

# **The Lost World Study Guide**

## **The Lost World by Michael Crichton**

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# Plot Summary

*The Lost World* is the second in a series of books by Michael Crichton about the existence of genetically engineered dinosaurs. In *Jurassic Park*, the prequel to *The Lost World*, Crichton introduces a company called InGen, which has discovered a way to clone dinosaurs from ancient DNA. In the first book, the arrogant head of InGen, John Hammond, believes he can control his amazing creations. Hammond is so sure of this that he builds a theme park and intends to promote it as a family vacation resort featuring his marvelous, cloned dinosaurs. However, nature proves too powerful for Hammond, and by the end of the first book, the dinosaurs have taken over the theme park and killed their human creators. As a result, InGen orders the destruction of the dinosaurs, and InGen's legal team places a gag order on the scientists who consulted with Hammond on his theme park.

One of these scientists, mathematician Ian Malcolm, is the protagonist of *The Lost World*. The novel opens approximately five years after the disaster at Jurassic Park. Malcolm still walks with a limp and uses a cane due to a serious injury he sustained in the first novel; however, aside from this, life has returned to normal for Malcolm. Then, rumors begin to spread about strange animal carcasses washing up on the shores of Costa Rica. The original dinosaur park was located on Isla Nublar, one of several small islands located off the Costa Rican coast. Malcolm is alarmed by the thought that some of the dinosaurs have survived. His colleague, a hot-shot young scientist named Richard Levine, hears about the rumors and decides that the islands around Costa Rica may be harboring what is known to scientists as a lost world. The lost world hypothesis is a scientific idea that some dinosaurs may still exist today in an isolated, undeveloped part of the world. Intent on studying this potential lost world, Levine convinces Malcolm to join him on the dangerous expedition.

First, Malcolm and Levine must locate Site B. This site, which they discover is located on Isla Sorna off the Costa Rican coast, houses the secret InGen manufacturing plant where InGen made their dinosaurs five years before. Levine, allowing his eagerness to overcome his common sense, rushes off to Isla Sorna accompanied only by a Costa Rican guide, Diego. Dinosaurs quickly kill Diego, and Levine calls for help over the high-tech satellite phone crafted for him by engineering wizard Jack Thorne. Malcolm, Thorne and Thorne's assistant Eddie rush to Isla Sorna to rescue Levine. Upon their arrival, they save Levine from some angry tyrannosaurs. The arrogant Levine, however, insists he was never in need of rescue. Now that Malcolm and Thorne have arrived with the heavy-duty expedition vehicles that Thorne has customized to handle even the toughest dinosaur, Levine insists they stay and study the animals. To the party's dismay, they find Kelly and Arby, two stowaway children, hiding out in their expedition vehicles. The scientists are now responsible for protecting the lives of these innocents.

Malcolm's friend, field biologist Sarah Harding, joins them on the island, but she is not the only new arrival. A group of unscrupulous scientists from Biosyn Corporation, led by the evil Louis Dodgson, show up with the intent of stealing dinosaur eggs and exploiting the dangerous cloning technology created by InGen. Malcolm's predictions about the



dire results of InGen's tampering with nature are once again proved correct as Biosyn's interference contributes to another Jurassic Park-style disaster. As chaos reigns on Isla Sorna, Malcolm's team must use every ounce of human ingenuity at their disposal to save themselves. Ultimately, Sarah Harding's positive attitude and Thorne's practicality prove far more valuable than Malcolm's pessimistic theories when it comes to saving the children and escaping from the lost world.



# Extinction at the K-T Boundary

## Extinction at the K-T Boundary Summary

The narrator reflects on the history of the modern scientific debate over the subject of extinction. In 1786, Baron Georges Cuvier first demonstrated that species became extinct. When Darwin set forth his theory of evolution many years later, there was very little debate. Scientists simply saw extinction as the failure of a species to adapt. However, in the 1970s, as mankind's technological prowess advanced at an alarming rate, scientists began to wonder if humanity's behavior could ultimately lead to extinction. Scientists began to study the extinction of previous species, looking for answers.

In 1980, physicist Luis Alvarez discovered high levels of iridium in the earth at a point called the K-T boundary. The presence of iridium in this layer is suggestive of a giant meteor from space, and it supports the theory that the dinosaurs of the Cretaceous period were wiped out by a calamitous meteor strike rather than through their behavior. This discovery calmed scientific fears that extinction is brought about by species behavior, but it raised new fears that the human species could also be wiped out by a giant meteor. These questions, states the narrator, went unanswered until 1993, when mathematician Ian Malcolm announced, "the debate over a meteoric impact was 'a frivolous and irrelevant speculation.'" (pg. x)

In Malcolm's speech, he explains that life on earth is marked by a constant and steady rate of extinction. Most species survive an average of four million years, he tells his audience. Many species cannot adapt to changes in their environment and thus die out. Complex animals like mammals or dinosaurs, though, are able to insulate themselves against environmental changes. Complex animals, states Malcolm, die out because of their behavior.

## Extinction at the K-T Boundary Analysis

The impersonal historic narrative technique employed by author Michael Crichton allows him to accomplish several things in this introduction. First, he lays the groundwork for the complex scientific discussion that follows. The historical narrator advances scientific theories and facts that help the reader place the subsequent debate in its proper context. Since the narrative conceit is that the narrator is completely impartial in imparting historical facts, the author lends additional credibility to his scientific viewpoints by presenting them in the absence of a strong contrasting opinion. Then, Crichton segues from the historical third-person omniscient narrator to Dr. Ian Malcolm's speech on the very same topic. This topical segue creates a convincing sense of the realism of Malcolm's theory, provides an entry point to the story and brings loyal readers up to date on recurring character Ian Malcolm's life.



# Prologue and The Lost World Hypothesis

## Prologue and The Lost World Hypothesis Summary

Ian Malcolm pauses dramatically before proceeding with his lecture. Malcolm makes a dramatic figure indeed in his all-black clothes. He carries a cane due to an injury he acquired in Costa Rica several years before, an injury so severe that Malcolm's death was prematurely forecast. Today, he speaks from a podium at the Santa Fe Institute, in a building that was once a chapel, and addresses an audience of scientists from various disciplines who represent the brightest minds of their day. The scientists have congregated at the Santa Fe Institute to discuss complexity theory, formerly known as chaos theory. Their belief is that the complexity of the world conceals an underlying sense of order that remains to be discovered. The term that science uses to describe the behavior of complex systems is "self-organizing." (pg. 4)

Ian Malcolm focuses on one scientifically defined self-organizing behavior: adaptation. He stresses the importance of a complex system's ability to strike a balance between order and change. In order to survive, a complex system must live on the edge of chaos, where old and new ideas maintain a constant state of battle for dominance. If the new ideas win out entirely, the system dissolves into incoherence and dies. If the old ideas predominate, the system becomes totalitarian and rigid, which also signals the death of the system. Thus, to survive, any complex system must maintain a balancing point at the edge of chaos. Malcolm concludes that extinction is the result of failing to maintain this balance. Either too much change or too little can lead to extinction. However, states Malcolm, this theory is untestable because fossils and bones do not usually reveal changes in an animal's daily behavior.

To Malcolm's great irritation, a member of the audience interrupts his speech at this point. The audience member is Richard Levine, a paleontologist from Berkeley with a reputation for both excellence and arrogance. Levine disagrees with Malcolm's belief that the theory is untestable. Levine argues that since dinosaurs lived in every corner of the planet during their time, if a change in their behavior led to their extinction as Malcolm postulate, then the discovery of a lost world would support Malcolm's behavioral thesis. Levine believes it is impossible that all dinosaurs everywhere could have undergone the same behavioral changes. Assuming their extinction was behavior-based, some dinosaurs in some hidden corner of the world may have failed to change their behavior and may therefore still exist today. Malcolm explains to the audience that Levine is referring to the lost world hypothesis. Malcolm suggests that Levine is deluded to believe this hypothesis and continues his lecture.

After the lecture, Malcolm crosses the courtyard at the Santa Fe Institute with his former girlfriend, biologist Sarah Harding. Harding cared for Malcolm in the wake of the injury he received in Costa Rica, but since then, their romantic relationship has become a



simple friendship. Now they discuss Malcolm's lecture, and Malcolm displays his characteristic cynicism by stating his belief that human beings are neither sentient nor aware. "There's no evidence for it. Human beings never think for themselves, they find it too uncomfortable. For the most part, members of our species simply repeat what they are told - and become upset if they are exposed to any different view." (pg. 7) Sarah laughs this off and fills Malcolm in on Richard Levine's reputation. She tells him that in addition to being irritating, Levine is also extremely rich, since he is the heir to a toy company fortune worth many millions.

Just then, Levine catches up to them, to Malcolm's dismay. Levine persists in trying to convince Malcolm that a lost world of dinosaurs still exists on the earth today. He mentions rumors about animals being found in Costa Rica. Malcolm asks if he's heard any such rumors recently, and Levine admits that the last such animal was supposedly found nine months ago. Malcolm asks if he has proof, but Levine tells him that the remains of the animal were burned before anyone could get a photograph. Levine proposes mounting an expedition to Costa Rica in search of the lost world; he has already begun the preliminary planning.

Levine joins Malcolm and Harding for lunch and continues to discuss the rumors about dinosaurs in Costa Rica. Levine says that a company called InGen is rumored to have genetically engineered dinosaurs on an island off Costa Rica some years back, but something went wrong. Now the lawyers and the government are covering it up for legal reasons. Levine eyes Malcolm and tells him that the rumors further suggest that Malcolm and Dr. Alan Grant were involved in the project. Levine has asked Dr. Grant about it, but he, like Malcolm, maintains that the idea is absurd. Harding listens quietly, but she is thinking about the things that Malcolm said years ago, after his injury, while under the influence of pain and pain medication. Malcolm raved about dinosaurs, and it seemed to Sarah at the time as if Malcolm were reliving a horrifying experience that had actually occurred. However, after Malcolm recovered, he refused to answer any of her questions about it.

By now, Malcolm has three years of practice at denying these rumors. In fact, Malcolm went to Costa Rica to consult for InGen, a company that genetically engineered dinosaurs in the late 1980s. When the project turned disastrous, InGen bound everyone involved with non-disclosure agreements to avoid liability. Because of these legal agreements, Ian Malcolm is not at liberty to discuss his experiences in Costa Rica. The initial rumors were put to rest when InGen hired a Stanford professor, George Baselton, to denounce the rumors on television, but because Malcolm denies the story of genetically engineered dinosaurs, Levine believes that the animals being found in Costa Rica must represent his lost world hypothesis. Levine asks Malcolm whether he will change his mind and help plan an expedition if Levine hears any more rumors about animals in Costa Rica. Malcolm agrees only because he feels certain that there will be no more such rumors.

The following day, Sarah returns to her wild animal field studies in Africa. Over the next eighteen months, Levine calls her periodically to report his progress. She also hears occasionally from Doc Thorne, the man building field vehicles for Levine's expedition.





From Malcolm, she receives only a single birthday card. In the note, Malcolm writes that Levine is driving him crazy.

## Prologue and The Lost World Hypothesis Analysis

In the prologue the author explains the lost world hypothesis upon which the story is predicated. Richard Levine's character is the key supporter of this hypothesis. He has the money, the brains and the necessary contacts to launch an expedition to a lost world, if only he can locate one. Levine is captivated by the rumors of dinosaurs in Costa Rica and all too ready to believe that his lost world has conveniently presented itself to him, Richard Levine, uber-god of science. His enthusiasm and bravura is not an unusual combination of character traits for an up-and-coming young man. Levine's hubris could use some tempering by the wisdom of the more experienced Ian Malcolm. Unfortunately, Malcolm's character is plagued by an abiding cynicism. He enjoys watching others make mistakes, as this lends support to his belief that mankind is a nuisance to the planet. Malcolm lacks a sense of personal responsibility to the people in his life or to the effects of his work. Since he is so cynical, he expects things to go badly and therefore doesn't bother to intervene to improve the outcome. In this case, he fails to make any attempt to cool Levine's ardor for the lost world, which Malcolm knows to be a genetically engineered fake. Because of this, the seeds of destruction have been sewn for Levine's ill-fated expedition even before the story formally begins.



# First Configuration

## First Configuration Summary

Marty Guitierrez, an American biologist living in Costa Rica, rides in a helicopter with Richard Levine. They fly over undeveloped jungle to a secluded area called Rojas, in the southern tip of the country near the Panamanian border. Levine asks Guitierrez how the creature was found in this area, which is devoid of roads or other signs of humanity. Guitierrez explains that the people who reported it came in by boat and landed on the beach. Levine, who was in the Gobi Desert at the request of a field scientist who wanted his expertise in identifying some dinosaur remains, left Mongolia for Costa Rica upon receiving word of the newly discovered animal from Guitierrez. Levine's brilliance in dinosaur identification is widely acknowledged, but he is impatient with anyone who lacks his gifts. Guitierrez smiles to himself as he recalls Levine's reputation for rudeness.

The helicopter touches down by a five-foot long animal carcass. Levine sees footprints around the carcass and is upset to realize that the Public Health Department has already been here. He blames Guitierrez for their interference, but Guitierrez insists if it hadn't been for him, they would have already destroyed the carcass. The smell of death fills Levine's nostrils as he approaches the bloated, dead animal body. The pilot takes away Levine's camera when he tries to take some pictures. As Guitierrez argues with the pilot about the photos, Levine quickly examines the carcass. The body is green with darker green striations. Its skin resembles a lizard's, but the carcass is far too large. Levine wants to proceed cautiously, for he believes this animal is an important find. However, a second helicopter touches down nearby, causing him to speed up his work. Guitierrez tells Levine that he definitely cannot take pictures of the dead lizard, and Levine responds that it is not a lizard. He takes Guitierrez' pocket knife to the animal to prove his point, but just then the men from the second helicopter approach the carcass with flamethrowers. They throw Levine to the ground and engulf the animal carcass in flames. Levine can only watch as it burns.

In the San Josy airport, Levine nurses a beer at the bar as he waits for his return flight to the States. Guitierrez breaks their awkward silence by complimenting Levine's specially made field backpack, constructed of dark-green Gore-Tex by Doc Thorne. Levine, impatient with the small talk, returns the subject to the specimen on the beach. Guitierrez insists that what he's about to say should remain confidential. Aberrant forms like the one they saw today have been turning up in Costa Rica for several years; a number of animals have been discovered near a soybean agricultural station. Scientists assume the animals have a great need for the amino acid lysine, or perhaps they simply enjoy the soybeans. Levine learns that all the other animal remains have been destroyed. The government, in fear of losing tourism over the animals, is going to great lengths to cover up the situation. Levine asks why the government is so worried. Guitierrez replies that the animals are the suspected cause behind an unusual strain of encephalitis.



Guitierrez explains that the government has searched the entire country for the animals, including the privately owned islands off the coast. Levine is interested in the islands. Guitierrez tells him that Isla Talamanca houses a Club Med. Sorna is leased to a German mining company, and Isla Nublar was leased to the American company InGen for several years. The government has found no traces of the animals anywhere. The assumption is that the animals come from deep in the jungle, where concealment is easy. However, the government is not the only entity looking for the animals. Guitierrez mentions that two people posing as Swiss geologists collecting gas samples from the offshore islands the previous winter turned out to be employees of an American genetics company called Biosyn. They were searching for signs of the strange animals. Biosyn is run by a man named Lewis Dodgson, who has a history of testing dangerous products on unsuspecting people. In an effort to overcome one such scandal, the company hired the eminent George Baselton as their spokesperson in order to clean up their image.

Guitierrez laments the changing ethics of scientists. Once men and women of science traveled to places like Costa Rica to study the rich ecological diversity. Their attitude had been one of respect. Now, most research is funded and driven by the powerful drug companies, and nature is valued only for its immediate profit potential. Guitierrez finishes his beer as Levine's flight is called. He asks Levine to keep their conversation confidential, and Levine reassures him. Levine shoulders his backpack and moves to the departure lounge. He stops at a phone bank to make a telephone call and notices the helicopter pilot using the phone. The pilot speaks clandestinely and in English. Levine lingers nearby, eavesdropping. On the phone, the pilot assures Professor Baselton that no pictures were taken of the creature. Levine also hears the pilot refer to one of the offshore islands. The pilot ends his call and leaves without seeing Levine. Then, Levine dials a number and leaves a message on Ian Malcolm's answering machine in San Francisco, reporting on the creature. Levine states that the creature is probably an ornitholestes and that the location fits the lost world hypothesis. He also warns Ian that other parties are interested.

Ed James arrives at the Marie Callender's restaurant for his two a.m. meeting with Dodgson. James hates these late-night meetings, but he is relieved to see that Baselton is present. "Dodgson gave him the creeps, but it was hard to imagine Baselton involved in anything shady." (pg. 32) Dodgson is paying James five hundred dollars a day to spy on several different scientists. James finds the work boring, having sat through some dull lectures given by a paleo-botanist named Ellen Sattler Reiman. Now he reports that Sattler is married to a physicist at Berkeley and is the mother of two children. Prior to her marriage, she was involved with Alan Grant, another of James' targets. Grant works at Montana State but is currently in Paris on a lecture tour. Most of the other scientists James has been hired to investigate are deceased, he reports. Attorney Donald Gennaro died of dysentery on a business trip. Dennis Nedry, a computer specialist, is also dead. John Hammond, founder of InGen, died in Costa Rica at the company's research facility. Hammond's grandchildren, who were present on the fatal Costa Rica trip, attend school back east. InGen filed for Chapter 11 after Hammond's death, and the assets remain tied up in court to this day. During the last two weeks, the hard assets have finally begun to be sold off.



Baselton asks if Site B assets are included in the sale. James does not understand the reference to Site B, but Baselton asks him to report to them if he hears anything about Site B in the future. Dodgson is irritated that James has not learned more. He asks if Malcolm and Levine are still friendly, but James does not know for sure. He heard that the two men had a falling out regarding an expedition that Levine is planning. Dodgson expresses interest in the expedition details, and James reports that Levine has ordered special vehicles from a company in Woodside run by Jack Thorne that specializes in vehicles for field researchers. Malcolm has been seen at Thorne's shop occasionally, and Levine goes there almost daily. In fact, Levine was recently arrested for driving a hundred and twenty miles per hour in a school zone near Thorne's shop. The judge impounded Levine's sports car and sentenced him to community service, and Levine was ordered to teach a class at Woodside Junior High. Baselton smiles at this punishment. James reports that Levine has been a conscientious teacher, but two days ago he left the country to visit Costa Rica. Here James hesitates, before divulging that Levine has apparently disappeared. He checked out of his hotel in Costa Rica, but he never boarded his flight or any other flight out of the country. Dodgson orders James to do whatever it takes to find Levine.

A sample from Costa Rica arrives for Malcolm at his office in Berkeley, California. Beverly, the secretary who brings him the sample, is surprised to see Malcolm walking without his cane. The possibility of Levine's expedition has inspired Malcolm to rehabilitate his leg, though he doesn't tell Beverly his motivation. Together they open the sample; it contains a ragged piece of green flesh with a plastic tag attached. Malcolm asks Beverly to call Elizabeth Gelman at the zoo and ask her to review the sample on a confidential basis. Malcolm finds a note from Levine in with the sample. It taunts that Levine was right and Malcolm was wrong.

Meanwhile, Levine climbs a rock cliff on a deserted island with his guide, Diego. From the height of five hundred feet, Levine watches the boat which brought them to island disappear from view. His muscles scream from the effort of climbing, but with no alternative besides a nasty fall, Levine forces himself to the top of the cliff. He rests on solid ground as Diego easily maneuvers his way to the top of the cliff. The two men stand at the edge of a dense, tropical jungle. As no map of the island exists, Levine has used satellite imagery for reconnaissance. Diego strikes a match to light a cigarette, but Levine silently motions him to stop. Levine assembles the Lindstradt rifle he carries in his backpack and hands it to Diego. For himself, he has a Lindstradt pistol. These weapons represent the best in animal-control technology. Silently, they head west, towards the island's interior.

As Diego and Levine top a rise, Diego comments on the fabulous view. Levine shushes him, irritated that Diego is violating the rules they discussed on the way to the island. There is to be no talking, no smoking and no cologne, and all food must be kept sealed. Levine wants neither sound nor smell to announce their presence, but Diego does not take the precautions seriously. The sound of animal cries silences Diego, who watches in fear as the treetops in the valley below begin to move although the day is windless. They resume their trek, and Diego finds them an old Jeep trail, which makes their passage easier. They arrive at a stream. Levine notices three-toed footprints in the



muddy bank. He sees something shiny in the water and pulls out a piece of glass tubing, of the kind used in laboratories. Levine sees the source of the three-toed footprints, a rat-sized animal which Levine has seen before only in fossil form. It is a *mussaurus*, one of the smallest dinosaurs known. Levine is charmed by the creature and entices it to stand on his palm. Suddenly, the creature hisses and disappears, and a foul odor fills Levine's nostrils. Levine recalls, too late, that carnivores in the wild like to hunt near streambeds, where they can attack unsuspecting animals that have come for a drink. Just then Diego screams as he is hauled into the bushes by a large, unseen animal. Another animal charges Levine, who races away. Levine is pushed to the ground, and as he feels jaws ripping into the pack on his back, he realizes that he is about to die.

At Woodside Junior High, Levine's voice lectures to the students about meteors and mass extinction. Kelly Curtis yawns, bored by the videotaped lecture. She is already familiar with the material on Levine's tape. The lights come up, and the teacher, Mrs. Menzies, tells them that Dr. Levine is out of town but expects to lecture in person after spring break. Mrs. Menzies asks Kelly and Arby for confirmation since both of them are working for Dr. Levine. She dismisses them for spring break, and Arby seeks out Kelly after the bell. Kelly is thirteen and extremely bright. Arby, short for R. B. Benton, is only eleven, having skipped a couple of grades in school. Arby is Kelly's only real friend; the other kids avoid her because she is too smart. Right now Arby is upset because Dr. Levine is absent. He had promised to take them on a field trip to Dr. Thorne's shop today after school. Kelly suggests they go by themselves, and Arby hesitantly agrees.

Some girls taunt Kelly for being a "brainer" as she leaves the school. (pg. 47) Arby tells her to ignore them. Outside, Arby spots a plain gray sedan, and inside it is the man who has been following Dr. Levine. Kelly believes this man is the reason why Levine recruited her and Arby to be his assistants. They are able to run errands for Levine without attracting the man's attention. Kelly presumes Levine is doing some secret research, since he sends them on mysterious errands to pick up items labeled with biohazard stickers or to research things at the library like Central American volcanoes, Gothic cathedrals and vampire bats. Levine never explains any of these errands. Kelly eyes the man in the sedan as they head for Dr. Thorne's shop, but the bearded man in the car pays them no attention at all.

At the zoo, Malcolm pets a baby snow lion while waiting for Elizabeth Gelman to report on her findings. She waits until the regular staff is gone before telling him about the stir his Costa Rican sample has caused. The green skin sample is lizard-like and has the ability to change color like a chameleon. The animal appears to have been warm-blooded, though, unlike any known lizards. The scent gland in the skin tissue indicates that the animal was male. The plastic tag embedded in the skin is even more unusual. Labeled "Site B," the tag shows weathering characteristic of exposure to volcanic fumes. It is the type of tag used by zoos to track young animals; inside the tag is a radio transmitter. Elizabeth explains that the animal was tagged and raised by somebody, and her coworkers are concerned by the idea that someone is raising some very unusual creatures. She asks Malcolm what this is all about, and he promises to buy her dinner in two weeks and tell her all about it. Before he leaves with the sample, she mentions that



they found skin cells under the surface belonging to another animal. This indicates that another similar animal may have killed the animal. Finally, she tells him that the arterial vessels indicate that the animal lived under extreme stress. Why would a tagged animal have a stressful life?

At Thorne Mobile Field Systems, Arby and Kelly announce themselves, and Thorne buzzes them into a large shed where several men work on a dark-green Ford Explorer and two RV trailers. The men remove the V-6 engine from the Explorer and replace it with a smaller engine made of aluminum alloy. The RVs are fitted with special scientific equipment and can expand dimensionally at the push of a button. The trailers are hooked together with an accordion passageway. Thorne stands in the center of the activity, directing the workmen and swearing busily. Thorne screams at one of the men for being careless with the trailers' defense mechanism, a ten thousand volt burst of electricity that can be sent across the exterior of the trailer. Thorne developed the system initially to protect park rangers in Yellowstone from marauding bears. Thorne asks the kids where Levine is and swears when they tell him they don't know. Thorne tells them he prepared a special backpack for Levine to take on a brief trip. Levine hadn't told Thorne where he was going, but he had promised to be back by today.

Thorne is irritated because Levine has been pushing him to get the vehicles completed in time to field-test them today. Thorne complains to the children that Levine's requirements are impossible. He wants vehicles that are both extremely strong and extremely light. Thorne has achieved the impossible and is upset that Levine hasn't bothered to show up for the field-testing. Kelly explains that's the reason they are here. Levine obtained permission from their parents for them to join him in testing the vehicles. Just then, a large, round metal cage crashes to the floor beside them. Thorne yells at his assistant, Eddie, for his carelessness. Eddie was trying to test the cage to ensure it could stand up to twelve thousand psi of pressure. Thorne picks up the cage with one hand; it is surprisingly light. He explains to the kids that the cage is part of the lightweight, heavy-duty observation platform Levine requested. Neither the kids nor Thorne knows what Levine intends to observe from this fifteen-foot structure.

Jack Thorne is a retired Stanford professor. He was famous in his day for challenging his students with creative problem solving, such as how to build a chair to support a two-hundred-pound man using only Q-tips and thread. Thorne is much happier away from academia, which he always found intellectually stifling. A practical man, he dislikes the theoretical approach of academia. "In his view, a theory was nothing more than a substitute for experience put forth by someone who didn't know what he was talking about." (pg. 60) Thorne enjoys putting his talents to use designing excellent field equipment for scientists around the world. Thorne misses his former students, however, and quickly takes a liking to Arby and Kelly, who he finds bright and interesting. Thorne decides to call Levine, worried that he may have encountered some trouble. Thorne is amused that Arby has figured out the small, cell-phone-sized telephone that Levine carries is actually a satellite phone designed by Thorne. One of the errands Levine sent Arby on was to pick up a VLSI com board with two Motorola BSN-23 chip arrays, and Arby knows that this technology is restricted to the CIA. Civilian satphones are usually suitcase-sized. Thorne grudgingly admits to having made a small satphone for Levine.





In Thorne's office, he shows the kids the matching satphone that he made for himself, and then he uses it to call Levine. Levine does not answer immediately. Thorne, thinking aloud, decides to call Sarah Harding if he can't reach Levine. Kelly is thrilled to hear this because Sarah Harding is her personal hero. Harding is one of the most famous animal behaviorists in the world. Like Kelly, Harding comes from a poor background, but she has worked her way up to assistant professor at Princeton at the young age of thirty-three. Harding is known for her toughness and independence, and she lives alone in Africa, where she studies predators. Once, her Land Rover broke down, and Harding had to cross twenty miles of savanna on foot, driving away roaming lions by throwing rocks at them. Kelly thinks that Harding is both rugged and glamorous. Thorne approves of the role model Kelly has chosen for herself, and he informs the kids that Harding is involved with Levine's project through her connection with Ian Malcolm.

The satphone call finally goes through, and they hear Levine's voice. Thorne sighs because Levine does not know how to work the phone. They can hear Levine, but he can't hear them. Levine speaks to whoever might be on the line, calling for help. The satphone battery begins to die, and they can just make out a few words. Levine says something about a death and a very serious situation, and he says he's surrounded and injured. Thorne stares white-faced at the children and says they must find Levine right away.

## First Configuration Analysis

The novel is divided into seven distinct parts, which roughly correlate to protagonist Ian Malcolm's views on complexity theory. Having prefaced the story with Malcolm's belief in the edge of chaos, the author carries this theme throughout his story as each of the seven sections of the novel correspond with a descent into chaos. As a prelude to Section One, First Configuration, Crichton includes a quotation from Malcolm: "In the conservative region far from the chaotic edge, individual elements coalesce slowly, showing no clear pattern." (pg. 15) This quotation not only fits the initial stage of the journey to the edge of chaos, but it is also befitting of the gradual development of story elements in the first part of the book. The characters and story elements are all introduced, and the initial development takes place. Still, there is not yet a discernible conflict. Several obstacles have been introduced, including Biosyn's greedy interest in the InGen technology and the Costa Rican government's desire to stamp out the unusual animals that Levine is intent on studying. Positive elements such as the introduction of Harding's character and the high-level equipment prepared by Thorne are also in play. The manner in which these elements will coalesce into a unified story line has not yet been revealed.

Additionally, by linking Malcolm's theories into the formation of the plotline, the author has established Malcolm as a mouthpiece for some of the author's more dismal theories regarding the human species. Jack Thorne's can-do attitude is the antidote to Malcolm's cynical belief that there's no point in trying to stop the march of chaos. Thorne and Malcolm are literary foils, flip-sides of the same coin. Through their contrasting viewpoints, the author is able to depict a fuller and more balanced portrayal of human

endeavors. Harding's character will turn out to be even more positive than Thorne, who is subject to a certain amount of pessimism himself. Thorne's character growth will be dependent on her positive example. Both Malcolm and Thorne will play off Harding's indomitable nature, and her staunch positivity serves to polarize their viewpoints so that by the end of the story they will be of completely opposite mindsets.





# Second Configuration

## Second Configuration Summary

Accompanied by the children, Thorne arrives at Levine's apartment. The apartment is furnished with expensive antiques, but the overall effect is impersonal and almost alarmingly clean. Thorne comments that this is why Levine lives alone; he is a known neat freak. Arby checks out the books on the coffee table and notices some old books written in German. In the kitchen, they find the table set for one, a hot plate containing lobster bisque and seared ahi tuna and a note from Levine's cook welcoming him home. On the fax machine, Kelly finds a fax in German indicating that a book Levine ordered about the geological research on Central America, dating from 1922-1929, has been shipped. Thorne searches the bedroom next, where they find more old German books and some notes in Levine's handwriting. The notes refer to Site B and Vulkanische, and it lists two of the islands off the coast of Costa Rica.

In Levine's office, Arby finds an entire wall dedicated to Site B, which Levine has labeled as an InGen research facility. It is clear from Levine's notes that he has been searching for Site B and that he believes it is on one of the islands off Costa Rica. Arby sees a strange-looking memo and realizes it is recovered data from an old computer. Arby explains that Levine sent the kids to buy one of InGen's old computer hard drives last week. It appears Levine has been trying to recover InGen files from the hard drive. Arby's expertise is computers. He sets to work, amusing Thorne with his sudden confidence. In front of a computer, Arby loses all his normal timidity and becomes confident to the point of imperiousness.

Meanwhile, at the university where he works, Malcolm looks at a statue of a velociraptor created by the biology department. Malcolm calls the statue an insult to a great predator. It lacks the fierceness of a real raptor. The sculptor worries that a more realistic recreation would frighten children. Malcolm is irritated because the sculptor represents "the current, fuzzy-minded thinking" of scientists. (pg. 73) He considers the various ways in which dinosaurs have been represented over the centuries by science. The original view, put forth by Richard Owen in the 1840s, is still the most accurate. Owen called the giant fossils he found *Dinosauria*, which means terrible lizards. However, subsequent Victorian-era scientists assumed that previous species were inferior to modern life, and they had therefore seen the dinosaurs as big, clumsy, lazy creatures incapable of supporting their own weight. For example, it was believed that apatosaurus had to stand belly-deep in water at all times to avoid crushing their own legs. Not until the 1960s did this view evolve. A man named John Ostrom imagined dinosaurs as fast, warm-blooded creatures. He and his supporters were laughed at for this viewpoint, even though it ultimately proved to be correct.

As Malcolm continues down the hall beyond the biology department, he worries about the tag that Elizabeth Gelman found on the tissue sample that Levine sent from Costa Rica. He rounds the corner to his office and is greeted by his secretary. Beverly tells him



Levine is still unreachable and says that photographers from *Chaos Quarterly* finished taking pictures of his office an hour ago. Malcolm asks her what she means, and Beverly tells him men with cameras arrived with a letter from Malcolm giving them permission to photograph his office for an upcoming article. Malcolm informs her he wrote no such letter and has never heard of this supposed magazine. He studies his office and stares at the map on the wall, which contains pins for each aberrant form rumored to have been found. He and Levine have spent hours studying this map looking for the lost world. Malcolm is relieved that the islands off Costa Rica are not highlighted on the map. The intruders could have learned little from the wall map. After Beverly leaves, he calls Levine, intending to tell him that the radio tag on the sample reveals the location of Site B. Thorne answers the phone instead of Levine and tells Malcolm to get over to Levine's apartment right away.

At Levine's place, Malcolm shakes his head over the size of Levine's ego. He is upset that Levine would have impulsively gone into the field. He knows Levine went to one of the islands off Costa Rica, but the last time they talked, Levine still didn't know which island housed Site B. Malcolm is interested to learn that Levine has several German books in his home. Back in the 1920s, a German mining company leased five of the islands off Costa Rica because they wanted to study the volcanic properties of these islands. Malcolm believes one of these islands is Site B, but which one? Arby finds a file on the InGen computer that contains labels corresponding to a map of Site B. Malcolm commends his work and asks him to print out the file. However, before he finishes, Malcolm realizes that it's not important. They have enough information already, he states, to locate Site B.

Ed James keeps watch on Levine's apartment from his gray sedan. Through his earpiece, he listens in on the conversation between Malcolm, Thorne and the children. James is embarrassed to realize the two junior high school children have been working with Levine all along. It doesn't matter, though. Through the bug he placed earlier in Levine's apartment, he now hears that Site B is located on Isla Sorna. Based on the Landsat pictures in Levine's apartment, Malcolm identifies a telltale smoke column signifying that Isla Sorna contains a volcano. James waits for them to leave Levine's apartment and then dials his telephone.

Back in Thorne's shop, Malcolm, Thorne and the children find the trailers and the Explorer fully assembled and ready to go. Eddie Carr, Thorne's foreman, assures him that everything is done, and the paint on the vehicles will be dry by morning. Thorne tells him that they can't wait until morning. They are taking the vehicles now. Thorne and Malcolm intend to leave for Costa Rica immediately. Kelly and Arby insist on coming along but are overruled by the adults. Dejected, the kids explore the vehicles as the men make their departure plans. The front trailer is fitted with a complete biological laboratory and heavy-duty computers. Kelly wonders what it is designed to study and why the windows and walls have been reinforced with the same material used to build supersonic jet fighters. She remembers Levine, on the phone, telling them that he was surrounded. She moves through the trailer to the homey living quarters complete with walk-in shower. From here, she walks through the accordion pleating to the back trailer, which is primarily a storage unit. She notices a motorcycle, and Arby calls her attention



to a wall display that monitors the trailer and the external area. He flips on the monitor, and they see Eddie approach the trailer. Eddie kicks them out of the trailer, and the kids walk across the shop to Thorne's office, where they say their goodbyes. Kelly learns that Sarah Harding will be accompanying the others on the trip.

In the African savanna, Harding watches hyenas attack through her night-vision goggles. Harding's assistant offers to move the Jeep closer, but Harding is pleased with their current view. She calls out the attack pattern of the hyena pack, referring to the individual hyenas as F1 through F8. The attack on the buffalo calf happens too quickly for Harding to see, but she hopes her video camera has picked it up. A lion approaches the kill. Just then, Harding's car phone rings. Harding picks up the phone and tells Thorne that this had better be important. Thorne assures her it is. He explains that Levine is missing and in trouble. They have tracked him to an island in Costa Rica and would like her to join them for the rescue expedition. Harding explains that even if she wanted to come, it would take her almost a day to get there, if she's lucky. Thorne gives her the details in case she decides to come. She hangs up the phone and tells her assistant that she has to pack for a trip.

Thorne drives the linked RVs, with Malcolm as a passenger. Behind them on the road, Eddie follows with the Explorer as they head for the airport. Thorne receives a page from the children telling him to have a good trip. Now that Malcolm is alone with Thorne, he finally tells him about the tag on the skin sample. Malcolm informs Thorne that the dinosaur was probably killed by another dinosaur. Thorne asks if anyone else knows about the dinosaurs on the island, and Malcolm tells him about the break-in at his office today. Malcolm reassures him that the culprits wouldn't have found much. They should have the island to themselves.

Lewis Dodgson enters the Animal Quarters at the Biosyn Corporation in Cupertino, California. He wants to speak with the company head, Jeff Rossiter, without being overheard, so they enter a glass-enclosed room in the midst of the noisy animal cages. Rossiter dislikes Dodgson but believes that every modern biotechnology company needs a man like Dodgson who is not above a little corporate espionage. Today, Dodgson informs Rossiter that they have another opportunity to acquire the InGen technology. Rossiter reminds Dodgson that Dodgson has tried several times to acquire this technology and failed each time, losing one and a quarter million dollars in the process. Dodgson reminds him why Biosyn was willing to spend that kind of money in the first place. The InGen technology will allow them to genetically engineer dinosaurs. The benefit, Dodgson reminds him, is that dinosaurs, unlike any other animals alive on earth today, are totally exploitable by science. The public raises an uproar whenever they hear about animal testing, and even hunting is highly regulated. Dinosaurs, though, could be used with impunity for animal testing, and there would also be a lucrative market in selling the creatures to game hunters for sport. Convinced, Rossiter tells Dodgson that he has one final chance to acquire the technology.



## Second Configuration Analysis

This section serves as a snapshot of the second configuration of a system approaching the chaotic edge. The beginning quotation from Ian Malcolm indicates that complexity increases as a system moves closer to chaos. Indeed, the complexity of the plot scenario has begun to increase, and several unpredictable elements are added. Malcolm's group discovers that Levine has unexpectedly, and unwisely, begun the scientific expedition alone. He is in danger, and the group decides to rescue him. However, Malcolm, Thorne and Eddie are not the only people headed to Isla Sorna. Dodgson and his people discover the location of the lost world and, unbeknownst to Malcolm's group, are headed there as well. Harding is also bound for Isla Sorna, but the fact that she tells no one she is coming foreshadows the potential threat to her life that awaits her there. The children's behavior foreshadows their decision to stow away in the RV. At this juncture, Malcolm's group remains unaware the children are on board, but Thorne is clearly suspicious of Kelly and Arby's parting pager message. The final unpredictable element foreshadowed by the author in this section is the equipment designed by Thorne. Thorne and his assistant Eddie are extremely gifted engineers, but their combined experience has taught them that failure to field test equipment can lead to serious repercussions. In this section, the author puts all his characters on a collision course with each other and with whatever they may find on Isla Sorna. A general sense of unease permeates the tone of Part Two, but the reasons for this unease have not yet been revealed.



# Third Configuration

## Third Configuration Summary

The young Costa Rican customs officer nervously warns Thorne about the lack of gasoline, supplies and roads on Isla Sorna. Thorne assures the man that his expedition is prepared and that they hope to leave Isla Sorna within two days. Reluctantly, the officer acknowledges that Thorne's permit from the Department of Biological Preserves is in order. He stamps him through. Later, Thorne gets his first view of Isla Sorna from the helicopter. The pilot tells Thorne he has never visited Sorna but believes there must be a landing site because Americans used to fly out to the island some ten years ago. From the helicopter, "Thorne glimpsed rugged, volcanic terrain, overgrown with dense jungle. There was no sign of life, or of human habitation." (pg. 103) The pilot points out the cliff side of the island as the landing area for boats and explains that there are caves in the cliffs that permit boat access, but only in good weather. The weather today is not suitable for travel by sea, and Thorne asks how his colleague, Sarah Harding, might be able to get to the island if she arrives later today. The pilot says his helicopter will not be available, but he indicates that the weather changes hourly. She might be able to rent a boat later today if the bad weather subsides.

The pilot agrees to return for them early tomorrow morning, which is the safest time for air travel, and then he puts them down in the only clearing on Isla Sorna suitable for a helicopter landing. Eddie watches the helicopters fly away, concerned about being left on this deserted island. Malcolm and Thorne grimly commit to finding Levine before dawn tomorrow, in time to catch the return helicopter. Eddie is the most nervous of the three, since he is a city boy and not comfortable in this primitive jungle environment. Eddie Carr is Thorne's right-hand man, and he has personally overseen most of the construction on the field vehicles. Eddie's mechanical genius mirrors Thorne's, and like Thorne, he is gifted at solving real-world problems through his ingenuity and practical approach. They release the field vehicles from their travel containers, and Eddie is relieved when their electrical systems power up correctly. He is anxious because there was no opportunity to field-test the vehicles. A lot of the technology in the vehicles is experimental, but Eddie has secretly built in a few backup systems using traditional, proven technology. Eddie believes Thorne is aware he's made a few customizations, but Thorne has never said anything to him about it. Now, as Eddie looks around at the raw jungle, he is grateful that he planned ahead with the backup systems.

Thorne gives a Lindstradt gun to Eddie, who still has not been told anything about the dinosaurs on the island. Malcolm gets one, too, and Thorne explains that the guns' darts contain a venomous neurotoxin that kills instantly. He advises them not to shoot themselves accidentally, since they would die within a two-thousandth of a second. With Malcolm in the passenger seat, Thorne drives the lead RV, hooked up by the accordion connector to the second trailer. Eddie follows in the Explorer, which is hooked up by radio to the RVs. Inside the trailer, Thorne activates the Global Positioning Sensor (GPS), which overlays a satellite radar image on the monitor. With this technology, they



are able to track their own position, as well as see the thin outlines of the road system on the island. They are on the southern tip of Isla Sorna, and they see a road leading from the helicopter clearing to the north end of the island, where the satellite image shows faint outlines that may be buildings. All the roads converge in this northern spot, and they choose this locus as their destination.

Ten minutes into the travelers' journey, Thorne, Eddie and Malcolm come across a stream with muddy banks. Eddie sees something, and they all stop and exit their vehicles. From the mud, Eddie plucks a strip of green Gore-Tex, and Thorne recognizes it as part of the backpack he made for Levine. Eddie assures Thorne that he put a sensor in the pack. Thorne activates a handheld receiver, but he does not get a signal from the backpack sensor. Eddie finds another strip of green Gore-Tex, and they realize that the pack has been ripped to shreds. Just then, Eddie notices a half dozen green lizard-like animals, each about the size of a chicken, surrounding their trailer. Malcolm explains that they are *Procompsognathus triassicus*, or compys for short. Eddie is surprised to learn that they are dinosaurs. Malcolm tells them that these dinosaurs are not very dangerous, but their bite is slightly poisonous. Creeped out, Eddie returns to the Explorer. By the time Malcolm and Thorne wade carefully through the compys to the trailer, Eddie is already driving the Explorer through the streambed to the other side.

Not wanting to drain the battery, Thorne and Malcolm drive without the air conditioner. They are all careful with the vehicles because they are unsure of the RVs' reliability. They head northwest, following the road to a Y-fork, where a faded sign points one way to the swamp and the other way to Site B. The party turns right, bearing north towards Site B. Eddie suddenly hits the brakes when the vehicles crest a rise. The panoramic view spread before them is breathtaking, but Eddie has eyes only for the hippopotamus-like animal crossing the road before them. It has plate-like scales and a curving bony crest on its head with two horns. Eddie hyperventilates when Malcolm explains that it is a baby triceratops. The animal's mother appears moments later, twice the size of the youngster. An entire herd follows in their wake, slowly crossing the road and completely ignoring the vehicles. When the herd disappears, the panoramic view is clearly visible through a gap in the trees. The men see herds of different kinds of dinosaurs spread throughout the island: duck-billed dinosaurs, stegosaurs and graceful, long-necked apatosaurs. The scene is tranquil somehow; it is the lost world.

Eddie asks if evolution has somehow bypassed this island. Malcolm begins to say that there is another explanation, but he is cut off by a sudden beeping noise. They are picking up a signal from Levine's backpack sensor. They continue driving toward the northern valley, and the sensor shows that Levine is in the area where the satellite image shows buildings. The main road that they've traveled since the Y-fork curves along a ridge overlooking the jungle. They continue to follow this ridge road and arrive at a guardhouse, overgrown now by the jungle. They pass a second checkpoint and a hundred yards further see wooden outbuildings at the entrance to a large, abandoned complex. Malcolm realizes that the compound is a huge manufacturing facility. Levine's sensor signal is coming from the main building in front of them. The building is alive with jungle flora. Its windows are long since broken, and plants grow within the structure's





walls and concrete floors. Thorne decides they should set up a base camp in a nearby clearing and then begin searching for Levine.

After the men set up camp, they leave the trailers in the clearing and mount their search. In the quiet of the empty trailer, a thumping is heard. Arby uses a credit card to unlock the storage cabinet in which he's been hiding. He stretches his cramped frame and then runs to the trailer's bathroom. Then, he frees Kelly from her locked storage cabinet, and she is able to use the facilities at last after twelve hours of uncomfortable travel. They see the jungle out the window and congratulate each other on getting to Isla Sorna. Kelly says she thought she heard the others talking about dinosaurs, but Arby laughs off this ridiculous notion. He worries about how the men will react when they learn that the children stowed away in the trailers, which was Kelly's idea. Kelly finds them some sandwiches in the mini-fridge. As they eat, they look out at the eerie, deserted compound. They see Malcolm, Thorne and Eddie enter the main building. They also see a trail in the jungle, which must have been made by animals since there are clearly no people on the island anymore. With their bellies full, sleep overtakes the exhausted children.

Meanwhile, at the main building, the men find boot prints in the dust by the front door. Thorne, Malcolm and Eddie enter the building. What was once an InGen company lobby now sprouts mushrooms and fungi from its carpet. Levine's backpack is on a couch, along with his satellite phone and empty food and water containers. Mice and snakes hurry away as the men approach. The sensor indicates that Levine is somewhere in the building beyond, and they follow the reading down a corridor to the inner offices. On one of the walls, they find a map indicating that there is a radio network on the island. They also find a huge manufacturing bay. Malcolm tells them that it was used to manufacture dinosaurs.

Malcolm tells Thorne and Eddie the story of John Hammond, founder of InGen. Hammond discovered a way to extract dinosaur DNA from long-dead mosquitoes preserved in amber. Malcolm tells the other men about the theme park Hammond created with his dinosaurs, which Malcolm visited in 1989. He explains that the park security systems broke down, and the dinosaurs were set loose on the park personnel and visitors. The park was destroyed, and the dinosaurs were killed. The failed project has been kept secret, but even at the time Malcolm suspected that there must be a larger dinosaur factory somewhere else. The tidy laboratory Hammond showed his visitors at the dinosaur park seemed way too small to Malcolm, since Malcolm is aware that "with any new manufacturing technology, initial yields are low: on the order of one percent or less. So in fact, Hammond must have been growing thousands of dinosaur embryos to get a single live birth. That implied a giant industrial operation, not the spotless little laboratory we were shown." (pg. 130) Site B, here on Isla Sorna, is where Hammond really made his dinosaurs. Eddie asks why the animals at Site B weren't destroyed when the theme park animals were killed. Malcolm suggests the answer lies before them and motions them forward.

Arby wakes up in the trailer; Kelly is still asleep. Arby feels all alone and worries that they made a big mistake in coming here. He turns on the trailer ignition to power the



radio handset and calls out for Thorne, Eddie and Malcolm. He gets no answer, and so he turns the computer on to try to get the radio to work. He begins hacking into the computer system.

Inside an old laboratory, Malcolm finds some DNA sequencing printouts and a stack of old memos. The memos refer to low production yields due to a disease referred to as DX. Because of lab contamination of the animals with DX, the decision was made to release the baby dinosaurs into the wild instead of feeding them in the lab. The animals were to be tagged and released for later pickup in a desperate attempt to fend off the DX disease. The men stumble into a room that is clean compared to the rest of the building. The reason for this lies in the corner of the room: a functioning electrical junction box. The men are surprised to realize that the building still has electrical power. Eddie declares that no battery could last that long.

In the trailer, Arby convinces the computer to issue him an access password, and he writes it down. When he types it into the computer, he is stunned to realize that he has accessed not Thorne's computer system, but InGen's. He cannot understand how the network could still function when InGen is shut down, and Arby realizes there must be some local power source feeding the network. He works through the menus to the video network and activates fifteen video camera feeds on his monitor. The cameras are apparently mounted in high places throughout the island. He sees dinosaurs on most of the feeds and cannot believe it is real footage, but one of the feeds has a real-time image of Thorne, Malcolm and Eddie climbing into the Explorer. With a shock, Arby realizes that the dinosaurs are real.

The men drive the Explorer towards the power station behind the main building. They see cottages off to the right featuring an overgrown tennis court and swimming pool, as well as a small gas station and deserted general store. Inside the power station, Eddie notices that the turbine blades are made of gold alloy. He realizes that the power system is geothermal. InGen has tapped a heat source deep within the volcanic earth to generate electricity through the turbine. The blades are made out of gold to prevent sulfuric corrosion from the volcanic heat source. The geothermal plant continues to function without maintenance or the aid of people, and Eddie is impressed. Just then, they are interrupted by the squawk of the Explorer's radio. Arby's voice yells at them to get inside the car now. Thorne expresses dismay that Arby is on the island, but Arby tells them that there's no time to argue. He can see "it" coming. Malcolm suggests they get in the car. The Explorer's dashboard monitor shows a giant Tyrannosaurus rex moving down the game trail toward them. Thorne turns to Malcolm for help, but Ian is frozen with fear.

The tyrannosaurus thunders into view. It notices the vehicle and bends down to have a look. The terrified, trapped men see dead animal legs hanging from the t-rex's mouth. The animal sits on the hood of the Explorer and excretes a smelly white paste onto the car before moving away down the game trail. Malcolm explains that the male animal has just scent-marked his territory. Arby asks over the radio if they're all right. The men thank him for his warning, and Arby tells them he can see Levine riding a bicycle. Thorne checks his sensor; Levine is on the move. Back in the trailers, Kelly wakes up





and is shocked to hear about the tyrannosaur and that Dr. Levine is on a bicycle following the t-rex down the game trail. Thorne drives the men in the Explorer along the game trail, following Levine's sensor. Grimly, they realize that the children are in their care on this dangerous island. Malcolm regrets getting involved with Levine's scheme.

A fallen tree blocks the game trail. Eddie offers to look for Levine on the motorcycle, but Thorne insists on going himself. Eddie is vital to the mission because only Eddie can repair the equipment if something goes wrong. Thorne takes the Lindstradt rifle and sends the others with the Explorer back to the trailer to guard the children. Thorne stays in radio contact with Arby as he follows the game trail on his motorcycle. Arby worries because Levine has dropped off the video monitors. Thorne passes animal carcasses, and Malcolm, via radio, warns him there could be a tyrannosaur nest up ahead. Thorne slips the bike into neutral and rolls silently downhill towards the potential nesting area. He hears a loud purring, growling sound. It is coming from two twenty-foot tall tyrannosaurs just ahead. Thorne watches from behind some bushes as the dinosaurs drop animal flesh into a four-foot tall, circular enclosure made of dried mud. A squeaking sound comes from within, and Thorne sees a turkey-sized baby tyrannosaur climb out of the mud nest. Its mother gently nudges the baby back into the nest. Thorne steps on a twig, and both tyrannosaurs snap to attention. The tyrannosaurs hear nothing further, and they reassure themselves by rubbing their snouts together. Then, they resume feeding their little ones.

Thorne slips quietly back to the motorcycle. Arby whispers over the radio that Levine is off to the left. Thorne taps the mike to acknowledge Arby. He finds Levine's bicycle a few feet away. From inside the RV, Arby watches four camera feeds at once. He can see the tyrannosaur nest, but that particular camera keeps moving. Arby tells Kelly that Levine is somehow moving the camera, and he thinks Levine is in the same tree as the camera itself, right above the t-rex nest. Arby is relieved to see Eddie and Malcolm arrive back at the trailer clearing with the Explorer. Meanwhile, Thorne stands at the base of the tree, looking up at Levine. Levine falls out of the tree with a crash, and the tyrannosaurs roar loudly. Arby watches them assume a defensive posture around their nest. One of the adults charges Thorne and Levine just as they jump on Thorne's electric motorcycle. Thorne sees the big jaws gaping wide and guns it down the trail, driving crazily in his haste to escape. Moments later, Levine yells at him to slow down. The t-rex is gone. Instead of thanking Thorne for saving him, Levine berates Thorne for driving dangerously. Levine insists the t-rex was only protecting the nest, not attacking.

Rudely, Levine explains that if the t-rex weren't preoccupied with the nest, they would both be dead right now. The t-rex is a good parent, though, as evidenced by his thin frame. Levine thinks the father has been neglecting his own meals for weeks in order to provide more food for the babies. Over Thorne's radio earpiece, he hears Malcolm comment on Levine's lack of gratitude. Levine insists he is truly happy to see Thorne and is pleased to learn that Thorne brought the expedition vehicles and all the equipment. Levine is less pleased to see Arby and Kelly waving to him through the window of the RV as the motorcycle pulls into the base camp clearing.

## Third Configuration Analysis

The quote attributed to Ian Malcolm at the beginning of this section states that at this stage in the descent to chaos, hidden elements of danger lurk just below the surface. On first glance, this does not seem to apply to Part Three, for the danger is far from hidden. Malcolm's group has arrived on the island, and the flourishing community of dangerous dinosaurs is discovered. The additional discovery of the children's presence on the island is unsettling to the researchers, but it is not yet as unsettling as it ought to be. Although the danger is evident, the quoted reference to hidden risks is accurate because the scientists truly do not comprehend the extremity of their situation. Each member of this group of researchers has considerable experience in the field and in their respective areas of expertise as well. Each has convinced himself of his ability to control the situation on Isla Sorna. This feeling of control borders on scientific superiority and demonstrates the hubris of man, which is author Crichton's central point.

The reader is similarly lulled into a temporary belief that the scientists have the situation under control. The equipment is carefully designed to withstand the hardest-hitting dinosaur, and the men believe they can outwit the dinosaurs with their superior knowledge and tools. They have encountered several dinosaurs already, and each encounter supports their belief in their ability to handle this lost world. Levine's character, known for his arrogance, serves to highlight the potential for disaster. Primarily, however, the children's presence indicates to the reader and the scientists alike that the safety and success of this mission is far from guaranteed.



# Fourth Configuration

## Fourth Configuration Summary

The children run to Levine and greet him with happy hugs. Despite himself, he can't help but smile at them. Kelly and Arby explain their actions. They thought the grown-ups would need their help. Malcolm tells Levine that the children were worried because Levine got into trouble here on the island. The men berate Levine for coming to Isla Sorna by himself with no notice. Levine explains about the encephalitis outbreak in Costa Rica. He indicates that they have precious little time to study the animals before the government catches on and destroys every animal on the island. Levine assures them that he did not come alone, but then the others learn that his guide, Diego, was killed by a dinosaur. Levine has miraculously escaped. He spent the night in a tree, hounded by a pack of velociraptors. Levine says that this morning he discovered the power source and the video camera network. He accuses the others of interfering with his work and claims he never asked anyone to rescue him. Thorne reminds him of the telephone call, and Levine claims he was only upset because he couldn't get the phone to work. Everyone glares at Levine. He insists that since they and the equipment are all here, they may as well just get to work.

In Puerto Cortys, Dodgson and Baselton eat at a small cantina as they discuss their plans. Dodgson is concerned with finding a way to get to Isla Sorna. Baselton discusses the best way to present their dinosaur discovery. He suggests they publish articles in peer reviewed scientific journals to make their claim seem legitimate, and Dodgson is glad he hired a man like Baselton to help Biosyn's reputation. Dodgson's assistant, Howard King, enters the bar with a Costa Rican man named Sesor Gandoca. Gandoca is Diego's uncle and identifies Levine from the photo that Dodgson shows him. He tells them that Diego and Levine went to the island by boat a few days ago and have not returned. Dodgson asks Gandoca to take them to Sorna in his fishing boat. Gandoca protests that the weather is too bad today, but Dodgson overcomes this objection with a suitcase full of Costa Rican money. Gandoca says they can be at Sorna in two hours.

Meanwhile on Sorna, Levine's group assembles the fifteen-foot platform that the kids saw in Thorne's shop. They use the cable and power winch on the Explorer to raise the enclosed platform into the air. They camouflage it with palm leaves, as Levine explains to the children that this durable tree house is called a high hide. They climb up with Levine and look out over the vast valley. From the high hide, Levine intends to study the animals round the clock in hopes of solving the extinction puzzle. Malcolm joins them in the hide and explains that the animals InGen created six years ago have grown up and now have offspring. This island has become a functional ecological system composed of roughly a dozen dinosaur species. Even in the brief time allotted them, Malcolm expects their behavioral observations of the dinosaurs will help him prove his theory, but he refuses to tell the children what the theory is yet.



The scientists set up video cameras to record and simultaneously transmit to California by satellite. On the ground, Eddie unpacks the strong circular cage. Levine clips it to the scaffolding of the high hide but on the ground where any of them can run inside the cage and lock it if an animal attacks. Levine doubts they'll need it because the plants they used to camouflage the hide are poisonous, and the animals will probably steer clear. They discuss prehistoric paleontology and whether the apatosaurs have exceptionally long necks in order to eat the leaves off the tall trees. Levine disagrees with that theory. Long necks are unusual in nature because they make it very hard for the heart to pump blood all the way up to the brain. As they watch the apatosaurs, though, they see that the animals keep their heads down for the most part. Levine's theory is that their long necks are for defensive purposes. With a little help from Thorne, Arby guesses that he means the necks are meant to counterbalance their long tails, which are their primary defense. Malcolm notices something troubling about the herd. None of the apatosaurs appear to have reached full adulthood. Levine agrees that none of the animals are mature adults. To Malcolm this indicates a problem, but Levine is unconcerned.

Sarah Harding argues with a Costa Rican official in a deserted airfield on the western coast. The helicopters are unavailable, and the official insists that no boat will go to Isla Sorna in this weather. Determined to find a boat anyway, Harding heads down to the docks. She notices a custom designed Jeep Wrangler being loaded onto a boat and admires the obviously expensive research vehicle. She asks the American supervising the proceedings if he can help her get to Isla Sorna. He eyes her carefully and asks if she is with Dr. Levine. When she says yes, Dodgson introduces himself, Howard King and George Baselton from Biosyn. Dodgson tells her that they're on their way to join Levine's expedition. From Harding, Dodgson learns that Malcolm and Thorne are with Levine. Dodgson invites her to ride on their boat to Sorna. Harding is troubled by his overt friendliness, which contrasts with King's suspicious manner, but she takes the offered ride.

On the boat, King worries what Dodgson intends to do with Harding. Dodgson recruited King years ago after King's early experiments failed to yield immediate financial gain for the pharmaceutical companies. Despite his brilliance, King was considered washed up, and Dodgson took advantage of King's desperation to bring him on board. Dodgson hired King to help with his industrial espionage efforts, and King has risen quickly through the ranks. King admires Dodgson's charisma and vision, but he has struggled hard over the years to keep Dodgson's dark side in check. Now King knows Dodgson is playing some kind of game with Harding, and he is afraid. Harding notices them arguing, but Dodgson reassures her that all is well. Dodgson makes small talk and learns that Harding told no one she was coming to Costa Rica. The boat approaches one of the caves leading to Isla Sorna. The weather causes the waves to crash around its dark mouth. The boat rolls in the choppy waters, and Harding stumbles slightly. Dodgson puts out a steadying hand, but something goes wrong. Harding is upended into the swirling waters.

Levine's party stands together in the high hide at midday. Levine and Arby eat candy bars. Levine drops his wrapper carelessly to the ground below, while Arby folds his



wrapper neatly into his pocket. The interspecies symbiosis demonstrated by the apatosaurs and the parasaurs is exciting to Malcolm and Levine. The smaller parasaurs stay close to the large apatosaurs for mutual protection, Levine theorizes. The small parasaurs likely have keen senses to provide an early warning of danger, and the apatosaurs have their large size to protect themselves and the parasaurs from predators. Just then, a pack of velociraptors arrives on the scene to prove Levine right. The parasaurs quickly warn the apatosaurs, who form a protective ring around the parasaurs and their own young. The apatosaurs stand in a circle with their tails facing outwards. They use the large swinging tails to scare off the raptors. Malcolm checks his watch and decides to head back to watch for Sarah in case she shows up.

In the water, Sarah struggles with the pounding waves. She narrowly escapes being dashed against the cave opening, but somehow she finds herself safely inside. She swims on toward the island and is carried in by a wide, muddy river. She sees Dodgson's vehicle and equipment but avoids being seen by his party. She collapses onto the riverbank, exhausted, and passes out. A few yards away from the river, Howard King bemoans Dodgson's murderous act. Baseltan pretends not to know what happened, and Dodgson just ignores King's concern. Dodgson tells King to focus because they only have four hours to collect dinosaur eggs. Dodgson has a satellite map which he's used to plot the location of the dinosaur nests based on the dinosaurs' infrared heat signatures cross-checked over the last several years. The red circles on the map show the areas in which the dinosaurs congregate most often - the nesting sites.

Levine is alone in the high hide. The others have all returned to the trailers, to his relief. He listens to the parasaurs make trumpeting noises. Levine calls out in imitation of the sound. To his horror, the parasaurs answer his call and begin marching single file toward the hide. Levine thinks of calling Malcolm, but he knows Malcolm will be upset with him for imitating the cry. Levine has done the one thing they intended not to do: introduce a new variable into the environment. Levine reaches for the radio as the parasaurs approach. Inside the trailer, Malcolm, Thorne and the children eat rehydrated meals. The kids ask questions about the debate over Darwin's theory of evolution, and Malcolm attempts to answer.

Malcolm begins with Baron Georges Cuvier, the first man to discover bones of extinct species. At the time, the world was thought to be only a few thousand years old, and no one realized that any species had gone extinct. Cuvier was upset because he didn't believe God would let species die out, but the facts remained. Eventually Darwin came along with the theory that these extinct species were actually predecessors of existing species. He introduced the idea of evolution. Many people objected due to their religious beliefs, but Darwin's data was overwhelming. Darwin proved that species evolve, but no one knew how evolution occurred. Darwin's answer was natural selection, but this still left many unanswered questions as to how and why animals were selected by nature to survive. As twentieth century scientists learned that genes control heredity, natural selection was proposed to be a product of random gene mutations.



Malcolm discounts that explanation, however, because life evolves too quickly. The adaptive traits of species usually require several simultaneous adaptations. Bats, for example, need specialized ears, vocal chords and brains in order to navigate by sound. Could all these traits have evolved simultaneously through pure chance? Can genetic mutation explain the species, like sharks, which have not changed over the years even though their environments have changed? Thorne asks Malcolm if he believes that evolution is directed. Malcolm says that directed evolution, or the belief in Creationism, is just plain wrong, but he doesn't explain why he believes it is wrong. Malcolm returns to his idea of complexity theory and attributes evolution to the self-organizational behavior of complex systems. He believes self-organization accounts for much of the driving force behind evolution. As an example, he states that infants of all species have a characteristic appearance that provokes adults of their species to act tenderly towards them. "In a sense, you might say infant appearance seems to self-organize adult behavior." (pg. 210) Without the characteristic appearances of the infants, the adults would not bother to care for their offspring, according to Malcolm's theory.

By radio, Levine interrupts Malcolm's explanation, asking him to come to the hide to see what the parasaur are doing. Leaving the kids in the trailer, the men head for the hide. Alone, Levine grips the railing of the hide tensely as the parasaur arrive in single file. He holds his breath as the animals walk right by, continuing down the game trail. He hears the animals calling to each other as if to convey position, but he cannot see what they are doing. Levine climbs down from the hide to find out.

Harding wakes on the riverbank. To her horror, a stegosaurus stands over her, licking her face. Her shock is total, even though she has harbored suspicions about the existence of dinosaurs in Costa Rica ever since she heard Malcolm's ravings in the hospital years ago. Fortunately, the stegosaur is placid and dumb, cow-like. Harding heads into the jungle in search of Malcolm and the others. Perhaps an hour later, around two thirty, she is accosted by a herd of fast-moving dinosaurs about four feet high. The herd is running from something. Instinctively, she swings her way into a large tree. Just as she reaches safety, a pack of predator dinosaurs emerges from the jungle, chasing the fleeing herd. Out of habit, she counts the predators. There are ten, which does not make sense to Harding. When the predators disappear from sight, she drops to the ground and follows them cautiously. From the crest of a hill, she looks down on their kill site.

The scene is unlike the kill sites Harding is accustomed to seeing in Africa. In Africa, the large predators like lions and hyenas feed their young close to the carcass. Medium-sized carnivores wait their turn a short distance away. Small scavenger animals circle and wait for the leftovers on the outer circle of a typical kill site. Different animals eat different parts of the body, so there is usually very little fighting over the food. This kill site is more like a feeding frenzy. The striped pack of predator animals rages viciously over the carcass. They fight each other. Harding sees one adult mortally wound another, and the snarling adults keep a young juvenile on the edge away from the food. Harding has never seen such needless aggression in nature. Sickened, she moves carefully away.





In the Explorer on the way to the hide, Thorne asks Malcolm about his theory of dinosaur extinction. Malcolm begins by pointing out that dinosaurs ruled the earth for a hundred and fifty million years, while by contrast human beings have lived here only some thirty-five thousand years. The earliest cavemen killed so many game animals that several continents were wiped free of some large game animals. Ten thousand years ago, Native Americans hunted the woolly mammoth to extinction. Malcolm speaks cynically of human beings until Thorne returns the topic to dinosaurs. Just then, Malcolm hears the distinctive sound of a car engine. Arby calls over the radio and instructs them to turn on the dashboard security monitor. On the screen, they see Sarah Harding. They try to let Levine know, but he doesn't answer at the high hide. Thorne instructs Eddie to take the motorcycle and search for Levine while they pick up Harding.

Levine walks along the game trail, listening as the cries of the parasaur become anxious and high-pitched. He smells a sweet-sour unpleasant odor. Back at the hide, Eddie arrives on the motorcycle. He sees the parasaur footprints and Levine's boot prints following them. Eddie has no desire to enter the forest, but he shoulders his Lindstradt rifle and drives forward. Levine catches up to the parasaur and finds them urinating in a group. In modern animals, this is thought to be a way of marking territory. Eddie drives up in time to witness the herd defecate flatulently. Levine is irritated by the interruption and tries to follow the dinosaurs. Eddie orders him onto the bike, but Levine pauses to watch as a group of compys arrives to eat the parasaur dung. This does not seem normal to Levine, and he wonders what nutrient the compys derive from it. He bends to scoop up a dung sample into a plastic baggie, and two of the compys bite him. Eddie has had enough. He again orders Levine onto the motorcycle.

Dodgson's red Jeep Wrangler approaches the first nest. He parks and takes a black box and a battery pack off the seat. He tells King and Baselton to follow him while he gets rid of the adult dinosaurs, and then King and Baselton are each to grab an egg. King asks what kind of dinosaurs these are, but Dodgson doesn't know and doesn't care. They turn out to be maiasaurs, meaning "good-mother lizards." (pg. 225) Indeed, there are twenty adults carefully tending a series of nests with eggs. Dodgson lifts his black box high and turns it on. A high-pitched electronic shriek emanates from it. The dinosaurs move away from the painful sound, reluctantly abandoning their nests. Baselton and King each take an egg. The moment Dodgson turns off the black box, the maiasaurs return to their nests. They seem to have forgotten what just happened. Dodgson calls them stupid animals, and they drive away, towards the next nest.

At the high hide, Levine complains as Eddie tries to clean the compy bites with the first aid kit. Levine berates Eddie for interrupting his successful experiment. Eddie tells Levine that Harding has arrived and suggests they return to the trailer to greet her. Levine refuses to leave the hide. Back at the trailer, Kelly is star-struck by Harding's presence. Harding, showered and refreshed, insists that Kelly call her Sarah. Harding asks what Kelly wants to do when she grows up, but Kelly does not know yet. Harding tells her that really smart people don't figure out what they want to do until they're in their twenties or thirties. Kelly finds herself confiding her concerns to Harding, who assures her there's nothing wrong with girls being good at math and that many boys do like smart girls. Harding admits that her own mother told her she'd never amount to



anything. "So, Kelly, even at your young age, there's something you might as well learn now. All your life people will tell you things. And most of the time, probably ninety-five percent of the time, what they'll tell you will be wrong." (pg. 233) They exit the bedroom and find the men clustered around the security monitor staring at Dodgson's red Jeep. Malcolm informs Harding that she has been misinformed; Dodgson is no friend of theirs.

The Jeep stops at the next nest. King and Baselton stare fearfully at an adult tyrannosaur. Dodgson hesitates, but he decides that his black box will still do the trick. Baselton recalls a research article and informs the others that tyrannosaurs cannot see stationary objects because their brains are similar to frog brains. Baselton clings to his superior knowledge even as his knees buckle from fear. Dodgson enters the clearing and sees two adult tyrannosaurs arrayed around a mud mound. Dodgson turns on the box. The dinosaurs roar when they hear the sound, but they advance on Dodgson. Dodgson twists the dial until the noise is ear-splitting and painful. The tyrannosaurs retreat as Dodgson moves forward with the box. Baselton and King scramble into the mud mound after Dodgson. King grabs an egg, breaking one of the baby tyrannosaur's legs in the process. Baselton refuses to approach the nest. Furious, Dodgson goes to grab the second egg himself, but in the process, he disconnects the batteries from the black box. Dodgson and Baselton quickly go rigid, holding themselves as still as possible. Watching the security monitor, Arby asks what they're doing. Over the radio, Malcolm explains that the men are misinformed.

Dodgson watches as one tyrannosaur returns to the nest while the other approaches him and Baselton. He very slowly pulls the power cord up, trying to reconnect the batteries without making any noticeable movements. Dodgson can smell the rotten odor typical of carnivores as the tyrannosaur draws closer. As the tyrannosaur nudges Baselton with his head, Dodgson realizes it can see them after all. The t-rex pins Baselton to the ground with its foot and bites his arm off. As Baselton screams, Dodgson runs away. In the trailer, Kelly and Arby turn away from the monitor, sickened by what they've seen. Arby runs to the bathroom and gets sick. Meanwhile, Malcolm and Thorne are also watching from the monitor in the Explorer. They quickly drive towards the tyrannosaur nest. Dodgson starts up his Jeep and tells King that Baselton didn't make it. King rolls down the window to return the egg to the dinosaurs. Dodgson wrestles with him to prevent this. Suddenly, one of the tyrannosaurs steps out into the road directly ahead of the Jeep. Dodgson speeds off in reverse, but the second tyrannosaur is waiting. Trapped, Dodgson plunges off the road into the trees. Empty space looms below their back tires. Balanced on the edge of a cliff, the Jeep cannot drive on. Dodgson opens his door and leaps out into space. He falls down a jungle hill and loses consciousness.

In the Explorer, Malcolm explains to the baffled Harding why Dodgson and Baselton froze at the approach of the tyrannosaur. Her experience with predators has taught her that freezing is the wrong thing to do, but apparently a scientist named Roxton published an ill-conceived article stating that tyrannosaurs don't see still objects. Levine chimes in over the radio that Roxton's theory is as dumb as a theory put forth by Dr. Grant that a driving rainstorm could confuse tyrannosaurs. Malcolm and Levine suggest that the only reason a tyrannosaur would not attack someone is if it is full. Harding,





Malcolm and Thorne decide to take the Lindstradt rifles and check out the nest while the tyrannosaurs are away. Eddie, on the motorcycle, pulls up and joins them. Harding notices Malcolm's pale face and tells the men that if they are unsure of themselves, they should not enter the nest. She once had to drag a two hundred pound man away from a kill site in Africa with lions snapping all around because he passed out in fear. Nevertheless, they follow her into the nest.

Harding, Malcolm and Thorne find part of Baselton's foot, which is all that remains of him. In the nest, they realize that the men got away with an egg. Harding sees the injured baby tyrannosaur. They describe the two infants to Levine by radio, and he guesses they are only a few days old. He warns them that the tyrannosaurs will not stay away long. The injured tyrannosaur bites down on Eddie's boot and will not let go. The others turn to leave and tell Eddie to shoot the baby. With a broken leg, it will not survive anyway. They leave, and Harding warns Eddie to do it quick before the parents return. The Explorer follows the trail looking for Dodgson's Jeep. Malcolm and Levine are morose because Dodgson has interfered with the natural order and affected their study results. Harding reminds them that it is impossible to observe animals without changing them. In fact, scientists' long-held belief that they could observe the world objectively was crushed by Werner Heisenberg's uncertainty principle: "that whatever you studied you also changed." (pg. 249) Malcolm reminds them of the Gambler's Ruin statistical phenomenon, which demonstrates that, against all statistical odds, once things go wrong, they tend to stay bad.

Howard King gradually returns to consciousness. He is in deep pain and realizes that he is alone in the Jeep. He looks at the sun and wonders if the boat has arrived yet. Determined to get on that boat and off of this island, King forces his injured body into the driver's seat. He looks out the open driver's side door and realizes that the Jeep is hanging over space, supported by trees. Far below, he sees Dodgson crumpled on the ground. He appears to be dead. King hears the buzzing sound of an electric car pass close by and knows it's Malcolm's people. Encouraged, he turns on the ignition, and the car comes to life. When the rear wheels spin fruitlessly in mid-air, King engages the front wheel drive, and the Jeep moves forward easily back onto the road. He takes the same direction Malcolm's car took, away from the tyrannosaur nest and towards the river. Meanwhile, Arby calls the Explorer over the radio and tells Malcolm that Eddie has returned to the trailer and that he has brought the baby tyrannosaur with him.

## Fourth Configuration Analysis

The scientists have acclimatized to their surroundings and finally get down to business. Malcolm's party assembles the high hide and begins mining data from the surroundings. Dodgson's group begins the initially successful execution of a plan to steal dinosaur eggs from the nests on the island. Their ingenuity and preparedness allows both groups to proceed with confidence. If all goes well, both groups expect to acquire that which they need and be off the island within a matter of hours. Of course, the author has already developed the backbone of his theme that, at the edge of chaos, things are more likely to go poorly than well. Malcolm underscores this idea with his mention of the



Gambler's Ruin hypothesis; such a hypothesis is well-suited to the cynical Malcolm since it states that once luck turns bad it tends to stay bad and then get worse. By this point, the reader is under no illusion that the expedition will turn out well. Alarming, and to the reader's astonishment, the scientists are under this illusion. They believe they are in full control of the situation on Isla Sorna. Thus, the author creates tension through the obvious disparity in the scientists' positive expectations and the actual likely outcome.

The quotation that precedes Section Four discusses the presence of internal conflict within various elements at this stage of the slide towards chaos. The author demonstrates this internal conflict in both Malcolm's group and Dodgson's. In Malcolm's group, Richard Levine is a loose canon. His behavior is indicative of his belief in his own indestructibility. Unfortunately, this belief causes him to take careless risks with the mortality of the other group members, and Eddie is forced to put himself in danger in order to corral Levine yet again. Internal conflict manifests in Dodgson's group as well when Howard King objects to Dodgson's decision to throw Sarah Harding overboard to her near-certain death. Baselton's death and the resulting separation of King and Dodgson mean there are now two separate destructive elements loose on the land, in addition to the unpredictable presence of the dinosaurs, potentially faulty equipment and Levine's foolish feeling of invincibility. Malcolm continues to be a negative influence by predicting disaster but being unwilling to help bring about any other outcome. His conceit as well as his intellect rival Levine's, but Malcolm's hubris is less obvious and therefore more destructive. The insidious nature of Malcolm's negative impact dovetails with the opening quotation regarding internal conflict. As the story progresses, Malcolm will become increasingly gleeful as the negative outcome proves his chaos theory. His pleasure in being right exceeds his concern for his fellow human beings, as time and again he elects to allow negative events to play out which he actually has the power to stop.



# Fifth Configuration

## Fifth Configuration Summary

Everyone except Levine, who remains in the hide, clusters around the baby tyrannosaur in the trailer. Eddie has fitted the unconscious baby with an oxygen mask and plans to fix its broken leg. Malcolm warns him against interfering with the system, but Eddie insists that it's the right thing to do. They x-ray the leg and find the still developing broken bone. If they don't intervene, the broken fibula will heal crookedly, leaving the baby crippled and vulnerable to predators. Eddie has prepared a polymer resin to use as a cast, but Harding warns him that the cast will kill the baby, too, because the growing animal will outgrow the cast. They need something that will wear or break off in three to five weeks when the leg is healed. Eddie tells Thorne that this is like one of Thorne's creative class projects. They brainstorm, and Arby points out that the animal's leg will grow both longer and wider. Length will not affect the cast, but they need a structural solution that will allow the cast to expand, widthwise, over time. Thorne suggests they build in a split-line with aluminum foil, coated with resin for durability. When the leg grows, it will pop the cast open at the split line. They set to work after giving the baby more morphine.

Levine calls in over the radio and asks to speak to Thorne privately. He tells Thorne that their possession of the baby is dangerous and strongly recommends that the children, Thorne and Eddie come out to the high hide while Malcolm and Harding work on the animal in the trailer. Thorne ushers the group to the Explorer, and they drive to the hide. Levine asks everyone to be quiet as he continues to study the animals. A triceratops herd faces down a single raptor. Levine drops another candy wrapper and watches as the rest of the raptor pack silently encircles the herd. A flash of lightning reveals the sneaky approach of the raptors. Having lost their element of surprise, the raptors retreat.

In the Jeep, King is relieved to see the Y-fork leading back to the river. Across the valley, he can see the boat. He hurries towards his rendezvous point but is stopped by a herd of green dinosaurs blocking the road. The animals stare at the honking Jeep but don't move. King moves forward slowly, trying to nudge them aside with the vehicle. The first animal he bumps charges the Jeep. He halts the car again and sees in the distance the fisherman preparing the boat for departure only a quarter mile away. King decides to proceed on foot. The moment he steps out of the Jeep, one of the dinosaurs charges him. It hits the door, leaving a deep dent in the metal. King runs around the car and escapes the animals, but he is on the wrong side of the road. He needs to get across and find a way down the slope to the river. He decides to move forward a hundred feet or so before attempting to cross the road again, but he slides down a muddy ravine and loses his bearings.

From the high hide, Arby sees a man walking and calls out to the others. King finds his way out of the jungle, but the road is nowhere in sight. He's now further from the boat.



He sees the river and realizes he must follow it to the boat landing area. Eyeing a herd of triceratops, King munches a candy bar and makes his way carefully toward the river. He hears a reptilian hiss. From the hide, Arby and the others watch as two raptors approach the man from the river side. King sees the raptors crossing the river. Upstream, he sees another raptor, and another. King backs away from the river, turns and runs. In mid-stride, a raptor head rears up before him, hissing and snarling. King changes direction, but another raptor leaps high into the air and pounces with its curved, razor-like claws extended. King runs for his life to the treeline, hoping to reach safety in a tree. He sees a raptor moving through the grass and heading off his escape route. Ten yards from safety, he feels something hit him from behind. It knocks him to the ground, and he feels its claws in his back. The last thing he hears is the sound of his neck bones breaking. In the hide, Thorne tries to stop the children from looking, but they stare at King in silence. Through his binoculars, Levine sees one of the raptors eating King's candy bar and enjoying it.

Dodgson wakes to the sound of a bird-like chittering all around. He can feel a heavy weight on his body and feels very sleepy. Just before he drops into unconsciousness, Dodgson feels a tug on his hand. He opens his eyes and sees a small green dinosaur eating a chunk of flesh from his finger. He yanks back his hand, and the chittering gets louder. He sees that he is covered in chicken-sized dinosaurs; they are taking little bites from all over his body. Repulsed, Dodgson leaps to his feet. The animals retreat a few feet and then stop. He realizes that they are compys, scavenger dinosaurs. They are waiting for him to die. His watch reads 6:40, and daylight is waning. He heads south for the river, trying to reach the safety of the boat. The compys follow him. Dodgson is in terrible pain and knows he cannot walk all the way to the boat, but he sees a light through the trees. Quickly he moves toward it and discovers a little concrete shed with a tin roof. He opens the door and finds the shed empty. An electric light on a timer in the corner is what drew his attention. He gratefully falls asleep in this temporary haven.

Harding places the aluminum foil cuff around the baby's leg, shapes it and coats it with resin. She asks Malcolm how many raptors he's counted. Her count is nine, but Malcolm thinks there are at least twelve. They both agree that there are too many predators for an island this size. In Harding's experience, predators like lions are spread out over a vast territory. The ecology can only support a limited number of active predators in a given area. Malcolm suggests that the large size of the dinosaur prey might account for the larger number of predators, but she is unconvinced. Studies show that ecologies can support only one predator per two hundred prey animals. To support twenty-five predators on this island, there would need to be at least five thousand prey dinosaurs, but the island doesn't have nearly that many. Malcolm believes there are five hundred prey dinosaurs at most. Harding says there must either be a food source they're unaware of, or the predator death rate is very high. Malcolm mentions that none of the animals are full adults and suggests they are dying off young for some reason. She shakes her head. There is something strange about this island.

Malcolm tells Harding about the animal carcasses which have only begun washing up on Costa Rican shores in the past year, despite the fact that dinosaurs have lived on Isla Sorna for over five years. Malcolm suggests that something has changed, but



what? Inspired, he turns to the old InGen computer network that Arby discovered and begins scrolling through old research files. He tells Harding about the mysterious disease that caused InGen to release the animals into the wild in the first place. Harding says some diseases take a while to show up. Five years is not unusual for an incubation period when the disease source is dietary. She asks Malcolm what InGen fed the baby dinosaurs. He checks the computer and discovers that the carnivores were fed a ground animal protein from sheep. Harding is stunned that they would feed sheep meat to a baby animal.

Just then, the external alarm on the trailer sounds, and security lights flood the clearing. Malcolm explains that something has set off the sensors, but he sees nothing out the window. In the high hide, Kelly notices the lights in the clearing, but they cannot see anything that might have tripped the sensors either. Harding finishes putting the cast on the baby. She covers him with a blanket and restrains him to the table with cloth straps. She joins Malcolm at the window. Just as they decide it must be a false alarm, they hear a deep, vibrating sound. Malcolm recognizes the sound immediately. From behind the trees at the edge of the clearing, a tyrannosaur head emerges. Harding says they must be looking for their baby, but Malcolm cannot believe they could have tracked the baby so many miles from the nest. Harding points out that predators have other sensory modalities such as infrared and echolocation. Who knows what keen senses dinosaurs might possess? Harding can tell that the lights are blinding the two tyrannosaurs, and they seem to be listening.

From the high hide, Levine and the others watch as the tyrannosaurs charge the clearing. Malcolm and Harding crouch on the trailer floor. They hear the scraping of scales on metal. The smell of the tyrannosaur sends Malcolm into a panic as he remembers his previous brush with these large carnivores. Harding reports that their behavior signifies searching, not hunting. An eye hovers outside the window, and then the huge head slams into the trailer. Working together, the tyrannosaurs begin pounding the trailer. The pounding suddenly stops. Harding sees one of the tyrannosaurs looking in the window where the baby lies, strapped down. Harding stands and speaks soothingly to the adult tyrannosaur as she simultaneously loosens the restraints on the baby. When the baby is free, Harding holds it up for the dinosaur to see. The t-rex smashes the window with its head. Then, Harding drops the baby onto the table and jumps back quickly. The adult delicately sniffs the baby, licks the cast and then rests its lower jaw on the baby's chest as it stares at Harding. Harding realizes it is feeling the baby's heartbeat. Satisfied, the t-rex grips the infant carefully between its jaws and lifts it out of the trailer. Outside, the t-rex nudges the baby to wake it. Malcolm and Harding are relieved when the morphine wears off and the baby wakes.

In the high hide, everyone cheers as the tyrannosaurs retreat with their baby. Harding watches them silently from the shattered trailer window. She is surprised when they set the baby down and turn back. The tyrannosaurs charge the trailer, knocking it on its side. They begin to push the trailer along the ground, upending it so that Malcolm and Harding are on the ceiling. Malcolm crawls along it to Harding, and she tells him she's okay although her face is covered with blood. He tells her that the dinosaurs are pushing the trailer to the edge of the cliff, intending to push them over. Before they can



react, the trailer slides over the edge. Malcolm falls lengthwise down the trailer and strikes his head. Back in the hide, they watch in horror as the lead trailer dangles from the edge of the cliff. The only thing keeping it from falling is the accordion connector to the second trailer. Levine explains that because of the baby's presence in the clearing, the tyrannosaurs now consider the clearing to be their territory, and they are instinctually defending it. Eddie yells that the accordion connector will not hold for long. The tyrannosaurs begin pushing the second trailer towards the edge. Thorne orders Eddie to stay with the children and takes off in the Explorer.

Harding wakes up in the trailer, disoriented. She is in the driver's seat, and the front windshield shows the ground five hundred feet below. Malcolm lies ten feet above her, unconscious, by the lab table. She feels movement and realizes the dinosaurs are working on the second trailer. Harding climbs up to Malcolm, and he tells her his leg is hurt. Malcolm tells her to turn the power on at the panel below them. She sees that the panel is destroyed but remembers another panel up above her. Precariously she climbs up to the highest end of the trailer and finds it. She presses buttons randomly until an explosion of electric sparks causes the tyrannosaurs to stop pounding the trailer. After a minute, the pounding resumes. Meanwhile Thorne drives the Explorer at high speed towards them. He hits a rain puddle, and the Explorer shorts out fatally. Cursing, he notices a flashing red glow just ahead. Thorne runs towards it and finds the Jeep Wrangler. No one is in the vehicle, and the ignition starts when Thorne turns the key. He drives the Wrangler into the clearing. The tyrannosaurs see him and abandon the trailer. They run towards their baby. In the next flash of lightning, he sees that they are gone. Still, the second trailer continues to slide toward the cliff edge.

At the high hide, the kids watch mystified as Thorne drives around and around a tree. Eddie explains that Thorne is running a cable around the tree trunk. Thorne runs towards the trailer and manages to hook the cable around the rear axle. The line goes taut and holds. The trailer stops sliding toward the cliff. He runs to the Jeep to set the parking brake, and Eddie calls him on the radio and tells him that the accordion connector will not hold much longer. Thorne knows. He runs to the trailer and enters, but Malcolm and Harding are not there. He calls Eddie and asks where the rope is. Eddie informs him it's in the other trailer. In the other trailer, Harding sees the accordion connector begin to tear. Harding, who never gives up, convinces Malcolm to stand despite his defeated attitude. At her request, he points to where the rope is kept. Harding is forced to climb down the trailer while hauling Malcolm to reach the rope. She lays Malcolm on the dashboard and finds the rope in the utility box underneath. Harding twists open the driver's side door and feels rain on her face. Leaning out for a look, she sees that the top and sides of the trailer are smooth and wet. There are no handholds for climbing. She assumes the underside will have some type of handholds available, and as she tries to check, she sees Thorne clinging to the undercarriage. He tells her to climb out, but she explains that Malcolm's hurt.

Thorne climbs into the trailer. Harding climbs up the undercarriage with one end of the rope. She refuses to look down. Miraculously, she reaches solid ground. Wasting no time, Harding loops the rope securely through a metal bracket underneath the trailer still on solid ground and throws the other end of the rope down to Doc Thorne. Harding pulls





Malcolm up as Thorne climbs the underside of the hanging carriage. Malcolm achieves the safety of the cliff top, but Thorne is still climbing when the accordion connector begins to break apart, and both Thorne and the trailer slip ten feet further down the cliff side. Harding encourages him as she reaches her hand down towards Thorne. The accordion connector breaks entirely, and Thorne feels a tremendous pain in the top of his head. Harding has grabbed him by the hair, and with her immense strength, she pulls him up to safety.

In the high hide, the onlookers celebrate Malcolm, Harding and Thorne's survival, all but Arby, who watches as a group of raptors approaches the hide. Levine assures Eddie, Arby and Kelly that the raptors are downwind and will not smell their presence in the hide. The raptors appear to be simply following the game trail that runs past the hide. Levine tells the others that if they maintain silence, the raptors will likely continue past them without incident. Meanwhile in the clearing, Malcolm is stretched out on a table in the surviving trailer. Harding cleans his wound. She gives him morphine to get him through it because the gash in his leg cuts all the way to the bone.

The raptors reach the hide and appear to be about to pass by without incident when one of the raptors stops. It sniffs in the grass and comes up with one of the candy bar wrappers that Levine tossed so carelessly to the ground. The raptor looks up at the hide and stares Levine directly in the eye. It snarls at him.

Harding puts an inflatable plastic splint around Malcolm's wound while Malcolm, under influence of morphine, ruminates about the intricacy of nature. Man-made items are inherently flawed, he points out, but nature is perfect. Life forms are incredibly complex. Harding encourages him to talk to take his mind off the pain. Malcolm believes that cyberspace is the beginning of the end for humanity. Innovation, he states, occurs only in small groups of people. Cyberspace encompasses the entire planet, and Malcolm is sure it will stamp out the intellectual diversity that people need to evolve. He speaks of the theory that he had hoped to prove on this island, that changes in dinosaur behavior led to their extinction. Malcolm says the experiment must end, and it is time they all get off the island. Thorne radios the high hide intending to tell the others to evacuate. Over the radio, he hears a high-pitched human scream.

The raptors leap eight feet into the air, attempting to climb the scaffolding to the high hide. With each attempt, they seem to be learning, and each attempt brings them closer to the hide. Levine pushes the kids to the center of the shelter as Eddie throws a lit flare at two climbing raptors. One of the raptors gets a hold of Eddie's shirt and pulls him over the side railing of the hide. Levine pulls him back, and Kelly scrambles to the top of the hide. Eddie uses one of the bars on the hide to club at the attacking raptors. A raptor catches the club in its jaws and pulls Eddie over the side. He falls to the ground, and his dying screams are heard in the night. Levine tries to help Arby climb to the top of the hide, but Arby is panicked and falls over the side.

Thorne unhooks the Jeep cable winch and starts the engine. Harding is on the motorbike with a Lindstradt rifle. They both race for the high hide while the injured Malcolm waits in the trailer. In the hide, Kelly watches Arby on the ground. Arby races



into the lightweight reinforced cage designed for just such emergencies. He has to stick his hand through the bars to turn the key, and the raptors nearly bite off his hand. The raptors bite at the cage, and one of them gets a hold of the looped elastic band that hangs from the key. The raptor gets caught in the band, and both band and key are wrapped around its lower jaw. All the other raptors converge on the cage, trying to get at Arby. Headlights appear on the horizon just as the raptors begin rolling the round cage containing Arby away from the hide. All the raptors leave with Arby except one. Kelly watches as the lone raptor with the key continues to struggle to remove it. When Thorne's Jeep arrives, the raptor runs away by itself.

Thorne and Levine race after Arby in the Jeep as Kelly calls after them from the hide. When Harding arrives at the hide, Kelly tells her what the others didn't wait to hear: that a raptor has the key to the cage containing Arby. Harding puts Kelly on the back of the bike and puts the Lindstradt rifle in her hands, giving Kelly a quick explanation on how to work it. Harding warns Kelly not to take a shot at the raptor until they get close, and then they head out across the plain after the lone fleeing raptor. In the Jeep, Levine is ready to give up, but Thorne reminds him that Arby didn't give up on Levine. Thorne drives swiftly to avoid losing sight of the raptors and the cage.

## Fifth Configuration Analysis

The cliff metaphor in this section is a simple yet apt description of the edge of chaos. The cliff represents the point where elements in a complex system drop irreversibly from stability to chaos and destruction. The author has previously used two similar metaphors, which foreshadow this descent into chaos. When Dodgson causes Sarah to fall over the side of the boat into the destructive ocean currents, the author is signaling a fall from the grace of order into the destructive currents of clashing chaos. To underscore this symbolism and build to the cliff metaphor in this section, the author has Dodgson's vehicle hang precariously balanced on the edge of a cliff. That precarious balance is tipped in the favor of chaos when Eddie takes the tyrannosaurs' baby back to the trailer to set its injured leg. This action causes an unexpected shift in the tyrannosaurs' perception of territory. They now perceive their territory to include the previously safe haven where Malcolm's team of scientists has set up the trailers. The trailers, with their high-tech customizations, represent the order and stability of human civilization. When the dinosaurs attempt to push the trailers off the cliff, they are symbolically destroying the complex system of human organization brought to the island by members of Malcolm's scientific expedition.





# Sixth Configuration

## Sixth Configuration Summary

Harding and Kelly race across the grassy plain. Harding brings them parallel to the running raptor and shouts at Kelly to shoot it in the neck. Kelly doesn't believe she can do it, but with Harding's encouragement, she squeezes off a shot. Kelly misses, but Harding insists she try again. Again Harding brings the bike parallel to the raptor. This time, the raptor lunges sideways at the motorcycle, and Harding narrowly manages to miss being rammed. The raptor heads for the river. Harding asks how deep the river is, and Kelly says it's over three feet deep. Harding knows the bike cannot forge such deep water, so she guns the engine attempting to cut off the raptor before it reaches the water. Harding informs Kelly that she has two shots left. She needs to make them good. The motorcycle tumbles to the ground on the muddy riverbank. Without missing a beat, Harding leaps back on and yells for Kelly to do the same. The raptor is twenty yards ahead and nearly to the water.

Thorne's Jeep crashes down a hillside at blinding speed. Thorne grips the wheel, trying to bring the Jeep back under control. Amazingly, the engine continues to run as they hit boulder after boulder on the way down the hill. On level ground, Thorne halts the Jeep. They are in a dry streambed. They see the raptors running down the streambed, and they follow in the Jeep. Levine wonders if Arby could have survived the trip down the hill inside the metal cage. They see huge apatosaur skeletons and three low mud mounds, around which the raptors congregate. Levine realizes that they are in the raptors' nest. On the radio, Malcolm asks them to describe the nest. It is messy and poorly made in contrast to the typically neat dinosaur nest. "There was a disorderly, chaotic feeling to the scene before him: ill-formed nests; quarreling adults; very few young and juvenile animals; the eggshells crushed; the broken mounds stepped on. Around the mounds, Levine now saw scattered small bones which he presumed were the remains of newborns." (pg. 327) The three juveniles in the nest appear to be forced to fend for themselves. Thorne points out the cage. From this distance, they cannot see Arby. The men consider their options. Suddenly, Thorne sees movement inside the cage; Arby is alive. Determined, Thorne decides to rescue Arby the old-fashioned way.

Harding and Kelly race toward the raptor on a diagonal course and manage to intercept it before it hits the river. The raptor races off into the grassy plain, and Harding follows, slowly catching up to the fleeing figure. Kelly prepares herself for the next shot. The raptor runs into a herd of apatosaurs. Harding tells Kelly to shoot now before the raptor can lose them in herd of giant animals. Kelly aims, fires and misses. Harding has no other option than to drive into the herd, swerving to avoid the giant feet and tails of the apatosaurs. They break through the herd, and Harding again pulls up level to the raptor. This time, when the raptor tries to head-butt her, she punches it in the head and tells Kelly to shoot it now. Kelly shoots, and the raptor falls to the ground. Harding stops the bike and reloads the rifle. She admits to Kelly that she lied when she told Kelly there



were only two shots remaining. Harding walks over to the prone raptor, shoots it again and takes the key.

At the raptor nest, Thorne climbs in the back of the Jeep with his rifle. Levine starts the engine and races across the streambed to the raptor nest at Thorne's order. Levine pulls alongside the aluminum cage, and Thorne jumps out and grabs it. Thorne swings the cage into the back of the Jeep and jumps in after it, as Levine puts the Jeep in gear. He hits the gas, but a raptor leaps onto the back of the Jeep, grabbing the canvas top in its jaws.

Back at the trailer, Malcolm drifts in a morphine dream. He considers the theory that complex animals like dinosaurs and people don't pass along their adaptive fitness through DNA, but through learning. Animals raised in isolation without parents or other guidance are not fully functional. Zoo animals, bred in captivity, are often ill-equipped to be parents. The velociraptors are extremely intelligent and also dangerous. These traits require learned behavioral controls. "Adaptive behavior was a kind of morality; it was behavior that had evolved over many generations because it was found to succeed - behavior that allowed members of the species to cooperate, to live together, to hunt, to raise young." (pg. 332) The raptors on this island came into the world with no older animals to guide them. They live in a completely unstructured society with no rules or cooperation.

One such maladapted raptor hangs onto the back of the Jeep as Levine drives along the muddy riverbank. The raptor grabs onto the cage with its jaws, and Thorne finds himself playing tug-of-war for Arby. Levine tries to hand Thorne a gun, but Thorne cannot let go of the cage. Levine is forced to shoot while driving at high speed. He knows that if he hits Arby or Thorne by accident they will die instantly. Levine fires and hits the raptor right in the throat. As it falls from the Jeep, it pulls the gun from Levine's hands. Harding calls Thorne on the radio and asks his position. He tells her they are following the river and that they have Arby. Thorne has not yet had a chance to check Arby's condition. He tells Harding to meet them back at the trailer on the ridge road. Both Harding and Thorne make for the ridge road, and Levine wonders if the raptors will really give up so easily, although for the moment they appear to have lost the pack. Thorne talks to Arby through the bars and finds that Arby is lucid but in pain. The Jeep turns onto the ridge road, and Levine feels relieved. Just ahead, though, they see the raptor pack, standing in the road waiting for them. Thorne takes the wheel from Levine.

Thorne accelerates down the road, and the raptors keep pace alongside. One raptor hits the windshield, and Thorne brakes quickly, causing it to slide off. While he slows, three other raptors charge from the side. One side of the road is a rock face and the other is a cliff looking out over nothingness. Thorne swerves the Jeep into the rock face, knocking away one of the raptors, but another raptor lands on the cloth top of the Jeep. Both Levine and Thorne punch at it through the roof with a large hunting knife, but the raptor hangs on. Thorne swerves the Jeep and manages to knock the raptor off. It hits two of its comrades, and all three plunge over the side of the cliff. Levine and Thorne think that was the last one, but suddenly another raptor leaps into the back of the Jeep. Levine stares at the raptor, which is fully inside the jeep. He knows he is about to die.



Suddenly, the raptor foams at the mouth and falls away. Behind him, Levine sees Harding and Kelly on the motorcycle. Kelly holds the Lindstradt rifle. Harding pulls level with the moving Jeep and hands Levine the cage key and the rifle. Levine looks off to his left. There are still six or more raptors racing alongside the Jeep.

Just then, the Jeep sputters, out of gas. Thorne puts it in neutral and allows the forward momentum to carry them. Thorne orders Levine to unlock Arby's cage, which he does. Thorne watches the speedometer fall, and he knows his only hope is to make it over the crest of the hill so that the downhill momentum will continue to carry them towards the trailer. They gain the rise, but Levine shouts that they cannot make it all the way to the trailer. Thorne knows, but he recalls that the fork in the road ahead leads one way to the trailer and the other direction to the laboratory complex. The laboratory road is all downhill. Thorne turns right, away from the trailer and towards the laboratory. The Jeep rolls down the hill past the lab to the worker village, and Thorne notices the gas station and wonders if there is still gas in the pumps. Levine points behind them and shouts that the raptors are falling back. They seem hesitant to enter the laboratory compound. Harding's motorcycle is nowhere to be seen on the road behind them.

Harding heads for the trailer with four raptors in pursuit. She warns Kelly that when they get to the trailer, they must jump off the bike and run inside immediately. Harding brakes hard next to the trailer, and Kelly leaps off the bike and inside the trailer door. Harding had hoped to get the bike inside, but the raptors are too fast. She is only able to get inside the trailer by shoving the bike at the oncoming raptors. Harding asks Malcolm how the door lock works, but he is in his morphine dream and cannot help. Harding and Kelly work together until they locate the locking mechanism. The raptors attempt to enter the reinforced trailer but cannot. In a fury, they drag the motorbike away and begin pounding on it. Harding asks Malcolm where the weapons are stored. Kelly is reassured by Harding's never-say-die attitude. Malcolm is too doped up to care about helping, but Kelly has spent enough time in the trailer to guess where the weapons are stored. She helps Harding locate the cache of weapons, including a cholinesterase bomb, which releases a gas that causes short-term paralysis.

Harding tells Kelly that they're getting out of there and tosses the gas bomb out by the raptors. The bomb does not deploy, but then one of the raptors sinks its teeth into it. The gas is released. Harding helps Malcolm walk, and together with Kelly, they move out of the trailer past the paralyzed raptors. Kelly and Harding work together to lift a raptor off the motorcycle. They see the raptor's eyes blink, and Harding orders everyone on the bike. Kelly rides on the handlebars, and they get away just as the raptors begin to wake. Harding finds the Jeep parked at the convenience store near the gas pumps. Harding, Kelly and Malcolm enter the store and close the door. Inside they find Thorne, Levine and Arby.

Harding assesses the group's situation. The store is secure and contains edible canned goods. Arby has lost a couple of teeth, but the cut on his head is minor. Thorne tells her that they have two hours before the helicopter lands, and the landing pad is several miles away. As Harding tends to Arby's wounds, Thorne leads the hysterical Levine off to the side. Levine moans that they're all going to die, but Thorne tells him to stop



frightening the children. Thorne informs Levine that he is going outside to see if the gas pumps work. Levine assures him this is a waste of time. Thorne exits the store, and Levine immediately locks the door. Thorne knocks and orders Levine to keep the door unlocked. Outside Thorne stares into the quiet night for a long moment before walking to the Jeep. He retrieves the radio and passes it inside to Levine.

At the pumps, Thorne finds no gas, but he considers how the pumps must have been fueled in the first place. The fuel would have arrived by boat or plane, most likely by boat. He examines the pumps and finds a PVC pipe leading from the pumps around the corner of the store. Behind the store, he finds three fifty-gallon metal drums, connected to the PVC hoses. The drums are empty, but Thorne believes that there must be additional drums stored nearby. He looks around carefully and sees a path glinting in the moonlight. The path is lined by rhododendron bushes and leads to a shed hidden just beyond the foliage. A sign on the shed door says INFLAMMABLE. Thorne can hear the raptors snarling in the distance, but they continue to give the compound a wide berth for some reason that Thorne does not understand. Heart pounding, Thorne moves towards the dark shed. Inside, he finds a dozen rusted gas drums, but they are all empty. He begins to retreat out the door, but the sound of breathing stops him.

Inside the store, Levine watches from the windows, nervous that Thorne has ventured so far out into the night. He wishes he could lock the door. He hears the raptors, too, and turns his mind to the question of why they are staying away. It occurs to him that the area around the lab is the territory of some other dinosaur. It is probably scent-marked to discourage the raptors from entering. Whose territory is this? Harding tells Levine to turn on a light so she can better tend Arby. At the shed, Thorne listens carefully. The breathing sounds like a large animal, waiting. It comes from his right, near the bushes. He looks but sees nothing. After a moment, the pattern of leaves in the bushes seems to shift slightly and then stabilize. The fence along the bushes seems to be rippling somehow. A light goes on inside the store, and for a brief moment, Thorne sees that two of the rhododendron bushes are actually dinosaurs. They are staring straight at him. As he watches, their bodies quickly adapt to the light and change color until they again perfectly match their environment. "They were chameleons. But with a power of mimicry unlike any chameleon Thorne had ever seen." (pg. 351)

From the store, Levine also sees the dinosaurs change color. He realizes that these beasts are the same ones he briefly glimpsed the day Diego died by the river. Levine calls Harding's attention to the beasts. She cannot see them, so they turn the lights out. She watches as they change color again. Harding insists they must rescue Thorne. Reluctantly, Levine follows her order to turn the lights on and off several times in succession. The dinosaurs shift uncomfortably. Harding grabs flashlights and batteries from the store shelves and hands some to Levine. Thorne watches the lights flicker from his post in the shed. The dinosaurs move toward the shed, and to Thorne's horror, they enter. Before they can attack, though, beams of light suddenly play over the dinosaurs' bodies. They become visible, which clearly disconcerts them. Bellowing loudly, they back out of the shed. The lights pursue them across the complex, and Thorne uses the distraction to get away. Safely inside the store, Levine locks the door behind them.



Thorne reports on the lack of gasoline and heats up some canned soup for them to eat. Arby, in fresh clothes from the store shelves, curls up and sleeps. Thorne reports that they have an hour left to get to the helicopter landing site. At the window, Levine calls out that they have visitors. A group of maiasaurs surrounds the Jeep and rips it to shreds, making the issue of finding gasoline moot. The maiasaurs locate their stolen eggs in the Jeep and make off with the infants that have just hatched. Thorne laments the loss of the Explorer. Harding asks what happened to it, and Thorne explains that it shorted out. Harding asks if Eddie built in circuit breakers, and Thorne suddenly recalls that Eddie did build them in, against specs, as a last-minute precaution. They realize that the Explorer will work if someone can reset the breakers. Harding puts on her radio headset and rides off on the motorcycle to find the abandoned Explorer. She reports a raptor sighting over the radio and drives down an alternate path. The men wait in the shed for Harding to report back, but her radio remains silent. Finally she calls in. She is at the Explorer.

Dodgson wakes up in the concrete utility shed. Thirsty, he leaves the shed and heads for the sound of water. He thinks of Malcolm's group and knows they must have some plan to get off the island. At the stream, he finds a green backpack. Inside the backpack is a radio. Dodgson turns it on and hears Harding speaking to Thorne. She asks Levine if a six-foot tall green dinosaur with a domed head is dangerous. Levine says yes, and Harding explains that a bunch of them are surrounding the Explorer. Harding is accustomed to spending time near wild animals, but the animals on this island behave unpredictably. She decides not to risk approaching them directly. Harding climbs a tree and makes her way out on a limb, over the car. A dinosaur charges the tree trunk, and Harding falls to the earth next to the dinosaurs. Her radio goes silent.

Kelly wakes up and begins idly playing around with the computer at the store cash register. She logs in with Arby's password and accesses the InGen network. The screens look very different from the screens Arby pulled up earlier in the trailer. She tries to access the video screens that Arby found, hoping to locate Harding's position. She pulls up live feed of the Explorer. They can see dinosaurs and the car, but not Harding. Harding radios them and informs them that she is underneath the car. The dinosaurs snort in frustration as they try to reach her. Thorne tells her that the circuit breaker box is under the car and suggests she reset the breaker while she's down there. Harding manages to reset the breakers, and the car begins to hum. Thorne informs her that the helicopters are due in ten minutes. Harding is trapped under the car by the dinosaurs, but suddenly, the dinosaurs disappear. Harding asks Thorne why they left. Tersely, he tells her to turn off the radio and stay quiet. Harding looks over and sees a pair of muddy boots standing by the driver's door. She recognizes the boots; they belong to Dodgson.

As Dodgson begins to get in the car, Harding acts on sheer instinct. She grabs his ankles and pulls hard, and he falls to the ground. Upon seeing Harding, Dodgson says that he thought he killed her already. This comment sends Harding into a fury, and she starts to scramble out from under the car toward him. Suddenly, the ground begins to shake with impact tremors, and Dodgson flattens himself to the ground. He rolls under the car with Harding just as a tyrannosaur arrives on the scene. The tyrannosaur stops.





It can smell them. Harding suddenly knows what to do. She braces her shoulders against the rear wheel and uses her legs to push Dodgson's lower legs out from underneath the car. Dodgson struggles to remain hidden under the car, but Harding has better leverage and forces him out inch by inch. The tyrannosaur sees Dodgson and scoops him up in its jaws. It carries Dodgson in its jaws but does not snap them shut to kill him. On the store monitor, Levine's group can hear Dodgson scream as the creature carries him through the jungle. Harding waits for the t-rex to disappear and then scrambles into the car. It turns on, and just then she hears the distant sound of a helicopter.

Harding drives as quickly as she can toward the landing site, hoping to stop the helicopter before it leaves again without them. As Levine waits in the store for news of her progress, he watches dawn break on the island. Suddenly, he remembers what dawn means in predator territory. Meanwhile, Harding rounds the final curve to the landing site. The helicopter rotors speed up, and she realizes that it is about to take off. She screams after it, but it is too late. It disappears into the morning sky. In the store, Levine counsels everyone to stay calm as he breaks the bad news. If Harding cannot arrive to pick them up in the next five minutes before daylight hits, they will be trapped. Thorne does not understand. Levine explains that predator territory boundaries are only in force at night. With daylight, any animals, including the raptors, can enter the territory. Kelly taps at the computer, trying to find some hope to cling to now that the helicopter is gone. She looks at the piece of paper that Arby's password is written on and realizes it is the list of Isla Sorna map labels that Arby printed out back in Levine's apartment. She stares at the list and calls Dr. Thorne over. She shows him the list, which indicates that there is a boathouse on the island. Thorne asks her to find it on the video cameras and radios Harding.

Harding informs Thorne that she has been delayed. She stares fifty yards ahead on the road and sees the tyrannosaur walking with Dodgson in his mouth. He is not dead yet, and he is still screaming. Dispassionately, Harding waits for the tyrannosaur to disappear before resuming her drive. At the computer console, Kelly finds an image of a boathouse. The interior angle reveals a powerboat and three oil drums. Thorne asks her if she can find a map so that they can locate the boathouse. Arby finally wakes up and joins her at the computer. Levine is pacing nervously and tells the kids to use the computer to find a way out of the store. Just then, a raptor breaks through the door lock and stands in the doorway. Thorne throws himself against the door, pushing the raptor out. Levine and Thorne together barely manage to keep the raptor from re-entering through the door. Other raptors appear in the windows. Levine screams for Kelly to find them a way out. Arby urges her to concentrate on the computer screen before her. He tells her how important it is for her to figure out the computer so that they can find a way out. Kelly remembers Harding's belief that most of what people say is wrong. Kelly knows that Arby uses computers as a way of taking his mind off his real problems. He tells her again that it's important, but this time Kelly realizes it's not important.

Instead, Kelly follows the computer cord under the desk to an access panel. She rips out the panel, revealing a tunnel under the building. They push a refrigerator in front of the door, and all disappear through the access panel, with Kelly in the lead. At a Y-



junction, Kelly takes the shorter path. Stairs at the end of it lead into a utility building. From the windows of the building, Kelly sees Harding driving toward them in the Explorer. They all drive along the river until they find a sign for the boathouse. Levine is doubtful when they find the overgrown building, but inside is a perfectly serviceable powerboat.

Dodgson tumbles through the air and lands on an earthen slope. With horror, he realizes that he is in the tyrannosaur nest. Three infant tyrannosaurs circle him excitedly. One of the infants wears a silver aluminum foil cast. The adult tyrannosaurs stay off to one side, purring, as the babies advance on Dodgson. Dodgson turns to run, but one of the adults knocks him to the ground. Each time he stands, he is knocked to the ground again. Dodgson begins to crawl away on all fours. That's when the adult tyrannosaur bites down on his leg, breaking it. Unable to move, Dodgson watches the babies toddle over to him and begin taking chunks of his flesh with their razor sharp jaws. One of them closes its jaws over his neck.

## Sixth Configuration Analysis

Complete chaos reigns in Part Six. As the initial quotation indicates, "Survival is now unlikely for individuals and groups." (pg. 321) Fulfilling this proclamation, as this section opens up, young Arby has been taken captive by the raptor pack. Thorne and Levine are unlikely rescuers in their unprotected, cloth-top Jeep. As Malcolm warned previously, once things go bad, they tend to get worse. Even if Thorne and Levine can rescue Arby, assuming Arby is still alive inside the cage, they will be unable to free him. Here Sarah Harding's stabilizing influence is felt most keenly. She refuses to give into chaos and never stops believing they will all survive. In contrast to Levine, who is ready to give up on the idea of rescuing Arby, it never occurs to Harding to not rescue the boy. Her persistence not only enables them to get the key back from the raptor, but it also saves Levine's life. Yet, Levine learns nothing from Harding's successful interventions against chaos and destruction. The moment they find temporary shelter in the abandoned convenience store, Levine again reverts to his doom-and-gloom pessimism. It is left to Harding and Thorne, with the help of young Kelly, to fight the rising tide of chaos in order to save all of their lives.





# Seventh Configuration

## Seventh Configuration Summary

The boat leaves the river jungle and enters a dark cave leading to the sea. Kelly cheers as they reach open water. Levine looks back at the island and says their cameras should continue to gather data and transmit through the satellite uplink until they can finally resolve the extinction question. Harding stares at him in disbelief. She reminds him that the island is not a lost world that can be studied to verify actual dinosaur behavior. The number of predators on the island does not comprise a typical population. Harding tells Levine what she and Malcolm found on the InGen computer network. InGen made a huge mistake by feeding the baby dinosaurs sheep protein. Levine doesn't understand. Harding explains that zoos never use sheep protein because of the risk of infection. The prions in sheep protein caused a disease in the dinosaurs called DX; the InGen lab was unable to counter the disease.

All of the animals on the island are infected, explains Harding. That's why they die off before they reach full maturity. This rapid die-off supports a much larger predator population than normal. Levine remembers the compy bite he received, but Harding assures him that in humans the disease manifests as mild encephalitis or perhaps just a minor headache. She promises to take him to a doctor once they reach Costa Rica. Harding concludes by telling Levine that the dinosaurs on this island can't reveal anything about extinction because they are not normal dinosaurs. Malcolm chimes in with his belief that human beings are a plague on the earth. He thinks human beings will be the cause of the next mass extinction and that perhaps the purpose of the human species is simply to kill off the rest of the world so the biosphere can start anew.

Kelly shakes her head at Malcolm's words and moves away from him to sit by Thorne. Thorne advises her not to take any of that seriously. He equates scientific theories to fantasies. The only things which are real, explains Thorne, are the sunlight and the ocean and their presence in the boat. "That's real. Life is wonderful. It's a gift to be alive, to see the sun and breathe the air. And there really isn't anything else." (pg. 393)

## Seventh Configuration Analysis

The quotation on the title page of Part Seven indicates that "Partial restabilization may occur after eliminating destructive elements." (pg. 389) Considering who and what is eliminated in the previous section, it is clear that the term "destructive elements" refers to Dodgson, King and the raptor population. This explains why Harding is so dispassionate about Dodgson's death, for he indeed functions as a destructive element. The "partial restabilization" in Part Seven indicates the group's ability to reform and reassert the stabilizing influence of human civilization after being pulled apart during the chaotic action sequences. They are able to get the Explorer functioning, and the Explorer, like the RVs, represents human civilization. Their subsequent ability to find a



functioning powerboat is serendipitous, but it also reflects the intangible quality of self-organization, which Ian Malcolm discusses in the prologue. Several factors must come together simultaneously to allow the group to escape in the powerboat. This simultaneous evolution characterizes Malcolm's definition of self-organization and provides a practical example with which to round out the story.

Astoundingly, Levine's scientific hubris remains strong even in the wake of the disastrous expedition. Levine's arrogance is such that he always expects to find the answer he desires from a scientific experiment. Rather than see the disaster on the island as the natural result of his experiment, he sees the disaster as merely an inconvenient obstacle that is so far preventing him from getting the result he would rather see. In other words, Levine turns a blind eye to the actual results of his experiment. On the powerboat as they are escaping, Levine states his intention to continue to gather data on Isla Sorna until he gets his desired results. Levine's preoccupation with scientific problem solving obstructs his vision of the reality around him. The irony of this is that science is intended as an impartial study of reality. The goals of science have always been to find the truth behind the mysteries of life on earth. Levine uses his science as a way of avoiding the truth that is all around him, much as young Arby immerses himself in computers as a way of avoiding the social challenges of pre-adolescence. Arby's insecurity provides a hint as to why Levine is so arrogant. Author Crichton hints that scientific hubris is a result of human insecurity. Such hubris allows scientists to pretend they have all the answers in order to make the world seem less mysterious and baffling.



# Characters

## Ian Malcolm

Ian Malcolm is an acknowledged mathematical genius. Well-respected by his fellow mathematicians, Malcolm is often called upon to lecture to learned groups about his various mathematical theories. Malcolm's favorite theory is complexity theory, formerly known as chaos theory. Loyal Crichton readers will remember Malcolm from the novel *Jurassic Park*, in which he explains the concept of chaos theory as it applies to dinosaurs. In *The Lost World*, Malcolm takes this theory to a new level as he applies advanced complexity/chaos theory to the situation on Isla Sorna. Malcolm believes that too much change or too much stagnation causes any complex system to fall into a destructive state of chaos. The events on Isla Sorna, which involve excessive change of the natural biosystem, bear out his theory as the expedition and the dinosaur population both descend into chaos.

Malcolm's greatest flaws are his negativity and his need to be right. Due to Malcolm's previous experience with InGen's genetically engineered dinosaurs, he has knowledge that could prevent the deadly chaos on Isla Sorna. Rather than share that knowledge with Levine in the first place, Malcolm is content to go along for the ride and watch passively as the destruction he has predicted plays out in real life. Although it is never explained why Malcolm and Sarah Harding broke off their romantic relationship, Malcolm's passivity and negative attitude in the face of danger clash decidedly with Harding's can-do attitude. Malcolm may be a brilliant theorist, but in the arena of real life, he would not survive five minutes without someone like Harding to save him from himself.

## Sarah Harding

Dr. Sarah Harding is a brilliant young field researcher. As a woman, she has had to contend with many stereotypes within her profession. It took several years for her insightful field observations on the predatory nature of hyenas to be taken seriously. However, her work is so good that eventually this male-dominated field of research came to see the validity of her observations. Gender stereotyping is not the only obstacle Harding has had to overcome in order to succeed in her chosen career. She comes from a poor background and had to work her way through college with the scholarships she earned thanks to her brains and academic discipline. Instead of beating her down, all these obstacles proved to Harding that obstacles are meant to be overcome. Her never-say-die attitude is a critical factor in the survival of Malcolm, Thorne, Levine, Kelly and Arby. Along the way, she inspires young Kelly to believe that women can be smart, strong and brave just like men, and some cases, they can be smarter, stronger and braver than a lot of men. Harding herself is freakishly strong thanks to her years of fieldwork in harsh environments like the wilds of Africa, where Harding currently lives and studies lions.



## Richard Levine

Dr. Richard Levine is an extremely gifted young scientist. He is also a spoiled brat and surprisingly immature for a grown man. Levine grew up in a sheltered environment. As heir to a large family fortune, he faced very few obstacles in his career path. His intelligence has earned him the respect of his paleontology colleagues, since no one can identify a dinosaur fossil with more accuracy than Levine. However, his arrogance and immaturity cause him to take unnecessary risks with his life and the lives of the people in his expedition. Levine is a loose canon, and his impetuous solo trip to Isla Sorna results in the death of his local guide, Diego. Levine finds himself alone on the island, hunted by raptors, and when Thorne calls him, he pleads for Malcolm and Thorne to bail him out of this dangerous predicament. Because Levine rushed ahead to Isla Sorna, the others are forced to sacrifice the time they need to field-test the all-important field vehicles in order to rescue Levine. Levine's natural arrogance reasserts itself once his friends arrive with the equipment. He foolishly insists he was never in any danger at all. This denial of reality is nothing more than Levine's attempt to assuage his own ego, for he doesn't like having to be rescued. In fact, Levine is quick to deny any truth that contradicts his sense of natural superiority. This overriding arrogance leads him to the dangerous assumption that he is in complete control of the dinosaur population of Isla Sorna. In this way, Levine makes the exact same mistake as the InGen scientists made when they first created the dinosaurs. Levine stubbornly refuses to admit that the failed expedition was a failure at all. Thus, his character demonstrates the scientific hubris that is author Michael Crichton's central theme.

## Kelly Curtis

Thirteen-year-old Kelly Curtis gets teased by the kids in her junior high because she is a "brainer." Her classes do not challenge her sufficiently. She is so bright and motivated to learn on her own that she already knows much of the class material before it is presented by the teachers. Her only true friend is Arby, another intellectual misfit like herself. Arby is only eleven years old, however, so Kelly has no mature friends her own age. Sarah Harding provides a much-needed role model for young Kelly, who has long admired Harding's exploits. When Kelly actually gets to meet Harding, Harding makes her feel validated in many ways. Harding explains that being intelligent is a huge asset, even if it feels socially awkward at this stage of Kelly's life. Harding also assures Kelly that many boys do like smart girls, which gives the young teenager renewed hope for her social life. Kelly learns an even more valuable lesson from Harding, however. When Harding tells Kelly that most of what people believe to be true is in fact not true at all, it inspires Kelly to think independently and not just go along with the group. This independent thinking allows Kelly to save the day when the raptors attack.

## R. B. Benton

R. B. Benton, nicknamed Arby, is an eleven-year-old boy who is intellectually well ahead of his peers, but because he has skipped several grades, he is socially behind the



curve. Unlike Kelly, Arby is aware that his intelligence is an asset. As a boy, he receives more encouragement from his teachers and adult role models than Kelly does. However, at his young age, he is understandably uncomfortable in the social setting of junior high. Arby turns to computers for solace. He is quite gifted at computer work, and in this environment, he feels perfectly comfortable. Unfortunately, this creates a problem for him while on Isla Sorna. Arby, like Dr. Levine, tends to shy away from uncomfortable situations. When the dinosaurs threaten their lives, both Levine and Arby retreat to the intellectual realm where they are more comfortable. Arby blocks out the real-life dangers by immersing himself in computer work. Fortunately, his friend Kelly is willing to tackle reality head-on and is thus able to protect Arby.

## Jack Thorne

Jack Thorne is a retired professor of applied engineering. His Stanford course, titled Structural Engineering 101a, was famous for the "Thorny Problems" he challenged his students with. One year he asked his students to drop a carton of eggs from the Hoover Tower without breaking the eggs; they could only use cardboard toilet paper tubes as padding. Another year, he challenged his students to come up with a chair that would support a two-hundred-pound man using only Q-tips and thread. In addition to taxing the creativity of his engineering students, Thorne also worked as a legal expert in cases involving materials engineering. This work took him away from the ivory tower academic life and gave Thorne a practical view of his science. He often told his students that engineers must also know psychology and history in order to design perfect things for imperfect humans to use. As a professor, he cared a great deal for his students and was quite popular with them. However, his colleagues disapproved of Thorne's practical approach mixed liberally with eastern philosophy. Thorne was never comfortable in academia, and his retirement marked a very positive change in his life.

When Kelly and Arby meet Thorne, he is in his second incarnation as a practical engineer. The vehicles for Levine's expedition are built in Thorne's shop. Field scientists around the world swear by Thorne's well-designed products and gear. Thorne misses his students and takes a liking to Levine's bright young assistants, Kelly and Arby. Despite the fact that he misses working with young people, Thorne is much happier making things than he ever was talking about engineering theories in class. Thorne believes that formal education often stifles the creativity of young people, as it has stifled his own. His practical approach ultimately proves critical to the survival of the scientific expedition members.

## Eddie Carr

Twenty-four-year-old Eddie Carr is a mechanical genius. Thorne hires Eddie straight out of community college. Initially, Eddie intends to return to school for an advanced engineering degree, but Thorne puts Eddie's talents to excellent use. Eddie finds the work so challenging that he has long since lost interest in returning to the world of theory and books. Like Thorne, Eddie is practical-minded and prefers to get his



experience hands-on, in the real world, rather than cloistering himself in academia. However, Eddie is a city boy and ill-prepared for his journey to Isla Sorna, where he gets more hands-on experience than he ever desired. Still, his character is critical to the success of the scientific expedition and ultimately to the survival of its members.

Eddie is a careful man and always builds in a few extras whenever he works on a project for Thorne. In building the vehicles for the expedition, Eddie surreptitiously adds some old-fashioned, proven technology to serve as a backup for the experimental vehicular electrical system. This far-sighted vision proves to be a saving grace when the Explorer shorts out fatally in a driving rainstorm. Eddie has fortuitously added in circuit breakers to combat this type of problem. Without these extras, the scientific team would have been left stranded with no means of transportation, and they would surely have died on the island at the hands of the dinosaurs. Unfortunately, Eddie himself is not so lucky. His precautions prove life-saving to the other members of the expedition, but Eddie loses his life to the vicious raptors while attempting to save the children.

## Lewis Dodgson

Lewis Dodgson's baby-faced appearance belies the ruthless criminal mind under the surface. He is supposedly a geneticist, but in truth this researcher does no original research. Dodgson develops the research of others, which is a polite euphemism for stealing others' research. He runs the reverse-engineering section of Biosyn; reverse engineering refers to examining competitor products to determine how they were made. Dodgson doesn't actually bother to study competitor products to figure out how they work. Under the guise of his reverse engineering position, he commits industrial espionage. Dodgson is a recurring character from Michael Crichton's earlier novel, *Jurassic Park*, in which Dodgson also plays the bad guy who attempts to steal the InGen dinosaur-cloning technology. This subsequent novel, *The Lost World*, finds Dodgson making one last desperate attempt to secure the InGen technology. He is not above committing murder to get it, as he proves by throwing Sarah Harding off the boat into dangerous waters. In terms of *The Lost World's* symbolism, Dodgson's character represents the destructive elements within complexity theory that send a complex system careening into chaos.

## Howard King

Howard King was once a brilliant young scientific researcher. Like so many other modern scientists, however, his work is only considered valuable if it yields an immediate profit for the corporation sponsoring his research lab. King is a victim of the impatience displayed by profit-driven drug companies, which only deem scientific inquiry valuable if it spawns a new, marketable pharmaceutical profit. After two of King's early experiments fail to generate a quick profit stream for Biosyn, he is relegated to a dead-end job within the company. At thirty-five, King is considered washed up as a scientific researcher. Louis Dodgson preys on the desperation of men like King. Dodgson convinces King that his only chance to attain professional success lies with Dodgson.





King is recruited to work alongside Dodgson in Dodgson's industrial espionage efforts. King feels that he's sold his soul to the devil, but he ignores his conscience in favor of the continued financial security that his alliance with Dodgson provides.

## **George Baselton**

As a Stanford professor, Dr. George Baselton has all the credentials of an eminent man of science. He looks the part as well, with his distinguished appearance and erudite accent. Underneath this respectable surface lurks the heart of a criminal. Baselton is willing to put his credibility and supposed personal integrity at the service of the highest bidder. He is hired by the unethical company Biosyn to deny Biosyn's grave lapses in ethical judgment. Baselton is so respected that once he becomes the company spokesman, Biosyn's declining stock values rise to healthy levels, as does Biosyn's public reputation.



# Objects/Places

## The K-T Boundary

The K-T boundary is the demarcation, deep within the layers of the earth, which separates the activities of the Cretaceous period from the Tertiary period. The presence of iridium in this layer is suggestive of the impact of a giant meteor and supports the theory that the dinosaurs of the Cretaceous period were wiped out by a calamitous meteor strike rather than through their behavior.

## Complexity Theory

Formerly known as chaos theory, complexity theory suggests that complex systems share certain common behaviors. The complexity of the world conceals an underlying sense of order that remains to be discovered by science.

## Reductionism

The opposite of complexity theory, reductionism is the long-practiced art of taking something apart to see how it works - a watch, for example. Reductionism does not work on complex systems, however, because complex systems incorporate self-organizing behavior that cannot be dissected and catalogued.

## The Edge of Chaos

The edge of chaos is a scientific term for the balancing point of a complex system. Complex systems must incorporate enough change to prevent stagnation, while avoiding so much change that the system dissolves completely. The edge of chaos is a zone of conflict where old and new ideas are in a constant state of war. This conflict must be maintained to avoid destruction of any given complex system, such as a large corporation or an ecosystem.

## The Lost World Hypothesis

The hypothesis of a lost world represents the hope of some scientists that somewhere in some hidden corner of the world, an ancient ecosystem still exists, complete with dinosaurs and other prehistoric life.



## International Genetic Technologies (InGen)

InGen was a company based in Palo Alto, California that genetically engineered dinosaurs in the late 1980s. When the project turned disastrous, InGen bound everyone involved with non-disclosure agreements to avoid liability. Because of these legal agreements, Ian Malcolm is not at liberty to discuss his experiences in Costa Rica.

## Biosyn

Biosyn is the biogenetic engineering company for which the evil Dodgson works. Dodgson and Biosyn are intent on stealing InGen's dinosaur-manufacturing technology.

## The High Hide

The high hide is a fifteen-foot tall structure made of reinforced but lightweight metal designed to be assembled in the field. Once in place, the scaffolding leads up to a little shelter reinforced with bars, which allows the scientists to study the animal population from relative safety.

## The Cage

Clipped to the bottom of the high hide's scaffolding, the cage is a round, heavy-duty structure designed to provide shelter to a human being surrounded by dangerous animals. When the raptors pull Arby out of the high hide, he manages to get inside the cage and lock the door before they can tear him to pieces. Unfortunately, the raptors manage to detach the cage from the high hide, and they roll Arby, inside the cage, down a steep hill to their nest.

## The Explorer

The Explorer is one of the three vehicles Dr. Thorne and Eddie have custom-designed for Levine's expedition. The gasoline motor is removed and replaced by an electrical system, which recharges through photovoltaic panels on the roof.

## The Trailers

These two connected recreational vehicles have been modified by Thorne to withstand extreme pressure. They are fully outfitted with a radio system, a computer, security monitors, a fully stocked field laboratory and all the comforts of home.



# Social Sensitivity

The Lost World, a sequel to Jurassic Park (1990), re-introduces its readers to the arcane world at the borders of advanced science, where fantastic views of reality are bandied about by very serious people trying to make the next major strides into the most mysterious realms of Nature. The story opens at the Santa Fe Institute, where a gathering of top scientists from many fields is listening to mathematics Professor Ian Malcolm, resurrected from the last pages of Jurassic Park, hold forth on the application of complexity theory (also known as chaos science) to the biological problem of extinction. Whether the science of ancient life, paleontology, appeals to the average reader or not, it can be assumed that almost everyone is interested in whether modern life, particularly our own species, can hold extinction at bay.

In the middle of his lecture Malcolm is interrupted by questions from an impetuous young paleontologist, Dr. Richard Levine, who states his belief that some supposedly extinct species, specifically dinosaurs, could still exist in some very isolated spot on Earth today—a "lost world," so to speak. Malcolm, who has spent the past three years denying the existence of Jurassic Park, where genetically re-created dinosaurs overran a remote Costa Rican island and killed almost everyone on it, disregards him at first.

But Malcolm's cool dismissal does little to deter the single-minded Levine, and eventually he forms a quiet partnership with Malcolm, and Malcolm's friend, wildlife biologist Sarah Harding, to see if there is any hard evidence that a lost world does indeed exist anywhere on earth. Levine's impetuosity pulls all of these people, and more, into a life-and-death struggle on a remote volcanic island where an ancient world that never should have been re-created plays out its drama.

The Lost World owes its popularity in part to the love-hate relationship with science and advanced technology that typifies our present society. Many of us are introduced to the sciences as little children through our fascination with dinosaurs, those fantastic but nevertheless quite real monsters whose existence was deduced by scientists through the examination of fossil bones many millions of years old. These reptilian giants once inhabited the very earth we live on today, and there is scarcely a child anywhere who does not fantasize about seeing a real dinosaur, even if only for a minute, yet as adults we would dread living with such huge and ungovernable creatures. If the new science of genetic engineering could fulfill our childhood wish to see real dinosaurs, would we survive the result? Ian Malcolm has an answer for those who believe that we, as intelligent beings, would naturally prevail: "What makes you think human beings are sentient and aware? There's no evidence for it. Human beings never think for themselves, they find it too uncomfortable. For the most part, members of our species simply repeat what they are told—and become upset if they are exposed to any different view."

For those who think that Malcolm is being too harsh, the author introduces two new characters, both children, early in the book. The way they are treated by most adults



and other children, ways that are familiar to us because we can remember similar incidents from our own childhoods, bears out Malcolm's observation.

The kids are Kelly Curtis, thirteen, and Arby Benton, her classmate who is eleven, because he has been advanced two grades ahead of his age-mates. Both of them are "brainers," a derisive term used by the others in their class because both are unusually intelligent, and that difference, along with the fact that Kelly is poor and Arby is black and short, makes them unacceptable to other kids, and their plight ignored by most of their elders. It hardly speaks well of the human species to have its brightest members treated with such disdain. Although Arby's parents obviously care for him, they dress him like a little adult, which makes him stand out all the more; Kelly's mother is a single parent, seldom home and plainly indifferent to her daughter's potential, pushing Kelly to grow up quickly and be gone.

Their paths cross with Levine's after he is sentenced to community service by a traffic court judge when the scientist is caught speeding in a school zone. Levine has to give a lecture on science to the children's seventh-grade class once a week, and Kelly and Arby are supposed to do just ordinary chores, like collecting homework, for him. But Levine's impetuous nature will not let him simply fulfill his sentence; he is still determined to find and visit his Lost World at the earliest possible moment. So the kids are secretly turned into couriers, picking up exotic high-tech packages at locations around town from nervous adults, nervous because some of the stuff is not supposed to be available for civilian use. Arby and Kelly are bright enough to figure that part of the arrangement out, but go along with Dr. Levine, we suspect, because having roles to play in such intrigue amuses them, whereas an adult might find the situation appalling rather than appealing.

They are doing chores more suited to graduate students' such as copying articles from Stanford University's library on a wide and a seemly unconnected range of scientific subjects. The kids are able to move freely on these errands, avoiding the notice of a mysterious bearded man who follows Levine wherever the paleontologist goes, simply because adults do not expect children to be capable of such roles. Levine seems to be ignoring the fact that he is involving the children in something that might get them in trouble if anyone else figured out what they were up to.

Some of their deliveries take them to the workshop of Thorne Mobile Field Systems in an industrial section of town, run by Jack Thorne, recently retired professor of applied engineering at the university. A blunt-spoken, vigorous man in his mid-fifties, Thorne designs vehicles for explorers on their way to the Earth's most challenging environments, packed with the latest hi-tech equipment, designed to bring back a maximum of valuable data—a home and laboratory on wheels. Thorne has put his knowledge to work in the industrial world, not because he wanted to make more money, but because he was forced out of teaching, his first love, by the narrow-minded attitudes of the rest of the engineering department. These people resented Thorne's emphasis on eclectic education and learning the principles of the discipline by designing, building, and testing items rather than embracing the theoretical approach, in which the acolytes learn to scorn all that is not pure mathematics and hard science and leave actually



building stuff to lowly technicians. Ian Malcolm's observation on humanity would seem to apply in this instance as well.

"(Thorne) liked Levine's two youthful assistants. These kids were smart, they were enthusiastic, and they were young enough so that the schools hadn't destroyed all their interest in learning. They could still actually use their brains, which in Thome's view was a sure sign they hadn't yet completed a formal education."

Crichton often allows his concerns to be brought out in the action of his tales.

Thus one of his principal concerns, the importance of human beings caring about each other, is the impetus for the plot.

While visiting Dr. Thome's workshop in search of Dr. Levine, who failed to show up for class that day, the youngsters listen in on a strange, desperate call on a satellite telephone. Thorne speaks to Levine, who cannot hear him but does leave a cryptic message indicating that he is out in the field somewhere in constant danger of attack, and then the satphone goes dead. Thome's immediate reaction is one of caring: "We have to find him," he said.

"Right away." But before anyone can come to the rescue he or she must first figure out where Levine is located. As Sherlock Holmes would put it, "The game is afoot." Thorne, Kelly, and Arby go to Levine's apartment in search of clues to where the impulsive scientist may have gone in such a hurry that he did not take time to leave a formal message with his contacts in the civilized world. In Levine's home-office are books, papers, and photographs, all referring to Central America and a mysterious place called "Site B." On the desk is an old computer that Arby and Kelly bought for Levine the previous week, with a label indicating that it was once the property of InGen Corporation. Arby sets to work on the computer and soon extracts some relevant files.

Meanwhile, Ian Malcolm, at his Berkeley office a few miles away, calls Levine's home and gets Thorne, who recruits him to help figure out their problem. With four excellent brains at work, Levine's location is soon deduced. But unbeknown to the four, a pair of illicit ears has overheard the information. The mysterious bearded man who has been tailing Levine is Ed James, a private detective working for Lewis Dodgson (who always has a "dodge" in the works), the archvillain of the novel. James has planted an illegal listening device in Levine's apartment, and so mediocre brains steal and put to use knowledge they could never have acquired otherwise, an event that happens all too often in the course of human affairs and this novel.

Time is now of the essence. The four return to Thome's workshop, where one of his technicians, a young mechanic named Eddie Carr, is closing up for the night. The field vehicles are finished, and in the normal course of business are due for their field test, which was planned to take place in "the woods a hundred miles from here." Arby and Kelly both had permission from their parents to go on this field test and were much looking forward to it. But now Thorne, realizing that Levine's very life may depend on speed, decides to forgo the tests and take the vehicles directly to Levine's probable





location—a volcanic island in a chain off the coast of Central America, a wild and, from Levine's message, a dangerous place. The children of course cannot accompany Doc, Malcolm, and Eddie, because this is something that adults alone can consent to be a part of, unlike earlier in the day when adults and children worked together to solve the puzzle of Levine's location. A caring adult would of course not bring children on this expedition—something which Thorne does not have time to explain at length.

The kids sulk, which children who have been denied a promised treat will, and then do a very childlike thing—they pretend to leave the premises, grumpily, but sneak back and stow away in two child-size compartments inside the trailer.

So, when Doc Thorne, Ian Malcolm, and Eddie Carr leave for Costa Rica at midnight aboard an air cargo plane, they unknowingly transport Kelly and Arby as well; the pair have decided to pop out of hiding once on the island, when it is too late to send them home.

As if things were not bad enough, Thorne's group is pursued in secret by Dodgson and his associates, George Baselton and Howard King. Dodgson, who is something of a sociopath, works for Biosyn corporation, a close competitor of the former InGen, as an industrial spy master; his boss regards a creature like Dodgson as merely an unfortunate necessity in a highly-competitive industry like genetic engineering. Dodgson considers the InGen fiasco, from which Biosyn failed to benefit after bribing an InGen contractor to steal samples of their product from Jurassic Park (Site A), a stain on his record that he would like to remove.

Biosyn could recoup their losses if Dodgson's dirty-tricks squad can get to "Site B" and get a second chance at the fruits of InGen's research.

As the action unfolds, characters become not only entangled in events but in the conflict between exploitation and preservation of life. For instance, Sarah Harding is unfortunate enough to cross Dodgson's path on her way to join Malcolm and Thorne on the island. She has gone directly from the African savannah to the fishing village of Puerto Cortes on the coast of Costa Rica, where because of the weather and the bad reputation of Isla Sorna, her destination, she has trouble finding transportation for the last leg of her journey. Reaching the dock just as Dodgson and company are about to leave for the island, Dodgson smoothly offers her a ride aboard their boat and as they come within sight of it, pushes her overboard into rough seas to drown. Dodgson wants no interference from a legitimate scientist on his mission to loot Isla Sorna of its strange booty.

Nevertheless Harding, a short woman but young, physically fit, and mentally tough, survives to reach the island and join Thorne's expedition. By this time Thorne and his companions have figured out why Levine is in peril. To their astonishment (to all except Malcolm) the place is inhabited by real dinosaurs, running free all over the island: every kind, from grazers to predators, tiny bipedal compys ("poisonous chickens" as Eddie Carr refers to them) to four-footed triceratops the size of tanks and swift-moving, dagger-toothed Tyrannosaurs several stories high. They find the vast facility where the



dinosaurs were produced, long abandoned and in ruins. They even find Levine, busily following this species and that through the jungle paths on a old bicycle, taking notes and making theories on dinosaur behavior as he goes, heedless as always. But their problems are far from over. To leave the island they must survive unexpected perils and trek across the island's most dangerous regions to the only area where the helicopter that brought them in can safely land—and they also encounter Dodgson's band, busy at their work, stealing eggs from the very nests of dinosaur parents.

Crichton has long preferred to portray his characters through action rather than description, and his view of essential human nature through their reactions to strange, extreme environments over a short period—often mere days. In these circumstances, social status, relative prosperity, gender, ethnicity, age, education—everything our society uses to measure worth—are largely irrelevant to the issue at hand: Who will survive and how? This is how the author states what is really important about human beings and the world we live in: For it is not wealth, or influence, or knowledge, even the scientific knowledge upon which the story is based, that ultimately make the vital differences between one person and another. It is the intangibles that set us apart: How accustomed we are to using our native wit, how much we care for each other, how responsible and co-operative we are, even how much we love life itself—our own and other creatures'. Doc Thorne gets the last word, as he tells young Kelly: ". . . you feel the way the boat moves? That's the sea. That's real.

You smell the salt in the air? You feel the sunlight on your skin? That's all real. You see all of us together? That's real. Life is wonderful. It's a gift to be alive, to see the sun and breathe the air. And there isn't really anything else."



## Techniques

The author's solution comes partly from the well-established mystery genre, where pieces of the puzzle that is the plot are uncovered gradually, from chapter to chapter, by a character who does the detective work. The principal characters in *The Lost World* are scientists, professional puzzle-solvers who, instead of seeking answers to who committed a crime, work out how things in our physical world got to be what they are and how they operate. An essential part of scientific work is dialogue with other scientists, trading ideas and measuring the usefulness of new theories by observation and experiment. Malcolm and Levine's scientific arguments take place only a few sentences at a time, often shared with the nonscientists in the group so that jargon is minimized, tucked between chapters of intense, even savage action. This technique is foreshadowed in the novels of Arthur Conan Doyle, the inventor of Sherlock Holmes, but refined to an art in Crichton's work.

There is also a real mystery to be solved on Isla Sorna—that is, why the dinosaurs on the island are dying young.

Both Malcolm and Levine note that, ten years after being established, the dinosaurs groups seem to consist of too many immature animals. It is as though something were acting to eliminate the older members, the ones that have grown closest to mature size. There is also a troubling preponderance of predators to prey animals, something that should not happen in nature either. Is there an answer here to one of the greatest unanswered questions in science? Why did the dinosaurs, who flourished and dominated the earth for a hundred million years, die out so completely, leaving the Earth to be repopulated by mammals, including human beings?

It is often maintained by critics that Crichton is not much of a stylist; certainly he is not given to long descriptive passages or to elaborately crafted language.

But he does have a good ear for spoken dialogue, which he uses much to his advantage in this novel. Each character has his own style of speech, geared to his age, education, and personality, entertaining in its own right. Eddie Carr sounds like a real mechanic, and Arby and Kelly like real kids their age. The more educated members of the cast of characters sound like real scientists, only more understandable. Crichton has also obviously given thought to the look of each character; while he does not spend much time on exact details of clothing or facial features, as some authors do, the details he gives fit. The careful way Arby is dressed, as compared to Kelly in her hand-medowns from KMart where America's working-poor shop, says much about the differences in their backgrounds, although their minds are much alike. The neat-as-a-pin apartment of busy bachelor Richard Levine says money just as his Porsche does. Sarah Harding's attractive in-spite-of-herself demeanor sets her apart from average American women, who are so constantly bombarded by messages from their society about their personal appearances that few could bring themselves to travel without makeup kits and a suitcase full of clothes.



The author's forte is action scenes— the tyrannosaurs trying to push the trailer with humans inside over a cliff, or the high-speed pursuit on motorcycle of the raptor with the key to Arby's cage, or the desperate flight of the group from the determined assault of the raptor pack— all of which are highly detailed and electrifying. They are also quite unusual; how many thrillers can boast of such exotic scenes without risking lapses into silliness when the author's imagination and ability to research his subject are not up to the task? Most thriller writers stick to welldocumented and familiar areas: espionage, police dramas, combat stories with familiar military hardware, foreign intrigue, and plenty of gratuitous sex.

Crichton takes that leap into the unknown and comes up with something rare and highly readable both in this novel and its predecessor, Jurassic Park.



# Themes

## Themes

The central theme of *The Lost World*, much as it was in *Jurassic Park*, is that we respect Nature and life, and that if we regard them as just another commodity it will be at our greatest peril. Crichton is saying that in a world where life forms are now patentable, and where rogue organizations like the fictional InGen or Biosyn companies have the same access to genetic engineering techniques that legitimate laboratories have, we now have a moral obligation and practical reasons to make sure that these new technologies are not used recklessly.

There is a price to pay for bringing back the many extinct species of animals and plants from the Jurassic Era, and that price is greater than the many millions of dollars sunk into the facilities on Isla Nublar (the resort island from the novel *Jurassic Park*) and Isla Sorna (the actual production site of the dinosaurs according to the novel *The Lost World*, although it is not mentioned in *Jurassic Park*). InGen's half-thought-out scheme involved only a couple of bright ideas, some expensive purchased equipment, some isolated real estate, just a few experts, and much grunt labor supplied by the impoverished local people—and the rewards would be immense: hoards of affluent vacationers flocking to InGen's resorts with wads of cash. But "in science there is a difference between a bright idea, and a bright idea that works" (Rob DeSalle and David Lindley in their book *The Science of Jurassic Park and The Lost World*, 1997). Once InGen had its dinosaurs, the corporation thought its biggest problems were over, but they were actually yet to begin.

Ian Malcolm is all too familiar with those problems, and the price that was paid in irreplaceable human lives. Now on Isla Sorna, that deadly denouement is poised to begin again. Dr. Levine's annoying predilection for dashing off into remote parts of the world simply because, as heir to an immense fortune, he can afford to travel at whim and is unencumbered by either a teaching position or a spouse, has finally gotten him into real danger. In fact, one person, a careless young local man who Levine hired as a guide, is killed within a half-hour after their arrival: Diego was screaming as his body was hauled away, into the bushes . . .

Levine caught a glimpse of a single large foot, its middle toe bearing a short, curving claw . . . He glimpsed a large animal charging him (and he) turned and fled, feeling the adrenaline surge of pure panic, not knowing where to go, only knowing that it was hopeless. He felt a heavy weight suddenly tear at his backpack, forcing him to his knees in the mud, and he realized in that moment that despite all his planning, despite all his clever deductions, things had gone terribly wrong, and he was about to die.

A cavalier attitude towards Nature and other human beings is also characteristic of the villainous Lewis Dodgson, although Dodgson's attitude is not like the nonchalance of the very rich. Dodgson, who began his career as a genetics researcher who thought nothing



of ignoring FDA regulations as a graduate student and later experimenting on uninformed people outside the country, takes himself to depths of callousness that Levine never dreamed of. Levine, for example, is charmed by the sight of his first living dinosaur, a tiny upright creature with the appealing curiosity and fearless manner of a tame squirrel. To Dodgson the dinosaurs have no appeal at all, except as alternative lab animals, beings who have no protection under the law because they were wholly created by man. That he should take the next step and attempt the cold-blooded murder of Dr. Harding, a woman he has just met, is shocking but not out of character.

The toll continues to mount as more people arrive on the island after Levine and his hapless guide. Eddie Carr, Thome's young mechanic, is completely out of his element being out of the city; Isla Sorna and its strange inhabitants have him spooked. Unlike Levine he finds the compys upsetting: "They smell rotten.

Like something dead. And you ask me, it's not natural, animals that don't show fear like that. What if they have rabies or something?" He even tosses a rock at them. Yet Eddie is not a cruel or indifferent person: Later in the novel he brings an injured baby tyrannosaur into camp to get its leg fixed. He does this with the same spirit that he would bring in an injured puppy, not realizing that the baby's gigantic parents may come looking for their missing offspring. Eddie dies while trying to defend himself and the kids, Arby and Kelly, from an attack by raptors, vicious pack-hunting man-sized dinosaurs. Unlike some others in this novel, Eddie Carr does not deserve his fate: He is simply a fish out of water. This is the crudest result of InGen's monkeying around with the forces of Nature without adequate oversight: the innocent die along with the greedy.

This is not to say that no one should ever take risks. Thome and others in his party take some truly hair-raising ones, but they differ from the ones made by Dodgson and crew in both intent and appropriateness. The biggest risk is coming to the island in the first place, but Thorne, Malcolm, Sarah Harding, and Eddie are there because no one else can accomplish the rescue in time. Thorne and Eddie know the equipment, Malcolm knows the inhabitants and Sarah knows animal behavior in the wild. The children were not supposed to come along, but once there, they prove to be at least as much an asset as a liability. Their flexible young brains see solutions where their elders miss them, and they are resilient in the face of extreme experiences. The strangeness of a place where the primeval past has come to life again, the constant menace of the gigantic tyrannosaurs, the single-minded ferocity and malevolent intelligence of the raptors during their repeated attacks, would quickly push many an adult into a state of nervous collapse. When the children themselves need rescue, when it would be easy for the adults to excuse themselves from danger and responsibility (as Levine tries to do), Thome's people do the opposite, even when it means following the raptors to their nests armed with nothing more than a dart gun and their wits.

Human life—to other humans, at least—is the only thing worth risking one's life to protect, the author might say.

Nature herself might agree, since even the primitive dinosaurs pursue and protect their young. The profit motive is not enough, as Dodgson's crew find out as they die, one by





one, in various terrible ways: Crichton has never been subtle when describing the wages of sin.

## Man versus Nature

Michael Crichton's books often center on the timeless struggle between man and nature. Human civilization arose thanks to mankind's ability to shelter and protect himself from the potential ravages of nature. Yet fear of nature lies submerged in the human unconscious, for mankind often wonders if he has grown too soft through years of civilized living. The ability to make tools once elevated mankind above all other species on the planet, and yet a man stripped of his tools is vulnerable in the wilds. If a man were thrust into a primitive environment, would his brains and brawn be sufficient to ensure his survival? This age-old fear plays out during the course of events on Isla Sorna. Malcolm and his party initially arrive equipped with state-of-the-art vehicles, animal-control weapons and a full complement of safety gear and laboratory equipment. Isla Sorna, for its part, represents the ultimate in primitive natural environments. Not only is it a dense, virgin tropical forest environment, but the existence of dinosaurs on Isla Sorna pits mankind against a species which nature long ago selected for extinction.

*The Lost World* provides the definitive man versus nature adventure. Mankind, the earth's dominant species, is pitted against another dominant species, the dinosaurs. As Malcolm points out, the dinosaurs dominated the planet for a hundred and fifty million years. Compared to this track record, human beings' thirty-five thousand years of domination seems puny. Yet, the characters that Crichton creates represent the best that humanity has to offer. The scientists on Malcolm's expedition are among the most brilliant minds in the world. In addition, Sarah Harding is extremely strong, physically, and Jack Thorne is a brilliant and practical problem-solver. This group of people is as well suited to overcoming the natural challenges on Isla Sorna as any group of people could possibly be. In a sense they triumph, but only because the majority of people manage to escape Sorna with their lives. Nature is the ultimate winner in this story, for the people are forced to leave the island in order to secure their safety. Once they are gone, the jungle and the dinosaurs reclaim their turf.

## Greed

Michael Crichton's novels, while entertaining, tend also to provide social commentary on the ethics of modern-day society. In *The Lost World*, Crichton lambastes the greed of today's large pharmaceutical corporations. A scientist himself before he became a writer, Crichton laments the days when scientific inquiry was carried out with care and respect for the natural environment. Crichton is an idealist who believes that science should remain the province of those who seek to better humanity, to better the planet or at least to add to human knowledge in a way that does not harm nature or other people. The picture he paints of greedy pharmaceutical companies like the fictional Biosyn flies in the face of everything the author respects. Biosyn wields its money like a club and uses it to smash its market competitors. Biosyn is responsible for carrying out



dangerous experiments on human beings without their knowledge or consent. Even worse, Biosyn uses its financial influence to change the way scientific research is done. No longer are brilliant scientists funded in their academic researches.

Companies like Biosyn only fund those scientists who can quickly come up with the next wonder drug that is sure to make the company billions of dollars. Young scientists like Howard King's character are considered failures if their research does not lead to the immediate discovery of such a wonder drug. Biosyn has no patience with the process of scientific inquiry and throws away men like King who might have otherwise had a promising future. Biosyn doesn't worry about the potential consequences of its actions, either. Respectability can be bought, after all. Biosyn simply hires esteemed professionals like George Baselson to give its public image a positive spin. Even as Biosyn devours the rainforests and destroys the lives of its employees, the company paints itself to the public as a benign corporation dedicated to improving public health by providing newer and better pharmaceutical remedies.

## Scientific Hubris

Scientific hubris is one of author Michael Crichton's favorite themes. As a scientist turned popular fiction writer, Crichton has addressed this theme continually, beginning with his first novel, *The Andromeda Strain*. *The Lost World* is a continuation of Crichton's previous book, *Jurassic Park*, which similarly deals with mankind's attempts to tamper with the natural order by bringing to life animals that nature long ago selected for extinction. The moral of *The Lost World* is very similar to the ending of *The Andromeda Strain*. In both stories, the plot centers on scientists who try to prove a theory about which they are passionate, but their ulterior motives prove ego-driven and selfish at great cost to other human beings.

In *The Lost World*, Dr. Levine believes strongly in the lost world hypothesis, which states that otherwise extinct animals still exist in some far-flung corner of the earth. When he discovers the genetically engineered dinosaurs on Isla Sorna, he mistakenly believes they represent his long sought lost world. The entire plot of the novel centers on Levine and the other scientists' desire to study the lost world with the aim of discovering if dinosaur behavior led to their extinction. Ironically, after losing two members of the expedition and thousands of dollars worth of supplies, and after barely escaping with their lives, the scientists belatedly realize that Isla Sorna does not represent a normal population of dinosaurs. Their entire experiment turns out to be a waste of time, money and human life. Just as in *The Andromeda Strain*, *The Lost World* ends with the realization that every hard-won bit of scientific ingenuity and every problem-solving triumph is nothing more than an example of misdirected energies and brain power. The scientists in both books walk away having learned nothing of scientific value, but with a valuable lesson in humility.



# Style

## Point of View

As is fitting for a story based on pseudo-scientific events and actual scientific theories, the point of view is third-person omniscient, and the narrative is often told through the perspective of an impersonal historical narrator. By presenting much of the underlying scientific background through this impersonal historical narrator, the author accomplishes two things. First, he educates the reader on the history and current state of scientific theory as it pertains to the plotline, and second, he provides a sense of credibility. The presence of a historical narrator implies to the reader that the outcome of the story is already known and has already been evaluated by learned members of society. This sense of credibility allows Crichton to use his fiction as a platform for espousing his personal viewpoints about the ethics of modern-day scientists.

However, the narration does not often focus on the impersonal historical narrator. The narrative point of view jumps from one character to another constantly throughout the story. The omniscient third-person narrative reveals the thoughts of each character in turn, allowing the reader to form his or her own judgments as to the motives and capabilities of the various characters. The author is gifted at switching points of view in such a way as to increase suspense. Crichton will stay with one particular character until that character finds him or herself in imminent danger. Then, Crichton quickly shifts to another character in another setting, leaving the reader to worry about the fate of the character left behind. These point of view shifts become markedly more rapid during the many action sequences, allowing Crichton to build the dramatic tension to a critical level.

## Setting

*The Lost World* is set in Central America. The country of Costa Rica and its capital city, San Jose, are prominently featured. However, most of the action takes place on a privately owned island off the coast of Costa Rica called Isla Sorna. Additionally, the wilds of Africa are frequently referenced to help the reader put the dinosaur predators found on Isla Sorna in a more natural context. As a scientist, author Michael Crichton has researched both the African plains and the tropical rainforest with meticulous care. Crichton realistically portrays the predator animals that populate these environments, and he paints a vivid and accurate picture of dense Costa Rican jungles and grassy African plains. The untouched quality of the Central American jungle helps reinforce, in the reader's mind, the awesome power of nature. However, Crichton does his novel a disservice in the flawed portrayal of the Costa Rican people and government. In the novel, every Costa Rican is surly, lazy, contentious and stubborn. The business establishments along the coast are described as dives or dumps, and the author focuses on the poverty of the populace. Additionally, he paints the Costa Rican



government as a dishonest, self-serving entity, which is willing to risk the safety of its citizens and visiting foreigners in order to make a buck from tourism.

While Crichton's fictional conceits aid him in propelling his story line forward, in reality, Costa Rica is an oasis of democracy in an otherwise war-torn part of the world. Costa Rica is a peaceful country with no standing army. It relies on diplomacy rather than guns for its survival. Unlike many other small countries in the world that are mired in war, terrorism and failing economies, the Costa Rican government has long been a visionary entity. This democratic country set about long ago to befriend and learn from prosperous European countries and the United States. The Costa Rican government imported coffee beans and established a thriving trade based on the export of this and other agricultural products. When industry began to take a toll on the natural beauty of Costa Rica, the government worked hard to restore the pristine natural environment and even today focuses heavily on conservation. In more recent years, the country set about standardizing its communication systems to meet top international standards. The initial goal was to ensure that each household had a serviceable telephone. That modest goal was later transformed into the current initiative to ensure that each citizen has an email address. This thoughtful plan has allowed Costa Rica to develop a new economic base centered on technology and telecommunications. Today, its technology rivals that of any civilized nation. Its healthcare system, university system and flourishing telecommunications industry provide a positive and stable base for the continued prosperity of this beautiful nation.

## Language and Meaning

Once again Michael Crichton enthralls his readers with a privileged look inside the scientific community. Academic and scientific jargon permeate the novel and lend its fictional story line a great deal of realism and credibility. Much of the reading public, and children in particular, are fascinated with dinosaurs, and Crichton does not disappoint. He teaches his readers the correct genus and species names of each dinosaur featured on the island of Sorna, and then he makes these tongue-twisting names more accessible by giving the dinosaurs nicknames. For example, the repulsive chicken-sized scavenger dinosaurs are properly named *Procompsognathus triassicus*, but Crichton refers to them subsequently in the text simply as "compys." Similarly, the velociraptors are referred to in the novel as raptors. In this way, Crichton manages to make the scientific terminology accessible without insulting his readers' intelligence.

Apart from the dinosaur names and general terms used for scientific research and observation, the author also familiarizes the reader with several uniquely named scientific hypotheses. Crichton presents and defines hypotheses with interesting titles such as Softening Up the Beachhead, Gambler's Ruin, the Red Queen hypothesis, and most notably, the Lost World hypothesis for which the book is named. Another phrase used frequently is "the edge of chaos." This term summarizes both the theme and the plot of the novel. Ian Malcolm's character defines the edge of chaos in the preface and introduction, and then Crichton structures his story in such a way that the plotline bears out the scientific theory behind this definition.



## Structure

The structure of the story is based on chaos theory, which is explained in a series of quotes attributed to protagonist Ian Malcolm. The quotations, taken together, explain the progression of a complex system that falls into a state of destructive chaos and serve as a structural backbone for the story. The descent into chaos is documented in the book through the progression of events at Isla Sorna. Each of the seven sections of the book explains the next chronological step in the descent towards chaos, and the quotations by Malcolm that precede each section give the reader an idea of the plot events which are to follow. In Section One, Malcolm's quote states: "In the conservative region far from the chaotic edge, individual elements coalesce slowly, showing no clear pattern." (First Configuration, pg. 15) Indeed, Part One of the book shows no clear pattern. Crichton uses this initial section to slowly develop his characters and plotline. Part Two is preceded by the following quote: "Self-organization elaborates in complexity as the system advances toward the chaotic edge." (Second Configuration, pg. 65) Correspondingly, the plot in Part Two elaborates in complexity as Crichton further develops his characters and story.

The second act of the story begins with Part Three, and its corresponding quote is: "In the intermediate phase, swiftly developing complexity within the system hides the risk of imminent chaos. But the risk is there." (Third Configuration, pg. 99) The risks to the expedition party are hidden, but the author buries clues and antecedents in this portion of the text. These clues will become integral later. Part Four's quote is: "Approaching the chaotic edge, elements show internal conflict. An unstable and potentially lethal region." (Fourth Configuration, pg. 159) In this section, the author develops the internal conflict within both Malcolm's and Dodgson's groups. Things get unpredictable and dangerous for the characters in Part Five, which is preceded by the following quote: "At the edge of chaos, unexpected outcomes occur. The risk to survival is severe." (Fifth Configuration, pg. 255) The climactic section of the novel, Part Six, begins with this ominous quotation: "Order collapses in simultaneous regions. Survival is now unlikely for individuals and groups." (Sixth Configuration, pg. 321) In Part Six, the characters struggle for survival, and several of them do perish. The final denouement in Part Seven is preceded with this quotation: "Partial restabilization may occur after eliminating destructive elements. Survival partly determined by chance events." (Seventh Configuration, pg. 389) Again the quotation sums up the events which follow in Part Seven. Destructive elements, meaning Dodgson and King, have been eliminated, and Malcolm's group escapes the island on a functional powerboat that they find through sheer luck.



## Quotes

"The decline of the dinosaurs allowed mammals - including us - to flourish. And that leads us to wonder whether the disappearance of the dinosaurs is going to be repeated, sooner or later, by us as well. Whether at the deepest level the fault lies not in blind fate - in some fiery meteor from the skies - but in our own behavior. At the moment we have no answer."

"And then he smiled.

"But I do have a few suggestions,' he said." Introduction, pp. xi-xii

"He was famous for his photographic memory, his arrogance, his sharp tongue, and the unconcealed pleasure he took in pointing out the errors of colleagues. As a colleague once said, 'Levine never forgets a bone - and he never lets you forget it, either.'" Part One, pg. 18

"Alone, Malcolm unrolled the strip of paper that had come with the sample. It was a piece of paper torn from a yellow legal pad. In block printing, it said:

"I WAS RIGHT AND YOU WERE WRONG.

"Malcolm frowned. That son of a bitch, he thought. 'Beverly? After you call Elizabeth, get Richard Levine at his office. I need to talk to him right away.'" Part One, pg. 38

"When he was not in class, Thorne often served as an expert witness in legal cases involving materials engineering. He specialized in explosions, crashed airplanes, collapsed buildings, and other disasters. These forays into the real world sharpened his view that scientists needed the widest possible education. He used to say, 'How can you design for people if you don't know history and psychology? You can't. Because your mathematical formulas may be perfect, but the people will screw it up. And if that happens, it means *you* screwed it up.'" Part One, pg. 59

"Malcolm had long been impatient with the arrogance of his scientific colleagues. They maintained that arrogance, he knew, by resolutely ignoring the history of science as a way of thought. Scientists pretended that history didn't matter, because the errors of the past were now corrected by modern discoveries. But of course their forebears had believed exactly the same thing in the past, too. They had been wrong then. And modern scientists were wrong now." Part Two, pg. 74

"Just remember, you don't want to shoot yourself in the foot with this, because you'll be dead before you realize that you've pulled the trigger."

"Malcolm nodded. 'Is there an antidote?'

"No. But what's the point? There'd be no time to administer it if there was."





"That makes things simple,' Malcolm said, taking the gun." Part Three, pg. 108

"The triceratops herd moved slowly past the stegosaur, which paid no attention to them. And to the west, rising above a clump of trees, they saw a dozen long, graceful necks of apatosaurs, their bodies hidden by the foliage that they lazily ate. It was a tranquil scene - but it was a scene from another world.

"Doc?' Eddie said. 'What is this place?'" Part Three, pg. 115

"They were the dominant life form on this planet for about a hundred and fifty million years - which is a very long time.'

"Considering we've been here for only three million,' Eddie said.

"Let's not put on airs,' Malcolm said. 'Some puny apes have been here for three million years. We haven't. Recognizable human beings have only been on this planet for thirty-five thousand years,' he said." Part Four, pg. 217

"The tyrannosaur peering in through the window, at the baby, strapped down. The tyrannosaur made a soft grunting sound.

"Then it paused, looking in the window.

"It grunted again.

"*She wants her baby, Ian,*' Sarah whispered." Part Five, pg. 284

"In the trailer, Sarah said: *Most of what people tell you will be wrong.*

"It's important, Kel,' Arby said. He was trembling as he stood beside her. She knew he concentrated on computers as a way to block things out. As a way to -

"The wall splintered wide, an eight-inch plank cracking inward, and a raptor stuck his head through, snarling, snapping his jaws." Part Six, pg. 384

"A hundred years from now, people will look back at us and laugh. They'll say, "You know what people used to believe? They believed in photons and electrons. Can you imagine anything so silly?" They'll have a good laugh, because by then there will be newer and better fantasies.' Thorne shook his head. 'And meanwhile, you feel the way the boat moves? That's the sea. That's real. You smell the salt in the air? You feel the sunlight on your skin? That's all real. You see all of us together? That's real. Life is wonderful. It's a gift to be alive, to see the sun and breathe the air. And there isn't really anything else.'" Part Seven, pg. 393





# Adaptations

The Lost World was made into a motion picture in 1997, directed by Stephen Spielberg but with no collaboration by the author, unlike the motion picture version of Jurassic Park. The screenplay was entirely written by David Koepp, Crichton's co-writer from Jurassic Park, by Spielberg's order. Koepp himself said later in an interview about the movie that he was treated like a "hack." Author Crichton was forced to threaten to halt production of the movie just to see a copy of the script. As a result, perhaps, of Crichton's exclusion from the enterprise, The Lost World is acceptable entertainment but nothing more; it is certainly nowhere close to the stature of Jurassic Park, which is now ranked as a nearclassic of its genre. For reasons best known to himself, director Spielberg decided to rewrite the story to his own tastes. The result should be a lesson to directors everywhere: If a best-selling author and screenwriter hands you a decent story, do not try to wear his hat.

Spielberg's adaptation only roughly follows the plot of the book. While most of the action takes place on Isla Sorna, the last part is relocated to San Diego, a large port city on the coast of southern California. Most of the characters have familiar names, but their personalities have changed in the process of combining two characters into one, and rather awkwardly at that. They seem to have been combined with their temperamental opposites, so that often their personalities and actions do not make much sense.

Malcolm goes to the island with "Eddie Carr" (a composite of Doc Thorne and Eddie) and a newly-invented character called Nick Van Owen, a photojournalist who later is revealed to be an environmental activist and a member of EarthFirst!, to rescue "Sarah Harding" (a composite of Drs. Harding and Levine). Kelly and Arby are combined into a single character, a twelve-year-old who is Malcolm's daughter by one of his ex-wives.

The villainous Dodgson and crew never make an appearance. In their place is a large band of professional animal trappers with a old-fashioned "great white hunter" at their head and accompanied by a tame paleontologist crudely modeled on the real Dr. Robert Bakker, a distinguished scientist. This group works for Peter Ludlow, John Hammond's jerk-of-anephew (another invented character) who sees himself as a latter-day P. T. Barnum, and who is hoping to make his fortune exhibiting his uncle's dinosaurs in a new Jurassic Park located on the mainland.

The dinosaurs are subjected to the indignity of a stampede and mass-capture but are released from their cages that night by Van Owen. The liberated animals break up the camp, while some distance away the tyrannosaurs attack "Carr's" trailer. The two parties become one so that most of the humans can be gratuitously pursued and eaten by various predatory dinosaurs as they seek the safety of the helicopter landing site near the abandoned dinosaur factory. The only dinosaurs the hunters actually succeed in getting off the island are a full-grown male tyrannosaur and one of its babies, transported out in the cargo hold of a converted oil tanker.



Once in San Diego, the big tyrannosaur gets loose, rampages through town looking for its infant but is lured back into its holding pen on ship by Malcolm and Sarah. There it revenges itself on Ludlow by feeding him to the baby. Next morning their ship is escorted back to the island by the U.S. Navy, who plan to blockade the place so that the dinosaurs can live peacefully "in the absence of Man." Gutted of most of its intellectual content and reloaded with cliches from old movies like the original King Kong (1933) and Hatari (1962), and a "radical chic" element, *The Lost World* is a lost opportunity as far as quality storytelling goes.

Fortunately there are parts of the movie that work and work well. The dinosaurs are a visual treat, and they get plenty of screen time. The actors do a good job with the material they are handed, and screenwriter Koepp has obviously tried to give them something to work with in spite of Spielberg's heavy hand.

The cinematography cannot be faulted: The movie has a handsome look to it, filmed as it was in the ancient lush redwood forests of Mendocino on the northern coast of California and in the rain forest of Hawaii. John Williams's superb musical score does much to elevate the screen experience. Based on an African safari theme, it is richly orchestrated and inventive. The short "march of the stegosaurus" is illustrative; the slow crossing of a stream by a herd of the gigantic, four-footed creatures is strange, yet majestic, evoking the alienness of these mighty saurians reborn in an era dominated by pygmy mammals. In the movie's scariest moments the string section's notes become deep, slow, and dark, with the piccolos making quick, eerie movements in a minor key, keeping the audiences' nerves on edge. A key scene, the attack of the raptors, is set up by the mournful sound of a Japanese flute straight out of a Noh drama before it becomes jazzy and modern. The final scene of the movie reprising the theme from *Jurassic Park*, showing the dinosaurs living freely on their island, safe from the interference of Man, is not from the book but is very upbeat and Spielbergian.

It is a fine moment, and one could only wish more of the movie was like it.



## Key Questions

Crichton's novel follows a very old literary tradition, seen across long stretches of time and culture. People have always been intrigued by stirring tales of adventure in far-off places in which small bands of travelers test themselves against the menace of strange beasts, unknown tribes, and physical barriers of many kinds. The reception of such stories varied with how believable the storyteller could make the narrative to his audience.

The fantastic or outlandish had to be balanced with truth as it was known to the listeners, adults, on the average, being more demanding of the latter. In the classical world, stories of Jason and the Argonauts and Odysseus' roundabout journey home from the Trojan War were repeated throughout the sea-faring Greek civilization. Their successors, the Romans, inherited these tales and added *The Aeneid*, an epic about the founding of their civilization, ostensibly by the surviving Trojans, as their contribution to the genre. Much closer to our own time are Jules Verne's widely-translated novels *Around the World in Eighty Days* (1872; see separate entry) as well as *Twenty-Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1870; see separate entry) and its sequel *The Mysterious Island* (1874-1875), which also contains colossal human-engineered animals. Other examples include the Allan Quatermain novels by H. Rider Haggard and the Tarzan books by Edgar Rice Burroughs, both set in darkest Africa, sometimes in locales similar to those in *The Lost World*, and there are the Challenger stories by Arthur Conan Doyle.

In addition to discussing the merits and drawbacks of genetic engineering, groups could tackle issues arising from the comparison of Crichton's novel to its antecedents in the genre. For example, the traditional concept of the hero is obviously changed from Jason, who steals the golden fleece and returns triumphant to his own country with it, to Drs. Harding, Malcolm, and Thorne who take nothing from the *Lost World* but what belongs to them already: their friend, Dr. Levine.

Where goes the concept of material gain—to say nothing of fame, power, knowledge, even love—as a fitting reward for heroism? Other ways that the heroes, villains, and even the beasts are different from early modern types like George Challenger, Allan Quatermain, or Phileas Fogg from *Around the World in Eighty Days* could be discussed. The makeup of the company of travelers itself, the inclusion of women and children as active participants in the action and danger of the adventure is surely worth comment. In most adventure epics the animals are present mostly to provide something for the heroes to fight off. In Crichton's novel they are much more: the embodiment of Life fighting against the odds to survive in an unkind world, a stand-in for humanity whose ultimate fate may be the same as theirs, a yet-living piece of an ancient puzzle we may never understand.

Groups may find that the novel inspires them to delve into the mystery of humanity's relationship with the beasts that have shared our world since the beginning of time.



1. Why does Ian Malcolm deny the existence of Jurassic Park, trying to pass rumors of it off as "techno-myth" like UFO landings? Might he be afraid of something? What?

2. Why does Malcolm co-operate with Richard Levine's search for a Lost World when he has ample reason to hope that it is never found, considering what happened the last time he encountered dinosaurs?

3. Why, do you suppose, Ian Malcolm and Sarah Harding did not get married?

Would they have been compatible as a married couple? What do their respective work environments say about them as individual people?

4. Dr. Richard Levine is not the world's most lovable personality, and he seems never to have learned the meaning of the word tactful. Why do Jack Thorne, Ian Malcolm, and Sarah Harding drop everything to go to his rescue? What bond do they have with him?

5. Is Levine the same man at the beginning of the novel that he is at the end?

What evidence, if any, do you see of change?

6. Do Kelly and Arby seem like real children to you? Did or do you know anyone like them? Why do you think the school authorities do not make more of an effort to discourage other children from teasing them?

7. Why do you think Jack Thorne's colleagues at Stanford University got up such a head of steam about his teaching methods? Might they have had a difficult time following his act when his students went on to their classes?

8. What about Dodgson's boss? Do you buy his argument that industrial espionage is a necessity for Biosyn to survive in a highly-competitive market?

9. How does chaos rear its head on Isla Sorna? Is Sarah being too pessimistic when she says that nothing about extinction can be learned from this island?

10. At the end of the book, we are presented with two different ways to look at ourselves: Malcolm's or Doc Thorne's.

Which one do you believe comes closest to the truth?



## Topics for Discussion

Do you believe that it was unethical for Ian Malcolm to withhold his knowledge of the InGen dinosaurs from Richard Levine? Why or why not? What impact might it have had if Malcolm had informed Levine that the dinosaurs were genetic clones while they were still in the planning stages of the expedition?

Explain why "the edge of chaos" is a desirable location for a complex system like a large corporation or a government.

Have you, like Kelly's character, ever heard a teacher or other authority figure say that females are not supposed to excel in the fields of math or science? What are your thoughts on this issue?

Explain how Arby's character is similar to Levine's. What does it say about Levine that he shares similar traits with an eleven-year-old boy?

How is the raptor nesting site on Isla Sorna different from the fossilized dinosaur nesting sites previously discovered by scientists?

How do the raptor kill sites differ from the lion or hyena kill sites which Sarah Harding is accustomed to seeing in Africa?

Explain why the predator nests and kill sites on Isla Sorna are so unnatural. What does this suggest about the future of the raptor population on Sorna?



# Literary Precedents

The book takes its name, though little of its plot, from Arthur Conan Doyle's 1912 novel about the exploration of a remote South American plateau where the dominion of the dinosaurs still continues. A well-publicized expedition from London begins as an invitation to Professor George Challenger to prove his declaration before the Zoological Institute that such a place exists and that he had seen it with his own eyes, having lost his physical evidence in a boat accident on the Amazon. The narrator is a young journalist Edward Malone, who accompanies Challenger, Summerlee, a skeptical professor of comparative anatomy and the eldest of the party, and lastly the famous adventurer Lord John Roxton to the vast, nearly-unexplored reaches of the Amazon River, where in the dense jungle, surrounded by unfriendly natives, the forbidden world awaits them. Stranded on top of the plateau by the treachery of one of their guides, the party encounter immense dinosaurs, pterosaurs (flying reptiles), pleisiosaurs (marine reptiles) and, sharing their realm, competing tribes of ferocious "ape-Men" and more advanced Indians. After many trials and adventures they find a hidden exit from the mountain and return victorious to London with positive proof of their discovery. They even become wealthy men after Roxton shares a secret cache of large diamonds he found within the volcanic cave of their escape route.

Crichton's story and Conan Doyle's do have their similarities. Both have their characters brought together at a meeting of scientists at an institute for the advancement of scientific knowledge. Both entail small parties of visitors to an isolated realm in the same general region of the world, where dinosaurs roam free, living much as they did more than sixtyfive million years ago. The necessary scientific background needed for the layman to understand what they are seeing comes from the dialogue between two educated members of the party, and at the end of their time in this strange place they must find a new escape route after their arranged one is cut off.

But Doyle's is easily the more lighthearted of the two, containing outright funny scenes satirizing the popular genre of "boys' book's" of the era. The initial meeting between Malone and the almostferal Challenger, notorious as a "difficult interview," which finishes in fisticuffs, cannot be taken seriously for a moment: [Challenger] resumed his unpleasant and stealthy advance, pointing his toes as he walked, like a dancing master ... his black mustache lifted and a white fang twinkled in a sneer ... It was at that moment he rushed me. It was lucky that I had opened the door, or we should have gone through it. We did a Catherine wheel together down the passage. Somehow we gathered up a chair upon our way, and bounded on with it towards the street. My mouth was full of his beard, our arms were locked, our bodies intertwined, and that infernal chair radiated its legs all around us. The watchful [butler] had thrown open the hall door. We went with a back somersault down the front steps . . . the chair went to matchwood at the bottom and we rolled apart into the gutter.

Conan Doyle takes further pokes at the conventions of his day, for Challenger as the typical "superior" English hero suffers a number of indignities that ironically have no effect on his pomposity whatsoever. Gifted with a magnificent leonine head and



shoulders, he is absurdly short: like one of those busts of patrician Romans Victorian gentlemen liked to clutter their libraries with, he is all top on a dismally short pedestal. Challenger in the pose of the thinker is likened to "a monstrous bullfrog" by his chronicler and is found to have a considerable likeness to the grotesque king of the apemen, whom the scientist refers to as "a creature of great distinction—a most remarkably handsome and intelligent personality," in spite of the fact that the ape-men were about to throw him and Summerlee over a cliff for the sheer entertainment value of it. There is even a tongue-in cheek preface where the journalist Malone assures the reader that "the injunction for restraint and the libel action have been withdrawn unreservedly by Professor G. E. Challenger . . ."

Both authors have been careful to base their stories upon respected scientific theory of their day—each ancient creature is represented in the actual fossil record that generations of paleontologists have constructed from specimens gathered in the field. Both have medical degrees so that their knowledge of biology and of the scientific method is sound.

Most of Conan Doyle's books and stories have stayed in print many years after his death while his contemporaries' books written in a much more serious vein have fallen by the wayside, forgotten by everyone but literary scholars. Whether such is to be the fate of Crichton's work is yet to be seen, but new editions of his previous novels have been issued and seem to be selling quite well at present.





## Related Titles

The Lost World is the sequel to the 1990 novel Jurassic Park (see separate entry) in which Crichton introduced genetically engineered dinosaurs and chaos theory into the mainstream of American fiction.

Millionaire industrialist John Hammond and a Japanese business consortium fund a special project on a lonely island off the Costa Rican coast. They are building a splendid new resort, called Jurassic Park, with a truly exotic special feature that seems guaranteed to bring wealthy tourists from all over the world in droves.

When Dr. Alan Grant and Dr. Ellie Sattler are flown for a weekend visit and informal inspection, they find that the place has been stocked with something dear to their hearts, as both are paleontologists. InGen—short for International Genetics, Incorporated—is Hammond's company, and they have seemingly wrought a miracle. Dinosaurs of every variety, including some of the greatest predators ever known, have been brought back to life through newly uncovered techniques of gene recovery and manipulation. The two scientists are joined on the island excursion by several others: Ian Malcolm, mathematician and discoverer of the "Malcolm Effect," Donald Gennaro, an attorney for InGen, Dennis Nedry, computer programmer extraordinaire, and Tim and Lex Murphy, Hammond's grandchildren. Grant, Sattler, and Malcolm are astonished at what they see, but Malcolm is deeply troubled. Unlike the others, he knew what Hammond was hoping to cook up on this island, but he thought it impossible. Now that the dinosaurs are here, the Malcolm Effect states that it will be only a matter of time before the ancient life breaks free of its confinement, in spite of the precautions against escape and reproduction that InGen's chief geneticist, Henry Wu, has incorporated into each animal. Within hours after their arrival, in the middle of a fierce tropical storm, chaos does indeed break free on the island. Dennis Nedry's plan was to temporarily disable the computer-controlled security system just long enough to steal some dinosaur embryos for one of InGen's competitors and escape. But he dies instead, and the system that keeps the buildings secure and the dinosaurs in their pens stays completely disabled. Communication with the outside world has been cut off, carnivorous dinosaurs, including the gigantic tyrannosaurus and the pack-hunting raptors, are running free, and every human on the island is in deadly peril from the forces of Nature unleashed.

Jurassic Park was made into a motion picture in 1993, directed by Stephen Spielberg with the screenplay co-written by Crichton and David Koepp. It broke box-office records all over the world and is one of the ten highest-earning movies ever produced. Its special-effects crew won Oscar awards for their innovative use of computer animation to bring the dinosaurs of Jurassic Park to breath-taking life on the screen. This success may have motivated author Crichton to make an exception to his rule about not writing sequels to his books. He then produced The Lost World, which goes into more detail about how the dinosaurs were made and portrays what a breeding colony of such creatures, left alone to reestablish the relationships between different species as they might have been many millions of years ago, might be like.



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