

《The Six Sacred Stone》

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内容概要

This novel is a sequel to Matthew Reilly's previous novel, *Seven Ancient Wonders*, which ended with the Golden Capstone reassembled atop the Great Pyramid at Giza, and the ritual of power performed to grant Australia a thousand years of unchallenged power - invincibility, as shown by the end of the book. *The Six Sacred Stones* picks up eighteen months later - 20 August 2007 - on Easter Island, the geographical opposite of the Great Pyramid, when seven men use a second Capstone to nullify the power of the Tartarus sunspot and remove Australia's invincibility. In [China], Professor Max Epper (known as Wizard) is investigating the tomb of Chinese Philosopher Laozi, owner of the Philosopher's Stone. With his research partner, Yobu 'Tank' Tanaka, Wizard discovers the cryptic message referring to the Tartarus Sunspot and the use of the Sa-Benben, or Firestone, the top piece of the Capstone from the previous book. They find another message, saying that the first pillar must be laid 100 days before the Return. Wizard sends a message to Jack West, in Australia, just before a contingent of Chinese military arrive to capture them, intended to use Wizard's knowledge to find the Six Sacred Stones. Jack West receives Wizard's message, just before the farm is attacked by the Chinese army, participating in the Talisman Sabre military exercises. West escapes to the Halicarnassus, his private plane, with Lily, whom he adopted at the end of the previous book; Alby Calvin, Lily's friend; Zoe and Sky Monster, who are visiting the farm. As they leave, Jack grabs the Firestone from its hiding place, and Wizard's research journal, and reads it whilst travelling to Dubai. In the city, they travel to the Burj al Arab tower, and call a meeting of nations. The surviving team members from *Seven Ancient Wonders* return, with the exception of Fuzzy, from Jamaica. At the meeting, Jack informs them that the end of the world is nigh, due to a zero-point field (the 'Dark Sun') entering our solar system, which could destroy the entire world. However, in order to save the world, the 'Machine' must be rebuilt by placing six oblong diamond pillars in their respective locations around the globe. However, almost nothing is known about the Machine, but the knowledge can be found using the Six Sacred Stones - the Philosopher's Stone, the Altar Stone at Stonehenge, The Twin Tablets of Thutmosis, The Seeing Stone of Delphi, the Killing Stone of the Maya, and the Basin of Ramses II. Then, Fuzzy's severed head arrives in a hatbox, and an aeroplane is sighted approaching the tower. Everyone escapes, and the team splits at the airfield. Jack, Pooh Bear, Stretch, Astro (a US Marine), Scimitar (Pooh's brother) and Vulture (Scimitar's companion) head into China to rescue Wizard, whilst Zoe takes Lily and Alby to Stonehenge. They meet up with twin Scottish Maths geniuses, Lachlan and Julius Adamson, and use the Firestone in conjunction with the altar stone to reveal the locations of the Six Vertices, where the Pillars must be placed. However, the locations are slightly inaccurate, as the continents have changed since the maps were drawn. Meanwhile, West's group rescue Wizard and Tank successfully, and retrieve the Philosopher's Stone from Laozi's trap system. Arriving in Britain, the location of the second meeting, the Americans have brought the Killing Stone of the Maya, recovered from Mexico; Vulture brings one of the pillars, from the treasury of his family, the Royal House of Saud; and a representative of the British Royal Family, Iolanthe Compton-Jones, brings the pillar kept by her family. The pillars are cloudy diamond bricks, with a liquid-filled void in the centre. After being 'cleansed' by the Philosopher's Stone, the pillars become clear, and the liquid silver. It is also discovered that Iolanthe's pillar is the fourth, and Vulture's pillar is the first. The Killing Stone of the Maya is united with the Firestone, and it reveals the dates by which the pillars must be laid - the first on the next day, and the second some seven days later. The Adamson twins have correlated the data from Stonehenge, and found that the first Vertex is underneath Lake Nasser in Egypt, close to Abu Simbel. The team starts out, accompanied by Astro and Iolanthe, leaving the Adamson twins with Tank to find the other Vertices. At the Vertex, the first pillar is inlaid, and the reward mentioned in Wizard's notes, 'Knowledge', is revealed in the Word of Thoth on its sides. However, Iolanthe betrays them, and a large number of military vehicles arrive. Iolanthe, Jack, Pooh, Vulture, Scimitar, Astro and Stretch are captured by American forces, whilst the others escape in the damaged Halicarnassus. West recovers to find himself in a pit, tied up. The leader of the American forces is revealed to be his father, Jack West Sr, known as 'Wolf' - who leads a rogue CIEF force. He informs Jack that of the ritual to counter Tartarus, the work of the Japanese Blood Brotherhood (as was the plane attack in Dubai), a group determined to avenge Japan's humiliation at the end of World War II, by destroying the world. He then drops a stone into the pit, intended to kill Jack, and allows his co-conspirators, Vulture and Scimitar, to send Stretch to the Mossad, who desire to exact revenge for his

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disobeying their orders at the Hanging Gardens of Babylon (see Seven Ancient Wonders) and for Pooh Bear to be sacrificed by the Ethiopian Christians who guard the mine, where they are now. It is also revealed that Iolanthe is cooperating with Wolf. Meanwhile, on the Halicarnassus Lily mentions she overheard Iolanthe telling Jack that the second pillar was guarded by the Neetha tribe in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. However, the damaged plane will not be able to reach the DRC, so Sky Monster (the New Zealand pilot) puts it down in Rwanda, and Zoe, Wizard, Lily and Alby head out to meet with an old friend, Solomon Kol, who will take them into the Congo. After a few days, they locate the place where explorer Henry Morton Stanley claimed he located the Neetha, and are promptly captured by the lost tribe. Imprisoned in the Neetha village, a city built by the same civilisation that built the Machine, they discover the tribe possesses the Second Pillar, and the Seeing Stone of Delphi. The first pillar, returned to Halicarnassus before Jack's capture, the philosopher's stone and Firestone are confiscated by the tribe's warlock. He uses them to cleanse the second pillar, and to use the Delphic orb to see the Dark Sun. They also encounter Dr Diane Cassidy, a missing anthropologist enslaved by the Neetha, and Ono, Cassidy's student, who is oppressed in the tribe. Following the transponder signature of the helicopter Zoe's group took into the DRC, Wolf follows them and attacks the Neetha. Solomon is killed shortly before the attack, in which Zoe, Wizard and Lily escape with the First pillar and the Delphic orb. However, Alby is captured by Wolf, as are the Second Pillar, the Firestone and the Philosopher's Stone. In the aftermath of the battle, the Neetha warlock reveals to Wolf that he can lead the American force to the Second Vertex. Meanwhile, the Adamson twins locate the second Vertex as well, close to Table Mountain, South Africa, and send the message to the Halicarnassus shortly before the Japanese Blood Brotherhood arrives to take them captive. Tank is revealed to be their leader. Zoe, Wizard and Lily are picked up by Sky Monster in his repaired plane, but, despite knowing the location of the Second Vertex, they cannot reach it due to aerial patrols by South Africa. Four days earlier, Jack West escaped from the Pit in the Ethiopian mine, and rescued Pooh Bear from sacrifice and freed the Jewish slave-miners. In gratitude, the miners give him the sacred stones they found recently - the Twin Tablets of Thutmosis, which contain the final incantation to activate the Machine when all the pillars are placed. Jack and Pooh travel to their old farm in Kenya, finding Horus (Jack's falcon) and the Adamson twins waiting. The Adamsons recently escaped from the Blood Brotherhood, and came to Kenya because it was isolated. They also discovered that the Brotherhood has a man in Wolf's unit, a marine code-named Switchblade, who plans to sabotage Wolf's effort to place the Second pillar. Jack and the Adamsons head to Zanzibar, where an old friend of Jack is hiding out after deserting the US army to attack gun-runners in Africa. Pooh leaves them at the airport, to rescue Stretch from the Mossad's torture chambers. Before he leaves, Jack gives him a GPS locator with which to signal Jack if he needs help. Jack and the Adamsons find JJ Wickham, known as the 'Sea Ranger' due to his use of an old Russian submarine. After a lengthy explanation, he takes Jack to the Second Vertex, arriving just as Wolf does. Switchblade attempts to sabotage the placing, by dropping the Second pillar into the bottomless abyss beneath the Vertex before it is inlaid, dooming the world and depriving the Americans of its reward, 'Heat', believed to be a never-ending power-source. However, Jack swings across beforehand, and manages to place the pillar in the Vertex, before Switchblade drops himself and Jack into the abyss. Wickham and the Adamsons escape, with Horus diving into the abyss after Jack. Wolf leaves with the Second pillar, leaving Alby, who was brought with them, alone at the Vertex. The occupants of the Halicarnassus, on an airfield in Botswana, who were called on the phone to help Jack avoiding the traps at the Vertex, see the whole thing on the videophone. Now, the surviving team-members must face the placing of the last four pillars and the arrival of the Dark Sun, all in March 2008, alone. Without Jack West Jr. The story will conclude in Matthew Reilly's next book, *The Five Greatest Warriors*, published in Australia on 20 October 2009. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Six_Sacred_Stones)

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作者简介

Matthew John "Matty" Reilly (born 2 July 1974 in Sydney) is an Australian action thriller writer. His novels are noted for their fast pace, twisting plots and intense action.

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