that it would behoove you to read it in order.

At first, I was not feeling this book as much as I was the others. The plot felt forced and some of the characters felt like they were acting a bit uncharacteristically. But, this soon passed and the last 3rd of the book has an explosive and twisty climax/resolution that should satisfy all Pendergast fans.

So, I highly recommend you get out your boogie shoes and do the Cemetery Dance!

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## Abby says

Reporter Bill Smithback has just been attacked by a dead man walking. Leave it to our favorite detectives to solve this mystery. It was really only a matter of time before this series explored the world of zombies and voodoo. However, this one fell a little short for me. The story was less charming than others and I didn't really feel for the characters, though it's always sad when we lose a favorite throughout the series narrative. Hopefully there isn't a trend of bad books with the rest of this series.

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## J.K. Grice says

The Preston & Child machine roll on with another smash!!

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## Shiva Pillai says

Wow. one heck of a comeback. Very glad that the writers decided to stick to the tried and tested formula of awesomeness. I can't wait to find out what was in that letter that was being delivered to the special agent. Off to the next one...

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## Lobstergirl says

Painfully awful. Preston and Child's ploy, I believe in every single novel, is to create some paranormal thing - a monster, demon, apparition, homeschooled child - and then at the end of the novel pretend it was not really paranormal. There is a scientific explanation for everything, and at the end of each tome it unspools from Agent Pendergast's mouth.

Here, it's zombies. Although they aren't satisfied with that spelling, it has to be *zombiis*. Note, although this seems to be a book about voodoo, the authors pretend it's not voodoo. Nor is it *Vôdou*. It's Obeah. I *hate* zombies. I *hate* voodoo. Every American mystery series author seems to feel it a requirement to devote one book in their series to voodoo and I plow through these books with gritted teeth. There's also a lot of animal sacrifice going on, plus the reanimated corpse of Bill Smithback, yes that Bill, a recurring character for P&C, and only recently married to his wife Nora. Bill is in fact butchered on their one-year anniversary and then, bloody rags still stuck to his body and long ropes of saliva dripping from his gaping maw (all the zombies have long ropy saliva), goes after Nora. If you believe this could never happen in real life, well, you just don't understand science.

In a previous review I complained about P&C's use and abuse of such words as "palsied", "purchase", "scrabbled", and worst, "susurrus." They show up again here: The steel loops on a curtain rod rattle "with a cold, palsied cadence." Nora's hands are "grabbing for purchase on bushes" as she climbs a "defile" (I had better not see this word again). A reporter "scrabbled against the chain link, finding a purchase". Someone's hand "scrabbled on the wetness." D'Agosta "couldn't get a purchase" on slippery walls. After a zombii

chomps down a freshly sacrificed colt, "the susurrus rose in volume".

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## Ginger says

### 5 STARS!! ??????????

What a great book and the plot was fantastic!

I was on the edge of my seat with this whole book. The shocks and plot twists just kept coming at me. I ended up binge reading the last 150 pages of this book because I could not put it down!

The Pendergast books are a perfect combination of suspense, action and thrills.

**Cemetery Dance** is set in NYC and involves all of our favorite characters.

Pendergast, D'Agosta, Hayward, Smithback and Nora Kelly. I've enjoyed reading about all of their adventures and cases over the years. I love how *Preston & Child* have made me care about and cheer for all of these characters!

This book involves a murderous religious group practicing the voodoo religion of Obeah.

Yeah, it's awesome! I love plots with dark, scary and shock worthy topics!

The whole plot of this book is just flippin' fantastic. I really can't say much in this review due to spoilers.

There is so many plot twists and action, even from the beginning! I don't want to ruin the shock factor for the reader.

Like I've said before in other Pendergast books, start from the beginning of the series.

You won't be disappointed!!

**This is one of my favorite series out there!**

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## Kasia says

By now the authors must think that it's pretty funny to toy with the reader's heart, I'm a constant fan when it comes to the Perndergast books but putting the lives of all my favorite characters into some seriously creepy jeopardy is not funny!! I think by page 153 I was making disturbing sounds one night reading on the couch because I was asked what the heck was I reading and if I was all right... yes thanks, just getting my internal organs rearranged... Cemetery Dance is book number nine in the FBI agent with a little air of mystery ala Jackie Chan but James Bond style; Pendergast, who is one of my absolute favorite literary characters in the existence of the known universe after the Big Bang. This book starts off fast and hard, one of the top characters in the series is killed, gruesomely murdered in their own apartment (I wont spoil who as central as it is to the plot) and their death resonates deep within everyone, D'Agosta, Nora, Pendergast, Hayward and the task forces who work effortlessly to get to the truth and heart of the matter. I really liked the crazy topic this embraced, I'm reviewing this books weeks after reading it and I have nothing but fond warm fuzzy memories of it, minus the creepy and ice chilled parts that made me grips the book harder than normal, yeah those...ick, there was some more delicious dreaded hide and seek- followed by a mad killed – type of museum stuff as it was so greatly done in Cabinet of Curiosities, book #3 which I really enjoyed, totally bone chilling and well done!

This story managed to dive deep into some dark places of the character's souls, abysmal and depressing

issues risen from anger and need for vengeance pushed someone to investigate the horrid and terrible death of their loved one, the results were magical and dark of course but a great read from the duo who writes Special Agent Pendergast so wonderfully, I cant wait to dive into the next read, they are always incredibly intoxicating with their creativity and intelligent charm.

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## **Terry says**

This next installment in the Pendergast series by Douglas Preston and Lincoln Child really ramps up the action. While all of the books have been good, this one was exceptional, both for the mystery and the action. Our favorite characters are there and they lived up to my expectations as to who they are supposed to be, while at the same time, growing to become more. I continue to be impressed with these authors and this series. While all of these books in this series have their moments of horror thrown in with the action, I felt this book had the most so far, which added to the excitement and anxiety very well. I cannot recommend this series enough for those that like action books, thrillers and mysteries, intertwined with some real elements of horror. On to the next in the series, and more great fun! Btw, on the ending and the big event that happens in this book, (view spoiler)

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## **Brooke says**

Although most, if not all, of the other GR reviews for this book contain a certain plot element without including a spoiler warning, I'm a little uncertain about doing so. I understand their likely reasoning - it's revealed in the inner flap of the book and occurs in the first few pages, but the shock I felt when opening up the cover and reading the newspaper clipping printed there, "William Smithback Jr., a prominent New York Time reporter, was killed in a brutal attack last night in his Upper West Side apartment," was so startling that I'd hate to take that away from other readers.

My first response was denial - no way did Preston and Child kill off Smithback. He's one of their original characters, introduced in Relic along with D'Agosta and Pendergast. No way did they do it and then reveal it in the book's synopsis without some sort of twist. It's a misdirection! At least twice they've given the illusion that someone was dead, only to find out that we'd been tricked. I was quite confident Smithback would be just fine.

By the time I got to the autopsy scene, where his organs were displayed around his opened corpse, I realized that no, our dear journalist has really left us.

#\$@!

One reason I love the Preston/Child books so much is that they've crafted unique characters that I end up really attached to. This is the opposite of so many other thrillers (including, puzzlingly, their solo books). In the end, the reason for Smithback's death was so mundane that it was disappointing. We lost him so some rich dude can get richer? The rich dude's full plan, when finally revealed, seems too crazily far-fetched - too many things had to happen just right for it to have worked out. Being a fictional story, obviously everything DID happen right, but it required quite a bit of suspension of disbelief (go ahead and laugh - after everything that's happened in the Preston/Child books, THIS is what trips me up? I know, I know.)

I'm just lukewarm on this one, which is sad since, to me, new Preston/Child releases are akin to new Harry Potters. There are threads dropped within that are reasonably expected to lead to new ones (Nora's new expedition and the mysterious envelope Pendergast receives), so hopefully I'll go back to being a drooling fangirl in a year's time.

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### **Emma says**

Fantastic! Really enjoyed this one. It seemed to me a return to the form of the pre-Diogenes books. Great story, action almost from the very first page, a fascinating look at a different part of New York. It was pretty creepy too. Such a great series. Join me on my campaign: #Pendergast for President...

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### **kartik narayanan says**

Cemetery Dance is a return to form for Agent Pendergast. It has an intriguing mystery, hints of the macabre and the return of some familiar characters. Surprisingly, for a story set in New York, it is not focused on the Museum of Natural History. And there is no Constance.

The trademark subtle humour returns intertwined with a pretty serious plot. The one negative for me were little changes in Pendergast's character.

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### **Matt Schiariti says**

Let me preface this that I picked up a copy and had it signed by Preston and Child themselves at the very first stop of their book signing tour at a local Barnes and Noble. If you have an opportunity to go see them, do so! Very personable, open to questions and had a great time talking to the fans, signing the books and answering the questions! They are working on another book and I did ask them if we'll ever see a sequel to Ice Limit (which if you'll recall was mentioned in Still Life with Crowes) and when I asked Lincoln Child he said 'yes there will be and sooner than you think!'

Now, on to the review.

Simply put, I loved it. Pendergast, D'agosta, Hayward, Kelly, Smithback, they're all here. This is simply yet another great mystery/whodunit penned by Preston and Child featuring characters that we fans have been reading for years now and if you're anything like me, have grown rather attached to.

I'm not giving anything away in saying that Smithback is murdered in this book. It's very sad to say the least which shows just how engaging these characters have become to me as a long time fan. Who did it? A man named Colin Fearing. But is he just a man? The majority of this book covers Voodoo and Zombis. Sound a little far fetched? Perhaps at first glance but as with Preston and Child novels, the Pendergast books in particular, the far fetched doesn't always seem as unbelievable after you start to turn the pages. I haven't encountered other authors than can go out on a limb with the supernatural and mystical and be able to land on their feet like Preston and Child.

At the center of this mystery is a cult like village referred to as the Ville which is situated in one of the most remote forests of Manhattan (and this is a real live place, not made up). Talk of animal sacrifice, murder and voodoo rituals coupled with the murder of Smithback by a zombi makes the public outcry immense against the Ville.

Pendergast, D'agosta and Nora Kelly are hell bent on finding out who would be after and want to murder their fallen friend/husband and what is really at the bottom of this zombi mystery. Let me say that it's definetly more complicated than it seems at first glance.

It took me a little while to read this book. Not because it was incredibly long, not because it was boring or difficult to read or hard to follow. It's simply because when a Preston and Child novel comes out I tend to read them slower because I enjoy them so much I find myself not wanting them to end, even though I'm eager to see how everything plays out.

Cemetery Dance doesn't disappoint and any fans of Preston and Child novels and their repeating characters should get their hands on this one.

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## **Buck says**

It seems that the longer many of my favorite series go, the more tiresome they become. I'm afraid that Preston and Child's Pendergast series is doing just that.

The plot of this one revolves around a hybrid form of voodoo and a secret town hidden inside a park in the middle of NYC. I won't go into the plot details here because it is irrelevant to my main beef with the work.

Over the years I have enjoyed Pendergast. He always seemed to be something of a modern age Sherlock Holmes. He was at once mysterious and unusual while also brilliant and almost prescient.

For the first time in this work, I noticed chinks in Pendergast's armor. The tipping point was a common philosophical mistake: Pascal's Wager. This classical conundrum has been used for 300 years to show that it is better to believe in religion. It's the classic "hedge your bets" strategy.

Unfortunately, Preston and Child don't seem to know much about it. They use it in the work incorrectly stating it as follows: A lifelong atheist is about to die. He calls a priest to confess his sins and profess his belief in God. Does he act logically? Preston and Child have Pendergast assert he does act completely logically. Alas, they have Pendergast falling into an amateurs trap in the faulty logic of Pascal's Wager.

Simply put, Pascal's Wager itself is illogical because it requires a number of unsubstantiated assumptions such as a "god" who is incapable of discerning false statements or beliefs, a "god" who prefers falsehood to honesty, and a "god" who will punish honest inquiry and questioning while rewarding lies and mendacity. If any of these are true then the "god" would not fit the criteria of a "god" at all. Thus, Pascal's Wager is ridiculous.

The Pendergast that I have always considered brilliant and quite logical should have spotted those amateur traps. Unfortunately, even a great detective is only as good as his author. Thus, we find Pendergast stumbling over such a simple thing.



This may not seem like a big deal, but for me it was big enough to blow the illusion of Pendergast and demote him, for me, from the pantheon of great fictional detectives.

Otherwise, the book is somewhat uninspired. The action follows a fairly standard formula of murder, kidnapping, plot twist, and resolution.

Honestly, this did not seem up to some of their earlier works which were much creepier and well laid out.

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### **fleurette says**

“Excuse me, Pendergast, but I have to ask: you don’t actually believe that stuff about oanga and zombiis?”

“My dear Vincent, I don’t believe anything. I am not a priest. I deal with evidence and probabilities, not beliefs.”

“Yeah, I know. But I mean, Night of the Living Dead? No way.”

“That is a rather categorical statement.”

For some strange reason that isn't really clear even to me, I have omitted this book in the series. I have read all the books preceding this one in right order and all the books after, of course also in order. But somehow I haven't read this one. Well, I don't think it is a problem, especially that I remember the next books in this series rather sketchily. Although it came the time to finally deal with this negligence.

Why, I'm asking you Mssrs. Preston and Child, why do you have to kill Bill? (I know this rhyme sounds cheap but it wasn't intentional) Okay, so he has never been my favourite character, for most of the time I didn't really care about him. But to kill him, just like that? That's an overkill! You just don't kill a character that is your main hero in one of your other books. Who stars in some of your other books. That you allowed the readers to get attached to. I quite like Nora Kelly and wish her well. And killing her husband is just cruel. (view spoiler) Who will be next? D'Agosta? Pendergast himself?

Fortunately, the whole story keeps your interest. The chapters are short, the characters familiar and the action is fast. The whole voodoo / zombii thing is really interesting. It is also used masterly to make the whole story really different from thousands of other books out there. These all makes the book an easy read. Again I'm not sure why I liked that long.

The explanation of the whole affair is much better than I expected. The authors could have use an easy solution but they went for something more complicated and sophisticated. That's a big plus.

It was nice to come back to the well-known characters again. I'm glad I read this story. But killing Bill, I won't forgive you that.

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### **Debbie says**

Wow, I just finished this book and it brought back the feeling I had when I first read Relic and met Agent

Pendergast. When I first heard that this book had been released I was a little hesitant as I did not enjoy *The Wheel of Darkness* as much as some of Preston's and Childs' other books. But the first 10 pages will blow your mind! I could not believe how they started off the book and I have to admit I was a little devastated.

That said I felt like after those first few pages you feel like you have a personal interest in seeing the murders solved and the murderers brought to justice. I found myself saying "Ok, I will stop at the end of this chapter" but it was hard to put the book down. I thought D'Agosta's character was a little annoying and totally irrational, which in the context of the story is totally fitting, but was a bit much. Pendergast is his usual smooth and slightly odd self. I thought it was kind of funny that the book centers around zombies. I guess there is no escaping the craze. You will definitely be left guessing until the last few pages of the book.

One minor point that did bother me was there was almost no reference what so ever to what happened to Pendergast in *The Wheel of Darkness*. I felt like that book showed a weakness in Pendergast and put him through such a trauma that I was curious to see how his character would adapt. I know at the end of *Cemetery Dance* it's mentioned that this is supposed to be a stand alone book but I would have liked to see some explanation of how Pendergast recovered so quickly from the events in *The Wheel of Darkness*.

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### **Margaret says**

*Zombies in Upper Manhattan*. (Hey, it's summer.) A relatively weak entry in the Agent Pendergast series, which is usually distinguished by its weirdly exuberant combination of police-procedural structure and supernatural, *The-Thing-That-Lived-In-the-Subways* plotting. This one has some interesting historical background on the Inwood neighborhood at the northern tip of Manhattan, an area I don't know at all despite have grown up in New York, but there's something enervated about the story and the writing, as if the authors didn't really have an inspiration this time around and dredged the book up from the bottom of endless cups of coffee to fulfill their obligation to the publisher. Even the eccentric and brilliant Pendergast, one of the more original and compelling detective characters going, seems colorless and sort of exhausted. Part of the problem may be that for the first time that I can remember in this series Preston & Child don't stand by their supernatural premise, a curious decision since its one of the things that sets the series apart in its overcrowded field. A disappointment.

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### **Juli says**

*Zombies*. VooDoo. Animal sacrifices. A violent cult. *Cemetery Dance*, book #9 in the Agent Pendergast series, has a little bit of everything. And once again it is a brilliantly creepy tale.

Two of Agent Pendergast's cohorts -- William Smithback and Nora Kelly -- are celebrating their anniversary when they are brutally attacked in their New York apartment. Witnesses are able to identify the assailant. The only problem is the suspect died three weeks before the attack. Soon Pendergast and Lieutenant Vincent D'Agosta are investigating a cult operating in an old abandoned church, amid rumors of murderous zombies. Then a dead man kills a woman in a room crowded with reporters and local media. Are the dead coming back to life to stalk the living? And is the cult behind it all?

I listened to an audiobook version of this novel, narrated by Scott Brick. He reads at a nice pace, and was easily understood. I have some hearing loss, but was easily able to hear and understand him easily.

I enjoyed the voodoo (or Vodou, as Pendergast points out in the book) and zombie killer cult slant of this story. Zombies are about as trope-y as vampires....but I enjoyed the use of re-animated corpses as murderers. A little bit different from most zombie tales. The story has lots of action, some grisly moments and lots of twists & turns. The ending was action-packed and thrilling as usual. Very enjoyable thriller. I love this series & I'm happily moving on to the next book. :)

To find out more about the authors and their books, check out their website: <https://www.prestonchild.com/>

If you watched the two movies based on early books in this series.....try the books instead. The movies didn't do the characters justice at all. Too many changes to the stories too. The books are much better -- as usual. :)

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