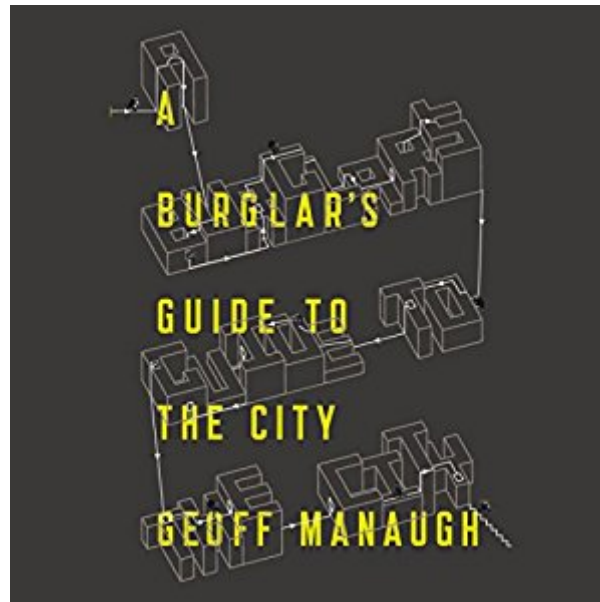




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A Burglar's Guide To The City



Synopsis

Encompassing nearly 2,000 years of heists and tunnel jobs, break-ins and escapes, *A Burglar's Guide to the City* offers an unexpected blueprint to the criminal possibilities in the world all around us. You'll never see the city the same way again. At the core of *A Burglar's Guide to the City* is an unexpected and thrilling insight: how any building transforms when seen through the eyes of someone hoping to break into it. Studying architecture the way a burglar would, Geoff Manaugh takes listeners through walls, down elevator shafts, into panic rooms, up to the buried vaults of banks, and out across the rooftops of an unsuspecting city. With the help of FBI special agents, reformed bank robbers, private security consultants, the LAPD Air Support Division, and architects past and present, the book dissects the built environment from both sides of the law. Whether picking padlocks or climbing the walls of high-rise apartments, finding gaps in a museum's surveillance routine or discussing home invasions in ancient Rome, *A Burglar's Guide to the City* has the tools, the tales, and the X-ray vision you need to see architecture as nothing more than an obstacle that can be outwitted and undercut. Full of real-life heists both spectacular and absurd, *A Burglar's Guide to the City* ensures that listeners will never enter a bank again without imagining how to loot the vault or walk down the street without planning the perfect getaway.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 7 hours 55 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Random House Audio

Audible.com Release Date: April 5, 2016

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B01DCN6KEQ

Best Sellers Rank: #27 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Arts & Entertainment > Architecture
#348 in Books > Arts & Photography > Architecture > Urban & Land Use Planning
#453 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Nonfiction > True Crime

Customer Reviews

This is a book about how people exploit the architecture and infrastructure of cities to abscond with other people's property. Manaugh shows us both how the masterminds of burglary

think outside the box. “Ocean’s Eleven” style, as well as how the dim dull-wits and junkies botch burglaries in hilarious ways. In the process, the author also shines a light on the ways in which the law enforcement community has had to update its technological and tactical capabilities to counter these threats. The book contains seven chapters. The first chapter lays the groundwork, particularly through discussion of the aforementioned extremes. On one hand, there is George Leonidas Leslie, an architect turned bank robber who would build accurate mockups in order to accurately rehearse robberies, and--on the other hand--there is the guy who used a ghillie suit disguise in a rock and mineral museum (which, not unsurprisingly, featured barren rock displays [down-playing vegetation] such that the guy stuck out like a guy in a ghillie suit in a rock display.) Chapter 2 details what Manaugh learned about burglary and the fight against it through his interviews with law enforcement, and in particular the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) helicopter unit. The next chapter focuses on how different types of buildings are violated by burglars, and apartment burglaries are prominent in the discussion. This isn’t just about how they breach the building, but how they discover when no one will be home. Chapter 4 is entitled “tools of the trade” and it reflects upon the skill-set that Hollywood suggests is associated with burglars--i.e. lock-picking and safe-cracking--but which constitute a less common set of tactics than one might think. Burglars usually favor the messier / quicker approach of busting walls and locks. Chapter 5 deals with a number of issues under the rubric of “inside jobs” but one of the most intriguing is its discussion of those who don’t break in at all, but rather who hide inside the target building awaiting closing time. The penultimate chapter is about that ever-present concern of burglars, the getaway. And sometimes the secret is what Black Widow says in “Captain America: Civil War”: “The first rule of being on the run is walk, don’t run.” The final chapter is a wrap-up, including a conclusion to the George Leonidas Leslie story that was brought up in the first chapter. There are notes and citations at the end of the book. There are no graphics. I think this book could have benefited from graphics. However, the author displayed such skill with language and story-telling that I didn’t seem to notice (or care) at the time of reading. I suspect Manaugh didn’t want to present too much detail for fear of being seen as an actual manual for crime, which this clearly is not. I found this book fascinating, and think you would enjoy it if you have any interests in cities, security, civil engineering, architecture, or just have a healthy curiosity about how buildings and cities work.

Good narrative, lots of anecdotes, but not precisely what I had in mind. I expected something more along the line of how to counter architectural weaknesses in order to increase your safety, but the author came time and again to stories of how you can bypass a deadbolted door by cutting holes through drywall. Don't get me wrong, he did a lot of research, and has lots of information, so perhaps I didn't see the forest for the trees.

This awesome tour de force mixes of entertaining jaw-dropping stories into the uses of the city mixed with architectural insights into the design of the city. Few writers with as much intellectual agility offer so much fun. It's almost like a guilty pleasure, much like watching a good crime show and rooting for the villain.

Really loved this book. Manuaga thoroughly researches some of the coolest heists imaginable. Fantastic stuff about subterranean Los Angeles. His book has truly changed how I view architecture and our dynamic interaction with it. Highly recommend!

An awesome book for those who want to explore the dark underbelly of any city and how they can be criminally exploited. I thoroughly enjoyed it.

It is a VERY interesting view of buildings. The whole forget all the complicated locks on a door and just go thru the wimpy wall they sit in, is an eye opening take on physical security. His writing style is engaging, I finished it in one sitting.

Most of the book is interviews with police it seems like Geoff couldn't get cool with any robbers for interviews.

Great fun and very interesting. I enjoyed it. Defines the old adage that nothing is impregnable.

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