

Code-cracking puzzles from 'The Joshua Files'

with M. G. Harris

THE JOSHUA FILES



Activity #1: Crack the Ek Naab code

Can you decipher this alphabet-substitution code from INVISIBLE CITY? Use it to decipher the clue from Josh on the Invisible City postcard (see flyer).

BLOG ENTRY: OUR LADY OF THE HIBISCUS

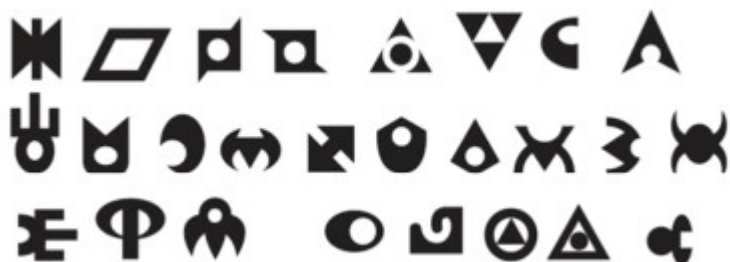
⊠⊡⊢⊣⊤⊥⊦⊧⊨⊩⊪⊫⊬⊭⊮⊯

⊠⊡⊢⊣⊤ ⊥⊦⊧⊨⊩ ⊪⊫⊬⊭⊮⊯ ⊰⊱⊲⊳⊴⊵⊶⊷⊸⊹⊺⊻⊼⊽⊾⊿
 ⊠⊡⊢⊣⊤⊥⊦⊧⊨⊩⊪⊫⊬⊭⊮⊯ ⊰⊱⊲⊳⊴⊵⊶⊷⊸⊹⊺⊻⊼⊽⊾⊿
 ⊠⊡⊢⊣⊤⊥⊦⊧⊨⊩⊪⊫⊬⊭⊮⊯ ⊰⊱⊲⊳⊴⊵⊶⊷⊸⊹⊺⊻⊼⊽⊾⊿
 ⊠⊡⊢⊣⊤⊥⊦⊧⊨⊩⊪⊫⊬⊭⊮⊯ ⊰⊱⊲⊳⊴⊵⊶⊷⊸⊹⊺⊻⊼⊽⊾⊿
 ⊠⊡⊢⊣⊤⊥⊦⊧⊨⊩⊪⊫⊬⊭⊮⊯ ⊰⊱⊲⊳⊴⊵⊶⊷⊸⊹⊺⊻⊼⊽⊾⊿

Whoa . . . sorry about that. This computer was set up to type in the Ek Naab version of Mayan hieroglyphs. It's a sort of stripped-down, high-tech version of Classic Mayan. They use it to encode all their technical stuff . . . in case something falls into The Wrong Hands.

That should read:

Here's a story I heard today from my cousin Benicio. I looked out of the window of an apartment in the city of Ek Naab. And what did I see but a bizarre, Spanish-style church?



Use the text in the blog to work out which glyph corresponds to which letter.

Use this Ek Naab alphabet key—write down the Latin alphabet equivalent underneath each glyph.

Find the answers at www.themgharris.com/puzzles

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Activity #2: Crack the postcard clues

In ICE SHOCK (Joshua Files #2) Josh receives a set of postcards from Mexico, each with a few mysterious words. The letter sender used an *acrostic* combined with a Caesar Cipher. To decipher, try transposing each letter by a few letters in the alphabet.

WHAT . KEY . HOLDS . BLOOD

DEATH . UNLID . HARMONY

ZOMBIE . DOWNED . WHEN . FLYING

KINGDOMS . LOSS . QUESTIONABLE . JUDGEMENT

FINESS . REQUIRES . PROPER . HEED

Activity #3: Crack the book code

In ZERO MOMENT (Joshua Files #3) Josh finds a scribbled set of numbers in the back of a rare book about a traveller who discovered the lost cities of the ancient Maya. The numbers literally hold the KEY to Josh's past and his future...

Can you decipher the clue hidden on this page from the book?

195: 1,1,6; 2,7,4;5,3,2;6,1,4;6,4,4;6,6,1;8,5,3;8,5,5;9,1,2;9,2,2;10,4,3;10,5,4;15,2,3;16,2,1;16,2,5

A LIVING CITY.

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entreat that they would come and make him acquainted with what was contained in the songs of the Indian merchants. A single Dominican friar returned with the ambassador, and the cacique, having been made to comprehend the mysteries of the new faith, burned his idols and preached Christianity to his own subjects. Las Casas and another associate followed, and, like the apostles of old, without scrip or staff, effected what Spanish arms could not, bringing a portion of the Land of War to the Christian faith. The rest of the Tierra de Guerra never was conquered; and at this day the northeastern section, bounded by the range of the Cordilleras and the State of Chiapas, is occupied by Candonos or unbaptized Indians, who live as their fathers did, acknowledging no submission to the Spaniards, and the government of Central America does not pretend to exercise any control over them. But the thing that roused us was the assertion by the padre that, four days on the road to Mexico, on the other side of the great sierra, was a living city, large and populous, occupied by Indians, precisely in the same state as before the discovery of America. He had heard of it many years before at the village of Chajul, and was told by the villagers that from the topmost ridge of the sierra this city was distinctly visible. He was then young, and with much labour climbed to the naked summit of the sierra, from which, at a height of ten or twelve thousand feet, he looked over an immense plain extending to Yucatan and the Gulf of Mexico, and saw at a great distance a large city spread over a great space, and with turrets white and glittering in the sun. The traditionary account of the Indians of Chajul is, that no white man has ever reached this city; that the inhabitants speak the Maya language, are aware that a race of strangers has con-