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Like Dr Frankenstein, brilliant scientist Joe Messenger will stop at nothing in his quest for immortality . . .

Brilliant scientist Joe Messenger believes that people can be made to live for ever. Knowing the human body can be frozen indefinitely, Joe devises a way of downloading the human brain into a supercomputer called ARCHIVE.

But Joe's wife, Karen, is worried by his preoccupation with ARCHIVE, which seems to be developing signs of a distinct and sinister personality of its own.

Then, just as Joe is on the brink of a scientific breakthrough, a series of macabre accidents befall him and his family - and Joe finds himself facing the terrifying consequences of his own obsessions.

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Host By Peter James Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #1346721 in eBooks
- Published on: 2010-10-07
- Released on: 2010-10-07
- Format: Kindle eBook

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

In his first techno-thriller, James tackles the issue of life after death, just as he did in his horror novels *Twilight* and *Possession*. This time, though, the author's fervid imagination—which here mixes the cryonic preservation of human life, the downloading of human personalities into a computer and a Fatal Attraction-style love affair—creates only a muddle. Neuroscientist Joe Messenger, of England's Isaac Newton University, has inherited his father's belief in, and passion for, cryonic preservation; he has also constructed a computer dubbed ARCHIVE, designed to eventually store the contents of an adult human brain. This goal seems far beyond reach until Joe meets the seductive Juliet Spring, who shows him how it can be done. But Juliet has an ulterior motive—she has six months to live, and wants her own personality digitized before she dies. When she does die, and ARCHIVE takes on her chillingly psychotic characteristics, the reader will be miles ahead of most of the characters in figuring out what's going on. The only real surprise involves the cryonics subplot, which is a needless complication, giving the impression that this novel consists of two books forced between the same covers. In addition, by pacing revelations slowly to accommodate his well-drawn but amazingly obtuse characters, James risks losing readers' interest. Despite an intriguing premise and some genuine scares, this is yet another novel in which less would have been more.

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From Library Journal

Computer professor Joe Messenger is carrying on the work of his late father in attempting to extend the human lifespan through cryonics and artificial intelligence. He agrees to advise a brilliant, terminally ill student, Juliet Spring, who seems obsessed with both eternal life and Joe himself. After a highly charged affair, Juliet dies. However, she has loaded her consciousness into ARCHIVE, a computer that seems almost eerily human. James (*Twilight*, LJ 2/15/93) has produced a fascinating technothriller that explores the downside of scientific breakthrough. An appealing protagonist up against some very unsettling events propels this cautionary tale for the millennium that will appeal to a wide audience. Definitely recommended for most fiction collections. —Eric W. Johnson, Teikyo Post Univ. Lib., Waterbury, Ct.

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About the Author

Peter James was educated at Charterhouse and then at film school. He lived in North America for a number of years, working as a screen writer and film producer before returning to England. His novels, including several number one bestsellers, have been translated into thirty-six languages. He has produced several films, including the BAFTA-nominated *Merchant Of Venice*, starring Al Pacino, Jeremy Irons and Joseph Fiennes. Peter James lives in Sussex.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Alicia Wescott:

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