

BOOKS | MARCH 18, 2023 7:00 PM

# Forty Years Later, People Are Still Searching for Byron Preiss's Treasure

Many of his casques are still out there



One of Byron Preiss's casques.

David L. Ryan/The Boston Globe via Getty Images

BY TOBIAS CARROLL  @TOBIASCARROLL

For years, an entire subculture existed for one primary purpose: attempting to decode the location where a man named Forrest Fenn had left **\$1 million in treasure**. It's not hard to see the appeal of searching for such a goal, nor is it difficult to see the appeal of decoding clues with the dream of a payoff in mind — the success of the *Indiana Jones*, *Tom Raider*, *National Treasure* and *Uncharted* franchises all speak to that. But Fenn wasn't the only person to inspire a treasure hunt with their words — and in the case of Byron Preiss, several of his treasures remain out there, waiting to be found.

Preiss — who died in 2005 at the age of 52 — was best known for his work in **publishing**, which included everything from early forays into graphic novels and multimedia to working with the likes of Billy Joel and Carl Reiner on books for kids. But he was also responsible for *The Secret*, a book that contained illustrated poems, each of which provided the location to a different treasure. *The Secret* was published in 1982. To date, only three of the treasures have been found.

Each of the locations contains a ceramic casque containing a key; those who found the keys were told to contact Preiss, at which point they would receive a reward. Preiss's family is keeping up this tradition — a 2022 [article](#) in *SFGATE* notes that the most recent discoverer of a casque received a gemstone in exchange for the key inside.

What's it like to search for a casque? The aforementioned *SFGATE* article details one writer's attempts to locate a casque in San Francisco. And a recent [Atlas Obscura article](#) recounts the search for a casque said to be buried somewhere in Milwaukee.

The Atlas Obscura article points to one of the trickier aspects of the search for Preiss's casques — namely, that somewhere that was a viable site to bury something in the early 1980s might have been paved over or otherwise developed in the intervening years. Even so, it's not hard to understand the desire to pore over clues, come up with theories and — maybe, just maybe — find a treasure at the end of the journey.

***Thanks for reading InsideHook. [Sign up](#) for our daily newsletter and be in the know.***

# InsideHook

Copyright © 2023 InsideHook. All rights reserved.