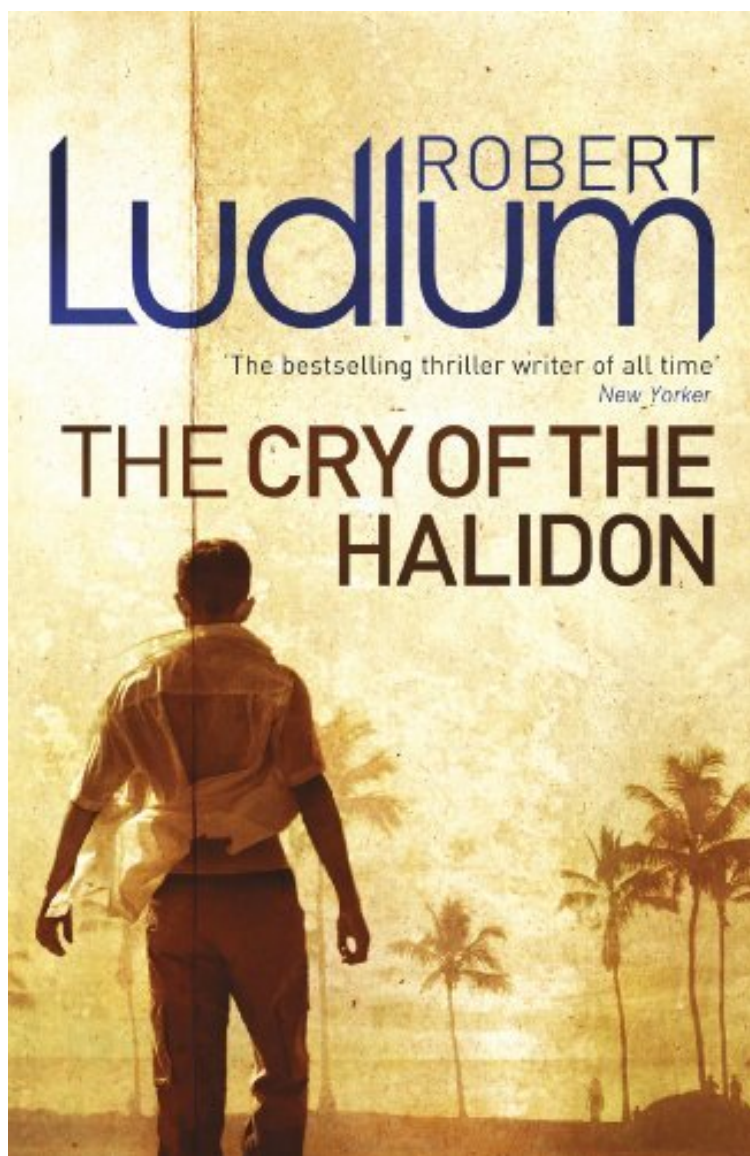


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The Cry of the Halidon (English Edition)



Par Robert Ludlum
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Description : Description du produitIt's an offer Alex McCauliff just can't refuse: two million dollars for a geological survey of Jamaica's dark interior. All Dunstone, Limited asks for in return is his time, his expertise, and above all his absolute secrecy. No one is to know of Dunstone's involvement - not even McCauliff's handpicked team. But British Intelligence knows and they've let Alex know a secret of their own: the last survey team sent to Jamaica by Dunstone vanished without a trace. For McCauliff, it's too late to turn back. Alex already knows about Dunstone...which means he already knows too much. He is a marked man...but by whom? Dunstone Limited? British Intelligence? A rival company? A beautiful island and a beautiful woman who could be a spy are central to Alex's chance for survival. That and a single word...Halidon.

Prsentation de l'diteurEvery move could be his last - and his only clue to survival is a single mysterious word: Halidon.Alex McAuliff has just received an offer he can't refuse. A company called Dunstone Ltd will pay him two million dollars for a geological survey of Jamaica's interior - and they require his absolute secrecy. But British Intelligence are aware of the deal, and they've let Alex in on a secret of their own: the last survey team Dunstone dispatched to Jamaica vanished without trace. Now it's too late to turn back. From the moment he lands in Jamaica, Alex is a marked man. He already knows about Dunstone...which means he knows too much.ExtraitLondon, England The tall, light-haired American in the unbuttoned Burberry trench coat walked out the Strand entrance of the Savoy Hotel. He stopped for an instant and looked up at the English sky between the buildings in the court. It was a perfectly normal thing to do--to observe the sky, to check the elements after emerging from shelter--but this man did not give the normally cursory glance and form a judgment based primarily on the chill factor.He looked.Any geologist who made his living developing geophysical surveys for governments, companies, and foundations knew that the weather was income; it connoted progress or delay.Habit.His clear gray eyes were deeply set beneath wide eyebrows, darker than the light brown hair that fell with irritating regularity over his forehead. His face was the color of a man's exposed to the weather, the tone permanently stained by the sun, but not burned. The lines beside and below his eyes seemed stamped more from his work than from age, again a face in constant conflict with the elements. The cheekbones were high, the mouth full, the jaw casually slack, for there was a softness also about the man...in abstract contrast to the hard, professional look.This softness, too, was in his eyes. Not weak, but inquisitive; the eyes of a man who probed--perhaps because he had not probed sufficiently in the past.Things...things...had happened to this man.The instant of observation over, he greeted the uniformed doorman with a smile and a brief shake of his head, indicating a negative."No taxi, Mr. McAuliff?" "Thanks, no, Jack. I'll walk." "A bit nippy, sir." "It's refreshing--only going a few blocks." The doorman tipped his cap and turned his attention to an incoming Jaguar sedan. Alexander McAuliff continued down the Savoy Court, past the theater and the American Express office to the Strand. He crossed the pavement and entered the flow of human traffic heading north toward Waterloo Bridge. He buttoned his raincoat, pulling the lapels up to ward off London's February chill.It was nearly one o'clock; he was to be at the Waterloo intersection by one. He would make it with only minutes to spare.He had agreed to meet the Dunstone company man this way, but he hoped his tone of voice had conveyed his annoyance. He had been perfectly willing to take a taxi, or rent a car, or hire a chauffeur, if any or all were necessary, but if Dunstone was sending an automobile for him, why not send it to the Savoy? It wasn't that he minded the walk; he just hated to meet people in automobiles in the middle of congested streets. It was a goddamn nuisance.The Dunstone man had had a short, succinct explanation that was, for the Dunstone man, the only reason necessary--for all things: "Mr. Julian Warfield prefers it this way." He spotted the automobile immediately. It had to be Dunstone's--and/or Warfield's. A St. James Rolls-Royce, its glistening black, hand-tooled body breaking space majestically, anachronistically, among the petrol-conscious Austins, MGs, and European imports. He waited on the curb, ten feet from the crosswalk onto the bridge. He would not gesture or acknowledge the slowly approaching Rolls. He waited until the car stopped directly in front of him, a chauffeur driving, the rear window open."Mr. McAuliff?" said the eager, young-old face in the frame."Mr. Warfield?" asked McAuliff, knowing that this fiftyish, precise-looking executive was not."Good heavens, no. The name's Preston. Do hop in; I think we're holding up the line." "Yes, you are." Alex got into the backseat as Preston moved over. The Englishman extended his hand."It's a pleasure. I'm the one you've been talking to on the telephone." "Yes...Mr. Preston." "I'm really very sorry for the inconvenience, meeting like this. Old Julian has his quirks, I'll grant you that." McAuliff decided he might have misjudged the Dunstone man. "It was a little confusing, that's all. If the object was precaution--for what reason I can't imagine he picked a hell of a car to send." Preston laughed. "True. But then, I've learned over the years that Warfield, like God, moves in mysterious ways that basically are quite logical. He's really all right. You're having lunch with him, you know." "Fine. Where?" "Belgravia." "Aren't we going the wrong way?" "Julian and God--basically logical, chap." The St. James Rolls crossed Waterloo, proceeded south to the Cut, turned left until Blackfriars Road, then left again, over Blackfriars Bridge and north into Holborn. It was a confusing route.Ten minutes later the car pulled up to the entrance canopy of a white stone building with a brass plate to the right of the glass double doors that read SHAFTESBURY ARMS. The doorman pulled at the handle and spoke jovially."Good afternoon, Mr. Preston." "Good afternoon, Ralph." McAuliff followed Preston into the building, to a bank of three elevators in the well-appointed hallway. "Is this Warfield's place?" he asked, more to pass the moment than to inquire."No, actually. It's mine. Although I won't be joining you for lunch.

However, I trust Cook implicitly; you'll be well taken care of." "I won't try to follow that. 'Julian and God.'

"Preston smiled noncommittally as the elevator door opened. From Publishers Weekly Ludlum's tale of international intrigue was originally published under a pseudonym in 1975. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc.