

Outrage Study Guide

Outrage by John Sandford and Michele Cook

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Contents

Outrage Study Guide.....	1
Contents.....	2
Plot Summary.....	3
Prologue – Chapter 6.....	5
Chapters 7 – 12.....	9
Chapters 13 – 18.....	13
Chapters 19 – 24.....	17
Chapters 25 – 27.....	21
Characters.....	23
Symbols and Symbolism.....	26
Settings.....	28
Themes and Motifs.....	30
Styles.....	34
Quotes.....	35



Plot Summary

“Outrage” is a dystopian young adult novel by John Sandford and Michele Cook, and forms the second installment of their “Singular Menace” trilogy in which Shay and her friends seek to bring down the evil Singular corporation. When the novel begins, 16-year-old Shay, her recently-freed brother, Odin, their friends and allies Twist, Cruz, and Cade, and freed test subject Fenfang are regrouping and preparing their next move. They learn that Fenfang was subject to hideous experiments in which the mind of Charlotte Dash, a U.S. Senator from New Mexico, was implanted into Fenfang. As a result, Charlotte Dash’s mind frequently attempts to seize control of Fenfang, who herself suffers terrible seizures. They all decide that they must expose Singular, and free the remaining test subjects.

Meanwhile, Micah Cartwell, CEO of Singular, as well as his top security agents, Thorne, Sync, and Harmon, seek to find the kids and neutralize the threat they present. They have stolen vital information contained on flash drives which is feared will be made public. Thorne vows to hunt down the kids at any expense. They use every available means of technology at their disposal, but the kids manage to stay one step ahead of Singular’s agents as the agents often show up only a few minutes after the kids have left. This leads Cartwell to imagine there is a leak among the topmost circles of the company. The remaining test subjects are ultimately to be loaded onto a converted cargo ship, but Cartwell will let his top men believe the subjects are going elsewhere. Each person will be given a different location, and whatever location the kids show up at, Cartwell will know the source of his leak.

Shay and her group go on the run after the tip-off from the leaker. They decide their best bet to expose Singular is to gather more hard evidence that could not possibly be faked – actual video. They decide to split into two teams. Shay’s team will pay a visit to Senator Dash, while Odin’s team will pay a visit to lead scientist Dr. Janes. A wealth of information is discovered at Dash’s house, as well as film of her acknowledging her relationship with Singular. Janes also acknowledges on film the heinous experiments being carried out, but denies knowledge of how test subjects like Fenfang are acquired. However, the information Janes gives Odin’s team – codes to decrypt the flash drives – ends up corrupting all the files.

Shay, Odin, and the others take to Northern California, where they hide out with a hippie named Danny, an old friend of Twist’s. From there, they begin to plan their next move. They reach out to the leaker, who is morally conflicted about what he is doing. He wants to help the kids, but knows his own life is in danger. He gives them the location of the test subjects, which turns out to be a trap in which Cade is captured. The leaker is revealed to be Harmon, who goes on the run and agrees to meet with and work with Shay and her group. He teaches them how to properly shoot, and sneaks into a Singular banquet with Shay to hold Cartwell hostage until Cade is released.

Hacking into the records of the company, Shay, Odin, Harmon, and the others learn about the ship being outfitted to deal with prisoners. The entire group converges on the



ship while Shay and Harmon sneak aboard. Inside, they discover fifteen test subjects who are mindlessly wandering around. One even begs Shay and Harmon to kill him. Outside, a convoy arrives with more test subjects and more guards. A gunfight breaks out, and the police are called to the scene. However, when they arrive, the ship is gone. Harmon and Shay, aboard the ship, prepare for a fight in which they are heavily outnumbered. However, Shay isn't too unhappy because she knows Singular is cornered.



Prologue – Chapter 6

Summary

Prologue – Sixteen-year-old Shay Remby heads into Home Depot to purchase H. K. Porter bolt cutters. Her wolf dog, X, is with her. She remembers the events of the previous day, rescuing Odin, seeing an Asian girl with a wired scalp, seeing Marcus West dead in a pool of his own blood, and Cruz pulling her away. Shay goes into the bathroom to find dollar bills in her pocket that haven't been soaked with West's blood. She does her best to clean ones with light stains, purchases the cutters, then returns to the jeep she is driving. The jeep used to belong to West. Shay tells X there will be no mercy.

Chapter 1 – Odin Remby, 17-year-old Cade Holt, and ex-gang member Cruz Perez restrain the Asian woman, Fenfang, on a Reno, Nevada motel room bed while Twist watches on. Fenfang's head is horribly mutilated, and she is bound in chains and padlocks, and is having periodic outbursts. Shay returns with the bolt cutter, which Cruz then uses to begin cutting off the padlocks. When the woman is freed, she explains that Singular has put an American woman into her mind. She explains she believes she is an incomplete experiment, that she has not been completely driven out of her own mind, and that she is experiencing much confusion. A Facebook message from Singular comes in, demanding the return of the copied flash drives. The group is warned that Fenfang is a Chinese spy being sought by the FBI. Fenfang says she is not a spy, and goes into convulsions once more. Medical help is needed, but no one has any idea how to help her.

When her attack subsides, Fenfang explains she and her cousin Liko lived in the village of Dandong on the Yalu River, across from North Korea. She and her cousin took a Christian American man named Robert G. Morris into North Korea to do research, but on the third night, they were captured and taken to Singular. Morris has been missing for months. Shay explains that they believe Singular, a biotech company, has dealings with the North Koreans, and that Singular is attempting to make people immortal transferring the mind of one person into the brain of another. X was another experiment that Singular worked on, but Odin saved. Twist is a wealthy artist who runs a home for street kids, and sheltered Shay during her search for Odin. Fenfang then uses the bathroom, during which time the other part of her mind takes over, compelling her to call San Francisco-based Singular. The others rush in, but it is too late.

Chapter 2 – Sync, Harmon, and Thorne meet with Micah Cartwell, CEO of Singular, at the Four Seasons in San Francisco. Sync is the Security Chief, while Harmon manages intelligence and Thorne manages enforcement. West is being blamed for the shooting and the chaos in the media. Micah knows Odin has been able to crack the codes of one of the flash drives. Micah is willing to negotiate or hunt them down, whichever the teens decide. Even if they choose to negotiate, they must still be killed. Traps are being laid wherever the teens may have contacts with Singular employees, such as Janes.



Fenfang's disappearance will be staged in Canada, meaning that if she ever turns up, it'll appear as if she has crossed the border illegally, meaning Singular never had her. Everything is being done to trace the kids, including following leads on West's jeep. They have also shut down the teens' leak site, Mindkill. The next task will be to set up a secure holding facility for the test subjects. Cartwell suddenly gets a call from Charlotte Dash – the woman implanted in Fenfang's mind – saying she is at the Bones Motel and Casino.

Chapter 3 – Fenfang has another seizure. When she comes to, she doesn't remember anything about the call, but she does know things about a woman named Charlotte Dash. She also has eight numbers in her mind, including U.S. Senate Majority Leader Harry White. Charlotte is revealed to be a Democrat U.S. Senator from New Mexico, and a member of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. They decide to head to Las Vegas to blend in and hide. West's jeep's license plates are changed with a car at the Reno-Tahoe International Airport parking garage. A wig is purchased for Fenfang. Cade will drive to Salt Lake City to reply to Singular's Facebook message, to make it appear as if the group has gone to Salt Lake while everyone else heads to Vegas.

Chapter 4 – The group takes rooms at the Moulin Rose, a dumpier hotel and casino in Vegas. Odin commits to cracking the encoding on the flash drives. He discovers 1,124 files, mostly dense scientific research information that he cannot understand. Odin knows he is also operating below capacity without his personalized laptop, now in the possession of his ex-girlfriend, Rachel. The laptop has hacking programs that will help them stay one step ahead of Singular. Twist and Cruz agree to go purchase a new laptop so Odin can track Rachel. Shay and Odin converse. Shay worries their mother cooperated with Singular. Odin disagrees, noting that their mother genuinely wanted to help disabled people with her work at Singular, and that the company swerved away from its original goals when she died. They do both worry Singular had a hand in her death. Odin then begins searching West's laptop. With a new laptop from Cruz, Rachel is traced to the Pasadena Public Library in Hill Avenue in Los Angeles. It is decided as well that Twist's friend, Dr. Girard, will X-Ray Fenfang's head. Cade returns that night with walkie talkies to use instead of cell phones, and revealing he has planted clues.

Chapter 5 – The group arrives in Pasadena at seven that evening. Odin meets up with Rachel, who says all the others have been arrested. Odin tells Rachel she needs to get out of town. He explains he and his friends are trying to expose Singular before Singular gets them. He asks Rachel to send a specific message to Singular one minute before she leaves LA. She agrees and gives him his laptop. Cruz, meanwhile, uses old gang contacts to get new plates and papers for the jeep. Lou, a friend of Twist's, brings along one of Twist's cash stashes, numbering twenty thousand dollars. Girard scans Fenfang's head, but he can't figure out how to fix her. By five in the morning, the group returns to Vegas. Shay reveals a plan has been formulated.

Chapter 6 – The X-Rays of Fenfang's head are examined. The wires in her brain are causing corrosion, which is in turn leading to seizures. The wires must be removed. Promises are made to get Fenfang help, but she is afraid to seek out help. The only way to do this is to put Singular on public trial. This can be done through Dr. Janes in



Eugene, Oregon, or through getting Senator Dash to talk in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Any confessions or important evidence will be filmed using a Sony Action Cam Mini. Twist, Odin, and Cade will take Janes while Shay, Fenfang, and Cruz go after Dash. Afterwards, everyone will hide out with a guy named Danny Dill in Northern California. Later, Shay quietly reveals to Odin and Twist that the files on the flash drive reveal that subjects implanted with wires die within four to six weeks after seizures begin. When the wires are removed, death comes faster. There is no way to save Fenfang. A contact of Twist's then delivers a message, saying Singular is on the way. Cade follows the guy and gets his license plate number. They realize Dash's role in Intelligence gives her access to cameras everywhere, which explains how Singular has found them. Everyone packs up and heads out.

Analysis

"Outrage" is a dystopian novel by John Sandford and Michele Cook, and forms the second installment of their "Singular Menace" trilogy in which Shay and her friends seek to bring down the evil Singular corporation. From the start, the theme of dystopianism is readily apparent through Singular itself. Singular, a small but deadly and powerful biotech company, has been using kidnapped human beings as unwilling test subjects for its experiments. In so doing, they are denying the human rights of these people by dealing in human trafficking and involuntary human experimentation. Like dystopianism, rights will be an important theme as the novel unfolds.

Singular will do anything it can and anything it must in order to retain its power, control, and to achieve its ends in which ultimately seek human immortality. This complete lack of regard for human life and human rights is very much in keeping with a dystopian worldview: the ends always justify the means. At present, Shay, Fenfang, Odin, Cade, Twist, and Cruz pose an existential threat to Singular, and so everyone in the group must be eliminated. Thorne, Harmon, and Sync unquestioningly accept their mission to do so, for the good of the company and its goals prevail against all other issues. Likewise, Singular has gotten into bed with the government by way of Senator Dash, ensuring it has a powerful and protective ally, and a serious reason to stay in business no matter the cost – including murdering people like West.

It is through the themes of rights and dystopianism that the theme of ethics also comes into play. Singular seemingly has an ethical goal: to eliminate death, to make human beings immortal. However, the manner in which they go about their work – from cruel animal experimentation to horrifying human experimentation, and denying rights to both man and animal – is a serious breach of morality. It is an absolute lack of ethics on the part of Singular that they should engage in their research in such a fashion; and it is utterly unethical that they should be willing to murder children in the process.

These themes and ideas also feed into the theme of technology. Already in the novel, technology is seen as a powerful but morally ambivalent thing: it can be used for good and ethical means and ends, or it can be used for bad and unethical means and ends. Fenfang is a case in point. Singular is using technology to achieve immortality, but it is



doing so in a very unethical way as it uses human test subjects, taken against their will, and experimented upon against their will. Meanwhile, Odin, Shay, and their group use technology for moral ends, seeking to expose Singular, hacking into their database, decoding their files, and seeking to do a major document dump on the internet.

While Shay and her group are united by a common cause, they are not merely resolved to stick together because they share a common goal. They are also friends. Their mutual like, respect, and loyalty towards one another helps keep them together, endure difficult situations, encourage one another, and cements their mission against Singular in ways it would not otherwise be possible to do. Friendship will be utterly crucial as the novel progresses.

Interestingly enough, however, friendship and good use of technology are not enough for Shay and the others to stay one step ahead of Singular. The reader should note that only a tip from an unknown individual through a third party allows Shay and her group to flee Moulin Rose before Singular agents arrive. This is not the only time this individual will be involved in saving Shay's team. What the reader should also note is that, for a company like Singular to have a leaker, the leaker must have a very good reason for helping Shay, especially because it will jeopardize the leader's very life.

Discussion Question 1

What is so horrifying to Shay and the others about Fenfang's situation, and the experiments she has undergone? How does this affect their views on Singular?

Discussion Question 2

What do Shay and her friends believe to be the ultimate goal of Singular? How do they view this goal? Why?

Discussion Question 3

How do Shay and her team manage to escape mere moments before Singular agents arrive? Why does this matter? What ramifications could this have?

Vocabulary

reanimate, lurch, mutilated, affluent, aura, optimal, anonymity, idiom, garish



Chapters 7 – 12

Summary

Chapter 7 – Thorne finds an old freighter that can be used as a holding facility for their fifteen test subjects, currently being kept under armed guard in three RVs. Charlotte Dash, meanwhile, helps Singular track down the teens in six hours through camera recognition. Cartwell, however, does not tell Dash that part of her mind is embedded with Fenfang. Thorne, his assistant, Red, and a team descend on the Moulin Rose, but miss the teens. Thorne realizes there is a leak somewhere. He calls Sync to report it.

Chapter 8 – Odin, Twist, and Cade head for Eugene, Oregon, to see Dr. Janes. Shay, Cruz, and Fenfang and X head to Santa Fe, to see about Senator Charlotte Dash. Odin traces the license plate number of the informant to Jerry Kulicek. More research will be done later. Cruz pulls over in the desert to teach Shay to fire a gun. X is able to predict when Fenfang will have seizures, which proves to be helpful. They take rooms at the Bandolero Motel in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The next day, they locate Dash's house – a walled compound set partway up a mountain – outside of Santa Fe. They keep watch until Dash leaves, making sure she will come home for the night.

Chapter 9 – That night, Shay, Cruz, and Fenfang break in using security alarm codes Fenfang has access through by way of the implanting of Dash's mind. The three confront Dash. At first, she denies any knowledge of Singular at all. When Fenfang reveals Dash's mind has been implanted in her, enabling them to break in, Dash is stunned, saying that Singular said the procedure didn't work at all. They threaten to kill Dash unless she talks. She relents. Dash denies that any other politicians or government agencies are involved. With Dash's mind, Fenfang locates and opens two safes, full of important documents, papers, gold, and cash. They decide to clear everything out. They also discover a bump on Dash's head, which turns out to be a plastic cap covering the hole through which Singular extracted her mind. Shay takes a cell phone photo of it so Dash doesn't know they are also filming it. They realize Dash is paying Singular. As they leave, Dash sends her dogs out after them. X intervenes, allowing Cruz to punch Dash in the face and to tell her that she and Singular are not untouchable. Cruz threatens to go public with everything they have taken if Dash opens her mouth. X then returns to the others as they leave.

Chapter 10 – Odin, Twist, and Cade arrive in Janes's neighborhood. They pretend to be a pizza delivery service. Cade goes to the door with the pizza. When Janes opens the door, Cade rushes in. Odin and Twist follow. They immediately confront Janes about Singular, forcing Janes to show them his home office. As they search, they question Janes about Fenfang. He confesses she was an "incomplete conversion". He explains that doses of carbamazepine and gabapentin help to calm seizures, and that the implanted mind will eventually fade away to becoming nothing more than what seem to be old memories. Janes also confesses he knows the alternate mind to be Charlotte



Dash's. Janes also surrenders the decryption codes to the flash drives, his thumbprint, his hard drive, and access to all his files. The codes are tried and work.

Janes goes on to explain that X is so important because he represents the possibilities for better people – replacing body parts with better alternatives, and creating perfect organs. Janes says he has nothing to do with how test subjects are acquired. He tells Odin he looks like his mother, Kathleen Carter. Janes says that he had nothing to do with what happened to her, and isn't even sure if she is dead. He believes she might not be dead based on the style of writing of a scientific report that came out of North Korea after she supposedly died. He reveals that she started asking too many questions when Singular began experimenting on human subjects. Janes explains she was too valuable to be killed or let go. Odin, Twist, and Cade then leave. Sync arrives a short time later, delighted to hear the plan has gone accordingly, and that the files have been opened with the codes. Sync assures Janes the NSA is not listening in, at which point Janes demands that Odin and the others be eliminated.

Chapter 11 – Shay, Fenfang, and Cruz, and Odin, Twist, and Cade put distance between themselves and their targets. A call between the teams reveals success, and they head toward Arcata, California. As Odin seeks to study the flash drive files, he realizes the files have all been corrupted by the codes Jane gave them. They are useless now. Odin, Twist, and Cade arrive at Danny's property. Dan is very wealthy thanks to his parents, and grows marijuana as a hobby. Danny reveals his girlfriend, Cindy, has taken his Lexus and left him. Meanwhile, Shay, Fenfang, and Cruz continue on their way. Shay considers everything that is happening to be overwhelming.

Chapter 12 – The test subject RVs are relocating while Cartwell, Sync, and Harmon meet with Dash at her home. United States Vice President Lawton Jeffers is also there. Jeffers is irate that things are turning out so badly. Sync explains the stolen flash drives have been neutralized, and that the entire situation can be contained. Dash is also irate that an Asian girl is walking around with her mind. Cartwell says that the girl is merely an incomplete experiment, that they are still years away from having a successful run. Dash reminds him that she has \$600 million invested in Singular, and has pulled government strings for Singular. Jeffers tells Cartwell his company will be destroyed if he doesn't get a handle on things and get rid of the kids. Dash then reveals a blood-stained paper towel containing the DNA of one of the kids who was bitten by her dogs.

Harmon explains part of the reason the kids have been hard to catch is because they're smart enough but also lucky. Dash reveals the documents stolen include important files on NSA data collection, among other things. Cartwell and Sync discuss who their leak could be, knowing only a handful – Thorne, Harmon, Denny Jackson, and Imogene Stewart – knew about the attempt at Moulin Rose. Cartwell decides to tell each person the new RV site will be at a different location, and if the kids show up at any of those locations, the leak will be known. Harmon, who has an interest in Southwest archeology, has been studying the pottery collection kept by Dash's late husband. He also discovers a shiny black stone with a linear white mineral deposit down the middle – known as a spirit line in Navajo circles – outside, and keeps it. Harmon suggests Dash donate her



collection of Mimbres pottery to a museum. She considers it would be a good reelection strategy.

Analysis

Singular continues to do whatever it must to achieve its ends. This includes becoming increasingly creative about how it conducts its research on test subjects. An entire ship is being purchased so that it can be converted into a mobile base for experiments and holding prisoners. They will stop at nothing to stay one step ahead of the kids, who in turn continue to stay one step ahead of Singular. As Harmon explains to Dash and the others later in this section of the novel, the kids are managing to do so not only because they are smart, but mainly because they are lucky. If it wasn't for the leaker, the kids wouldn't be roaming around free.

Apart from seeking out a ship on which to continue their experiments, the depth and scope of Singular's relationship with the government is fully revealed to the reader. Not only has Senator Dash involved herself in the company, but she has used her political leverage against the kids as well. It demonstrates how much Dash is willing to risk on behalf of the company. This comes not merely as a question of the \$600 million she has put into the company, but comes through the fact that she herself is seeking immortality. Likewise, that Vice President Jeffers himself should be involved in the scheme is telling of just how expansive Singular's reach has become, and how dangerously powerful they are.

The break-in at Janes's house reveals some important contextual information for both the reader, and for Odin and the others. Singular did not begin as a power-hungry, ethically immoral company. Instead, it began as a way to use biotechnology to improve human life, from better organs to better body parts to ensuring those with a missing limb or a damaged body part could be made better. Originally seeking to serve the greater good, the company committed to a future course that seemingly had all the moral and ethical grounding it needed.

Somewhere along the way, the reader recognizes, Singular veered away from its original, ethical, and moral intent and means toward something sinister. Immortality is one thing, but the process for achieving it is something else entirely. Additionally, it isn't merely human immortality which now motivates Singular, but its own survival as well. Technology is herein again presented as something that can be used for good or for evil. Fenfang uses the technology forced upon her against Singular and Dash by penetrating Dash's memories to use access codes to her house and safes.

The break-in at Janes's house also unveils other incredibly interesting information that the reader should note and bear in mind. Janes explains that Odin's mother may not actually be dead. He explains that it was around the time she went missing that Singular shifted focus heavily. He also notes that Odin's mother's disappearance occurred after she asked entirely too many questions, and began to dig into things that didn't concern her. In all likelihood, this means that Odin's mother never truly cooperated with Singular



the way in which was previously believed. In all probability, she either uncovered ongoing secret research, emerging secret research, or railed against the changes in the company. Knowing far too much to kill, she couldn't be let go, either.

Discussion Question 1

What does Janes reveal about the nature of Singular, Odin's mother, and the change in the company's direction? Why does this information matter to Odin? What does this have to say about Singular itself?

Discussion Question 2

What does Singular's involvement with Dash and Jeffers indicate about its willingness to do whatever it takes to achieve its goals? What does this mean for Shay, Odin, and the others?

Discussion Question 3

Why do Shay, Odin, and their respective teams target Janes and Dash? What do they gain by the simultaneous raids?

Vocabulary

obscure, deterred, adjective, lacquered, expletives, incomplete conversion, acquisition, synchronized, sophisticated



Chapters 13 – 18

Summary

Chapter 13 – Shay, Cruz, and Fenfang arrive. Cruz's arm, bloodied from the dogs, will need a doctor. Danny brings Cruz and X into town for medical help and return a few hours later. They also obtain the pills Janes spoke of, but Fenfang isn't sure if she wants to take them or not yet. Shay, Cade, Odin, and the others go through the documents from Dash's house. They learn a lot about the NSA and who it is spying on, such as the New York Times, reporters, professors, and other influential people. There is also an agreement between Dash and Singular for "medical treatment" for half-a-billion dollars to be transferred from a Venezuelan bank to a Russian bank. With Fenfang's approval, a course of action is decided upon. A YouTube video of Fenfang will be made, telling her story. The video of Janes and Dash will be edited. Contact with Jerry Kulicek will be attempted. The most damaging files will be put together for release on Mindkill.

Danny, Odin, and Cade get high with weed while Shay, Twist, and Cruz refuse to use it. Twist explains he refuses to touch any drug after discovering his mother dead from an overdose when he was ten. Fenfang has another seizure during which time Dash takes over, leading Fenfang to decide to take the pills no matter the outcome. Meanwhile, Odin fills Shay in on the details about their mom given to him by Janes. A secret photo is then discovered in Janes's files. It includes a meeting with Cartwell, Dash, Jeffers, and Vice Marshal of the Korean People's Army, Ch'asu Kim Lee Pak. The meeting, Fenfang realizes, was to arrange for test subjects like her.

Chapter 14 – Jeffers meets with Earl Denyers, Assistant Deputy Director of Operations at the CIA, whom Jeffers has known for thirty years. Jeffers expects Singular to kill the kids, then expects the CIA to take care of the top members of Singular. Jeffers laments that he himself isn't president, but that Terrance Berman is. Berman has no idea about Singular. Everything has been done without his knowledge. Jeffers explains Berman would never go along with things, because Berman is a moral absolutist. Denyers contends that maybe Berman is no longer useful, but Jeffers doesn't acknowledge the statement.

Chapter 15 – Shay contends a raid on a new Singular prison is the best way to bring about maximum exposure, and little deniability. They decide to contact Jerry Kulicek using Danny's satellite phone after driving south to Willits. They tell Jerry to have his contact at Singular call them. Half an hour later, the leaker calls, but refuses to do names. The man explains that West was a friend of his, and that he too is angry about West's death. The man reveals they have Cruz's DNA on record from blood at Dash's house. The man doesn't want to meet, and seems conflicted between helping and risking his life, or playing safe and living. Meanwhile, Fenfang's video is completed. It is decided that numerous X-Rays from numerous trusted hospitals will be proof that Fenfang is not lying and the video is not faked. Although Danny doesn't like guns, he has a number of them for self-defense. He teaches the kids how to properly shoot. It is



then revealed that the Singular leaker has called back with a possible location for the test subjects.

Chapter 16 – By phone, the leaker reveals the location of the test subjects to be 1547 Chambers Avenue in Stockton, California, but warns Shay and the others that the information was too easily available to him. Cruz believes it is a trap, but the others believe it is a risk that must be taken. Fenfang is especially insistent. Stockton is a suburb of San Francisco, and the address is an area with warehouses and industrial buildings. They study the surrounding area, and determine where it would be best to conduct a stake-out. Odin commits to working on the cache of documents for the Mindkill site, which can then be picked up by mirror sites. Everyone ends up dancing, and Odin ends up kissing Fenfang.

Chapter 17 – The following day, Shay and the others drive to Stockton. The journey takes six hours. They decide to hide out in the Unclaimed Freight building nearby the unmarked Singular building to keep watch. At 3:30 in the morning, they see a food truck arrive for the prisoners at the warehouse.

Chapter 18 – Twist explains his plan for the attack. They will purchase a large Mack truck, crash through the fence around the building, throw Molotov cocktails into the parking lot, then report an explosion to the police and media who will arrive to handle everything. The plan is revised to make it so the gas pedal is held down by cement, meaning no one has to be in the truck when it goes through. From there, they will relaunch Mindkill. The secret photo will be held back until needed.

Analysis

Following the raids, Shay, Odin, Cruz, Cade, Twist, and Fenfang regroup at Danny's property in Northern California. It is a perfect place to hide out, for it is at least temporarily beyond the reach of Singular. Despite the corrupted files, important information has been gleaned from Dash and Janes – including a secretly-taken photograph showing a meeting in which Jeffers and a North Korean general are involved. This startling and disconcerting information is assembled with the intent of unleashing it on the internet – an ethically moral and good use of technology to expose a corrupt and immoral company, Singular.

Technology will also be used to create a video featuring Fenfang and the associated documents, film of Janes and Dash, and will help Shay, Odin, and their group to expose Singular to public scrutiny. It is once again a moral and ethical use of technology to achieve good ends. Singular, meanwhile, continues to rely on technology for its immoral ends: That Fenfang will ultimately die, and that truly successful work on test subjects has yet to be achieved, demonstrates the brutality of the company. It is more concerned with a crude trial-and-error method rather than an ethical and refined manner of experimentation.



Meanwhile, the dystopian extent of Singular's involvement with the government is also made known. Jeffers seems to be the one coordinating the cooperation between the government and Singular, and indeed seems to be the driving force behind Singular as well. It is Jeffers's pressure on Singular that gets Cartwell to force his security to double their efforts to find Shay and the other kids. It is also Jeffers who calls for the elimination of the uppermost echelons of Singular, meaning one of two things: Either Jeffers plans a government takeover or absorption of the company, or he intends to replace Cartwell and his men with government men.

What is interesting to note, however, is that unlike the assumptions of Twist, Shay, and their group, the dystopian conspiracy does not go all the way to the top. Jeffers himself laments that the president does not know about the Singular plot; and he also laments that the president is actually a moral absolutist. His ethics are pure and clean, and he will not hesitate to break apart Singular and all those associated with it should it be demonstrated to be immorally and/or illegally operating. In other words, the means are just as important as the ends for the President, while the ends always justify the means for the Vice President.

Startlingly, Denyers casually suggests that perhaps President Berman has outlived his usefulness. This demonstrates, once again, not only the depth and reach of Singular and its people, but indicates that they will pursue whatever ends they must in order to ensure successful completion of their operation. Their discussion is accomplished by way of Denyers scanning the room with cutting edge technology to ensure they are not being listened in upon. It is use of technology intended for good now being used for evil purposes.

The reader should also note that Shay and her team again seek to get in touch with the leaker. The leaker himself is morally conflicted about helping Shay anymore. This is because his own life will be at stake, but also because he seemingly worries about getting the kids into more trouble than they are already in. That the leaker should have a moral conflict is good news for Shay and her group, because it underlies the idea that not everyone who works for, or at Singular, is ethically-absent the way that Cartwell, Jeffers, Sync, and others are.

Discussion Question 1

What things do Jeffers and Conyers discuss relating to Shay and her team, and the leadership of Singular? Why do you believe Jeffers is determined to eliminate them all?

Discussion Question 2

What does Jeffers lament about President Berman? Why would Berman never go along with the Singular plot? Does this bode well or ill for Shay and her group?



Discussion Question 3

Why do Shay and her group reach out to the leaker? What do they hope to gain by doing so? Why does the leaker seem morally conflicted about helping Shay? Do you believe he is justified in feeling conflicted? Why or why not?

Vocabulary

logistics, maximum exposure, deniability, imprudent, preposterous, decadent, stereotypical



Chapters 19 – 24

Summary

Chapter 19 – Cruz positions himself in the Freight building to film the attack and response. Twist will be waiting by in an escape car. Odin will be prepared to launch Mindkill. Cade suddenly realizes he has lost his spirit rock, causing him great concern, but does his best to be hopeful. He drives the Mack truck on, during which time Shay lets the firebombs go. Shay then flees the truck to meet up with Twist. Twist calls in the explosions to the media, while Cruz calls the explosions into the police. As Cade attempts to escape, he is tackled by a Singular man and thrown into a van as the building is evacuated. Cade presses the button on his walkie-talkie so the others will hear him, pretending he is just a hobo looking for a place to sleep. Emergency response finds the building empty. Twist realizes it was all a trap that they narrowly avoided, except for Cade.

Chapter 20 – Harmon is driving with a subordinate named Eric Jobair when he learns the news. Harmon speaks with Twist on the phone, revealing that Harmon is the leak. He now knows his own life is in jeopardy, and agrees to meet with Shay and the others. Harmon swings by his apartment to grab weapons and supplies. Sync arrives at Harmon's apartment, promising not to shoot Harmon. Sync reveals that he is there to let Harmon know Thorne's people are coming after Harmon, a warning as payback for Harmon saving Sync's life in the War in Afghanistan. Sync asks what has happened to Harmon; Harmon says he has had a moral revelation about helping and trusting a company that would murder children and deal with dirty politicians and places like North Korea. Sync leaves and then calls Thorne, pretending to be angry at Harmon, and telling Thorne the situation needs to be handled quickly. Thorne says it is in hand. Thorne then gets off the phone and prepares to waterboard the already-beaten-up Cade for information.

Chapter 21 – Shay and the others realize they must do something to force Singular to let Cade go. Twist calls Micah Cartwell's office, pretending to have a video of Cartwell, the Vice President, and the North Koreans in a meeting. He threatens to release the video if Cade is not released. Twist then calls Harmon for help, but Harmon says he himself is on the run and is in no position to help. Still, he agrees to meet up when Shay explains that bringing down Singular could save him as well. They meet in mountain country north of Oroville. Harmon reveals it was Thorne who personally killed West. He says he thinks he knows how he can help Shay get Cade back.

Chapter 22 – Cartwell is furious about Twist's message, and furious that there is no news on Harmon. He orders Thorne to find a hard-vetted replacement for Harmon immediately. Harmon, meanwhile, explains his falling out with the company, and the end of his friendship with Sync. Harmon's clothes, weapons, and gear are searched to make sure he is not working for Singular anymore. Harmon is stunned by the fact the kids have hard evidence against Singular and its involvement with politicians and North



Korea. Harmon reveals his plan for getting Cade back. Cruz, Twist, and Shay have no choice but to trust him.

Chapter 23 – Harmon and Shay arrive in San Francisco and wait in the parking garage of the Flavian Hotel for a banquet hosted by Cartwell. They rehearse the plan, then move in. Shay is dressed like a waitress, and proceeds to the banquet in the private room. She hands Cartwell a piece of paper, saying there is an urgent call. She then agrees to lead him to a private nook for privacy. Away from the banquet room down another hall, Harmon seizes Cartwell. Cartwell is handcuffed and a noose put around his neck in a bathroom stall. They force him to call Thorne to release Cade. Cartwell is panicked and desperate as Harmon and Shay leave. Meanwhile, Dash tells Sync she briefly saw Cartwell go off with a waitress, and is concerned that he hasn't come back yet. Sync grabs Thorne and the two go to find Cartwell. While Thorne frees Cartwell, Sync goes after Shay and Harmon. Thorne catches them, but Shay fires a warning shot and threatens to kill him if he attempts anything. When she learns from Harmon that Thorne is the one who killed West, she kicks him between the legs as hard as she can.

Chapter 24 – Cade has been released. Twist picks him up. Cade is badly hurt and in need of a hospital. Cade reveals he didn't tell the enemy anything. Harmon and Shay drive out of the city. They become friendly talking about climbing. Both are avid climbers. Harmon reveals how he went to work for Singular after serving twenty years in the Army because Singular was interested in prosthetics for veterans, as well as helping humanity in general. But upon learning the truth about them, Harmon grew disillusioned. He explains his beliefs as an American led him to oppose Singular. They meet up with the rest of the group. Cruz, Cade, and Twist then arrive. Cruz and Shay kiss. Harmon is horrified by what has been done to Fenfang. He explains the company is heavily compartmentalized, with people knowing only about what they are doing, and knowing about only as much as they need to know. He explains the company is powerful but small –some three hundred people, mostly researchers. They decide to hack into the company's logistics files to try to trace the movements of the test subjects.

Analysis

The raid on the Stockton facility is disastrous for Shay and her team. The scope of Singular's power is revealed in the failure Shay and her team accrue. It has all been a trap designed to expose the leaker, and to kill Shay and her friends. Only fast thinking allows the majority of the group to get away, but Cade is captured. Fast thinking and cutthroat professionalism allows the Singular sting team to grab Cade and make their escape before the police and emergency responders arrive on scene.

As the reader is stunned to learn, Harmon is the leaker. His reasoning for helping Shay against Singular is purely morally-driven. Harmon considers himself a patriotic American, and deeply believes in what America is meant to be. America is not about murdering children and carrying out cruel and inhuman experiments under the protective arm of the government. As such, Harmon cannot justify having risked his life in the military to defend an American which Singular is now corrupting. As such, he can



no longer serve Singular. He now sides with Shay against the dystopian conglomerate that consists of Singular and various parts of the federal government. Interestingly, Sync lets Harmon go as a moral question of combat service many years before.

As noted earlier in this study guide, the theme of friendship becomes central in this section of the novel. Given any other circumstances, Shay and her group might well cut their losses with Cade's capture, and agree to continue to try to take down Singular. However, because of their loyalty and commitment through friendship, they cannot abandon Cade to the evils of Singular. They go out of their way to effect a rescue, orchestrated primarily by Shay and Harmon. The two hold Cartwell hostage until Cade is released and safely picked up by other members of Shay's group. It is an important moral act born of friendship that no man should be left behind. It is this sense of closeness and loyalty that continues to cement the group together. They will all succeed together, or they will all go down together.

Human rights again emerge here as an important theme. Cade's rights are brutally taken away in the vicious tortures and beatings that he receives at the hands of Singular's agents. Harmon is horrified to discover what has been done to Fenfang. He explains that the people at Singular are heavily compartmentalized, and rarely know what is going on elsewhere in the company. The lack of human rights experienced by Fenfang and by Cade further steel Harmon's resolve against Singular. His mission against Singular is now truly not only one of American patriotism, but of moral absolutism.

Discussion Question 1

Despite the fact that Cade is not central to the mission against Singular, and despite the fact that it is a great risk to Shay and Harmon and the other members of the group to rescue Cade, they make rescuing Cade a priority. Why?

Discussion Question 2

Why does Harmon reveal he has turned against Singular? What important information about Singular does he reveal to Shay and the others? How do they use this information to their advantage?

Discussion Question 3

Why does Sync let Harmon go, warning Harmon that Singular will be after him? Do you believe this means that Sync may yet turn against Singular in the future? Why or why not?

Vocabulary

premonition, exasperated, accurized, sumptuous, interminable, involuntarily, ruminated, compartmentalized



Chapters 25 – 27

Summary

Chapter 25 – Harmon provides Shay with some real gun training. Meanwhile, Odin and the others have learned that the trail of the prisoners seems to have gone cold. Harmon tells them to find the lowest-paid employees – drivers and guards – and to find their addresses. Four potential candidates are found, and Shay and the group move out to collect them. They end up zeroing in on a man named Adams, following him to a ship which everyone realizes is meant to be a mobile prison. Shay and Harmon move in to scout, while everyone else stays back.

Chapter 26 – Harmon and Shay sneak up on the pier to which the ship is tied. Shay uses a hawser – a massive rope – to gain access to the ship. Harmon follows. They cautiously move along, searching as they go. They come upon two guards and tie them up. One of the guards, Jim, is stunned to learn that rumors of Harmon turning are true. Shay cautions the two men to think about whose side they are on, since they admired Harmon so much and Harmon is now with her. She tells them that they have one chance to go to the police, or they will go down with Singular. Down in the depths of the ship, they find fifteen Asians, mostly female, mostly all with shaved heads, mindlessly wandering around. Shay films everything. The prisoners beg her to kill them. Twist suddenly comes in on the radio, telling her and Harmon to evacuate, that an entire convoy is coming.

Chapter 27 – Harmon and Shay rush to flee the ship, but they cannot easily get off. Security guards have arrived, and open fire. Harmon returns fire. More chained test subjects are being taken to the ship as Harmon and Shay seek a way off. Liko is among the subjects. Danny uses an M16 to fire at the hull of the ship, causing chaos. Singular guards return fire. Fenfang is hit as she calls to Liko. Cruz, Odin, Twist, and Danny drop Fenfang to the hospital. Twist tells the emergency room nurses to make sure to X-Ray Fenfang's head. Harmon realizes he and Shay must now hide. Shay calls the group and tells them to send the police. Cade calls the police, and meets up with Cruz, Odin, Twist, and Danny. They decide to publish Fenfang's video. They drive past the ship once more, stunned to discover only a single cop car has arrived, and the ship is gone. On board the ship, Harmon and Shay prepare for a fight. Shay says that at least they have Singular cornered.

Analysis

Harmon continues to prove his moral worth by risking his life to board the ship with Shay. There, they discover the newest extents of the moral depravity and dystopian reach of Singular. They discover fifteen test subjects being kept in the holds of the ship. Most are wandering around aimlessly like zombies, but the few who retain any semblance of who they are recognize that they are in serious trouble and agony.



Indeed, one man even begs to be killed. The reader can only imagine how terrible things must be for the man to prefer death over life.

A convoy arrives which brings an additional four test subjects for the ship, as well as numerous other guards. For Singular to transport people so easily and at such great cost underscores the promise and wealth of the company. Likewise, that an entire convoy of prisoners and people could be moved through areas with large populations, and that the agents would not be concerned about committing to a gunfight which could draw mass attention, speaks to the supreme confidence and self-assurance the company has. This, too, demonstrates the dystopian atmosphere in which Singular operates.

When the police arrive at the dock, the ship is gone, and all traces of Singular have vanished. The ship has put out to sea, a clever and nefarious way of staying one step ahead of the reach of the public and law enforcement agencies that Singular is not in league with. Only at sea can Singular avoid having to deal with land-based issues such as police and raids by Shay's team. Harmon and Shay are trapped on the ship as it puts out to sea, but what is interesting is that Shay surmises Singular is on the run rather than being on the rise. Likewise, Fenfeng's appearance at an emergency room will likely cause some controversy, as will the videos and documents when they are released to the internet.

Discussion Question 1

How is Singular able to avoid the police cruiser that shows up to the docks? What does this demonstrate about Singular? How do Odin and the others react to Singular's disappearance?

Discussion Question 2

Why is Fenfang dropped off at the emergency room? Why does no one stay with her to see whether she survives?

Discussion Question 3

Shay contends that rather than being unstoppable, Singular is cornered. Why? Do you believe she is correct in her assertion? Why or why not?

Vocabulary

ubiquitous, behooves, fundamentally, shinnied, cornered



Characters

Shay

Shay Rembly is a 16-year-old girl who leads the group determined to bring Singular down. She is pretty but tough, an avid climber, courageous, and morally astute. She is deeply horrified by the experiments and murders that Singular has been conducting, though she is thrilled to have rescued her brother, Odin, from the clutches of the company. Together with Odin and their group of friends, Shay carries out raids on Singular targets and associates. When the raid on the Singular ship is conducted, Shay and Harmon find themselves trapped. Shay, however, is not worried at all because he believes Singular is on the run.

Odin

Odin Rembly is the brother of Shay, is an animal rights activist, computer hacker, and high-functioning autistic though he is still prone to outbursts when things don't go his way, or when the stress builds on him. Odin serves as the group's main tech, handling decrypting classified and encoded files, as well as helping to cover their movements. He also spearheads the efforts to make a video featuring Fenfang's story, associated film clips, and documents. Later in the novel, he seems to develop feelings for Fenfang.

Fenfang

Fenfang is a Chinese teenager who was abducted in North Korea by Singular's agents, and sent to California for experimentation. There, she had several hundred holes drilled into her head, and part of Charlotte Dash's consciousness thrust into her brain. Fenfang now faces paralyzing seizures and temporary loss of control over her body to Dash. She has only four to six weeks to live based on reports of previous test subjects. She falls in league with Shay and her group, and helps to challenge Singular by making a video with her story. During the shootout at the boat, Fenfang is shot when she thinks she sees her cousin.

Cruz

Cruz is a former gang member, and a member of Shay's group that challenges Singular. Cruz is brave and headstrong, and takes it upon himself to punch Dash in the face during the raid on her house. He and Shay ultimately develop feelings for one another, and kiss toward the end of the novel.



Cade

Cade is a member of Shay's group that challenges Singular. He is known for his good luck, long hair, and fierce intelligence. He is captured by Singular during the Stockton raid, but released when Shay and Harmon hold Cartwell hostage. He continues to recover from the brutal treatment suffered at the hands of Singular during his imprisonment through the end of the novel.

Twist

Twist is a wealthy artist who runs a wayward home for teens in Los Angeles. Twist is bitterly opposed to drug use after seeing his mother die of an overdose, and must get around with a cane due to being beaten up by redneck thugs in a random attack many years before. Twist originally sheltered Shay, and now provides the group with financial backing and a fantastic getaway car driver.

Harmon

Harmon is a member of the security structure of Singular, dealing in intelligence. Harmon is an Army veteran who served in the War on Terror, and is deeply patriotic and pro-American. He is also an extremely moral man, who turns on Singular when he sees Singular attempting to kill Shay and her teenage friends. He ends up working with Shay to bring down Singular.

Micah Cartwell

Micah Cartwell is the CEO of Singular. Cartwell is an effective and brutal leader, who drives his company on to achieve human immortality. Cartwell is also cunning and dangerous, dealing freely with the North Koreans, members of the American government, and agencies of the American government. His goal is to protect Singular at all costs, including killing Shay and each of the members of her team.

Lawton Jeffers

Lawton Jeffers is the Vice President of the United States of America, serving under President Berman. Jeffers is cruel and corrupt, dealing Cartwell, the North Koreans, and Singular in the quest for human immortality. Jeffers not only wants Shay and her people killed, but wants Cartwell and the leadership of Singular killed as well. He relates this to his old friend, Conyers, who works at a high level position in the CIA. Jeffers is annoyed that Berman isn't in on the plot, and is even afraid of Berman finding out because he knows Berman would shut everything down.



Janes

Dr. Janes is the lead scientist on the immortality project at Singular. Janes is a crass and very unethical researcher, willing to do whatever it takes to get the job done, all in the name of science, the future, and bettering humanity. Janes is confronted by Odin, Cade, and Twist in his home in Eugene, Oregon, where he gives up more information and a code which ends up corrupting the files Odin has stolen.

Charlotte Dash

Charlotte Dash is a Democratic U.S. Senator from New Mexico. Ruthless and dangerous, she has over \$600 million invested into Singular, and has undergone experimentation herself in the attempt to transfer her consciousness immortally into another person. She uses the government's agencies, including the NSA, to assist Singular in their pursuits. Dash's home is broken into by Shay, Cruz, and Fenfang, during which time top secret documents and information are stolen. Dash is enraged, and demands that Shay and her entire group be put down.

Danny

Danny Dill is a wealthy hippy who lives in Northern California, and is longtime friends with Twist. With family money, Danny leads a very comfortable lifestyle, growing marijuana as a hobby. When Shay and her group go on the run from Singular following the dual raids on Dash and Janes, Twist suggests hiding out with Danny. Danny takes everyone in, and then becomes a part of the group effort to bring Singular down.

Terrance Berman

Terrance Berman is President of the United States of America. Not much is known about him except two important things. First, he has no involvement or knowledge of the Singular plot. Second, he is a moral absolutist who would shut down Singular if he knew the truth. This makes Berman dangerous, but also means he is in danger as well.



Symbols and Symbolism

Wire nodes

Several hundred wire nodes have been drilled into Fenfang's brain. Wires to various computers and systems are attached to Fenfang's brain through these nodes. The nodes are attached to interior wires which dissect Fenfang's brain, allowing the consciousness of Charlotte Dash to be implanted into her mind. The wires are corrosive, however, leading to the destruction of the brain and death in the test subject.

Charlotte Dash's consciousness

Charlotte Dash's consciousness is implanted into Fenfang's mind by way of the wire nodes drilled into her head. Charlotte Dash's consciousness struggles for control of Fenfang's body, succeeding more than once, and even using one opportunity to call in the location of the teens to Singular. Fenfang wages a constant war to stay in control of her body, but then uses Dash's consciousness to enter important passcodes to gain access to Dash's house and safes.

Cash

Cash – to the tune of tens of thousands of dollars – is kept in hidden stashes by Twist around his studio and home. When Twist, Shay, and their group go on the run from Singular, they survive by tapping into Twist's cash stashes. This allows them to rent motel rooms, purchase food, and take on important supplies in their fight against Singular.

Secret photograph

A secret photograph is discovered among Janes's possessions by Odin and his group. The secret photograph has been taken with a hidden camera, and shows an important meeting underway. The meeting includes Jeffers, Dash, Cartwell, and high-level North Korean military commanders. The photograph has been presumably kept by Janes as an escape ticket should the situation require it, but is now being used by Odin and his group as leverage against Singular.

Secret documents

Secret documents in print and in electronic format are stolen by Shay, Odin, and the members of their group from Singular in San Francisco, Janes's house in Eugene, Oregon, and Dash's house in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The documents reveal the scientific research and cruel experiments conducted by Singular, and tie Dash closely



with the company. The documents are being prepared to be dumped onto the internet when the time is right.

Mimbres pottery

Mimbres pottery is a form of pottery prevalent in the American Southwest. Charlotte Dash's late husband collected the pottery, which now serves merely as decorate in Dash's house. Harmon is the first one to notice the pottery since Mr. Dash's death, admiring it greatly. This indicates to the reader that Harmon is not a mindless robot, but that he has a heart and a keen intellect to notice and know about such things. This in turn marks him as a potential flaw in Singular's watertight security apparatus, a mark which later turns out to be true.

Scientific report

A scientific report is mentioned by Janes to Odin as he is leaving Janes's house after the raid. Janes contends that Odin's mother may still be alive, based on a report leaked out of North Korea following the supposed date of her death. The report contains a writing style alarmingly identical to Odin's mother, and may prove that she is alive after all.

Anti-seizure drugs

Anti-seizure drugs are recommended by Janes to stop Fenfang's seizures. This includes doses of carbamazepine and gabapentin. The drugs are obtained by Danny while taking Cruz into town for medical treatment. Fenfang later takes the pills, which in turn stop her seizures.

Spirit line stone

A spirit line stone is kept by Cruz, lost by Cruz, and later found and kept by Harmon outside of Dash's house. The spirit-line stone is a shiny black rock with a linear white mineral deposit down the middle. They are popular in Navajo circles and are meant to bring good luck.

Fenfang's video

Fenfang's video is a filmed expositional account of Fenfang's captivity and experiences under Singular. The video is recorded and edited by Odin to include important documents, film clips, and still images that relate to the story to provide as much evidence as possible. The video is kept offline until the ship raid, after which time Odin goes through with publishing it, and their document dump, online.



Settings

San Francisco

San Francisco is a coastal city in California. It is the American headquarters of Singular, and is where most of their operations are based, including a research lab. San Francisco is where Cartwell works as CEO, and where he plots and plans Singular's operations. San Francisco is also where Singular ends up purchasing a massive ship to create a mobile lab for tests and research on subjects. It is to San Francisco that Harmon and Shay later travel to hold Cartwell hostage at the Flavian Hotel to effect the release of Cade.

Stockton

Stockton is an industrial suburb of Francisco. It is noted by its massive warehouses and factory buildings, many of which are abandoned and vacant. It is the site of a sting operation that Singular sets up to take Shay and her group prisoner, and to out the leaker. Only Cade is captured during the sting operation, although Harmon is outed as the leaker.

Los Angeles

Los Angeles is a major city in California. It is where Twist keeps his wayward home for runaway kids, and where Twist has his art studio. Los Angeles is also home to the suburb of Pasadena, and the Pasadena Public Library where Rachel visits on a daily basis. It is to Los Angeles that Odin and the others head to retrieve Odin's laptop from Rachel, and it is in Los Angeles that more cash is picked up by Twist to fund their anti-Singular operations. It is also in Los Angeles that the license plates of West's jeep are switched out.

Santa Fe

Santa Fe is a city in New Mexico. It is where Charlotte Dash keeps her home, a walled compound set halfway up the mountain just beyond the city. It is to Sante Fe that Shay, Cruz, and Fenfang travel to break into Dash's house and to confront her. Santa Fe is also visited by Vice President Jeffers and Cartwell and his security team to assess the situation following Shay's raid.

Eugene

Eugene is a major city in Oregon, and hosts the home of Dr. Janes. Odin, Cade, and Twist head to Eugene to confront Janes in his home. It is in Eugene that they disguise

their car as a pizza delivery car, and it is in Eugene that Odin learns his mother may still be alive. It is also revealed that Eugene is a sort of trap for Odin and his group, as the codes Janes gave to Odin do not allow access to encrypted files, but corrupts them even further.



Themes and Motifs

Dystopianism

Dystopianism is an important theme in the novel “Outrage” by John Sandford and Michele Cook. Dystopianism involves a government, organization, association, or company, that exercises tremendous or total power and influence in the lives of everyday people, often denying their human and legal rights in the name of the greater good. Those in power will do whatever it takes to retain power, and will do whatever is necessary to secure their own ends. On the surface, those with power have the stated goal of helping the people, but in reality, all they do is harm people.

In the novel, the dystopian element is brought about by the company Singular, and its alliance with portions of the American and North Korean governments. Singular, a biotech company, originally started out with the goal of providing a better life for people and veterans through replacing failing organs and lost limbs with biomechanically engineered organs and limbs. The mother of Odin and Shay worked at Singular, seeking to improve the lives of human beings through her research.

However, at some point, either the goal of Singular changed or simply became apparent – achieving human immortality. Their methods and practices changed, especially under stewardship of Cartwell. The company went on to arrange kidnapping human test subjects with the North Korean government to cozying up with portions of the American government in order to carry out its research unhindered. No less than North Korean military commanders, U.S. Senator Charlotte Dash, and U.S. Vice President Lawton Jeffers became involved in the project.

Everything the company does is done under the mantle of human betterment and scientific endeavor. The company violates the human rights of the test subjects it carries out experiments without the consent of the subjects. It skirts laws, hides behind the government, and manipulates its employees to achieve its ends. The prisoners are subjected to horrifying experiments, such as in the case of Fenfang.

Upon knowledge of its true intent being discovered by Shay and her group, Singular intends to exterminate them. In turn, Jeffers intends to exterminate the leadership of Singular because they know too much, and because they let things get too out of hand. Likewise, the President of the United States, who does not know about Singular’s operation, will also find his life in danger as the President is the greatest threat to Jeffers. When Harmon learns the truth about Singular’s operations, experiments, and intent to kill teenagers, he quits Singular and sides with Shay.

Human Rights

Human rights from an important theme in the novel “Outrage” by John Sandford and Michele Cook. Human rights are fundamental guarantees and principles of freedoms



and preservations of the self afforded to human individuals in conjunction with their lives. Human rights are seen as natural to human beings as gifts from God, meaning that no other person may take these rights away. In the novel, human rights form the moral backbone to much of the plot, and are heavily exploited by Singular.

Originally, Singular upholds human rights by seeking to improve the human condition by way of perfect organs, limb replacements, and immortality. Their methods of testing appear to be moral at first, but at some point, things change. Singular engages in deals with North Korea to kidnap human test subjects. These test subjects are taken against their will, and experimented on against their will, in which time their human rights of freedom and self-determination are denied. Fenfang is one such person who is kidnapped and sent to Singular for testing. There, cruel experiments are conducted on her against her will. The human rights of the test subjects still under control by Singular are also denied as those people are forced to live in a wandering stupor and in filthy conditions. They are being treated worse than animals.

Singular denies human rights in many other ways as well. It will do whatever it needs to in order to achieve its ends. This includes brutality and murder. When Cade is taken captive, he is subjected to vicious beatings and waterboarding to make him talk. He is only released when Cartwell is taken hostage, and even then Cade can barely make it out of the building. Singular has certainly had a hand in the disappearance of Odin and Shays' mother, and also actively seeks to kill Shay, Odin, and their group. This underscores the viciousness of, and degree to which Singular would deny human rights by looking at people as merely expendable liabilities.

Ironically, it is the denial of human rights by an all-powerful company that causes one of its top security people, Harmon, to defect and turn against Singular. Harmon, a patriotic American and Army veteran, fought in the War on Terror to preserve the ideals of America, and to defend human rights of Americans and people around the world. He is horrified by the things that Singular has been doing, especially when it comes to denying human rights, so his defection is only a foregone and welcome conclusion.

Ethics

Ethics form an important theme in the novel "Outrage" by John Sandford and Michele Cook. Ethics – essentially what is morally right or morally wrong – are something which some of the characters in the novel struggle with, while others could not care less about. Many of the actions and events in the novel may also be considered in an ethical light, and ethics ties in closely with the themes of dystopianism and technology.

Early on, by all appearances, Singular was an ethically moral company, dedicated to improving human life through longevity, perfect organs, and limb replacements. Their work with injured veterans is what attracted many of their security personnel, including Harmon. However, somewhere along the way, the testing Singular did on animals evolved into testing on unwilling human subjects as Singular sought immortality. Testing on unwilling, kidnapped human test subjects is highly unethical, and morally



indefensible. Janes tries to argue that only through such experiments can progress can be made, an ethically immoral position to take. Janes could care less about ethics so long as science is served in the process. The ends justify the means.

Shay, Odin, and their team have no ethical qualms about going up against Singular. They know Singular is without moral ethics, so they have no problem with opposing Singular and all that it does. Harmon belatedly comes to realize that Singular is no longer the company he thought it was, and his moral dilemma becomes whether he will live and serve Singular, or potentially die and oppose Singular. Knowing what is morally right and morally ethical, Harmon decides to stand with Shay against Singular.

Interestingly enough, Jeffers knows that much of what he and Singular are doing is unethical, but like Janes, Jeffers believes the ends justify the means. Cartwell and Danyers are willing accomplices, less concerned with ethics than they are concerned with results. Jeffers notes that President Berman has no idea of what is going on, and that if he did, Berman would shut everything down. Berman is morally just, believing that the means are just as important as the ends. Berman is thus a danger to Singular's operations, but is also a danger to himself because Jeffers opposes Berman's morality.

Technology

Technology is an important theme in the novel "Outrage" by John Sandford and Michele Cook. Technology makes numerous important appearances in the novel, and technology itself is present as neither good nor evil, but very susceptible to use for good or evil ends. There are no shortages of technology being used for good and for evil in the novel.

Singular is a biotech company determined to improve human living through perfect organs and limb replacements, as well as other advancements. Singular, at least on the surface, seeks to use technology to such good ends. But beneath the surface, Singular hopes to use technology to achieve human immortality. This in and of itself raises moral questions, but is not in and of itself necessarily evil. However, Singular ends up using its technology to conduct brutal tests on subjects kidnapped by the North Koreans overseas. Singular thus uses technology to evil ends, carrying out experiments on unwilling, imprisoned people.

Singular likewise uses technology to evil ends by encrypting its files and protecting its secret operations. It uses technology to track down Shay and her group by way of facial recognition through cameras and assistance from the NSA, and it uses DNA-determining technology to zero in on Cruz. The technology that Singular is using for human immortality – transferring a person's mind, or consciousness into the brain of another – is currently not actually being used to help anyone, but only to hurt them as in the case of Fenfang.

Meanwhile, Odin, Shay, and their group are using technology for good ends. They use online map services and the internet to research places for their raids and operations.



They use the internet to dump documents and secret information that will expose Singular. They also use the internet to upload a video in which Fenfang relates her story in conjunction with secretly-filmed video of Dash and Janes admitting to their work with Singular and Singular's operations, all in order to bring Singular down – a good end.

Friendship

Friendship is an important theme in the novel "Outrage" by John Sandford and Michele Cook. Friendship occurs between Shay, Odin, Cruz, Cade, Twist, Fenfang, and later, Danny and Harmon as well. Friendship brings about, and is brought about by, mutual like, respect, and loyalty between the members of Shay's group. Friendship proves to be an immensely important thing as the novel progresses.

Shay and her group are united in their fight against Singular, which has helped to bring them all together. But it is their friendship which helps keep them together, and makes the bonds between them stronger. They enjoy being in one another's company, encourage one another, take care of one another, and look out for one another. They learn from one another, and grow in one another's tutelage. Shay is taught to properly fire a gun by Harmon, whereas Fenfang and Odin end up in something of a quasi-romance.

It means they are willing to take greater risks, knowing their friends have their backs, and it means that no one will be left behind. This is certainly the case when Shay and Harmon risk their lives to make sure that Cade will be freed – even when they don't have to, and even when Cade has no real current importance to the mission. It is the case when Cruz, Cade, Twist, and Fenfang risk their lives in order to help Shay and Odin bring down Singular through the raids on Dash, Janes, and Stockton.

The care and concern that Shay and the others have for one another isn't evident only in their willing to take risks for one another, but in the actual way they treat one another. No one is put down for bad ideas, no one is mocked or made fun of, everyone is considered an equal member of the group, and everyone is counted upon for their strengths and helped in their weaknesses. The sense of belonging and bonding between the friends only strengthens their effectiveness against Singular.

Styles

Point of View

John Sandford and Michele Cook tell their novel “Outrage” in the third-person omniscient point of view. This is done for several reasons. Through the third-person narrative, the reader is allowed to follow simultaneous events and subplots, and various characters as the novel increases in complexity and depth. For example, the reader is allowed to follow the raids on Dash and Janes, and the Singular response to the raids, all at the same time. The omniscient aspect of the narrative exposes the reader to information and knowledge that the characters themselves are not always aware of right away. This bird’s eye view of the novel creates a sense of drama and suspense as the reader knows what is coming up against Shay and her friends before Shay and her friends do. Further, the single third-person narrator creates a single, unifying thread between the different characters and different events and subplots of the novel.

Language and Meaning

John Sandford and Michele Cook tell their novel “Outrage” in language that is simple and straightforward. This is done for at least two reasons. First, the novel is written for a target audience of young adults in the 2010s, so it is only fitting that the language employed reflect the audience, 2010s culture, and readers’ level of education. Second, the novel revolves primarily around teenagers, most of them between 16 and 18, so it is only fitting that the language employed in the novel be reflective of the age range and level of education of the characters. This creates a sense of realism and authenticity for the novel and the time period in which it is set – the 2010s.

Structure

John Sandford and Michele Cook divide their novel “Outrage” into 27 linear and chronological, numbered chapters preceded by a prologue. Because “Outrage” is the second installment in the “Singular Menace” trilogy, the prologue serves not only as a way to begin “Outrage”, but to recall briefly the events of the previous novel in order to catch the reader, and new reader to the series, up to speed. The simple and straightforward structure of the novel allows the reader to more easily follow events in the novel between the various characters and situations, and is reflective of the young adult genre which usually relies upon uncomplicated novel structures.



Quotes

Shay had no idea how long she stood there, frozen by the images.

-- Narrator (Prologue paragraph 9)

Importance: As the novel begins, the prologue alludes briefly to the events of the first novel in the Singular Menace series, "Uncaged". This is accomplished through Shay's remembering of the previous day's events. Such sights and sounds as rescuing Odin, the wired Asian girl, the dead Marcus West, and being dragged away by Cruz to escape all haunt Shay with no end in sight. This demonstrates her emotional vulnerability, even though outwardly, she appears tough and unmoved.

Yes, I think I am like a monkey – an experiment. But I do not think the experiment worked. Not completely."

-- Fenfang (Chapter 1 paragraph 40)

Importance: When Fenfang is freed by Shay, Odin, and the others, she reveals that an American woman has been implanted into her mind. She explains it is an incomplete, only partially successful experiment, noting that only parts of her mind have been taken over, while other parts remain her own.

We promise them everything they ask for, and we get the drives, and then we get rid of them.

-- Cartwell (Chapter 2 paragraph 20)

Importance: As Shay, Odin, and their group do their best to keep away from Singular, Singular wants to destroy them. Cartwell unveils his devious plan to his security team, Sync, Harmon, and Thorne. They will do whatever they must to get the flash drives back, including pretending to negotiate. No matter how the flash drives are retrieved, Shay and the others will all be killed regardless. They are too dangerous to leave alive.

We're trying to expose them before they get us.

-- Odin (Chapter 5 paragraph 32)

Importance: Odin meets up with his ex-girlfriend, Rachel Wharton. Rachel is amazed that Odin hasn't been captured yet, while Odin tells Rachel to go into hiding. Odin explains to Rachel what he and his friends have taken on as a mission – to expose Singular before Singular can kill them. It is a desperate gamble, with their lives on the line, but they are determined to bring Singular down. This mission will see them through the course of the novel, and the series.

You think you can do whatever you want, kill whoever you want? You think nothing can touch you?

-- Cruz (Chapter 9 paragraph 157)

Importance: After Shay, Cruz, and Fenfang raid Dash's house, Dash tries to kill them



with her dogs. Her dogs are stopped by X. Cruz rushes up to Dash, punches her in the face, and declares that she and Singular are not invincible. This provides Cruz with a sense of victory, but also provides Dash with a motive for revenge.

Walking back to the motel, toward a wounded guy and dog and a wired-up girl who was probably dying, she suddenly felt overwhelmed by it all.”

-- Narrator (Chapter 11 paragraph 119)

Importance: After getting some orange juice at a nearby gas station, Shay returns to her motel room. As she walks, she thinks about all of the terrifying and disturbing things she has seen over the past few days. It finally begins to get to her like never before, making her feel overwhelmed, sad, and angry all at the same time. She realizes she might not live to see seventeen.

This is bullshit, Micah. What the hell have you been doing?

-- Vice President Jeffers (Chapter 12 paragraph 39)

Importance: Cartwell meets with Dash and the Vice President. The presence of Vice President Jeffers indicates that knowledge of the crimes of Singular goes all the way to the top. Jeffers is irate that things are turning out the way they are. He cannot conceive how things have gotten so out of hand as to lead to the escape from the labs to the attack on Dash. He will not tolerate failure any longer.

Berman knew nothing about Singular. Not yet.

-- Narrator (Chapter 14 paragraph 24)

Importance: Jeffers meets with Earl Denyers, Assistant Deputy Director of Operations at the CIA. The two have known each other for thirty years. Both are in on the Singular plot. Whereas Shay and everyone else believe the president himself must also be involved, Jeffers reveals - shockingly - that the president has no knowledge of anything going on. The president is truly innocent.

Berman is a moralist. He'd be shocked, and I'd wind up on a landfill somewhere, giving speeches to the seagulls.

-- Vice President Jeffers (Chapter 14 paragraph 30)

Importance: With the Singular situation getting out of hand, Jeffers laments the fact that Berman has no knowledge of what is going on. He is even more annoyed by the fact that Jeffers is a moral absolutist, who would never go along with the Singular plan. Should Berman find out, the entire plan would be done away with, and Jeffers would be out of a job.

Then maybe his usefulness is over?

-- Denyers (Chapter 14 paragraph 31)

Importance: Earl Denyers, Assistant Deputy Director of Operations at the CIA, converses with Vice President Jeffers about the Singular situation. Jeffers reveals that



President Berman has no knowledge of the Singular situation at all, and that even if told, Berman would never go along with it. Berman would, in fact shut everything down. Denyers callously suggests that perhaps Berman's usefulness as president is over. Jeffers says nothing on the subject, causing Denyers to understand that Jeffers did not say "no". This is incredibly dangerous for not only Shay and her group, but for the president as well.

We need this guy. If Singular is a threat to him, and we could bring it down, he might help us – and if he's near the top of the company, he must have all kind of s information that would help us get Cade back.

-- Shay (Chapter 21 paragraph 49)

Importance: It turns out that Harmon is the leak at Singular, and it is Harmon who has been helping Shay and the others. His inside knowledge will be critical is Shay and her friends seek to free Cade from the clutches of Singular. Harmon agrees to meet with Shay because he knows his safety now rests with bringing down Singular.

Get out of there, get out of there..

-- Twist (Chapter 27 paragraph 1)

Importance: As Harmon and Shay carry out a search of the ship, a convoy of new prisoners and Singular security guards arrives. Twist sends warnings to Harmon and Shay, but they do not have enough time to get off. As a result, they must take cover and hide in the bowels of the ship, even as the ship leaves port for an unknown destination.