

Reading Group Guide

1. The legend of the *Ciudad Blanca* has been around for more than five centuries, and in that time, generations of adventurers have risked their lives in search of it. What do you think the appeal is of this kind of quest? What is it about the idea of discovering a lost city that maintains such a perennial grip on the human imagination?
2. Preston offers a colorful history of the men who had tried to find the *Ciudad Blanca* over the centuries—many of whom came back with vivid accounts of their discoveries. Do you believe that any of them came across the same city that Preston and Elkins and the expedition found in T1, and if so, who?
3. In 1940, *The New York Times* ran a front-page article announcing that “City of Monkey God Is Believed Located” by swashbuckling explorer Theodore Morde. However, Preston’s research reveals a shocking new twist to this seventy-five-year-old story. How does this new information change our understanding of the history of the legend of the lost city? Why do you think Morde’s original account remained unchallenged so long?
4. Do you think the team underestimated the challenges that they would face, by themselves in the jungle? Why or why not? If offered the opportunity to go on a similar adventure, would you want to go yourself?
5. After Elkins, Preston, and the team emerge from the jungle and announce their findings, a conflict breaks out in the archeological community. What is the source of the disagreement, and do you think either side is correct?
6. What can the discovery of the city at T1 teach modern-day archeologists about the past? What are the biggest surprises that surround this discovery? Does it change the way we understand any of the history of the New World?
7. Do you believe in the curse of the Lost City of the Monkey God? Why or why not?