

Dragon Study Guide

Dragon by Clive Cussler

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Plot Summary

The book, *Dragon*, by Clive Cussler, published in 1990 introduces the reader to the world of Dirk Pitt and his great friend, Al Giordino. A prologue set in 1945 tells the story of an ill-fated B-29, *Dennings' Demons*, on a run to bomb Japan, which does not make it because it is shot down off the coast of Japan. The plane and its cargo sink to the bottom of the sea, silently waiting for their turn in history. The story opens with a veritable bang as a Norwegian cruise-liner comes across a foundered Japanese cargo ship, the *Divine Star* that is mysteriously abandoned. The Norwegian crew sends a scouting group over to the Japanese ship with the intent of taking over the ship and salvaging the cargo that could be worth a great deal of money to the men who bring her into port. What they find is a completely abandoned ship, with the exception of a single body of a Japanese crewman, who appears to have been burned from the inside out. His clothes show no evidence of disaster or foul play. Within minutes of boarding the *Divine Star*, the Norwegian crewmen begin to exhibit symptoms of extreme illness, to the point that they begin to die. Steen, the head of the scouting crew is down in the cargo hold when he succumbs to the illness. In his rage at dying of something unknown, he takes out a handgun and shoots at the engine of the car beside which one of his men has already died.

The resulting explosion demolishes the *Divine Star* and the shock wave turns the Norwegian cruise liner into a heap of twisted metal before it sinks to the bottom of the sea. Twelve kilometers away, a British survey ship is likewise twisted and crumpled, stranding three team members, who are in a deep sea underwater vehicle. Communications are cut off and they are stranded at the bottom of the ocean. To the rescue come Dirk Pitt and Al Giordino, who have been living at the bottom of the Pacific Ocean for the past four months in an underwater research facility called *Soggy Acres*. They hear the distress signals and render aid to the three stranded researchers. This marks the beginning of the entire saga.

A Japanese businessman by the name of Hideki Suma is a megalomaniac with intentions of turning the United States into a Japanese territory. He has been importing nuclear bombs into the United States in the motors of a few Murmoto automobiles for strategic placement throughout America. He has also placed some bombs in Russia, Europe, and various Pacific locations as well. He has created a secret laboratory on an island off the coast of Japan that is a state-of-the-art nuclear facility run almost completely by robots. Once every bomb is in position, he will have the capacity to remotely detonate the bombs simultaneously, creating an electromagnetic shield that will shut down all computer and communications and render the world absolutely helpless. All computer records will be erased, and the twentieth century way of life will become obsolete, allowing Japan to take over the world.

It is up to Dirk Pitt and Al Giordino to help a group of U.S. intelligence agents stop Suma and his cohorts. Pitt suffers tremendously by having to find a way out of *Soggy Acres* in his DSMV, *Big John*, and swim from a depth of 138 feet below the surface of the water to be rescued. Immediately upon landing in Hawaii, he and Al are swept into a



Gulfstream and jetted to Washington, where they are essentially given no choice but to join MAIT - Multi-Agency Investigative Team - to stop the threat to the world. Working without much rest, Pitt joins the team, but on his own terms. Pitt's girlfriend, Congresswoman Loren Smith is abducted by the Japanese and secretly taken to Ajima Island, where Suma has his command center. Flying into Suma's fortress in two ultralight Ibises, Pitt and Giordino take on Suma and his maniacal bodyguard, Kamatori. While they are successful in killing Kamatori and abducting Suma, they do not successfully incapacitate the Kaiten Project. Pitt, once again, must go underwater, manually detonate the nuclear warhead that has been sleeping below the surface of the water for fifty years, escape before the blast and stop the world threat. Only Dirk Pitt can possibly accomplish such an impossible feat.



Dennings' Demons

Dennings' Demons Summary

Dragon, by Clive Cussler, is a techno-thriller, where the protagonist, Dirk Pitt, is once again fighting to stop a major danger to the world. Japanese ultra-nationalist Hideki Suma has determined that the United States must be brought to her knees. He devises a plan where nuclear warheads are shipped in the air-conditioning units of imported Japanese vehicles to be distributed throughout the United States, USSR, Europe, and various locations around the Pacific. Once all the warheads are in place, Suma stands poised to remotely detonate any and all of the nuclear devices that will result in an electromagnetic blanket that will cover over one half of the earth, rendering all communications and computers inoperative. Unless Dirk Pitt can stop him, the twentieth-century way of life will come to a grinding halt, and Suma and his empire will step in to rule the world.

August 6, 1945, Shemya Island, Alaska

The B-29 Bomber, named for the commander and crew, receives its biggest bomb payload ever, a bomb so large that it must be recessed into a pit before there is adequate clearance for the bomber to accept it. To Dennings, the bomb looks like a bloated overgrown gray football with enough clamps around its middle to resemble a zipper. The Los Alamos scientists had shown him and his crew the full destructive capabilities of a nuclear bomb, the first of its kind in the world. Dennings is surprised and honored to be part of the flight crew chosen to carry the dangerous device over three thousand miles and drop it on Japan. As he watches the bomb being secured into his beloved aircraft, he has the fleeting thought that the plane is to become his crypt. Despite being seventeen-thousand pounds overweight, Dennings' Demons takes off smoothly from the island and has an uneventful flight toward Japan until they are three hundred miles from Japan, when one of the four engines overheats and has to be shut down. Believing themselves to be safe from any fighters, the crew is taken completely by surprise when a lone A6M Zero coastal patrol catches sight of the enormous bomber and opens fire, killing the tail gunner and destroying the number three engine. The bomber flips over on its side and heads for the water. They are only twenty miles from an unnamed island off the coast of mainland Japan. Dennings' Demons comes to rest one thousand feet under water, the incendiary cargo still waiting to be detonated. Meanwhile, Colonel Pail Tibbets is over Hiroshima in the Enola Gay and drops his bomb successfully. Neither flight commander knows of the other.

Dennings' Demons Analysis

Opening Dragon with a scene from 1945, near the end of World War II takes the reader into a piece of history. While today's entire world knows of the atomic bomb over Hiroshima, Cussler raises the question of possible simultaneous bombing runs over



Japan, which were unsuccessful. Such a question prepares the reader for future subterfuge and duplicity on the part of the government in the remainder of the book. Most Americans are ignorant of what goes on behind the scenes of governmental agencies and the fate of Dennings' Demons is merely the first example in the book where pieces of history are purposefully excluded to suit a purpose.



Part I, Big John: Chapters 1 - 3

Part I, Big John: Chapters 1 - 3 Summary

October 3, 1993 Western Pacific Ocean

The Divine Star is a Japanese cargo ship adrift and apparently abandoned in the Western Pacific. Norwegian cruise ship, the Narvik, comes upon the Divine Star shortly after a typhoon passes through. A brief discussion between Captain Arne Korvold and his chief officer, Oscar Steen, convinces the captain to send a boarding crew over to the listing ship. If they are successful in bringing the Divine Star to port, they are eligible for a huge salvage value payment. Captain Korvold gives permission, and Steen takes a small crew over to the abandoned cargo ship. They find the ship empty of human life, except for a body that had once been human, burned from the inside out. A call back to the Narvik informs Captain Korvold of the sinister feeling aboard the Divine Star. He instructs Steen to ensure the ship is truly deserted before making their salvage possession claim. The ship's cargo is 7,288 new Murmoto automobiles en route to Los Angeles. An entry in the ship's log indicates a sickness going through Divine Star's crew, dated only two days before. Within minutes, members of Steen's boarding crew begin to suffer strange physical symptoms—weakness, dizziness, and vomiting. One seaman is next to one of the cars. Previously hearty and hale only moments before, the man's face is now covered with seeping sores and he has blood streaming from his mouth. Steen knows something is killing them and the boarding party is doomed.

Meanwhile, twelve kilometers away, a British oceanographic survey vessel, the Invincible, is sending a deep sea submersible called Old Gert to the ocean floor to investigate the Mendocino fracture zone. Old Bert has enough oxygen and supplies to support a crew of three for forty-eight hours. Craig Plunkett is Gert's pilot and he is very attached to Old Gert, having helped to design her. His expedition includes Raul Salazar, marine geologist, and Stacy Fox, photographer. Jimmy Knox will run communications from the Invincible, above the surface. The journey to the ocean floor is complex and time consuming. At the bottom of the abyss, they see a cleared area of sand whose perimeters are so straight and clean that they cannot have been formed naturally. They believe it to be manmade but not at that depth. They know of no equipment capable of creating what they see before them.

Part I, Big John: Chapters 1 - 3 Analysis

Cussler engages the reader in multiple puzzles simultaneously. The prologue places an armed plane under the sea. Now a Japanese ship with over seven-thousand new automobiles is seemingly abandoned, but something sickens the Norwegian boarding crew within minutes of reaching the deserted ship. Something deadly is quickly killing men who had previously been very healthy. Just a few kilometers from the deadly Japanese ship, a British survey vessel reaches the ocean floor to be faced with a large

cleared area of sand that is impossible to have been left naturally and can only have been man-made, but perhaps not. None of the scientists aboard Old Gert have ever heard of equipment capable of dredging at these depths.



Part I, Big John: Chapters 4 - 6

Part I, Big John: Chapters 4 - 6 Summary

Steen's mind is now affected by the sickness, and he knows that he is too weak to make it back to the communications center to radio his captain. He knows a second boarding party means more loss of life. In his frustrated anger, he unholsters the gun he found aboard the Divine Star and shoots the car he feels is responsible for the death of his men. Captain Korvold is watching from the Narvik, and when the explosion occurs, his mind does not have enough time to comprehend it. Anyone on deck of the Narvik is instantly incinerated, and the shock wave that follows turns the cruise ship into a mass of twisted metal and shards of glass and wood. Within five minutes, what remains of the ship sinks. None of the 120 passengers survive. Twelve kilometers away, the Invincible's fate is delayed only by milliseconds. She suffers the same fate as the Narvik, but there is one survivor, Jimmy Knox, who has the presence of mind to cling to a bobbing wooden crate.

Below the surface of the water, Old Gert is somewhat protected from the shockwave traveling through the water because she has descended into an underwater abyss whose high canyon walls deflect some of the shockwave. The portion of Old Gert containing the batteries and propulsion system collapses from the damage, their communication lines are severed, and there no ship on the surface to bring them up. Old Gert and her crew of three are stranded on the ocean bottom with only about twelve hours of oxygen left.

In Washington, the President is meeting with his advisers, who verify that the explosion was nuclear, that the three ships in the area were all foreign. There were no nuclear submarines in the area leaving the only possibility remaining; that a foreign ship was bringing a nuclear device to the United States for purposes unknown.

Part I, Big John: Chapters 4 - 6 Analysis

A gunshot into the front of the Japanese Murmoto car sets off a nuclear explosion that takes the lives of nearly two hundred people, sinks three ships, and sets the United States and the U.S.S.R. up to high alert. An explosion over the ocean affects the people in the general vicinity, but the cloud of radiation soon dissipates. The big question and greatest threat is determining who is responsible for the explosion and why. The U.S. President is appropriately concerned as two of the ships were headed toward the United States. It is imperative that he discover as much as he can about the situation and quickly. On a less grand scale, but one that increases personal concern, are the three scientists stranded on the ocean floor as a result of the explosion. The reader has been personally introduced to them and has a strong desire to see them rescued.



Part I, Big John: Chapters 7 - 9

Part I, Big John: Chapters 7 - 9 Summary

The crew in Old Gert have been trapped at the bottom of the ocean for eleven and a half hours. All three members of the oceanographic team are still alive, though barely. They are nearly out of oxygen; the carbon dioxide scrubbing capabilities are diminished due to the discharged batteries. All three are alone with their thoughts, believing that death is just moments away. When Stacy hears music, Salazar believes she is hallucinating and urges Plunkett to just shut everything off and let them die. Plunkett's desire to live is too strong and he refuses. Seconds later, he, too, hears music and they cannot believe their eyes when they see a great device moving toward them. It is Big John, a NUMA DSMV, piloted by Dirk Pitt, accompanied by Al Giordino. They save the lives of the three stranded scientists, but it puts Pitt in a tough position. Soggy Acres is NUMA's biggest secret and because he had been compelled to rescue the three, their secret is now compromised. Initially, they intend to keep Stacy, Plunkett, and Salazar veritable prisoners for another sixty days, until their projects are completed for the full six months underwater. However, the nuclear explosion affects the unstable fault on the ocean floor, and a large earthquake is predicted within the next twelve hours. Wasting no time, Pitt fills the first of two transport subs with Giordino and six of the largest men on the team. The second sub is filled with the two NUMA women, Stacy, the remaining NUMA men and Salazar. Pitt and Plunkett must remain behind as there is no more room on the transport subs. Plunkett, despite his strong will to live, is equally brave and congratulates Pitt on playing God so well. Pitt is surprised. He tells Plunkett he has no desire to die, that the two of them will take the last transport out of Soggy Acres.

Part I, Big John: Chapters 7 - 9 Analysis

The scene inside Old Gert as the three members of the British group reach the end of their life support gives the reader a good idea of the character making up those individuals. Salazar has no wish to suffer and urges Plunkett to just turn everything off to hasten their deaths. Plunkett is strong and honorable. He has no desire to choose death this way. However, when it comes time to load the subs to go to the surface from Soggy Acres, Salazar is fearful that he must remain behind, while Plunkett calmly accepts that by remaining behind with Pitt, more lives will be saved. Plunkett is a brave man. Salazar is a coward. The reader will see, too, how brave Pitt is and how he puts the lives and safety of everyone before his, especially the life of his friend, Giordino. Pitt flat out lies to Giordino to get him to pilot the first sub. He tells Al that his intention is to leave the British survey team behind. Al suspects that Pitt is lying, and he intends to return as quickly as possible to rescue Pitt.



Part I, Big John: Chapters 10 - 12

Part I, Big John: Chapters 10 - 12 Summary

The two submersibles leave Soggy Acres and head to the ocean's surface. Al's sub pops up first, and instead of a wide expanse of empty water, a Chinese junk is very nearly on top of the small submersible. The men on the ship try hard, but the gap is too small and the NUMA scientists barely manage to escape the sub before the junk lands on top of the pod, submerging it and sending it back to the bottom of the sea, unmanned. Al Giordino is devastated and frustrated. Now he keeps an eye out for the second pod, intending to command it and take it back down to rescue Pitt and Plunkett. Bad luck continues to plague the NUMA team; the second sub has shorted batteries and is not able to make the dive. Now Al is devastated. Pitt is as close to him as a brother. It is difficult to tell Admiral Sandecker, who just arrived on the junk via the water plane. Giordino tells the Admiral that Pitt will not die easily.

The Tucson, a nuclear submarine, is dispatched from Pearl Harbor to the explosion site to collect data on radiation levels and to collect any debris they can easily collect. The sonar room begins to hear a very strange sound, a song, Minnie the Mermaid, coming from five thousand meters below them. Pitt and Plunkett are alive. They managed to get into Big John and clear the air locks of the underwater station only moments before the resulting earthquake hit the station and demolished it. Big John is buried underneath layers of muddy silt, but with the scoop and mechanical arm, Pitt begins the long and tedious process of digging them out. As Al had predicted, Pitt will not die easily.

Part I, Big John: Chapters 10 - 12 Analysis

The situation is grim enough that the NUMA team had to evacuate Soggy Acres. Then, to have both transport submersibles rendered inoperable at the surface causes Al Giordino to suffer intense agonies of grief. He feels that he let Pitt down and that his friend had given his life to save all the others. However, knowing Pitt as well as he does, Al is hanging onto the slightest thread of hope that his resourceful friend will defy all odds and still manage to survive. The spooky, ghostly sounds of Minnie the Mermaid coming from the ocean depths is a startling event for the crew aboard the nuclear sub, the Tucson, but it is enough to get their attention. Dirk Pitt is alive. He and Plunkett are aboard Big John and clambering out of the layers of sediment caused by the earthquake.



Part I, Big John: Chapters 13 - 15

Part I, Big John: Chapters 13 - 15 Summary

Eight thousand kilometers away from the undersea drama in the Pacific, a crew of men in the Philippines excavate, looking for a hidden tunnel that is thought to contain over five-hundred billion dollars worth of gold and treasure, called Yamashita's Gold. This is a stockpile of treasures stolen from various countries by the Japanese during World War II. The task has been arduous. The tunnel was dug by the labor of captured Allied soldiers and booby-trapped to prevent theft. When the men finally reach their objective, all they find are hundreds of skeletons, bodies of the men who dug the tunnel and were sealed in to prevent them from telling tales. The treasure has already been removed by the Japanese.

Back in Washington, Curtis Meeker, expert at satellite photo intelligence, briefs Raymond Jordan about the explosion in the Pacific. They have definite proof that the explosion originated from the Divine Star, the Japanese auto carrier. Even more interesting, there was a second detonation milliseconds after the first one, indicating the presence of more than one bomb on board. Meeker sees a slight anomaly, which is an unknown deep-sea vehicle driving over the bottom of the ocean only twenty kilometers from the explosion site. Pitt and Plunkett have been seen by satellite.

Commander Morton of the Tucson is not happy to have to surface and be seen by Soviet satellites in order to allow Admiral Sandecker aboard. Lieutenant David DeLuca, Tucson's navigation officer was once a student of the admiral and is very pleased to be able to pinpoint the source of the music for him. Giordino and Sandecker know that Pitt is still alive and trying to survive. They are able to predict his destination and are now left with the problem of extracting them from Big John at three-hundred meters below the ocean's surface. They have twenty-four hours to figure it out.

Part I, Big John: Chapters 13 - 15 Analysis

The discovery that Yamashita's gold has already been retrieved by the Japanese, leaving behind hundreds of Allied soldiers' bones entombed for fifty years infuriates the explorers. Most Asian war criminals have never been brought to justice. This puts the Japanese in a very unfavorable light, something that is not a commonly-held belief in 1993. Cussler is preparing the reader to be less sympathetic to the Japanese by bringing up their history during World War II. The next scene further reinforces this opinion in the mind of the reader by the revelation that the Japanese ship is responsible for the nuclear explosion. Lastly, Giordino and Sandecker have been given hope that Dirk is still alive and now they must match his genius and come up with a rescue plan.



Part I, Big John: Chapters 16 - 17

Part I, Big John: Chapters 16 - 17 Summary

Dirk Pitt and Plunkett are making excellent and steady progress to their destination, the flat topped mountain summit of Conrow Guyot. Their desperate escape from the mud and silt caused by the avalanche apparently caused a tiny scrape to the exterior of Big John. As time passed, the defect became worse and now, with a loud bang, the warning indicator signals that they have a pinhole leak. At the great depth of five thousand meters below the surface, a pinhole leak can cause a stream of water to have the power of a laser and cut off a man's hand. Very, very carefully, Pitt creates a makeshift repair patch that slows the leak, but he is unable to stop it entirely. Twenty-two hours after entering Big John, Pitt and Plunkett make it to the summit of Conrow Guyot. They are still 322 meters below the surface of the ocean and the leak has gotten worse. Rescue must come in the next forty to sixty minutes. Twenty minutes later, Al and Admiral Sandecker appear in the repaired submersible vehicle. Fortunately, the vehicle is equipped with the necessary saws and arms that Giordino uses to cut the pod loose from the framework of Big John and allow Pitt and Plunkett to float toward the surface. Unfortunately, the leak and additional weight of the water makes them less buoyant, and they can only get one 138 feet from the surface. They must swim for it. In his younger days, Pitt would free-dive to eighty feet. But there is no choice. The two men abandon Big John's habitation pod and head for the water's surface. Still below the surface, Plunkett loses consciousness, and Pitt grabs the man by the collar and struggles to get them both to the surface. Navy divers reach them just in time to give Pitt a regulator to breathe through. It is enough. The two men make it out alive.

Part I, Big John: Chapters 16 - 17 Analysis

The tension really builds with the DSMV suffering a leak and no line of communication. Pitt hopes that Al has the capabilities of a mind reader and it seems that he does. They have correctly determined the destination and have come up with a plan to help the two men to the surface without a case of the bends. It is a very close call. Al arrives with only minutes to spare. Just as they feel they will make it, their pod begins to sink. They are just within a safe depth when they must swim for the surface. The reader is aware that Pitt survives against formidable odds, but the tension is what the reader expects from a Dirk Pitt novel; this scene is extremely satisfying.



Part II, The Kaiten Menace: Chapters 18 - 20

Part II, The Kaiten Menace: Chapters 18 - 20 Summary

October 6, 1993

In Tokyo, Japan, three days after the explosion, Hideki Suma worships secretly at the Yasukuni shrine, previously a shrine dedicated to the lives of those who died in honor of fighting for the Emperor. By World War II, it had lost its religious significance and now stands for a cult and ethnic philosophy of Japanese superiority and dominance. Suma is the powerful man who intends to exert Japanese dominance over the entire world, targeting first the U.S. He is responsible for the nuclear weapons aboard the Divine Star. The situation is even grimmer as he also has two more ships already docked and offloading in the U.S., and two more in transport. The reader has to assume that there are nuclear weapons aboard all four ships bound for the U.S. Suma has undercover agents in the U.S. known as sleepers. They are children of Japanese Nationalists, who have lived in the U.S. educating their children so they can achieve top-level positions in American companies, not because they love the United States. George Furakawa is one such sleeper. He received his Ph.D. and now holds a position of power in one of America's most advanced aerospace technology companies, secrets of which he has passed to the Japanese. Additionally, Furakawa has been recruited by Suma to take delivery of specific cars and move them to secret locations. His curiosity extends no further than his orders.

Admiral Sandecker and his NUMA team are picked up off the Chinese junk by a U.S. Air Force helicopter and transported to Hawaii, where they expect some time to recuperate. On the ground in Hawaii, Sandecker, Pitt, Giordino, and Stacy Fox are immediately hustled aboard an airplane bound for Washington. Pitt and Giordino still have no idea what caused the explosion that leveled their underwater research facility, but Pitt is getting angry. He realizes that Stacy is some sort of covert operative spying on Soggy Acres and not merely an innocent photographer of the British survey crew. He is also realizing that he and Al are being recruited for some sort of mission, but even Admiral Sandecker refuses to give them any information.

Part II, The Kaiten Menace: Chapters 18 - 20 Analysis

What initially seemed like a single threat to the U.S. detonating prematurely in the Pacific Ocean now reveals that it is merely a single cog in the wheel of the main event. Hideki Suma is a Japanese Ultra-Nationalist, who despises the poison of Western culture and has taken it upon himself to position Japan as a world ruling power. There are now at least twelve nuclear devices headed for the United States, a very clear and ominous threat. There is also the revelation of Japanese sleepers who appear to have

assimilated themselves into American culture and yet hate the U.S. enough to betray military secrets and work to bring America to her knees. This sort of information causes the reader to wonder about his coworkers, acquaintances, even neighbors. Hatred of Americans is a frightening thought as most Americans consider themselves to be good guys.



Part II, The Kaiten Menace: Chapters 21 - 23

Part II, The Kaiten Menace: Chapters 21 - 23 Summary

Immediately upon disembarking from the Gulfstream, Pitt, Giordino, Admiral Sandecker, and Stacy Fox were picked up and taken immediately from Andrews Air Force base to a broken-down building that is actually the Federal Headquarters Building. Once inside, they are taken to an elevator that takes them down to a subterranean, soundproofed room. Pitt and Giordino still do not know what is going on, why they are there, or what caused the blast. Sandecker has done his job and kept them completely in the dark. Stacy seems to have a better idea, and Pitt's suspicions about her as a covert operative have increased dramatically. Inside that room, they meet several men. One of the men is Frank Mancuso, who approaches Pitt and tells him they will be working together. They discuss MAIT, the multi-agency investigative team, and Pitt absolutely does not want to be part of this. There are a number of other people in the room. Raymond Jordan is in charge and takes his time getting started. Pitt is tired, hungry, and quite honestly past his ability to handle things. He has been coerced into this and is not very happy about being kept in the dark. Pitt discovers that Soggy Acres was built under such tight security that none of the other intelligence agencies knew that it was authorized. That is why Stacy Fox was aboard the British survey team ship that was investigating in that area. By now, Pitt is realizing that the nuclear sub, the Tucson was not there to rescue him and Plunkett; it was there to investigate the blast and debris. Pitt sat and listened with little interest. Finally he says that he and Al were not formally "invited to the party." They are volunteers and not asked to play secret agent to the government. They are told that they are under contract to the government and Pitt disagrees that his contract includes being a covert agent.

Jordan finally realizes that he needs to give Pitt full disclosure so reveals everything about the bombing. He says that Japan has the bomb; they have advanced nuclear technology; the ship that blew up was a Japanese ship carrying Murmuto automobiles, and that two or more devices detonated taking with it the Norwegian passenger-cargo liner and the British survey ship. Those responsible for the bombs onboard the automobile cargo ship are smuggling bombs into American ports with the likely intention of nuclear extortion. Despite all this information, Pitt still wants to leave the room. He says he will consider joining their team, then makes his departure. Jordan tells Admiral Sandecker that he does not want to work with prima donnas to which Sandecker replies that Pitt is more loyal and patriotic than anyone else in that room and is likely already considering ways to help MAIT and Jordan. Sandecker is correct. Pitt gives Giordino some instructions. Then he calls his uncle, Percy Nash, who was one of the original Manhattan scientists and asks to meet him at the NUMA center. Once there, they are joined by Hiram Yaeger, a good friend of Pitt's, who is capable of taking any device, entering the information into the computer and creating a likely scenario. They are trying to determine how the Japanese are hiding nuclear weapons inside an automobile. They



finally realize that the air-conditioning compressor is the exact size and shape to contain a nuclear device, and it is even more likely that a customs inspector will not take two hours to take apart an air-conditioning unit to see why it is not working. Percy knows that the Japanese have outsmarted the Americans. He tells the two other men that the U.S. contracted with the Japanese to construct a Star Wars missile system and determined that it was not feasible and too expensive. Japan went ahead with theirs and is likely protected, while America is not.

Part II, The Kaiten Menace: Chapters 21 - 23 Analysis

Dirk Pitt and Al Giordino are both strong, loyal, and patriotic Americans, who have been through a very trying time—Pitt almost at the cost of his life, Al nearly lost his friend. Sandecker had been aware of the likely cause of the blast but had been sworn to secrecy when he was dispatched to pick up Pitt and Giordino. As requested, the Admiral kept his two friends in the dark about the possibility that America is under imminent attack. Being rushed from the bottom of the sea to Hawaii, to Washington, to a basement room does not work well to motivate Pitt. He prefers to be a much more independent agent. It is not the case that he has refused to work on the problem, he merely prefers to work independently. In fact, as soon as he leaves the meeting, he contacts Percival Nash, who is one of the leading nuclear scientists in the country, and he also contacts Yaeger, who is an expert at running schematics through a computer and establishing the creation of likely scenarios. The three men come up with a conceptualization on the computer that shows them exactly how the Japanese are smuggling the bombs into the U.S. He is able to accomplish this in less than a few hours, while the rest of MAIT have had three days to work on it and have not come up with anything. Obviously Pitt is effective and Raymond Jordan would be best instructed to trust and work with Pitt, rather than simply ordering him to do certain tasks.

"You didn't do your homework, or you'd know that Dirk Pitt is a bigger patriot than you and I put together. Few men have accomplished more for their country. There are few of his breed left. He still whistles "Yankee Doodle" in the shower and believes a handshake is a contract and man's word is his bond. He can also be devious as the devil if he thinks he's helping preserve the Stars and Stripes, the American family, and baseball."
Page 163, Chapter 21.



Part II, The Kaiten Menace: Chapters 24 - 26

Part II, The Kaiten Menace: Chapters 24 - 26 Summary

The congressional subcommittee, on which both Congresswoman Loren Smith of Colorado and U.S. Senator Mike Diaz of New Mexico serve, is looking to have the Japanese companies that operate on American soil pay taxes and be subject to the same regulatory practices all other companies experience. Tsuboi is very angry at what he perceives as a preparation to place a serious hold on the ability of Japanese businesses to operate in the U.S. All Smith and Diaz wish to do is to fight against what they perceive to be unfair trade and investment practices of the Japanese. Tsuboi wishes to convert the American currency to the Japanese Yen, to take ownership of Hawaii and share ownership of California. The two leaders of the subcommittee absolutely and viciously disagree with Tsuboi.

Giordino borrows a file on Murmoto Motor Corporation for a five-state area. He approaches the manager claiming to be from the Commerce Department there to double check shipments against the inventory lists. He quickly finds what he needs, but pretends to work until closing to keep up appearances. He has discovered an inconsistency, six cars not accounted for on the Tokyo list. He does get the name of the dealers where the cars were shipped. Giordino reports his results to Kern, proving that he and Pitt do work as a team, but also independently.

Pitt returns home, which is in an old 1936 aircraft hangar on a far corner of Washington's International Airport. Loren is his sweetheart and has left a salad chilling and soup on the stove for him. Just before turning in, Jordan calls to congratulate him and Al for their useful information. He accuses them of preferring to play their own game. Jordan is confident that they will find all the bombs within a month. Pitt worries that they will detonate a few in the U.S. and some in Russia, attempting to start a war. Over breakfast with Loren the next morning, Pitt learns just how desperate the situation is for the U.S. financially. Essentially, Japan owns more than one third of U.S. businesses. The United States is on her way to becoming the equivalent of a financial colony of Japan

Part II, The Kaiten Menace: Chapters 24 - 26 Analysis

Japan has taken advantage of America's desire to become a nation of consumers and as a result is gaining a stronger and stronger foothold in American economics. Because the U.S. under-produces and over-consumes, Japan has stepped in and taken over many large U.S. holdings in both business and real estate. Ichiro Tsuboi of Kanoya Securities is working with Hideki Suma and wishes to bring the Great United States to her knees. He wishes for America to become nationalized to the Japanese way of life.

Financially, he is poised for such a takeover. Suma is preparing to take over with the threat of nuclear bombs. Together they intend to exert Japanese influence over the Western world's greatest nation. Japanese supremacy is their ultimate goal. Pitt and Giordino are working by their own rules with MAIT, giving them vital information to help neutralize at least the nuclear threat.



Part II, The Kaiten Menace: Chapters 27 - 28

Part II, The Kaiten Menace: Chapters 27 - 28 Summary

Hideki Suma is responsible for creating Edo City, the first of Japan's new underground frontiers. It was built as a scientific research center and think-tank community capable of housing and supporting over 60,000 people. It is a twenty-story round complex that has living quarters, common baths, offices, convention halls, and everything else needed for a living community, including a thousand-man security force. It is built of ceramic concrete and reaches a depth of fifteen hundred meters below the surface. In the city of Edo is where Suma meets with an art specialist by the name of Ashikaga Enshu, who is actually MAIT's Jim Hanumara. As Mr. Enshu, he claims to have a painting from an artist that Suma collects, from the sixteenth century Kano school, Masaki Shimzu. He is a revered seascape artist, and Suma has collected most of the paintings of the island set; he owns eleven of the thirteen seascapes and wishes to have the other two seascapes. He most especially wishes to possess the seascape called Ajima, because that is where Suma's secret installation is. Mr. Enshu only has the one of the Island Kechi. Suma is taken in by this, being thrilled by the genius of the artist. The painting is actually a forgery and has bugs on it in the form of ants that are state-of-the-art listening devices. While the painting is in the office, Suma meets with Kokori Yoshishu and Tsuboi to discuss the Kaiten Project. The state of the project is that there are eighteen bomb vehicles on the high seas destined for the U.S., Soviet Union, Europe and other Pacific countries. They estimate three weeks before every car is in place. The command center will be ready in three weeks to remotely detonate the vehicles. They do not really care why the Divine Star blew up, they just want to ensure that there are still enough bombs in place to be effective. Suma was able to replace the three bombs that detonated in that explosion.

Total number of nuclear devices in their system is 130 vehicles in fifteen different countries. The idea is to put most of them in Russia and the U.S. so the twenty-first century can belong to Nippon, which is the new ruling order of Japan. Yoshishu would like to get Congresswoman Loren Smith and Senator Michael Diaz out of Congress. They advocate kidnapping them and holding them in a silken prison and blaming it on the Blood Red Brotherhood, a renegade association that will make a good cover for their disappearance. The two members of Congress are the two would like to create a trade barrier against Japan and are starting to gather enough votes to be successful in that endeavor. The two must be eliminated because they are the spearheads in both houses of Congress.

The Japanese leg of MAIT meet in a Japanese bathhouse, which is actually a covert American establishment. Marvin Showalter meets with Roy Orita and an unknown man comes in and startles the two agents, until they realize that it is James Hanumara in disguise. James tells them of his successful portrayal of Mr. Enschu who just sold Suma



the island painting. He tells them the details of the bugging devices. They also discuss the fact that Suma is involved, something that Roy Orita was trying to keep from them. Roy, as a double agent, has been attempting to appear to do his job while deflecting information to maintain the integrity of the Kaiten Project. As soon as he can, he meets with Suma's bodyguard to give him the bad news of the painting and that their mission is somewhat compromised. Kamatori asks Orita who linked the cars and warheads, and Orita answers that Pitt of NUMA, that he is not necessarily part of the scientific portion of investigations, but that Pitt does have a reputation for carrying out impossible projects. Kamatori asks for a list of the names of the agents he is working with and their duties. Orita can give him the names, but not their function because of the high level of security.

Part II, The Kaiten Menace: Chapters 27 - 28 Analysis

The plot becomes even more complex with the introduction of the Japanese power-hungry Hideki Suma. Suma is the mastermind behind the construction of the futuristic city, a self-contained civilization capable of supporting a population of 60,000, the size of a medium-sized American city. His power and his cunning have allowed him to create the underground, self-contained community. His association with a member of the God Dragons increases his power and influence. He does not suspect Mr. Enschu of any subterfuge when he purchases the painting of Kechi from him, little knowing it is bugged. He has a top secret meeting in the very room with the painting before his organization discovers the bugging through Roy Orita, the sleeper agent. It is Roy who tells Kamatori that Pitt put together the idea of the cars and warheads theory, earning Pitt a serious enemy in Kamatori.



Part II, The Kaiten Menace: Chapters 29 - 30

Part II, The Kaiten Menace: Chapters 29 - 30 Summary

One of Dirk Pitt's most passionate hobbies is that of collecting old vintage cars. On this particular day, he is taking his Stutz towncar to the Virginia Memorial Racetrack, the concours d'elegance show, where the car is judged on appearance and one lap around the track between classic vehicles that were designed and built as road cars. Loren Smith has accompanied Pitt to the race track, along with Al Giordino. While they are admiring all the vintage cars, Frank Mancuso appears and tells them that the salvage operation of the Divine Star has been put on hold. Congress does not want to explain an undercover salvage operation because Soggy Acres was built under such tight security that it actually went against international laws against mining on the sea floor. Right now, Giordino has no job other than to wait and see what happens. While at the car show, there is a group of four Japanese men in dark suits, dark sunglasses, and carrying attaché cases. Car enthusiasts little know that the briefcases are full of gas grenades and assault weapons. They are not there to admire the cars; they are there to abduct Congresswoman Smith. When it is Pitt's turn to take his one lap race around the track, he is pitted against Clive Cussler. While the two are in the middle of their race, the Japanese make their move and abduct Loren and force her into a white Lincoln limousine. Pitt beats Cussler and laughs as he crosses the finish line, only to see Giordino and Mancuso frantically waving their hands to flag Pitt down. They tell him that Loren has been abducted. Mancuso joins Pitt in the Stutz to chase the white limousine, following it out of the concourse and onto the freeway. His town car is an older vehicle, and Pitt fears it will be no match for the modern V-8 engine in the Lincoln. Strangely, he manages to keep up with the vehicle. He has to use some racetrack maneuvers to get around a stubborn farm boy, then avoid a flat-bed truck oil spill, a spectacular chase through a cornfield before the Lincoln purposefully crashes into a concrete silo. Running over to the car to see if Loren is alive, Pitt is stunned to find that there is no one in the car. It has been remotely operated by the helicopter that appeared to follow them throughout the pursuit. They have followed the wrong car, the switch had occurred back at the racetrack, and Loren has disappeared. Pitt vows to find Loren and make her abductors pay.

Part II, The Kaiten Menace: Chapters 29 - 30 Analysis

One of Clive Cussler's greatest hobbies is the collection of vintage cars, and this is a characteristic that he passes to his main character, Dirk Pitt. Pitt, Al, and Loren are all at the Virginia Memorial Racetrack, where Pitt places third in presentation of his Stutz town car. Then, he is slotted against a driver named Clive Cussler. This is the author's chance to appear in his own novel, much the way Alfred Hitchcock did in his movies. Once the race is over, Pitt naturally winning over Clive Cussler, he discovers Loren's

abduction and gives immediate chase. After a very exciting series of near misses, the Lincoln limousine crashes, but there is no one in it. They have been duped, and Pitt vows vengeance on those who have abducted his girlfriend.



Part III, Ajima Island: Chapters 31 - 33

Part III, Ajima Island: Chapters 31 - 33 Summary

October 12, 1993 Bielfeld, West Germany

A farmer discovers a hidden bunker filled with dozens of the Luftwaffe's first turbo aircraft, the Messerschmitt Swallow. At the time Mr. Clausen makes his startling discovery, Pitt, Giordino and Sandecker are speculating about Loren's abduction. They have been notified that Senator Mike Diaz has also disappeared, and they have come to the conclusion that some powerful force in Japan is determined to stop the American Congress from limiting Japan's business enterprise in the United States. They are not sure how this connects with the nuclear bombs being shipped to America, but the Japanese connection is no mere coincidence. Jim Hanamura has sent enough intelligence back from Japan to make them take notice of Hideki Suma as the kingpin behind the automobile bomb shipments, named the Kaiten Project. Things look bad when they get word that Agent Marvin Showalter has also been abducted and that Jim Hanamura is late reporting in. Roy Orita says they need to wait and see. Pitt is beginning to put all the events together and see that they are somehow related; he surmises that Suma is holding off a nuclear threat for a specific reason. Pitt is much more clam than the government men. Jim Hanamura's failure to check in is the result of him sneaking in to steal the blueprints of Suma's secret hideout. He very nearly escapes, but luck is against him. He suffers three gunshot wounds in his escape and knows he will not make it to the American Embassy. Instead he asks a truck driver to take the envelope with the blueprints to the American Embassy for him, hoping it will somehow reach MAIT. The man agrees. Jim Hanamura is then tracked down by Kamatori and beheaded with the assassin's famous sword.

Part III, Ajima Island: Chapters 31 - 33 Analysis

The abductions of the two anti-Japanese members of Congress and of one of their agents in Japan give the MAIT men the information that they need to know that the abductions are related to the importation of the autos fitted with nuclear devices. It is very apparent that a serious threat to the American way of life is upon them, and some of the best intelligence agents are not prepared enough to deal with it. Jim Hanamura's death is the price he pays, however, for the best information to date regarding Suma's secret installation, provided it actually makes it to the American Embassy. Nothing gets Pitt's ire up so much as a threat to his way of life and the safety of those who are dear to him.



Part III, Ajima Island: Chapters 34 - 36

Part III, Ajima Island: Chapters 34 - 36 Summary

Furakawa is relieved that this shipment of Murmoto autos includes the last four cars he has to pick up. He has also been given instructions to check for homing devices, a request that makes him nervous, but he is able to get the cars loaded on the truck without incident. What Furakawa does not know is that Tim Weatherhill is concealed inside one of the cars. Once the enclosed truck is rolling, Weatherhill contacts Stacy via radio. She is following at a safe distance in a helicopter. Given the all clear, Weatherhill examines the compressor and the hidden nuclear devices. He is disappointed that they are not more advanced. What makes his blood run cold is the discovery in the owner's manual that Suma intends to use the bombs; they are not a mere threat tactic.

Jordan sneaks into Pitt's hangar, curious to see how Pitt will handle a surprise entry. Pitt stuns Jordan when he starts talking to him without even turning around. One step ahead of him, Pitt tells him that he missed the camera across the street that alerted Pitt to his entry. Jordan's real reason for the meeting is to inform Pitt that Loren and Senator Diaz have been smuggled out of the country, news that is a relief to Pitt, who had feared she might have been killed. They made it as far as Tokyo, then their intelligence broke apart, and the trail is now lost. Hanamura and Showalter have both been murdered and Jordan suspects Roy Orita of being a sleeper. The one good bit of news is that the papers Hanamura died for look to be rough drawings of an electronic control center that meets their specifications for the detonation control center for which they are looking; additionally there is a note saying that they need to look on the island of Ajima. Jordan is frustrated because there is no Ajima Island on record. They know enough about Suma's art collection to know that he seeks the painting of Ajima Island, but its exact location is still unknown. Pitt's next assignment is a dive in Germany inside of a Luftwaffe bunker. Coincidentally, the Ajima painting's last known sighting was the Japanese Embassy in Berlin, Germany.

At the underground bunker in Bielfeld, West Germany, Pitt discusses the situation with the leader of the German naval dive team. The first team's communications and safety lines are severed, and they fear for the safety of the divers. They discovered a tunnel a distance of ninety meters from their current location that must be traversed underwater. Shortly after that communication, the lines went slack. A second team went to investigate and they, too, disappeared, approximately four hours ago. Pitt, Giordino, and Mancuso all agree that it is a booby-trapped treasure trove put together by the Germans at the end of World War II, just prior to the Allies arrival. Pitt overrules the German police dive captain but does agree to allow members of their team to accompany him and Giordino, but they must follow his directives. As expected, the tunnel is booby-trapped—inside the tunnel is poisonous gas that killed the first two dive teams. Keeping their masks and breathing regulators on, Pitt's team manages to reach the center of the cache of treasures.



Part III, Ajima Island: Chapters 34 - 36 Analysis

MAIT has been injured with the loss of the entire team in Japan, two who have been murdered and the third member was a sleeper and traitor. Regardless, the rest of MAIT is still working to determine the extent of Suma's threat to the world. Weatherhill and Fox follow up on Pitt's discovery that the bombs are being smuggled in via the air conditioning compressors of the specific autos. The bombs are certainly there, but what is worse is that Weatherhill finds evidence that Suma does not merely intend to threaten to use the bombs; he has plans to use them. This raises the stakes for MAIT. The key is finding Ajima Island, and the last known sighting of the painting of the island was in the Japanese Embassy in Germany toward the end of World War II. The newly-discovered bunker in Germany is very possibly the location of the treasure. Pitt and Giordino are sent to assist in getting past the booby-trapped bunker with its waterways and poisonous gas traps to find what is, indeed, a cache of treasure.



Part III, Ajima Island: Chapters 37 - 39

Part III, Ajima Island: Chapters 37 - 39 Summary

Once Pitt, Giordino, and Mancuso discovered that the deaths of the previous divers were due to poison gas, they were able to get the German government to set up pumps to remove the water from the tunnel, then use gas-removing devices to safely remove the gas to waiting tanker trucks in order to make the treasure cave safe for entry. While they wait, Pitt talks with the head of the German team, admiring the Messerschmitt 262s. In a gesture of gratitude, Gert Halder gives Pitt permission to take one of the forty planes and transfer it to his hangar in the United States. Halder tells Pitt it is a thank you for saving the lives of the remaining German divers and possibly saving his job and position. Pitt promises to restore the aircraft to its original flying condition. Once the cavern can safely be entered, the three MAIT men find the Japanese section of the treasure trove and open the crates one after the other. The last one they open holds the painting of the Island of Ajima. They have finally found the island where the detonation control center for Suma's diabolical plan resides. It appears that the three men will be heading to Japan after their short sojourn in Germany.

Jordan has a meeting with the President of the United States to bring him up to speed on Suma's threat. Initially, the President had been told that it was merely a coercion tactic, but with the new information available, Jordan is able to let the President know that they are looking at massive chaos and destruction of society as it is known. With the systematic and simultaneous detonation of all the nuclear devices at the same time, a huge electromagnetic cloud will rise over fifty percent of the earth and everything that relies on a computer chip will be rendered inactive. This means that every computer in every home and business will be mute. All records, financial, scholastic, and medical will be erased. Microwaves will no longer work and airplanes will simply fall out of the sky. The world will be one without communication, as there will be no link to any satellite system. The President suggests a nuclear strike, which Jordan dissuades. He reminds the President how it will look to the world if the U.S. were to initiate a strike against a seemingly-benign country, and the international fallout that he would have to endure. He asks for ninety-six hours to allow his MAIT intelligence to find the control center and destroy it.

Returning to Washington for a debriefing, Pitt and Giordino are met by Sandecker at the airport. Mancuso remained behind in Germany to see to the packaging of the Japanese art that will be presented to the Japanese in a goodwill gesture at some point in the future. Even though the two men would like a night's sleep in their own beds, Sandecker informs them that they are headed to the Pacific in an hour's time. As they drive toward Dulles airport, Pitt notices that they are being followed by twelve gunmen in ambulances. Thinking quickly, Pitt uses his racing skills to exit the freeway without the benefit of an exit ramp, surprising the attackers, but they need to find something with which to fight. Pitt speeds through the outskirts of a small town telling his two passengers to look for a hardware store. It doesn't matter to Pitt that the store is not



open, he opens it with the front end of the Jeep Grand Cherokee he is driving and stops right in front of the gun department.

Part III, Ajima Island: Chapters 37 - 39 Analysis

Pitt and Giordino successfully traverse the dangerous traps set in place nearly fifty years before when the Germans hid their looted treasures in the underground bunker. The two things Pitt accomplished in that mission were that they discovered the Ajima Island painting, which they can now compare to satellite photos and determine where the island really is, and Pitt has earned his trophy, the Messerschmitt 262 that he will add to his collection of vintage cars. With the threat of Japanese world domination becoming more and more imminent, Pitt and Giordino realize they are now fully obligated to see this mission through. If they do not, there will be a world that they do not recognize in the place of their modern one. They know they are irritating their enemies when the three ambulances converge on them, filled with heavily-armed men instigating an attack. The attack force do not figure in Pitt's quick and unorthodox thinking.



Part III, Ajima Island: Chapters 40 - 42

Part III, Ajima Island: Chapters 40 - 42 Summary

The three men quickly choose weapons and ammunition and load their guns in preparation for an assault. Pitt breaks the remaining headlight of the Jeep, plunging the entire hardware store into darkness. The only indication that something is wrong is the screaming alarm. The twelve Japanese ninjas approach the storefront, thinking that the three men are either dead or seriously injured and it will be an easy kill. Without warning, a five gallon container of paint thinner with a flaming rag in it is thrown out from the back of the store and with the illumination Pitt and Giordino open fire. They kill about half of their attackers before exiting the store. Pitt does take the time to pull off the mask of one of the men, and seeing that he is Japanese, Pitt is determined not to suffer at the hands of Suma any longer. He reminds Al and the admiral that they have a plane to catch. Pitt is really angry now.

Ordered to return to Las Vegas, Stacy Fox and Weatherhill now have the job of taking out one of the nuclear devices. Once it is removed, they must replace it with a decoy replica made from the measurements Weatherhill took inside the delivery truck outside of Los Angeles. The only way to get into the underground parking location where the Murmoto vehicles are stored is down a ventilator shaft. Stacy has to lower Tim into the vault, which has no internal sensors, making it easy for Tim to make the switch. He does see something unexpected that makes the terror even more real. Inside each of the cars is a robot designed to drive the cars to their destinations. This eliminates the possibility of human emotion and reluctance to detonate the bombs. What is most worrisome is that the control center on Ajima may very well be run and guarded by robots. This will make Jordan's job much, much more difficult.

Back on Ajima Island, Suma, Roy Orita, and Kamatori are meeting. Kamatori is feeling the brunt of Suma's anger with the botched attempt to neutralize Pitt and Giordino. Kamatori believes that Pitt and Giordino are lucky men, and that because they are civilians, they are unpredictable. Had they been trained professionals, he would have been able to effect a total kill, but their very unpredictability made the job a failure. The only thing he managed was to leave none of the seven bodies in evidence. Orita assures Suma that MAIT has reached a dead-end, that they have no idea where the control center is. Loren and Senator Diaz are being held prisoner in very luxurious rooms with no windows and no knobs on the inside of the doors. Kamatori takes great pleasure in lying to Loren and telling her that her friends, Pitt and Giordino, have met with an accident and that the President of the United States is doing nothing to rescue her and the senator.



Part III, Ajima Island: Chapters 40 - 42 Analysis

Pitt is a very capable and able man and Giordino no less skilled. The two of them manage to keep their attackers at bay while the admiral finds a rear exit for them. Pitt was somewhat unwilling to catch the plane at Dulles when Sandecker first picks them up, but after discovering that their attackers are Japanese, Pitt is in it for the long haul. All the attack on the men did is to strengthen his resolve to bring down Suma. Japan has many reasons for wishing to expand their colonies throughout the world. Suma has taken their idea and perverted it into a need for absolute power. He believes he can control people by threats of injury either to themselves or to loved ones. He is only partially right. There are those, especially independent-thinking Americans, who will fight even more ferociously when those rights and freedoms are threatened. Suma cannot possibly understand just how angry Pitt, Giordino, and others who hold similar beliefs can become. He does know that humans are ruled by emotions, which is why he prefers to use robots whenever possible.



Part III, Ajima Island: Chapters 43 - 45

Part III, Ajima Island: Chapters 43 - 45 Summary

Five remaining members of MAIT meet on the island of Palau to plan their attack on Ajima Island. Mel Penner created a three-dimensional model of the island, including an inside view showing rooms and tunnels deep underground, created from the plans stolen by Jim Hanamura before he died. This gives Pitt, Giordino, Mancuso, Fox, and Weatherhill some idea of how difficult their task will be. The island is remote, sixty kilometers from Edo City, connected by an underground tunnel that has been a secret until now. It is also an island of very steep cliffs, making it impossible to access from the sea. The only way to get onto the island is either through the tunnel from Edo City or via helicopter. Getting onto the island in a stealthy way is going to be a huge challenge, and Penner intends to use Pitt and Giordino as a diversion in order to allow the other three members of the team to get onto the island via the tunnel. Fear of execution, however, will not keep Pitt from making the attempt, especially if Loren might be on the island.

As expected, Pitt and Giordino are the diversion tactic, while the other three make their entrance via the tunnel. Their mode of transportation are two brand-new, barely-tested Ibis ultralight aircraft that they must fly just above the surface of the water in order to remain invisible. Both men successfully take off from the Bennett carrier and make it to the island just at sundown. Pitt lands in Suma's pond of carp and water lilies. Al makes a more graceful landing and helps to extricate Pitt from his wrecked aircraft. Initially, there is no one to greet them, but just as they detonate the remains of their aircraft they are told to stop. A trio of tread-driven robots with guns tell them not to move. As expected, Suma's robotics research has been perfected. While the robots do not share any human characteristics other than vocal, they do not appear to be easily overcome. Pitt and Giordino are captured.

Stacy Fox, Tim Weatherhill, and Frank Mancuso enter through Edo City. Their British intelligence agent manages to obtain the necessary information to allow the trio to enter the tunnel to Ajima Island through a thorough security screening process that is designed to identify human characteristics such as nervousness or aversion. The intelligence is top rate, and the three manage to make it through the security system. Once inside the island, they are on their own; no one has managed to penetrate this far into Suma's control center. They are lucky on their first try and find the floor where the electronic brains of Suma's control center are. There are robots all about them, but they have not been programmed to interact with humans and so behave as if the interlopers are not even there. Unfortunately, just then Roy Orita steps out of the elevator and confronts the intruders. All five members of MAIT made it onto the island, but all five have been captured.



Part III, Ajima Island: Chapters 43 - 45 Analysis

Finding Ajima Island had initially seemed to be the most difficult task of the entire project. Once the proper island is identified, the new problem of how to gain access to the island must be tackled. Suma's defensive and technological alert systems prevent anyone from being able to approach the island by water, and the steep craggy cliffs preclude it anyway. The only way in is either by air or through the tunnel at Edo City. The American team manages to get five people on the island, Pitt and Giordino by air, and the remaining three through the tunnel from Edo City. As Weatherhill had predicted back in Las Vegas when he discovered the robotic drivers of the bomb cars, the entire island is protected and defended by robots. All five MAIT members are captured within minutes of gaining access to the island. The question, now, is whether or not any of them will survive, and if any one of them will be successful in shutting down the nuclear threat to the world.



Part III, Ajima Island: Chapters 46 - 48

Part III, Ajima Island: Chapters 46 - 48 Summary

The three most recently apprehended captives are separated and placed in rooms not nearly as luxurious as those Loren and Senator Diaz occupy, but certainly as secure. The Japanese intend to play a psychological game with their captives, misdirecting and giving them untrue information. Pitt and Giordino are imprisoned together, and when confronted by Kamatori, they use their typical banter and nonchalant manner to disarm the assassin. They succeed in angering him by not seeming to take their position very seriously. Kamatori would like nothing better than to dispatch both of them, but he must invite all the prisoners to have dinner with Suma. Loren and Senator Diaz meet Stacy, Weatherhill, and Mancuso over drinks prepared by Toshie as if they were having a typical dinner party. When Pitt and Giordino make their entrance, eschewing the requested attire of kimonos, but wearing the colorful silk as neckties instead, Loren is ecstatic to see them. The two non-government intruders take great delight in treating the entire situation as if it were some sort of joke; taking the situation lightly allows them to be open to opportunity. Dinner is where Suma is able to tell his captive audience of his plans for Japan's future, where he will build entire armies of robots to fight wars without human frailty having any sort of determination in the outcome. He also believes that economic war has no rules and that the Japanese will surely win because they do not worry about wasting money on charitable work unless it is for the better good of Japan. A vicious argument ensues with Pitt challenging Suma's position that the United States is full of criminals and drug addicts. He reminds Suma that most of Japan is corrupt and that their government is run by war-lords and men on the take. Suma ends the conversation by telling the assembled group that he will use the nuclear bombs to devastate the rest of the world, allowing Japan to take over, that Loren and Senator Diaz will be returned to the United States tomorrow, but that Pitt and Giordino have just been granted to Kamatori as a gift. Kamatori enjoys hunting human game for the thrill of the kill.

Back in their room, Al and Dirk discuss their chances of outwitting Kamatori. Knowing that there are listening devices everywhere, Pitt tells Giordino that he injured his leg when he crash-landed on the island and that he would like to have medical attention in order to be at his best for Kamatori's hunt tomorrow. Directed by his robot guard to the clinic, Pitt meets Dr. Josh Nagomi, a transplant from UCLA. He and Pitt chat about scuba-diving, but Pitt is unable to get Dr. Nagomi to give him any useful advice on how to elude Kamatori tomorrow. Once his knee has been given an injection and bandaged, Dr. Nagomi gives him some pain killers and agrees to allow Pitt to sleep on one of the beds in the clinic as they are more comfortable than the mats back in his room. Dr. Nagomi cautions him to not try to escape as the robot guards are programmed to kill him if he does. Before settling in on the comfortable bed, Pitt rifles through the supply room, taking a blood donation bag complete with needle, and then the six-volt battery from the portable x-ray machine and hiding them under his clothing. Then he falls fast asleep.



Part III, Ajima Island: Chapters 46 - 48 Analysis

Like many megalomaniacs, Suma is delighted to have a captive audience to whom he can crow about his victories. He has spent many years putting his plan into effect and is very happy to be on the brink of seeing it in action. For him, it is very gratifying to have an audience who have all been against him from the beginning. Some of them he abducted to keep them quiet, the others came of their own free will in an attempt to stop him. He believes he has won and cannot help proving to them the superiority of the Japanese mind and culture by showing just how wonderful a host he can be. He provides them with an elegant dinner, but when the captives fail to be adequately impressed, Suma finally loses his temper. He tells Loren and Diaz that they will be returned to the United States the next day. He needs them to be his spokespeople, telling the President exactly how things are going to happen, and that the U.S. is completely incapable of preventing it. Then he makes his bodyguard happy by promising that Kamatori can have his human hunt with the members of MAIT. Pitt and Giordino, having been in rough places before, are still jocular and somewhat relaxed. Pitt has an idea and manages to get permission to go to the medical clinic for medical attention and a soft bed. Unknown to everyone else, he also takes a few supplies from the clinic, which appear to make no sense at all against a sword-carrying maniac like Kamatori.



Part III, Ajima Island: Chapters 49 - 51

Part III, Ajima Island: Chapters 49 - 51 Summary

Very early the next morning, Pitt is brought before Kamatori in his study, where more than thirty heads are mounted on the walls. Pitt is repulsed, especially when he recognizes the head of Jim Hanumara in the collection. Kamatori gives his victims only one hour's head start before beginning the hunt. Baiting his hunter, Pitt knows that he will only survive by his wits, and that he must do so; otherwise, the others will also be killed. He uses the knowledge he gained from the diorama that Meeker had built of Ajima Island to give him an idea of which way to head. Once Pitt reaches a clearing overlooking a very steep cliff that ends in shallow water, with a tree hanging by its roots of the precipice he takes out the blood collection bag and takes out a unit of his own blood. As he is doing this he hears the baying of a dog. At first he disbelieves his ears but realizes that Kamatori is not one to play fair. Pitt hides the bag of blood, climbs high on a rock, taking with him two rocks as weapons. The dog reaches the clearing and Pitt is stunned to see a robot dog with a whirling chain for teeth. He throws a rock at the dog and misses, but he watches carefully to see which direction the dog moves. The second attempt, he merely pretends to throw, and with this information he manages to land one on the robotic dog, rendering it inoperable. When Kamatori reaches the clearing, Pitt is nowhere to be seen, but there is blood everywhere, and Pitt's footprints showing that a fierce fight had taken place. Looking over the cliff, Kamatori is infuriated that Pitt died falling off the cliff rather than at the end of his sword. He really wanted Pitt's head on his wall. Back at the house, the rest of the captives have been chained in front of a monitor to watch the death of their friend. When Kamatori returns, Weatherhill volunteers to be next, but Kamatori instead chooses Stacy. He does this in order to make the men feel puny and helpless. At the door, Stacy turns to look at the remaining men in the room and is surprised to see Al Giordino give her a smile and a wink.

Part III, Ajima Island: Chapters 49 - 51 Analysis

Kamatori is an evil man who believes that his sport of hunting humans has been handed down to him from his masterful ancestors in the samurai tradition. He has wished for quite some time to be able to kill Dirk Pitt. Pitt is responsible for great loss of face for him, and having Pitt's head on the wall of his study will be little consolation for his recent failures. He has hunted many men and knows that Pitt will be a challenge, but he is shocked when his robot hunting dog is overcome and destroyed. Kamatori's anger at being deprived of killing Pitt is almost insurmountable, but he consoles himself by choosing to hunt the female operative next. He knows of nothing better to bring men to their knees than to hunt and kill a helpless female while her male companions have to watch without being able to render aid. Kamatori seriously underestimates Pitt, who manages to escape from him to a watery grave at the base of the very high cliffs of Ajima Island.



Part III, Ajima Island: Chapters 52 - 54

Part III, Ajima Island: Chapters 52 - 54 Summary

Kamatori's shock at seeing Pitt alive is matched with the relief in the eyes of the remainder of the captives. Pitt used the tree to cushion his fall into the water, and then was able to climb back up, put the security robots out of commission and track Kamatori back to the house. Kamatori does not believe that the security robots were put out of use until Pitt presses the battery-magnet he created to the sides of the robots guarding the prisoners. Both robots fall over, incapacitated. Pitt has picked up a sword, which is thirty centimeters longer than that of his opponent, off the wall of Kamatori's study. His sword is heavier and harder to work with, but he feels that the length will serve him well. A sword fight between Pitt, who has some experience in fencing, and Kamatori, who is a skilled samurai might not have been the best match, but with Stacy's help distracting Kamatori, Pitt is the victor and wins the match after cutting off Kamatori's hand. After that he pins Kamatori to the wall of his study with the sword so that Kamatori can keep his heads company. Moving quickly, all the captives are released from their chains. Weatherhill has some explosive devices in the heel of his shoe and the hunt is on once again to find the detonation center. While they do not have enough explosive to level the island, they have enough to set back the project by several weeks.

Meanwhile, Suma is taking Loren and Senator Diaz for a tour of his facility. He delights in being able to further impress the two politicians, proving to them that he has built the most advanced facility in the world and that the Americans truly have their hands tied. He shows them his plans for oil-eating bacteria to deplete the world's oil supplies and bring the rest of the world to its knees. While Suma is giving the tour, Pitt and his cohorts have reached the medical clinic where Dr. Nagomi is astonished to see them all still alive. This is when they discover that he is a U.S. operative and is able to show them exactly where they need to place the explosives for maximum effect.

Part III, Ajima Island: Chapters 52 - 54 Analysis

Living up to his reputation, Dirk Pitt once again appears resurrected from a seemingly-impossible situation. He has effectively fooled Kamatori into believing that he had died in the fall to the water and has now appeared once again. Kamatori is actually happy to see Pitt; he believes he will now have his head on the study wall. What Kamatori does not know is that Pitt is motivated by things other than heads. He is motivated by the four other people in the room, who will surely die if he does not succeed, and he also knows the world is counting on him to somehow change the direction of Suma's plan. He has no qualms about killing Kamatori, though it gives him little pleasure. With the battery-magnet device, they are able to destroy the electronics of any robot they meet and able to reach the medical section unimpeded. At the clinic, they discover that Dr. Nagomi is a covert operative, who is willing to show them where they can place their explosives that will render the most destruction.



Part III, Ajima Island: Chapters 55 - 58

Part III, Ajima Island: Chapters 55 - 58 Summary

The MAIT team is running out of time, and they really do not even know it. Back in the U.S., Raymond Jordan and Donald Kern watch a clock that tells them they only have forty-five minutes to get word from their team that they have been successful, or there will be a nuclear strike on the island. The MAIT team effectively places the explosive device and heads up the elevator, where they hope Pitt and Giordino are waiting for them. As they move upward, they do not know that a new robot has been positioned in place of one that was compromised. The technicians only know that the robots have failed for some reason, but because there is no external damage, they merely think that a circuit board has failed. The new robot monitors the laser pulse rate through an optic fiber and is sensitive enough to sense that it is refracting around something causing a drop in rate of 0.2 million beats per second.

Suma has tired of his political guests and wishes nothing more than to be rid of them. He gives Loren the fatal blow when he tells her that Pitt, Giordino and the rest of the MAIT team have been executed by Kamatori. Loren reacts in shock and barely notices that she is being dragged toward the waiting helicopter. Diaz is directly behind her when two of the crewmen grab hold of Suma who has just turned away from his unpleasant guests. Pitt and Giordino have overcome the helicopter crew and have now kidnapped Suma and Toshie to accompany all of them off Ajima Island. The helicopter heads directly for the Ralph R. Bennet, hoping to reach the ship before they are shot down. As they make their way toward the ship, the robots discover the explosive device. They do not know what it is, only that it does not belong where they find it. When it explodes, it only takes out the robot and has no effect on Dragon Center. After the explosion, Dragon Center is alerted, but when a search goes out for Suma and Kamatori, they find the samurai impaled on his study wall, and Suma nowhere to be found.

Tsuboi, as second in command, gives orders for the helicopter to be shot down. He has no intention of allowing any of the occupants to reach the ship. What he does not plan on is that Suma is the only one with the codes to initiate the Kaiten Project strike. With Suma either as a captive or dead, the Kaiten Project is now set back by several weeks because it will take that long for the software specialists to reprogram all the codes known only by Suma. Tsuboi's command put two Japanese fighter jets on the tail of the helicopter. Only by great skill, and direction from control aboard the Bennett, do the occupants of the helicopter avoid being shot down before they land on the ship. One of the Mitsubishi Raven jet fighters is shot down and falls into the sea. The other turns tail and runs, leaving Pitt and his team free to land on the Ralph R. Bennett.



Part III, Ajima Island: Chapters 55 - 58 Analysis

The excitement of the book continues to intensify with every chapter. There are numerous events that keep the reader involved and wondering just what is going to happen. Cussler is a master at creating scenes that appear to be impossible to escape, only to have Pitt and Giordino pull another one out of their hats. Being able to gain control of the helicopter crew is an event that happens off-stage, but is a welcome event when Suma escorts Loren and Diaz out to the helipad. Once they have Suma and Toshie aboard, the reader believes that the explosion will take out Dragon Center, and the world will be saved. True to his style, Cussler allows the robots to find the explosives just moments before detonation and prevent destruction of Dragon Center. The only advantage on the side of the Americans at this point is that they saw fit to kidnap Suma. They did not know that his knowledge will cripple the Kaiten project for a period of time, while the terrorists work to reconfigure all the codes, which are known only to Suma. It is not a win; it is merely a reprieve. At this point in the book, the reader cannot put it down.



Part IV, Mother's Breath: Chapters 59 - 61

Part IV, Mother's Breath: Chapters 59 - 61 Summary

October 20, 1993 Washington, D.C.

It is apparent that Dragon Center did not explode in the way it was intended, and with the Japanese fighter jets firing upon the helicopter known to carry Suma as a captive, Jordan and Kern reach the unpleasant conclusion that Tsuboi and his men consider Suma to be expendable. The President cancels the nuclear attack on Ajima Island, but they are still in a very high state of alert not knowing the status of the Kaiten Project. They are delighted to have Suma as a guest of the United States and intend to interrogate him thoroughly, but realize that the danger is far from over. Tsuboi is known for his ruthlessness, and the fact that he ordered Suma's helicopter to be shot down demonstrates just how debased he is.

Back at Dragon Center, the techs inform Tsuboi that he cannot launch the detonation sequence for the Kaiten Project because Suma kept all the codes secret from everyone except himself. Tsuboi is infuriated when he is told that it will take a minimum of three days to reprogram everything so that someone else can run the detonation sequence. Yoshishu, Tsuboi's superior, expresses his concern that if Suma is still alive he could be a true embarrassment to the Kaiten Project. He delivers the directive to Tsuboi not to fail him. In an effort to fool the Americans, Tsuboi decides to manually detonate at least one of the bombs to keep the Americans frightened and submissive until they are able to get the entire project back up and running. The best way is to use a high-powered rifle and shoot directly into the engine of one of the cars. Tsuboi wants to use a robot for this job, but is again incensed that there is no robot built for this express purpose yet. This method requires a suicide bomber, a commodity Japan knows something about.

Part IV, Mother's Breath: Chapters 59 - 61 Analysis

For every gain there is an additional loss, on each side of the game. The MAIT team is successful in getting off Ajima Island, but the bomb they leave behind does little damage and only serves to alert Tsuboi and Yoshishu that Suma has been kidnapped and the Americans know much, much more than they expected. America is still at the mercy of the Japanese. The Japanese suffer a great loss with the kidnapping of Suma, especially with his knowledge of the codes, but they do determine that they can manually detonate one of the nuclear explosives to keep the Americans wondering if they are operational yet or not. This is where the foreshadowing at the beginning of the book is explained. The Japanese do not know that the explosion of the Divine Star in the Pacific is a result of Chief Officer Steen plugging a couple bullets into a car he believed took the life of his

shipmate. The reader knows this and should remember this fact when Tsuboi now must find a suicide bomber to detonate one of the devices manually.



Part IV, Mother's Breath: Chapters 62 - 64

Part IV, Mother's Breath: Chapters 62 - 64 Summary

Pitt is weary; he has barely had any rest from the time of the detonation of the bomb aboard the Divine Star requiring immediate evacuation of Soggy Acres. He understands before almost everyone that the detonation of the nuclear device aboard Dennings' Demons will be required to reduce Dragon Center to a pile of rubble. The crash occurred near a serious fault line that will become very unstable with the detonation of a bomb, much like the Mendocino fault that destroyed Soggy Acres. What will then happen is the island will sink into the ocean like a stone. While the Americans are planning their attack on Ajima Island, the Japanese have chosen to resort to a manual detonation of a bomb in a very remote area in Wyoming. Posing as a surveyor, a Japanese in the kamikaze tradition, drives one of the Murmoto vehicles to Charlie Keegan's land, and, despite being confronted by Keegan, he shoots the compressor at very close range and detonates the nuclear bomb. Initially the President believes that this gives him the right to arrange for an air strike on Ajima Island, but he is persuaded to be patient. While the Kaiten Project cannot be detonated in a simultaneous fashion and result in the electromagnetic erasure of every computer chip in the west, what can be done is to order all the robots to detonate the cars where they are being held. This will result in wide-scale loss of life as all the vehicles are held in vaults in very densely populated cities. By not responding, the Japanese will be led to believe that America is on her knees, which is a good thing, because the cars have all been moved from their known locations. The Japanese still have the upper hand.

Part IV, Mother's Breath: Chapters 62 - 64 Analysis

Dennings' Demons at the beginning of the story was to have stopped the World War in which Japan was positioned to gain the upper hand. Because of a single coastal patrol, Dennings' Demons sank below the sea into a watery grave, a mere twenty miles away from Ajima Island. Again, foreshadowing is in place where a bomb destined to stop the Japanese from world domination fifty years before is now to be used for exactly the same purpose, only this time it is to be detonated from below the surface of the ocean. With the detonation of the bomb in Wyoming, the Japanese believe they continue to hold the upper hand in a very tense game of poker. By not responding to the blast, America gives the impression that she is neutralized. This gives MAIT a little more time to work out their plan.



Part IV, Mother's Breath: Chapters 65 - 67

Part IV, Mother's Breath: Chapters 65 - 67 Summary

Pitt and Giordino have been instructed to wait behind while Loren and Diaz are flown back to Washington. They have been told that they can take a little time to enjoy the beaches of Wake Island until Admiral Sandecker comes to fill them in on their next step. When Sandecker arrives, it is in a huge C-5 with a DSMV similar to Big John aboard, a new and improved model called Big Ben. Three minutes later, the big plane is airborne again, this time with Pitt and Giordino on board. They have been instructed as to the seismic and volcanic nature of the seabed by and around Ajima Island, and that a nuclear blast will create enough disruption of the integrity of the fault that the Island will simply sink into the sea. The plan is for Pitt and Giordino to be parachuted from the belly of the C-5 inside of Big Ben and float to the bottom of the ocean. From their landing point, they are to travel to Dennings' Demons, extract the bomb from her fuselage, move it ten kilometers closer to the island so that it is perfect position, set a timer, and move as far as they possible in the hour that remains. Pitt is disgusted that this is the best plan that they can come up with, but he has plans of his own. He cannot allow his friend to be subjected to the danger of the mission. He collects all the food, water, and coffee on board the C-5 and stows it into Big Ben. Minutes before they are to be dropped into the ocean, he persuades Giordino to use the facilities, telling him that every race car driver will do that before a big race. Once Giordino is in the lavatory, Pitt and one of the crewmen winch a steel cable tightly around the bathroom door keeping Al trapped inside. Admiral Sandecker tells Pitt that he can order Al to be released, but Pitt is firm. He will not have the life of his friend on his conscience. Pitt believes he can accomplish what needs to be done alone. He gets his way, and is sinking to the bottom of the moonlit ocean just a couple of minutes later, alone. He sinks too fast into the water and hits bottom with greater force than expected. His biggest worry is that he will be buried underneath meters of ocean silt and not be able to get out. Fortunately, after only a few tense moments, Big Ben is underway and heading toward Dennings' Demons.

Part IV, Mother's Breath: Chapters 65 - 67 Analysis

Pitt is disgusted at the idiotic idea that is at the core of their newest mission. He knows that it is likely that this is the last hope to stop the Japanese from unleashing a nuclear monster that will destroy the twentieth-century way of life, but he does not have to like it. Because of the danger, Pitt determines that he will not risk the life of his friend. He conspires with a crew member aboard the C-5 to help him trap Giordino in the latrine so Pitt can be sent into the ocean alone. Al is furious at Pitt, but once Pitt is in the water, there is nothing he can do except be there, help with operations, and pray.



Part IV, Mother's Breath: Chapters 68 - 73

Part IV, Mother's Breath: Chapters 68 - 73 Summary

Pitt's mission is expected to take approximately six hours to complete. While the U.S. waits, Tsuboi contacts the President and informs him of his demands. He requests that the states of Hawaii and California be turned over to the Japanese and subject to Japanese rule. He gives the President only six hours to make the announcement to the American people. This is exactly how much time it will take for Pitt to get the bomb detonated off the island of Ajima. The timing becomes critical, and the President is sweating. Pitt is ahead of schedule, having been able to extract the bomb, with a very tense moment when he had to allow the bomb to free-fall a couple of feet in order to maneuver into position. Giordino and Sandecker have been flying above Pitt in the C-5, but the Japanese have ordered an attack on the airplane. Despite the gaping holes in the C-5, the plane is still able to fly, but the radios have been compromised and no longer work. They must divert immediately to Okinawa. Now Pitt is working completely in the dark and absolutely alone. The damage to the radio has put Washington in the dark as well, and they have no idea whether or not Pitt is still on schedule. They are beginning to assume the worst. They have apprehended some of the bomb cars and their suicidal drivers, but they know that there as many as ten still unaccounted for. After starting the timer, Pitt turns around and makes tracks as fast as he can in the muddy silt that is the ocean bottom. He is only eight kilometers away when the bomb explodes, and he is hit with a shockwave blast that covers him with layers of mud and silt. Despite this complication, Pitt is thrilled. He has accomplished what many believed to be an impossible mission. How frustrating it is that he cannot share his joy with anyone. The shock of the bomb does exactly what it was intended to do. The sea floor beneath Soseki Island shifts enough, and the island slides quietly and slowly into the ocean. The huge chunk of sea wall that breaks off during the explosion is displaced with water, creating a large wave at the top of the water, which continues to grow until it reaches what is left of Ajima Island. All Dragon Center workers are believed to have drowned. The avalanche covers Big Ben, and no satellite photos can find any trace of Big Ben or Pitt.

Part IV, Mother's Breath: Chapters 68 - 73 Analysis

The final mission of the MAIT team is successful. All the bombs but four have been accounted for, and Soseki/Ajima Island has sunk into the ocean, taking with it all of its great scientific and robotic advancements. It also takes with it the men who continued to pursue world domination via the threat of nuclear weapons. Pitt has the satisfaction of knowing that his mission is successful, but he also knows that he did not make it far enough away from the detonation site to be able to reach the Japanese shore as he was instructed. He is on the wrong side of the cavern, and when the avalanche reaches



him, Big Ben is tumbled end over end and covered in silt and mud and is without the digging tools that Big John had.



Part V, Obituary: Chapters 74 - 76

Part V, Obituary: Chapters 74 - 76 Summary

An obituary is written up about Dirk Pitt in the Washington Post on November 19, 1993, nearly a month after his disappearance, when he managed to detonate the bomb left aboard Dennings' Demons. Sandecker and Giordino are at his hangar at the Washington Airport. Al is simultaneously delighted and sad because they have managed to get Pitt's Messerschmit Me-262A-1a home for him, and Pitt is not there to see it. Toshie is in Giordino's care and wishes to assist him in working on the airplane; she was trained in mechanics by her father before being groomed by Suma. Ray Jordan is enjoying his time with Hideki Suma, who has been repeatedly drugged and given post-hypnotic suggestions to believe that he has only been held for a day or two, when in reality he has been repeatedly interrogated and then hypnotized to forget that he has revealed quantities of information. In Suma's mind, he still has the upper hand; the Kaiten Project will still be detonated if the Americans refuse to accede to his commands, and he will be going home tomorrow. Jordan's intention is to keep Suma in this state for as long as he has information to reveal, and once he is no longer useful, he will be dispatched without qualm. The president manages to deal with the Prime Minister of Japan with much more backbone than he has ever been able to manage before. The Prime Minister refuses to admit any culpability in the Kaiten Project, but the President is having none of that. He insists that the current Prime Minister resign and a new one installed in his place and a brand new cabinet of honest Japanese businessmen be put in place of the existing one. A threat of revealing everything about the Kaiten Project to the world is enough to ensure the Prime Minister's acquiescence. Far across the world, on November 21, 1993, a strange disturbance off the coast of Marcus Island reveals an underwater vehicle attaining a stronghold on the beach. The strange vehicle opens and the bearded, dark-haired man requests a crab Louis salad and a tequila on the rocks from the open-mouthed beach waiter.

Part V, Obituary: Chapters 74 - 76 Analysis

For four weeks, Pitt has been driving the DSMV across the ocean floor, having struggled out of his mired trap, and makes his way to the beaches of Marcus Island. Because of the length of his disappearance, it is obvious that all efforts to rescue him have been canceled. While a satellite was able to spot him when he and Plunkett were in Big John, there seemed to be no need to continue to search for a dead man. Everyone except Giordino had written Pitt off as dead. Pitt learned an excellent lesson during his ordeal with Plunkett in Big John; they did not carry any food. Before deploying Big Ben, Pitt had managed to beg, borrow, and buy all the food and drink he could before he went to the bottom of the ocean. For the third time in this saga, Pitt is resurrected.



Characters

Dirk Pitt

The main character of the novel. He is tall, dark haired, muscled, graceful, and very, very smart. He is a man who seems almost invincible. He has friends both inside and outside of the government. He believes in the American way of life more than he believes in life itself. He does not enjoy to have anyone hurt, especially projects and people who are close to him. He is infuriated about the destruction of Soggy Acres and is determined to find out who is responsible for detonating the bomb that caused the devastation. He is also determined to rescue Loren Smith, his girlfriend, who happens to be a U.S. Congresswoman from Colorado abducted by the Japanese during the course of events. Dirk is a very skilled underwater scientist and spent the four months preceding the events of the story underwater in a top-secret underwater facility. He is more at home underwater than he is on land. However, when he is on land, he has another hobby that he finds fascinating. He is a collector of vintage cars. In his home, which is an old 1936 hangar on the edge of Washington International Airport, he has a huge collection of vintage cars. He is currently working on a Stutz towncar, the name of which he uses for the code name for his team on MAIT. During the race in the Stutz, he races against a man named Clive Cussler, the author of the book. It stands to reason that Dirk Pitt is the fictional counterpart of Clive Cussler, who shares Pitt's love of the underwater world and vintage cars.

Al Giordino

Dirk's best friend and NUMA associate of Italian descent with dark curly hair. He is shorter than Pitt by a head, but very strong and stocky. He knows Pitt better than anyone alive as they have been friends and associates since they were both in kindergarten. It falls to Al to determine that Pitt did not perish when they had to evacuate Soggy Acres in the transport subs, leaving Pitt and Plunkett behind as there was simply not enough room for everyone in the two subs. When they were unable to return for Pitt, Al is the one who determines that Pitt did not die, but found a way out of Soggy Acres using Big John, a DSMV. Al also figures out exactly where Pitt is headed so Al can direct the rescue operation to the proper place just in time to cut Pitt and Plunkett out of the habitation pod attached to the chassis of Big John. Al will do anything in the world for Pitt.

Admiral James Sandecker

Director and head of NUMA - National Underwater and Marine Agency. He has close-cropped red hair and a cigar habit. He considers Dirk Pitt to be the son he never had. He is very close to Pitt and Giordino and would do anything to support them. He is directly responsible for their becoming involved in MAIT and assures Ray Jordan that



they are more patriotic than anyone else on Jordan's team. They just march to the tune of a different drummer. He has full and complete faith in the abilities of both men.

Major Charles Dennings

Pilot of the B-29, Dennings' Demons.

Captain Irv Stanton

Bombardier of Dennings' Demons.

Captain Mort Stromp

Dennings' Demons copilot.

Lieutenant Joseph Arnold

Dennings' Demons navigator.

Navy Commander Hank Byrnes

Weapons engineer of Denning's Demons, who monitors the bomb during flight.

General Harold Morrison

Special deputy to General Leslie Groves.

General Leslie Groves

Head of the Manhattan Project in Los Alamos, New Mexico where the atomic bomb was created.

Lieutenant Junior Grade Sato Okinaga

Japanese pilot who shot down Dennings' Demons.

Colonel Paul Tibbets

Pilot of the Enola Gay, who successfully dropped the nuclear bomb on Hiroshima, Japan



Captain Arne Korvold

Captain of the Norwegian Rindal Lines passenger-cargo liner Narvik.

Chief Officer Oscar Steen

Heads the boarding crew of the foundering Japanese ship, the Divine Star.

Olaf Andersson

Assistant chief engineer.

David Sakagawa

Communications man, only crew member aboard the Narvik who speaks Japanese.

Arne Midgaard

Seaman who dies beside the Murmoto automobile.

Craig Plunkett

Chief engineer and pilot for Old Gert.

Dr. Raul Salazar

Marine geologist of the expedition from the University of Mexico.

Stacy Fox

Photographer of the British survey expedition, actually a NSA covert operative.

Jimmy Knox

Scotsman, surface controller of the Invincible, dies of radiation exposure.

Dale Nichols

Special assistant to the U.S. President.



Raymond Jordan

One of the five most powerful men in Washington. He is the director of the CIA and heads the National Security Service and reports directly to the President.

U.S. President

Never named, but the President of the United States in 1993.

Nikolai Golanov

USSR counterpart to Ray Jordan. He is the Directorate of Foreign and State Security for the Politburo. He and Jordan have a twenty-six year history.

Sarah

Redhead member of the NUMA team, who oversees the computer needs.

Keith Harris

Seismologist of Pitt's NUMA team.

Owen Murphy

Captain of the Chinese junk, Shanghai Shelly, that rescues the underwater crew.

Harry Deerfield

Pediatrician aboard Shanghai Shelly who tries to save Jimmy Knox.

Commander Beau Morton

Skipper of the attack submarine, the Tucson, sent to the explosion area.

Lt. Commander Sam Hauser

Naval Radiological Defense Laboratory.



Sonarman Kaiser

Sonar specialist aboard the Tucson.

General Yamashita Tomoyuki

Commander of Japanese forces in the Philippines after October 1944.

Frank Mancuso

Graduate of the Colorado School of Mines, part of the intelligence community of Washington. Part of Pitt's Stutz Team.

Rico Acosta

Mining engineer attached to the Philippines security forces.

Ferdinand Marcos

Corrupt leader of the Philippines, who stole thirty million dollars worth of Philippines wealth before he was evicted from office.

Curtis Meeker

Deputy Director of Advanced Technical Operations who studies satellite intelligence photos.

Lieutenant David DeLuca

Navigation officer of the Tucson.

Hideki Suma

A Japanese ultra-nationalist, who is on a sacred quest to purify Japanese culture and has a dream of an empire dominated by Japanese superiority. He will stop at nothing, including detonating dozens of nuclear devices throughout the world to achieve his goal.

Moro Kamatori

Suma's oldest friend, chauffeur, bodyguard, and chief aid. He manages Suma's secret projects. His greatest passion is hunting down human game. He has no qualms about



killing anyone who gets in Suma's way. He keeps a tally of his victims, two-hundred and thirty seven, in the past twenty-five years.

Toshie Kudo

Suma's secretary, who is tall, slender, jet black hair that falls to her waist, and has an IQ over 165.

Admiral Itakura

Japanese Ambassador in Washington.

Prime Minister Junshiro

Prime Minister of Japan.

George Furukawa

Directs Suma's secret affairs in the southwestern United States. He is the Vice President of the Samuel J. Vincent Laboratories. He is called a "sleeper." His job is to take delivery of special Murmoto cars, fitted with nuclear bombs. His Ph.D. in aerodynamic physics and position at the lab allow him to take information on the United State's aerospace technology and pass it on to Suma Industries. His activities have advanced Japanese research by at least five years.

Donald Kern

Deputy Director of Operations of MAIT.

Mel Penner

Director of Field Operations on the Island of Koror in the Palau Republic chain. His cover story is that he is a UCLA sociologist studying native culture.

Marvin Showalter

Assistant Director of Security for the U.S. Department of State, working out of the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo.



Dr. Timothy Weatherhill

He is a weapons expert on Stacy Fox's team, his cover is as a journalist from the Denver Tribune

Roy Orita

Asian American part of Team Honda on the Japanese end of the investigations. He is a double agent, actually on Suma's payroll. He, too, is a sleeper, and managed to achieve very high ranking in the CIA in order to help Suma's world takeover bid.

James Hanamura

Asian American, the other half of Team Honda, working undercover in Japan. He is the only man who manages to actually get his hands on the saved blueprints of Suma's Dragon Project that is the epicenter of the Kaiten Project. He manages to get the blueprints sent to the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo just before he dies. He is beheaded by Kamatori.

Dr. Percival Nash

Pitt's maternal uncle. He was one of the nuclear scientists on the Manhattan project that produced the first atomic bomb. He works with Pitt to help determine exactly how the bombs are being smuggled into the United States.

Hiram Yaeger

A decorated, three-tour Vietnam veteran, who is a Navy Seal. He is a great friend to Pitt and works with Nash and Pitt to determine that the bombs are being smuggled in the air conditioning units of the Murmoto automobiles.

Ichiro Tsuboi

Chief director of Kanoya Securities, the biggest security company in the world with enough capital to consume Paine Webber, Charles Schwab, and Merrill Lynch. He is a ruthless financial manipulator. Works directly with Suma.

Mike Diaz

United States Senator from New Mexico. He is very outspoken against Japanese attempts to take over the United States. He believes that Japanese companies making



money on American soil must abide by the same laws as American companies. He is the one man in the Senate who is not intimidated by Tsuboi.

Congresswoman Loren Smith from Colorado

Pitt's girlfriend and lover. She supports Mike Diaz's position against Japanese Nationalism. She is a beautiful woman and is known for her political cunning. Her power in Congress is an affront to Tsuboi, who does not believe in taking orders from a woman.

Mr. Dennis Suhaka

In charge of new car shipments at Murmoto Motor Distribution Corp in Alexandria for a five state district.

Kokori Yoshishu

Tsuboi's mentor from the time he was a boy of fourteen. Member of the secret society of Gold Dragons and one of the most feared men in Japan.

Jiro Miyazi

Worker whose I.D. badge James Hanamura stole to get into Suma's plant and find the blueprint plans for the secret installation.

Lieutenant Commander Raymond Simpson

Commander of the Ralph R. Bennett.

Commander Wendell Harper

Skipper of the radar ship.

Josh Nagomi

Doctor on Suma's Soseki Island - a covert operative for the U.S.

Clyde Ingram

Director of Science and Technology Data Interpretation at the NSA in Fort Meade.



Martin Brogman

Director of the CIA.

Jesse Simmons

Defense Secretary.

General Clayton Metcalf

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs.

Douglas Oates

Secretary of State.

General Duke Mackay

Commander of Anderson Air Force Base on Guam.

Takeda Kurojima

Dragon Center's chief director.

Dan Keegan

Rancher northeast of Sheridan, Wyoming, killed in a nuclear blast detonated by gunshot.

Suburo Miwa

Suicide bomber who manually detonated one of the car bombs.

Masuji Koyama

Expert defense detection technician for Suma, who identifies the C-5 circling over Denning's Demons.

Ashikaga Enshu

A purported art investigator, who claims to have found a Shimzu painting. In actuality, he is Jim Hanamura, and has successfully fooled Suma.



Objects/Places

B-29 Bomber Dennings' Demons

The airplane assigned to drop an atomic bomb on Osaka, Japan. The aircraft fails as it is shot down and rests at the bottom of the Pacific with an active nuclear device since August 6, 1945.

Mitsubishi A6M Zero

The Japanese aircraft that shoots down Dennings' Demons.

Narvik

The Norwegian Rindal Lines passenger-cargo ocean-liner that is blown up in a nuclear explosion.

Divine Star

The Foundered Japanese cargo ship bringing a shipment of Murmoto cars to the U.S. It is the source of the nuclear explosion in the Pacific.

Old Gert

A deep sea submersible designed to investigate the Mendocino fracture zone on the floor of the Pacific.

Invincible

British oceanographic ship.

NSA

National Security Agency.

NORAD

North American Aerospace Defense Command.



DEFCOM

Defense Command.

Pyramider Satellite

U.S. Satellite that recorded the nuclear explosion in the Pacific.

Casper SR-Ninety

Reconnaissance aircraft stationed at Edwards Air Force Base, sent to the explosion site to collect data.

NUMA

National Underwater and Marine Agency.

Soggy Acres

Top secret NUMA project headed by Dirk Pitt; Soggy Acres is a highly-classified, suboceanic test mining and survey project.

Big John

A DSMV - Deep Sea Mining Vehicle - used to excavate mining samples from the ocean floor.

Shanghai Shelly

Chinese junk piloted by Owen Murphy on hand to rescue Dirk Pitt's NUMA team when they had to abandon Soggy Acres.

Tucson

U.S. attack submarine sent to the explosion site from Pearl Harbor.

Corregidor Island

At the entrance to Manila Bay, Philippines, where Yamashita's Gold is believed to be hidden during World War II.



Ford's Theater

The theater where President Lincoln was shot by John Wilkes Booth, and where U.S. Intelligence operatives sometimes meet.

The Great Karnak

The latest underwater visual technology developed by NUMA scientists and installed on the Tucson. It helps Admiral Sandecker see Big John's progress to assist the rescue mission of Pitt and Plunkett.

Yasukuni

A shrine erected in Tokyo to honor those who died fighting for Japan and the Emperor, whose sacred symbol is a mirror.

Divine Moon

Japanese ship carrying Murmuto cars successfully docked in Boston; six of the vehicles carry nuclear warheads.

Divine Water

Japanese ship with nuclear warheads docked in Los Angeles.

Divine Sky

Japanese ship with nuclear warheads scheduled to dock in New Orleans.

Divine Lake

Japanese ship with nuclear warheads five days away from Los Angeles.

Kaiten Project

The brainchild of Hideki Suma, a mission to simultaneously detonate nuclear devices in the United States, Europe and the Soviet Union, knocking out each country's communication and computer network grids, paralyzing the United States and other countries. It is designed to create an electromagnetic shield over one half of the earth.



Federal Headquarters Building

A building disguised as a run-down derelict 1930's building, where Pitt and Giordino are taken to be briefed about their involvement with MAIT.

Old Aircraft Hangar

Pitt's home on the edge of Washington's International Airport, built in 1936. This is where Pitt lives and where he houses his extensive vintage car collection.

Ajima Island

The missing painting from a series of paintings done by Japanese artist Shimzu. It is also the island where Suma builds his fortress, now known as Soseki Island.

Virginia Memorial Racetrack

Where Pitt shows and races his Stutz and meets his creator, Clive Cussler. It is also where Loren Smith is abducted.

Bielfeld, West Germany

Where an underground bunker is discovered holding aircraft and relics from World War II, including the much sought after painting of Ajima Island.

Edo

A subterranean city, special project of Suma.

Dragon Center

The command center for the Kaiten Project.

Robots

Specially designed robots to do specific tasks, the first that are discovered are created to drive the bomb cars in the U.S. to specific locations. Others, on Ajima Island and in the Dragon Center have specific jobs ranging from security to monitoring all the specific details of the Kaiten Project.



Ralph R. Bennett

The tracking and detection ship of the U.S. Navy.

Ibis

The ultralight power glider aircraft that Pitt and Giordino use to gain access to Ajima Island.

Mursaki

A robot, whose name means purple, which captures Pitt and Giordino. Giordino calls it McGoon and tells it that it is painted yellow.

Soseki Island

Formerly known as Ajima Island. Connected to Japan's Edo City through an underground tunnel.

Shintoism

Japanese religion that believes that all things animate and inanimate have souls and deserve to be revered as human.

Robotic Dog

Robot that Kamatori uses to track Pitt.

6 Volt Dry Cell Battery

Battery that Pitt steals from the portable x-ray machine to use to decommission Suma's robots.

Lockheed C-5 Galaxy

The largest cargo plane in the world.

Big Ben

DSMV, a later model to replace Big John, used by Pitt to gain access to the nuclear warhead hidden underwater for over fifty years in Dennings' Demons.

Fat Man

The implosion nuclear bomb designed at Los Alamos.

Marcus Island

1125 KM SE of Japan, where Pitt comes ashore in Big Ben weeks after the sinking of Dragon Center.

MAIT

Multi-Agency Investigative Team



Themes

Be Self-Sufficient And Do Not Take Unnecessary Risks With Th

Dirk is one of the most self-sufficient men known to all his friends and family. He is not one to take unnecessary risks, though he does live a life of high excitement and danger. He knows exactly what he is capable of doing and what he is willing to do. His first demonstration of this skill is when the entire NUMA team must evacuate Soggy Acres. There are two submersibles capable of carrying the entire NUMA team to the surface before the earthquake devastates Soggy Acres. Pitt's concern is to get his NUMA team, plus the three additional members they just rescued from the British Survey team, who were trapped underwater. Pitt has a really tough decision to make because there is simply not enough room in the submersibles for everyone. He tells his friend, Al Giordino, that he, Al, is to pilot the first vehicle, and that Pitt will pilot the second vehicle, and he intends to leave the British Survey team to die. At first Al believes him but then realizes that this is Pitt's way of getting his friend up to the surface. Al's intention is to take his team up and then return immediately for Pitt. A second example of Pitt's choice not to take unnecessary risks with the lives of others is when he and Al have been chosen to take Big Ben down to the ocean floor and dig out Dennings' Demons and detonate the formerly lost nuclear warhead in order to sink Ajima Island and Dragon's Center. Just prior to the release of Big Ben, Pitt traps Al Giordino in the lavatory so Pitt will be the only one to risk his life in the endeavor. Pitt cares very deeply for his friends and does not see the need to risk Al's life on something that he firmly believes he can do alone. He shows his self-sufficiency, because this time he takes all the sandwiches and coffee he can get his hands on before going underwater.

Huge Dangers Require Huge Risks

Dirk has a great many skills, some of them as a result of his NUMA exploits, others he has gained as "on the job training" from his many varied escapades. The current situation shows Pitt taking huge risks in the beginning merely to survive. When he and Plunkett are the only two left down in Soggy Acres with the two submersibles already deployed to the top, Pitt knows that they need to get out before the earthquake hits. There simply is not enough time to wait for a submersible to return for them. He takes the DSMV, Big John, and uses it as a tractor to dig them out of the muck from the avalanche and then to travel approximately five kilometers an hour to an underwater mountain summit where they can be rescued, which they are. A second example of huge dangers requiring huge risks occur when his girlfriend, Loren Smith, is abducted from the Virginia Raceway. Despite his love of his vintage Stutz, Pitt uses the car without concern, trying very hard to keep up with the kidnappers' vehicle. The Stutz suffers quite a bit of damage, but the danger to his girlfriend requires the risk. Pitt demonstrates, again, his ability to take risks when he realizes that the only way anyone can get on Ajima Island is by flying a motorized Ibis onto the island. He and Giordino



agree to do this because the very future of their way of life in the United States is at risk. He knows that his life is in extreme danger, and there is likely no way out for him, but he is willing to take the risk to see what he can accomplish. He successfully leaves the island with Suma as a captive but has not completed his mission. He is very willing to once again risk his life by taking Big Ben below the surface of the ocean and detonating the nuclear warhead that Dennings' Demons left on the ocean floor over fifty years ago. The resulting explosion causes Pitt to be underwater for weeks before he finally comes ashore on Marcus Island. All his friends and family believed he had died in the explosion. He proves once again that great dangers require great risks.

Patriotism Can Be Exhibited In Different Ways

Dirk seems to have his own agenda when it comes to defending his country. He is likely one of the most patriotic men anyone has ever met when it comes to his country; however, he is not enamored with the idea of being coerced into a covert operation without his permission. When asked to join MAIT, he was not so much asked to join as expected to join, and that does not sit well with Dirk Pitt. He is an individual and has unique ideas. After being briefed as to the situation regarding the nuclear bomb plot on U.S. soil, Pitt understands the gravity of the situation but still does not like the fact that he has been paired with an agent he has never met. Pitt has his own ideas about how to proceed, and, instead of agreeing to join MAIT, he declares that he will think about it, and then he and Al Giordino leave the building. Ray Jordan is irritated and tells Admiral Sandecker that he does not have time to work with prima donnas. Sandecker replies that Pitt is more patriotic than the two of them put together, and that in all likelihood, Pitt is already devising a way to figure out the plot and to correct it. This is, indeed, the case. Pitt gives Giordino instructions to compare recent car shipment inventories of local Murmoto dealerships with shipment records from Tokyo. In the meantime, Pitt calls on his uncle and a highly-trusted friend to figure out where the Japanese are hiding the bombs in the cars. Within a very short time, Pitt has determined where some of the cars are and where the bombs are being hidden in the cars. This shows that he is very much interested in solving the problem, but that he is not easily swayed when given blind directions from a newly-formed committee which has no idea where they should start.

Style

Point of View

The story, *Dragon*, by Clive Cussler is told from a limited omniscient third person point of view. There are multiple narrators, giving details of the story necessary to understanding all the details when the main character is not in the scene. Most of the story is told from Dirk Pitt's point of view. The reader does not have a lot of insight into Pitt's or other character's plans or thoughts. Rather, the reader is taken through the events exactly as they happen to the narrators, experiencing the occurrences as they develop. This serves to heighten the anxiety and tension as the conflict continues to rise throughout the entire book. The author allows the action and story to unfold through the actions and dialogue of the characters. While the reader is very much along for the ride, being an intimate observer of the events of the book, there are very few passages that allow the reader into the actual thought processes of the characters.

The reader is introduced to the story as it actually starts nearly fifty years in the past in 1945, with the B-29 Bomber *Dennings' Demons* being shot down off the coast of Japan and coming to rest on the bottom of the ocean floor. Her cargo is a huge nuclear bomb that had been intended to be dropped on a Japanese city and bring a halt to the war. The reader is along for the ride as an observer as the bomber flies toward its target. The reader is then taken into the mind of the Japanese patrol pilot who shoots down this unexpected danger. Then the author moves into an expository position explaining that while *Dennings' Demons* did not reach her rendezvous point, Colonel Paul Tibbets of the *Enola Gay* did, and the course of the war turned.

This is a traditional story-telling style, with some authorial narration giving the reader very brief insights into the thoughts of some of the characters, but these are extremely brief. The story moves around the world, from place to place, but does follow a chronological pathway, making it easy to follow the story provided the reader pays attention to where the action is taking place and who the characters are. Cussler uses a huge cast of characters, numbering over seventy characters, making it almost necessary to create a character list to keep track of who is who, and on which side of the game each character is playing.

Setting

Clive Cussler's *Dragon's* opening scene is on the Alaskan Island of Shemya, a mere three-thousand miles from Japan. It is August 6, 1945. The story begins with the journey of a B-29 bomber, captained by Major Charles Dennings with a cargo of one of the newly-developed nuclear bombs and headed for a city in Japan. Major Dennings believes that he and his crew are the only crew asked to perform this extremely important, yet dangerous, duty. The plane flies from Alaska to just off the coast of Japan



when it is shot down by a Japanese coastal patrol plane. The plane falls to the water and comes to rest on the ocean bottom.

The story then jumps to October 3, 1993, in the Western Pacific Ocean. Drama begins on the top of the ocean when a Japanese ship explodes from a detonated nuclear device aboard the ship, sinking her and two other neighboring ships. The blast further compromises life underwater, as beneath the surface of the water is a top-secret underwater project headed by NUMA's Dirk Pitt. The explosion sets off a series of earthquakes that require evacuation of the underwater station and a subsequent underwater cross-country journey in a Deep Sea Mining Vehicle as Pitt tries to save himself and another scientist.

Action moves again to the surface of the ocean, briefly before another equally brief stop in Hawaii, before landing for some time in Pitt's hometown of Washington, D.C. where Pitt and Al Giordino are recruited to join MAIT in an effort to keep Japan from taking over the world. The reader is introduced to another love of Pitt's life, his vintage cars, housed in his unusual home—a 1936 hangar on a remote corner of Washington's International Airport. A sojourn over to the Virginia Raceway have the reader meeting Pitt's creator, Clive Cussler in a one-lap race around the track before leaving the concourse and heading onto the open road following a Lincoln limousine believed to have abducted Pitt's girlfriend, Congresswoman Loren Smith.

The reader moves all around the world, from a deep cavern in the Philippines to a hidden underground bunker in Germany, all related to the events of the story before returning to modern-day Japan and Edo City, a subterranean city that has an underwater tunnel to Soseki Island, which houses Dragon Center, Suma's command center for the Kaiten Project.

The last scene of the book has the reader once again traveling cross-country underwater in another DSMV, Big Ben, as Pitt evades the grim reaper and manages to escape, virtually unharmed from the nuclear blast that he instigated in order to sink Soseki Island. Pitt comes ashore on Marcus Island weeks after anyone last hears from him, hungry and thirsty, but alive and well and ready for his next adventure, whether on land or under the surface of the ocean, where he is most at home.

Language and Meaning

The language of the novel, *Dragon*, is very much American English and spoken in character for most of the main characters. Despite the vast array of characters that populate this novel, the reader soon learns that the main characters have a specific manner of speaking that allow the reader to easily follow dialogue that does not have tag-lines. Cussler's use of language is direct and uncomplicated. As long as the reader keeps his characters and locations straight, it is very easy to follow the story.

Cussler keeps his dialogue short and brisk, without too much extraneous information except when he must be more explicit, specifically when Pitt threatens to leave the



Federal Building because he does not wish to be part of a covert operation. In that case, Raymond Jordan has no choice but to give Pitt many specific details in order for him to be up to date on the events that they are facing. This is one time when the reader actually has more information than Pitt does because the reader was present for the explosion on the surface of the water that leveled NUMA's Soggy Acres.

The author also uses a lot of detail when he is dealing with his scenes in an expository manner. His language is easy to understand, but he does use a lot of specific terminology for both underwater diving and military terms when on the various ships. Because the novel deals with the Japanese taking over the world, there are a number of Japanese words and references that might be difficult to understand, but not so many that the reader becomes frustrated. Cussler's descriptions of underwater events is full of great detail as this is an area of supreme interest to the author; undersea diving and exploration figure very heavily in his novels.

The reader is not given any foreshadowing except in the prologue when the author indicates that the crew of Dennings' Demons does not have long to live. That is the only time the reader knows to expect a true disaster; the rest of the language takes the reader along as events unfold, giving the reader no advantage when it comes to figuring out how everything will unfold.

Structure

The novel, *Dragon*, is written in seventy-six chapters, with an additional prologue that is named *Dennings' Demons*. After the Prologue, the book begins with Part I - "Big John" - where chapters one through eighteen cover all the events that take place in the Pacific where the DSMV, Big John, factors in very significantly. Part II - "The Kaiten Menace" includes chapters nineteen through thirty-one, and cover all the specifics of the Kaiten Project, the players involved on both sides of the ocean, and what it means to the world if Suma's plan works. Part III - "Ajima Island," encompasses chapters thirty-two through fifty-seven and deal with the activities involved with Suma and his fortress on Ajima Island. Part IV - "Mother's Breath," contains chapters fifty-nine through seventy-three and deal with the logistics of how they will detonate a fifty-year-old bomb that has been underwater the entire time. Part V - "Obituary," with chapters seventy-four through seventy-six handle Pitt's supposed death and resurrection.

Cussler uses a traditional story-telling style, where he is in the head of numerous characters, a technique that is essential to the telling of this story as Dirk Pitt is not present in every scene. Even though Pitt is the main character, other characters have important duties, and it is essential for the reader to understand what is happening while Dirk and Al are in another part of the world. A number of chapters end as a cliff-hanger, enticing the reader to continue on to the next chapter. The excitement of the story begins almost immediately and continues on an upward trend, rarely allowing the reader to have any respite. Cussler's novel is a techno-thriller in structure, dealing with world domination and threat to American society and culture.



Dirk Pit is a hero of vast proportions, similar to a James Bond style of character. He is seemingly invincible as evidenced by the number of times he eludes death in this single novel. He is strong, patriotic, independent, and courageous. He does not suffer fools lightly and especially hates when people violate the law of life. Any injustice must be rectified, and he feels a strong sense of responsibility to ensure that justice is done. He feels a great responsibility for his friends and will go to great lengths to protect and save them.



Quotes

"Steen sagged against the car, stricken with horror. He clutched his head between his hands in helplessness and despair, not noticing the thicket of hair that came away when he dropped them to his sides. 'Why in God's name are we dying?' he whispered, seeing his own grisly death mirrored by Midgaard. 'What is killing us?'" Page 37, Chapter 2.

"A monstrous fireball erupted with a blue brilliance whose intensity was greater than the sun. White hot gasses instantly burst over an area four kilometers in diameter. A hemispherical condensation cloud formed and spread out like a vast doughnut, its interior quickly burned out by the fireball." Page 47, Chapter 4.

"Is this what it's like to die? Stacy wondered. She'd read of people going through tunnels before emerging into light and seeing people and relatives who had died in the past. But this man was a perfect stranger. Where did he come from?" Page 64, Chapter 7

"To him Pitt was the son he never had. He'd have ordered out the entire army of specially trained men and secret equipment the American public had no idea existed if fate granted him another thirty-six hours. Admiral Sandecker had that kind of power in the nation's capital. He didn't arrive where he was because he'd answered a help wanted ad in the Washington Post." Page 89, Chapter 11.

"'We made positive IDs on the two that sank intact.' Meeker paused to turn from the photographs and look into Jordan's eyes as if to underscore his answer. 'The ship that was transporting the bomb was the Japanese auto carrier.'" Page 107, Chapter 14.

"Pitt smiled and took manual control, turning the DSMV to avoid the strange colony of exotic sea life that thrived without sunlight. It was like a lush oasis in the desert, covering nearly a square kilometer of sea floor. The wide tracks of the intruding monster skirted the spewing vents and the entwining thickets of giant tube worms that gently leaned with the current as though they were marsh reeds swaying under a breeze." Page 117, Chapter 16.

"His sacred quest was to purify Japanese culture from the poison of Western influences while protecting the gains of financial empire was guided by divine power." Page 139, Chapter 18.

"In the nineteen-thirties, Japan went to war to build a self-reliant economic empire. Now, fifty years later, they're willing to fight again, only this time to protect it. With utmost secrecy they built their nuclear weapons arsenal long before anyone thought of verifying its existence. The weapons-grade plutonium and uranium were spirited from civilian nuclear facilities. The fact they had the bomb was also overlooked because they didn't have a delivery system such as long-range missiles, cruise systems, bombers, or missile-carrying submarines." Page 173, Chapter 23.



"True, the government and the majority of the people are totally against atomic weapons. But forces deep beneath the mainstream of their bureaucracy clandestinely constructed a nuclear force. The arsenal was built more for defense against economic threat than as a military deterrent. Their concept was the bombs could be used as extortion in the event of an all-out trade war and a ban on their export goods into the United States and Europe. Or if worse came to worse, a naval blockade on the home island." Page 173, Chapter 23.

"Something is holding Suma back. He's got a fleet of those bomb cars hidden away. All he needs is one driving the streets of Manhattan or Los Angeles to put the fear of God into the White House and the American Public. He's literally got the government by the scrotum. But what does he do? He plays petty kidnapper. No, I'm sorry. Something's not going down the right chute. Suma isn't ready for prime time. I say he's stalling." Page 252, Chapter 32.

"But the page in the manual was no electrical wiring diagram. It was a map with instructions for placing the cars in their designated positions for detonation. Suma's strategy became so boldly obvious to Weatherhill that he had to force himself to believe it. The car bombs were not simply part of a threat to protect Japan's economic expansionist plans. The fear and the horror were real. They were meant to be used." Page 265, Chapter 34.

"Their worldwide commercial thrust is only part of a broader plan. The Japanese live under terrible conditions of high density. A hundred and twenty-five million people on a land mass the size of California, with most of it too mountainous to live on. Their unadvertised, long-range goal is to export millions of their best-educated people into other countries and form colonies while maintaining loyalty and strong ties to Japan. Brazil is a case in point, and so is the United States when you consider their mass immigration into Hawaii and California. The Japanese are obsessed with survival, and unlike us, they plan decades into the future. Through economic trade they're building a vast economic global society with Japanese traditions and culture as the hub. What even they don't realize is that Suma intends to set himself up as executive director." Page 291, Chapter 38.

"Pitt took a final look at the huddled corpses of strangers he had killed. He reached down and pulled off the hood from one of the dead. Under the light of the flames he could see a face with Asian features. A rage began to seethe within him. The name Hideki Suma flooded his mind. A man he'd never met, had no idea of what he looked like. But the thought that Suma represented slime and evil was enough to prevent Pitt from feeling any remorse for the men he'd killed. There was a calculated determination in him that the man responsible for the death and chaos must also die." Page 305, Chapter 40.

"Most rolled on wheels, some on tractor treads. Some had as many as seven articulated arms sprouting like octopus tentacles from wheeled carts, a few could have passed as the familiar multipurpose units found in a dentist's office. But none walked on legs and



feet, or remotely resembled C3PO from 'Star Wars' or Robby from 'Forbidden Planet.' The robots were immersed in their individual work programs and went about their business without taking notice of the human intruders." Page 345, Chapter 45.

"Suma had no sooner spoken when he felt a movement behind him. He looked over his shoulder. Pitt and Giordino were being hustled through the dining room entrance by two security robots. They were still clad in their flying suits, both with huge garish neckties knotted around their necks that were obviously cut from the sashes of kimonos they'd declined to wear." Page 354, Chapter 46.

"We have already begun Japan's new robotic military forces. My engineers are designing and constructing robotic military forces. My engineers are designing and constructing completely automated warships without human crews, aircraft flown entirely by robots, robotic-operated tanks that drive and fight by remote command, and armies composed of hundreds of thousands of armored machines armed with powerful weaponry and long-range sensors that can leap over fifty meters and travel at sixty kilometers an hour. Their ease of repair and their high-level sensory capabilities make them nearly invincible. In ten years, no superpower military force will be able to stand against us. Unlike your Pentagon generals and admirals, who rely on men and women to fight, bleed, and die in combat, we'll be able to fight large-scale battles without a single human casualty." Page 359, Chapter 47.

"The Japanese engineers at Hideki Suma's robotic laboratories had outdone themselves on this one. The tail, standing straight into the air, was an antenna, and the legs rotated like spokes of a wheel with the ends bent on a ninety-degree angle to grip the ground. The body was a complex of electronics clustered around an ultrasonic ranging sensor. It was the ultimate in tracking machines, able to detect human scent, heat, and sweat, and able to navigate around or over obstacles at a rate of speed matching a Doberman pinscher." Page 378, Chapter 49.

"Should your President be foolish enough to launch an attack on the Dragon Center, my detection systems will alert me in ample time to signal the robots to deploy and detonate the bomb cars." Page 404, Chapter 53

"The woman swears she's Congresswoman Loren Smith of Colorado, and if we don't guide them in and provide protection in the event they're pursued, she's going to lunch with Roy Monroe and demand you're put in command of a tugboat in the Arctic. I'm not one to offer advice to the captain, sir, but if she's friendly with the Secretary of the Navy, she must be who she says she is." Page 427, Chapter 57

"You are sacrificing for the future of a hundred million of your country's men and women. Your family will honor you for untold generations. Your success is their success." Page 466, Chapter 63



"You two are the best qualified to make a last-ditch effort to finish off the Dragon Center. No one else has had as much hands-on experience with a Deep Sea Mining Vehicle."
Page 476, Chapter 65

"Big Ben was still battling through the soft ooze when the avalanche caught up to it. Pitt felt the ground slipping away under the vehicle and knew he'd lost the race. The sound of it came like the roar of a cataract in a tiled room. He saw death's finger reaching out to touch him. He just had time to tense his body before a great wall of mud engulfed the DSMV and swept it end over end into the black void far below, concealing it under a burial shroud of featureless ooze." Page 518, Chapter 73

"Four hours later, his stomach supremely sated, Pitt was sleeping the most enjoyable and satisfying sleep he had ever known." Page 542, Chapter 76



Topics for Discussion

Define the word "hero." Does Dirk Pitt fit the description of that word? Explain.

Why does Pitt lie to Al Giordino about leaving the British survey team behind when they have to evacuate Soggy Acres? Explain his motivation behind the lie.

Plunkett truly admires Pitt. How does Pitt react to this admiration? Is this in keeping with Pitt's overall character?

Why does Pitt walk out of the MAIT meeting? Does he not agree with the goal of the team? Give your reasons.

Why do you think that Pitt and Giordino seem to be more effective than the governmental agencies in gathering information?

Discuss the Kaiten Project. What is the goal of the project and how will it be implemented? What will the repercussions be for your current way of life?

Having read about Japanese owning much of America, how does that make you feel about how much debt our country is carrying? What about your own personal debt?

Is it necessary to be suspicious of everyone just in case they could be "sleepers" from another country? How can one live safely and still be alert?

Talk about Al Giordino's character, his personality, his sense of humor. Does he make for a sympathetic character in *Dragon*?

Discuss the friendship between Dirk Pitt and Al Giordino

What is Pitt's relationship with Admiral Sandecker? Does he trust the Admiral?

Could the disaster Pitt and Giordino work to fight have been averted sooner? How?

What safeguards are in place currently to prevent such a hostile takeover of the United States? Are they adequate? Explain.

Why does Pitt agree to help defuse the Kaiten Project? Are all his reasons personal? Explain.