

# **Wild Justice Study Guide**

## **Wild Justice by Wilbur Smith**

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# Plot Summary

Wild Justice by Wilbur Smith is an explosive story that deals with an issue of worldwide concern. A British Airways flight departs from Mauritius, unaware that four well armed terrorists are on board. As soon as they are airborne, one of the girls in this group opens a coco-de-mer to reveal the concussive grenades inside. She takes one, removes the pin, and walks into the galley. When the staff requests she return to her seat, she shows them her hand and insists to be taken to flight control. Ingrid is in control within moments of her entry, knowing which circuits need to be turned off, where the emergency signals are and how to disarm them. Four hundred and one passengers are still unaware of their predicament.

Peter Stride is the General in charge of one of the three branches of Atlas named Thor, and is looking forward to a weekend off with his daughter, but instead has little more than enough time for dinner before being called back to deal with the crisis brewing as a result of the British Airways flight 070 that has been out of communication and has not checked in.

Their demands are simple - a list of what they call 'true leaders' released, one million gold Kruger Rand coins, their position televised on prime time, and the assurance that a resolution calling for economic sanctions on South Africa will not be vetoed by any member of the Security Council of the U.N. The first three demands met will trigger the release of women and children, and the last, to occur three days later, will release the men.

A branch of the Atlas team, Thor, under the command of General Peter Stride, is called in, and they soon realize that this is no ordinary hostage situation. Peter is recognized and referred to by name when he approaches the leader in an attempt at negotiation, and that leads him to think that someone very high up is involved as the Atlas group is not a publicized response team. After four passengers are killed, he leads the team in and regains control without further incident, killing three of the four hostages. The leader taunts him, insisting she'll be free to act again in no time. Believing he has lost his position for going in against direct orders, Peter decides he has nothing to lose. He shoots and kills her while she is in custody, and then he quits.

He returns to the family home, Abbots Yew, which is still occupied by his brother Steven, and is approached by Baroness Magda Altmann with a job offer he cannot refuse. He is to aid her in the hunt for the terrorist, Caliph, responsible for the kidnapping and murder of her husband and for other acts of terrorism, including the hostage taking that has ended his career. In the weeks that follow, Peter's relationship with Magda evolves into something special. Colin Noble, Peter's second in command at Thor, shows up and asks Peter to return to Atlas for a meeting with his old boss, Kingston Parker. While he is on his way there, Peter's daughter Melissa-Jane is kidnapped and her finger is sent to Magda's as proof. Peter asks for help from Atlas, and Colin and his team help him to rescue Melissa, who is being held by Caliph's henchmen in a remote town in Ireland. Peter is told Atlas is still employing him and asks him to work undercover, watching their



prime suspect Magda. After giving him more information that he can absorb, they send him back. She senses a reserve in him, and for a time keeps her distance. When she finally summons him to her private island, Peter is prepared to kill her, but she has been warned and fends him off. During their struggle, Peter realizes he can't kill her even if she is Caliph, and in their subsequent conversations, he learns more than he bargains for. To ensure her safety, she goes into hiding, and Peter discovers his brother is deeply involved. In a tale filled with twists and turns and unexpected events, Wilbur Smith leads the reader on a wild ride that has surprises lasting to the very last page. The mastermind, Caliph, is killed, but his identity, and the identities of those who protect him, are a surprise to all.



# Section 1: Pages 1 - 36

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Peter Stride is the General in charge of one of the three branches of Atlas named Thor, and is looking forward to a weekend off with his daughter, but instead has little more than enough time for dinner before being called back to deal with the crisis brewing as a result of the British Airways flight 070 that has been out of communication and has not checked in.

South African radar intercepts the signal of the approaching plane and scrambles a Mirage flight to intercept. Peter and his second in command, Colin, are in the air soon after and are on their way to intercept when they get the news that the British Airways flight is confirmed in South African airspace. Peter briefs his boss Dr. Kingston Parker on the possible scenarios when the BA flight begins its landing approach at Johannesburg Airport. The Mirage pilot is ordered to enforce the departure clearance ordered, but the Boeing continues as if it doesn't notice the Mirage in front of it. The Mirage pulls alongside, and radios the presence of the fourth person in the cockpit. He is instructed to simulate a head on attack and does, but the Boeing has descended into controlled airspace. Ingrid orders pilot Cyril Watkins to land, but air traffic control has blocked the runway. Ingrid instructs him to land on the grass strip alongside, but Cyril makes the decision to abort the landing. Ingrid responds by shooting off the hand of the flight engineer, amputating it at the wrist, and instructs Cyril to land or she will kill the engineer. Even the faces of the crews on the ground are white as Cyril lands the plane dangerously close, rocking to a stop just short of the main radar installations building.

## Section 1: Pages 1 - 36 Analysis

Ingrid is dressed to draw attention to herself as she and her companions go through the airport security checks in Mauritius. They carry mesh bags containing 'Love Nuts' from the island, and their sight is so common that these bags of fruit are not checked. The four hundred and one passengers board, most of them from the medical convention that just finished, and the four terrorists relax, knowing the most difficult part is over. They have manage to smuggle their armored plastic grenades and firearms on board. Once



they are off the ground, Ingrid opens a Love Nut and removes a grenade, arming it before heading for the cockpit. She is excited, and confident, and has no second thoughts about her mission. She takes over the plane efficiently, having practiced long and hard for this moment, knowing all of the possible danger points and eliminating them as she goes along. The danger excites her further as she informs the pilot that she is perfectly willing to die for her cause, but promises that if they obey her wishes, everyone will survive.

Peter Stride gets the call when the plane has missed its second check in. Contact is attempted three times before it is decided that a possible situation exists, and Peter and his team are called in. Peter is in charge of Thor Command. It is one of the three organizations that make up Atlas. Peter has hardly had time to do more than have dinner with his fourteen-year-old daughter when the call comes in, and though she is disappointed, his mind is already focused on the task ahead as he scrambles to return to the base. General Stride and Colonel Colin Noble are in the air quickly, heading to intercept the British Airways flight. They are midway through a briefing when they get the information that the plane is attempting to land at Johannesburg Airport in South Africa.

Ingrid tells pilot Cyril Watkins to ignore the instructions from the Mirage trying to deter their landing, and land anyway, but when Cyril sees the equipment on the runway, he aborts, taking the plane back into the air. The penalty for his disobedience is a single shot to the wrist of his engineer, who doubles over in shock as his hand is amputated. Stunned by the voracity and violence of Ingrid's actions, he circles as instructed and lands on the grass beside the runway, to the stunned expressions of the ground crew. Atlas is now convinced that the motive is political in nature.



## Section Two: Pages 36 - 71

### Section Two: Pages 36 - 71 Summary

Peter and Dr. Parker argue about the merits of morally justifiable militancy while Ingrid instructs Cyril as to where to maneuver the Boeing. The co-pilot and several stewardesses are attempting to stop the bleeding of the flight engineer, but Ingrid refuses to let him off the plane for medical assistance, reminding Cyril that they have over three hundred doctors on board and allowing two to come forward to attend to him. Then she gets on the intercom and tells the passengers that they may be there for days and disobedience will be severely dealt with. Two of her fellow terrorists are sent down the aisles to collect passports.

Sixteen hours later, the only contact has been for medical supplies. The South Africans are pushing to storm the plane and Peter knows that kind of action would be disastrous. He arrives first and the word has already preceded him that he will take charge of the situation. He does so immediately and without airs, soon after instructing the existing soldiers already in place to make an obvious retreat of both armored vehicles and armed men surrounding the Boeing. They do so, but reluctantly. Finally, further contact is made by the terrorists, who give them a detailed log of passengers on board, their nationalities and number of children. The latter deeply affects Peter. He has seen first hand in Ireland how the innocence of children can quickly be absorbed by the actions of terrorists.

As the predominant nationality is British, the terrorists demand a spokesman from that country be present to hear their demands, and Peter takes the opportunity to meet them face to face himself. Asked to strip almost naked, he walks alone to the plane, being recorded and monitored by snipers the entire way. Surrounded by the crew of the plane, the woman tells Peter their demands, which lets him know the situation is far more serious than any of them imagined. He tries to ask questions, which she refuses to answer or lies about, but the pilot uses discreet hand gestures to answer how many terrorists are on board, confirm the gunshot injury and indicate the source of their electronic connection to their grenades.

### Section Two: Pages 36 - 71 Analysis

This is the first real test of the Atlas program since its inception and Parker is coming face to face with the differences in opinions that he has with Peter just as he had originally feared. Parker believes in the merits of what he terms to be morally justifiable militancy, and Peter strongly objects. To Peter, who has seen so much of this first hand, there is no room for moral justifications for militant action. There is no middle ground, and Peter finds it difficult to hide the feelings of anger, contempt and frustration he feels when discussing this with Parker.





The terrorist calling herself Ingrid allows two of the doctors to look after the flight engineer and has the necessary medical equipment brought on board to stabilize him and make him reasonably comfortable. The doctors are filled with contempt for her until she uses her powers of persuasion with them, first complimenting the job they are doing and then promising that by way of reward, their loved ones will be the first to be released. They now find themselves looking upon her with a curious mixture of gratitude and respect. She is definitely someone who is adept in getting her own way, regardless of the circumstances.

The South Africans turn control over to Peter when he gets there, having been briefed by their commanders that Peter will lead and they are to follow his instructions. They aren't thrilled with the prospect, and less so when Peter asks them to visibly pull back their troops and armored vehicles. When the call comes from the terrorists requesting a representative from Britain to hear their demands, Peter takes the opportunity to meet the terrorists face to face. Stripped almost naked, he stands in front of the small group of airline employees trying to get a better look at her, but 'Ingrid' is intelligent and resourceful. She has a quick temper and believes in her cause to a dangerous degree. When she finishes citing her list of demands, Peter is only too aware of the degree of their commitment to this action, and his impression of their chances at a successful resolution have greatly diminished.



## Section Three: Pages 72 - 98

### Section Three: Pages 72 - 98 Summary

When he returns to the terminal, Parker is ready with information about who she is, and Peter confirms she is definitely willing to go all the way to martyrdom if necessary and his belief the group may have governmental ties. After Parker listens to Peter's assessment, he promises to get back to him within the hour, after he has briefed the President, the Prime Minister and the Ambassadors. Next, Colin confirms the explosives are genuine and capable, and then plays back the recording of his meeting with the terrorist. When Peter hears the playback of the terrorist confirming to someone inside 'It's Stride' on her way out the door, his blood runs cold. Inside the plane, the other female terrorist called 'Karen' loses her temper with a passenger, and 'Ingrid' calms her down, whispering to her for continued patience and reminding her that in just a few hours they will take their pills. One of the doctors informs her that the engineer is going into renal failure from delayed shock, but still cannot get permission to have him transferred to a hospital.

A counteroffer is put on the table, but 'Ingrid' refuses to talk unless it is in person. When Peter gets to the plane, she comes out by herself, and noticing the laser dot on her chest, is unimpressed and considers it an act of hostility. Peter gives a signal to cancel it, and the dot vanishes. He delivers the counteroffer calmly, but she is not happy, and her face contorts with her lack of control. She informs Peter that the first deadline has just passed and that it is necessary for her to convince those in power that they are serious. She goes back into the plane and when she returns, it is with four passengers that she had previously selected for their impact. Two are children and the other two are women - one of them heavily pregnant. They are all shot in the back and tumble down the stairs. The next deadline of midnight is announced with a warning that dire consequences will result if their demands are not met. Peter is horrified, and tries to save one of the children, but is not successful.

Peter delivers the news to Parker, who is convinced that the way to proceed is to secure the release of the women and children, buying time to work out a 'Delta' solution. Peter disagrees, but is promptly put in his place. He tries hard not to show the anger and frustration he is feeling, and though the Prime Minister and Sir William are horrified by the news of the murders, they are divided as to the action that should be taken.

### Section Three: Pages 72 - 98 Analysis

Peter returns from his meeting with 'Ingrid' disturbed and convinced that the situation is much more dire than they first believed. The woman he spoke to was calculating and cold, sure of herself and determined. It is a dangerous combination and Peter recognizes that this might not be a situation that they can get on top of. Not only do the terrorists want to televise their position on prime time, but they want a list of what they



call 'true leaders' released and one million gold Kruger Rand coins. When their list of people is free and on a flight to a destination of their choice, the money is in their hands, and their message has been broadcast, they agree to release the women and children only. Three days later, a resolution calling for economic sanctions on South Africa is not to be vetoed by any member of the Security Council of the U.N. or the men will not be released. It is this last demand that instills fear in Peter, as he recognizes that there must be treason involved by someone who knows the protocols of Atlas. The number of possibilities is small.

After discussing the issue with Parker, Peter learns that the situation is worse than even he feared. Colin plays back the recording made while he met with 'Ingrid' and Peter clearly hears her announce to someone inside, "It's Stride" as he walks up. Her knowledge of who he is changes their odds considerably. He contacts Parker again, interrupting his briefing with the President to tell him that the odds of successful Delta is now only fifty-fifty.

'Ingrid' plays her part to perfection. She has such charisma that many of the passengers refer to her as the nice one, but they couldn't be more wrong. She is easily the most dangerous of all of them. When one of the doctors treating the engineer tells her that he needs a hospital to deal with shock related renal failure, she outright refuses, knowing that he will likely die, and then sits there holding his hand as though his life meant something. The truth is that he is only one man, and she is on a mission to affect the many at the expense of the few.

When Peter calls 'Ingrid' with the government's counteroffer, she insists on a person to person delivery. He again walks out to the plane and this time she boldly comes out without camouflage. Hearing the counteroffer, where much of their demands are not met, she loses her temper and gives the order for four preselected passengers to be shot. She does this at the top of the stairs in front of Peter, killing two children and two women - one of them expecting. Peter is stunned, and his hatred for her increases tenfold as he realizes how committed and insanely irrational she really is. Then she calmly delivers the next deadline time of midnight and gives out the stimulant pills to her group to keep them sharp for the remaining time.

Peter tells Parker what happened, and Parker is advocating that they give in to the first set of demands to buy them time to increase the odds of a successful Delta incursion. Peter argues this choice but without effect. Even the governments are divided on how to respond, although all are equally horrified by the murders.



## Section 4: Pages 98 - 130

### Section 4: Pages 98 - 130 Summary

Colin uses a twin to the Boeing to run simulations with his team in the event that a Delta insertion clearance is given. Using flares to blind their adversaries, then nerve gas followed by insertion, he feels they are as ready as they can be. Peter tells him to rest his team and talks the details through with Colin. He wants to plan for an insertion that uses no flares on the chance that 'Ingrid' knows more about their methods. He suggests the team focus on the red shirts and asks Colin to set up a strike timed for fifteen minutes before the next deadline expires. Peter tries again to get permission to remove the bodies, but 'Ingrid' again refuses.

The cabinet and the ambassadors watch the murders after a tape is delivered to them, and the British government agrees to provide the 170 million dollars demanded but the rest must be agreed to by all. Peter requests that Parker authorize a Delta assault and Parker insists on Colin's presence when he tells them both in no uncertain terms that they will not authorize the assault. Promising to get back to them, Parker signs off and Colin, taking one look at Peter's face, knows he will do it despite the orders to the contrary. Peter sets up the recording equipment to record a formal objection from Colin to save his career.

Four more passengers are chosen at random. The second woman so alarmed that the man across the aisle comes to her rescue, gallantly offering to trade seats with her and take her place. Peter and Colin prepare to storm the plane and Peter marks the time grimly as the end of his career. He gives the signal and puts Delta in motion. Just as they'd practiced, the team moves with precision, observing radio silence, and using increasing radio clicks to convey progress. They dispense gas, but 'Ingrid' manually drops the oxygen masks and warns her team. Karen begs 'Ingrid' not to detonate, insisting that Caliph will get them out of jail, but senses she will anyway, so Karen grabs the camera that is the detonator and runs for the door just as Peter makes his entrance and shoots her dead. Two more of the team are killed and 'Ingrid' is wounded and taken into custody without a single passenger killed in the exchange. The Prime Minister is just announcing his decision to give in when he gets the call informing him of the success of the Delta insertion.

### Section 4: Pages 98 - 130 Analysis

Peter and Colin are both frustrated with the lack of clearance given for Delta. As they are on the front lines of the situation, they both understand that the sooner the insertion is made, the sooner they will save lives. It is only Colin's training that keeps him drilling his men anyway, on the off chance that things will change, despite knowing that they will never get permission to go. Peter presents his position to Parker, but after insisting that Colin is present, Parker makes it abundantly clear that he does not give his permission



to go forward with Delta. He insists that they confirm his decision, and they both do before signing off. Colin knows that Peter is going to go ahead anyway. He can see it in his face and tries to talk him out of it, telling him that his entire career is at stake. Peter isn't listening. He tells Colin to formally record his objection for the record, which he does to save his own career, and then he happily follows Peter to finalize their attack.

The governments involved can't seem to agree on a stand to take. The British are willing to pay the ransom money, but leave the rest of the decisions to the other governments. South Africa doesn't want to give in to any demands, knowing that if they do, this will only be the first in a long line of terrorist acts. They also don't want the other governments involved to agree to the embargo, cutting their country off from economics and resources.

'Ingrid', like the rest of her team, is feeling the effects of having taken more of the stimulant than recommended. Suffering from headaches and all-around malaise, she looks forward to the next dose, but at the same time knows that the extra earlier was necessary to give them the boost they needed to kill the first four passengers. Now, she gets on the intercom and calmly explains that the next four will be chosen at random and draws seat numbers, asking those drawn to go to first class. The first seat chosen is a man who begs his fellow passengers not to allow this to happen.

When Peter gives the order to dispense the gas, it takes little time for 'Ingrid' to figure out what is going on. She almost seems to want to be a martyr and stands in the aisle with the detonator, waiting for the insertion she knows is coming. She is no longer thinking about survival, but instead about how much of the rescue team she can kill as well. She is concentrating on maximum effect instead of living, and Karen desperately tries to get through to her, telling her over and over that Caliph wouldn't leave them in jail for long, and they could just surrender. When Karen gets no response from 'Ingrid', she grabs the detonator and runs down the aisle with it straight into Peter. The entire rescue takes moments and 'Ingrid' is the only survivor, shot but subdued. She brags about how she won't spend any time incarcerated and that this is only the beginning, and Peter hears the ring of truth in what she says but is still relieved to have stopped it for now.



## Section 5: Pages 130 - 171

### Section 5: Pages 130 - 171 Summary

Parker berates Peter for disobeying his orders before the adrenaline has faded, and both are angry and barely controlled. Parker tells Peter that all decisions will now go through him first, and it is clear that his plan is to have Peter removed from command of Thor as soon as possible. Peter walks down the hallway through the passengers who congratulate him, one even hugging him briefly, but the smile on his face doesn't reach his eyes. He picks up the gun 'Ingrid' used to kill the passengers, and loading it, he continues to the office where the Thor doctor is working on her. He tells the doctor and Colin to leave, and explains to 'Ingrid' that now she has forced him to sink to her level. For the first time she is afraid and is spewing abuse and hatred at Peter when a single shot is heard, and then no more. Seconds later, Peter walks out, handing the still hot gun to Colin, and telling the doctor he can return to her now.

Peter spends the weekend with his brother Steven on the family estate of Abbots Yew. There he meets Baroness Magda Altmann, who proposes that she come to work for him. While at first he refuses, she tells him the real basis for her generous offer. Magda is looking for a man that will lead the efforts to find and eliminate the most dangerous threat the world knows - Caliph. Once she has explained herself fully, he is unable to refuse.

In the six weeks that follow, Peter sees her three times, each occasion too brief for his liking. He goes about the business of being her sales executive while quietly hunting Caliph on the side. He also rearranges her security, replacing her staff with professional men trained by a friend. They meet for a day on the slopes before returning to her suite of offices, where she works for over an hour before calling him up to her private suite on the top floor. There they discuss the latest actions they believe could be attributed to Caliph.

Caliph's motives appear to have gone from amassing money to becoming more powerful. In the Boeing hijacking, Caliph tried to isolate South Africa to make it free for the taking, but his plan didn't success because of Peter. Now he is trying again, but his concentration was on the Arabian and Iranian mineral-filled countries. He uses kidnapping and threats to intimidate the royal families who have no governmental hangups. By eliminating those who won't play by his rules, he creates a way to increase his own power.

The whole concept of a single head to this enemy is new to Peter. Unsuccessful in finding Caliph, Peter suggests to Magda that he use himself as bait to lure him out, but Magda doesn't like the idea of losing a man she is beginning to feel very strongly for.



## Section 5: Pages 130 - 171 Analysis

Peter knows his job is over, and Parker confirms it shortly after their successful mission. Strangely, Peter is not as upset about the career ending move as he is that this group brought him down to their level. Still feeling the adrenaline from the rescue, he challenges Parker, asking him if he is fired, but Parker knows that under the circumstances, he can't very well fire the hero of the hour. He promises that he will pursue the issue and tells Peter that from here on, all decisions will go through him first. Peter knows it's over. He goes down the hall, accepting congratulations from those who were saved, and retrieves the gun that 'Ingrid' used on the victims. He loads it and uses it to shoot 'Ingrid', ensuring that she never gets the chance to be free to plan something like this again. For now at least, he knows he has stopped one arm of the terrorist regime, but he sees this as a multi-headed snake that can never be fully eradicated. As soon as one is taken down, another takes its place. The whole concept depresses him.

He spends time with his daughter and goes to the family home of Abbots Yew for the weekend after a persistent request for his company from his twin brother Steven. He goes riding with M.J., and when they return, Steven has company. Peter is surprised to find himself introduced to a woman who had been a subject of one of Thor Command's alerts. Baroness Altmann is even more stunning in person than anything he had seen in the file he studied for many days. It isn't until after lunch that she seeks him out and wrangles an invitation to spend time alone with him by asking about the ancient ruins on the property. Peter offers to show her, and they hike to them in the afternoon.

When they get to the ruins, the Baroness confesses she has another agenda. One of the companies she controls had offered Peter a job that he had turned down, feeling that there was more to it than the generous remuneration offered. She confirms that his suspicions were correct but only partially, and asks him what he knows about Caliph. By the time their conversation is done, he is accepting her job offer, which is merely a cover so that he can help her to find and get rid of Caliph, who has been a subject of her obsession since he murdered her husband. Since then, Magda Altmann has used her considerable power and resources to discover a great deal about the terrorist Caliph, who has been behind many acts of violence and crimes against humanity. She also feels that as a result of the recent clash between Peter and BA flight 070, Peter is the perfect candidate to help her catch this madman.

Peter begins working for her immediately, under the cover of sales manager, and after reorganizing her protection detail to be more efficient, he searches for Caliph. He and Magda spend little time together, but each meeting is bittersweet. Finally, they admit their feelings for each other and they connect on a personal as well as professional level. She is a constant surprise to him. When he suggests to her that they use him as a lure to bring Caliph in, she objects, unwilling to lose him now that they have discovered each other.





## Section 6: Pages 171 - 209

### Section 6: Pages 171 - 209 Summary

Peter and Magda fly from Zurich to Britain in a Lear jet that Magda piloted the take off and landing in, citing that she needs the flight hours. Magda gives Peter her Maserati to drive, and he becomes aware of a Citroen keeping pace with him. It finally drops back and he convinces himself that he must have been imagining it. He comes over a rise to find a gendarme, flares, and a two vehicle car accident. He slows, and the Gendarme directs him to one side, but he notices one of the bodies under the tarp moving. Suddenly aware it is a trap, he guns the Maserati, but the wet pavement contributes to a delay in responsiveness from it. The car swerves and the gun play begins. Automatic weapons fire and he hears them hit the car. The damage is compounded as the second 'body' fires. He is hit by a bullet that is already slowed by the Maserati's body, and the smell of gas tells him the lines are hit as well. He tries to recall the terrain, heading back to Magda's, and bails out of the damaged Maserati after the engine compartment shows signs of fire. He moves away from the car, still thinking that these men were sent to kidnap Magda and attempt to collect a ransom. They are a professional group of men, and Peter, though wounded, has to stay on his toes to keep ahead of them.

With little ammunition, he can't create cover fire for himself, so he creeps back towards the Maserati's shell and hides behind a nearby oak tree. He waits, but no one follows. He walks towards the bridge, using the creek to find his way, almost convincing himself he's alone before he smells the tobacco of a man close by. He hides and waits for the other to move. Finally, movement from three men very close with automatic weapons makes Peter consider his strategies. Headlights from a vehicle approach and a vehicle parked on the bridge starts up. The three men abandon their attempts to hide, realizing their cohorts are about to leave them behind. Two get away, but Peter tackles the third. In the struggle, they end up in the creek. The vehicle approaching is Magda and her bodyguards, as Magda had been told Peter is dead. The bodyguard sees the struggle, and when the attacker breaks free, Peter shouts at one of them not to let the man get away. The bodyguard shoots the man dead. Magda takes him to the hospital where the bullet is removed and then home where she nurses him back to health.

Peter takes Melissa-Jane shopping, and is aware once again that he is being followed. His concern is replaced with amusement when the tail on him rotates and he finds himself looking at Colin. They go back to Magda's, where Colin tells him he now has Peter's old job and asks him how he'd like to come to New York for a couple of days. He is so sure of Peter's acceptance that he has already made arrangements for M.J. to fly home. Peter accepts, knowing that the trap he has baited with himself has yielded results.





## Section 6: Pages 171 - 209 Analysis

Part of the flight is pure business and Peter has convinced himself that their new relationship will be kept entirely private when she kisses him on the mouth before going back to the pilot's seat to land. Peter doesn't want Magda to drive the distinctive Maserati, as it is a signpost as to her location and makes her an easier target, so she tells him someone should drive it, and gives it to him. He understands her love for it before reaching the city. He attends his meetings and leaves with a spring in his step, looking forward to the evening with Magda. When he drives into an ambush, he immediately assumes that the attack is meant as a kidnapping plot against Magda, who is usually behind the wheel of this car. He uses the car to its maximum capabilities, but the two apparently dead bodies rise up to join the attack and Peter and the Maserati are both hit. His mind is in hyper-drive, slowing everything else around him. He even has time to consider and appreciate the professionalism of the attack. When it is clear the car is on fire, Peter bails out, leaving it to coast to the side of the road and burn. He remembers the area vaguely from a previous visit and manages to elude his captors until approaching headlights spoil their plans entirely.

Magda has been called by the local gendarmes who all know her vehicle, because it is found on fire, and they made the presumption that the driver burned inside with it. She and her bodyguards go to the accident site, Magda sick with grief, only to discover Peter and the lone remaining attacker struggling in the water. Peter wants to question the man so is careful not to use lethal force, but the bodyguard is unaware of this desire, and when Peter asks him to stop the man, he shoots him dead. Peter is angry, but soothed quickly by Magda's ministrations and her obvious mixture of relief and concern for his well being. After his bullet is removed at a local hospital, she takes him home and spends days tending to his every need and ensuring his recovery. She replaces his suitcase full of clothing, even remembering shaving gear and toiletries, and includes a gift that amazes him. She buys him a very expensive first edition book that finishes his collection of nineteenth century African first editions by Cornwallis Harris. He is speechless, as it is a one of kind in museum quality condition. It is difficult for him to accept such an extravagant gift. Magda is so relieved that he likes it that he can hardly refuse it.

She confesses that she owns a small chain of nine islands under two hours from Tahiti by air, and asks him how he would feel about retiring there in anonymity. She is willing to find someone else to run Altmann Industries and to spend the rest of her life with him there where the rest of the world can't intrude. He can't even answer, but she realizes quickly that he is right. Despite the temptation to escape it all and be safe, someone has to bring Caliph down. They are the best hope to do that, and despite the danger, have to continue. They are both disappointed, however.

Peter takes Melissa-Jane shopping, and she is in the process of trying to convince him to buy her expensive silk underclothes when Colin shows up. Peter now understands that it was Colin's men in the Citroen who had followed him, and is relieved by the knowledge. They go back to Magda's Orchestrate suite and talk shop until Colin reveals

the real reason for his intrusion. He comes with an invitation for Peter to return to New York for a few days. It is what Peter has been waiting for. The trap he baited yields results faster than he expected, but he doesn't turn the invitation down. He needs to know who the traitor in Atlas is.



## Section 7: Pages 209 - 241

### Section 7: Pages 209 - 241 Summary

They land at Kennedy just after midnight. The next morning, Colin takes him to Kingston Parker, and Peter has difficulty maintaining a degree of civility. Parker outlines the same conclusions that Magda had at Abbot's Yew, telling Peter about a consolidated militant activity. Then he tells Peter that he accepted his resignation to encourage the appearance that he was an embittered outcast, wronged and ripe for subversion by the enemy. Parker gives Peter a bank statement revealing that his salary is still being paid and had been all along, and apologizes for the pretense. He tells Peter that Baron Altmann had actually been one of the top agents of Mossad and convinces him it is true, revealing how much research they have also done into the Baroness. What he hears about her makes him very uneasy.

Peter doesn't reveal many key elements of his current association with Magda, although Parker knows about his job and the most recent attempt to either kidnap or kill Magda. Parker asks him to use his relationship with Magda to discover whether or not she is a threat, and seeing no alternative at present, Peter agrees on the surface. Magda is so pleased to hear from him that he has a hard time believing that she could be faking it.

She meets him at the airport and he admits meeting with Atlas. She already knew, and they discuss the benefits of his employment cross over with Atlas. She gives him a parcel that arrived for him the night before, and he opens it to find a single finger with the same kind of nail polish as Melissa-Jane was wearing, floating in formaldehyde.

Cynthia sounds grief-stricken when she calls to ask if M.J. is with him, confessing she's been gone for two days. Magda doesn't need confirmation. Peter tells Cynthia he is on his way, and alerts Colin before leaving. When he reaches Heathrow, the news is front page. Inspector Alan Richards fills Peter and Colin in, and confirms that it is indeed M.J.'s finger, though Peter had no doubt. It is after three in the morning when Peter heads to the Dorchester to check in and gets his messages. Cynthia and Magda left messages, and a sealed envelope with only his name on the front reveals a message from Caliph when Peter opens it. It simply states that this time a finger, next time a hand - then a foot, and another foot, and later the head, unless of course he kills Doctor Kingston Parker, at which time his daughter's suffering will immediately end. It ends with instructions to destroy the letter and show no one, or she dies immediately.

Peter is horrified and can hardly keep it together until the porter is gone and he is alone to read it again. Thinking it through, Peter knows this will never end with Parker's death. He will have to kill Caliph, or be killed by him. He destroys the note, knowing Caliph has won, and spends the rest of the night planning the death of Parker.



## Section 7: Pages 209 - 241 Analysis

The meeting the next morning finds Peter face to face with Kingston Parker again in the top floor of an extravagantly furnished apartment that occupies the top floor of a building overlooking the Pan Am and World Trade Center buildings. Parker tries to be friendly - an offer which Peter immediately rejects. He tells Peter that he misjudged him, but by the time he realized it, Peter had already tendered his resignation. Parker tells Peter that he was already aware of the change in terrorist style and its consolidation of activities when the BA 070 flight was hijacked. He tries to tell him that the reason he denied him Delta clearance at the time was because he needed to find out as much as he could about the group behind it. Peter is unconvinced and unimpressed, especially when Parker explains that Peter's actions proved to Parker that he was the man Parker needed all along.

Peter skirts the truth and is disturbed by everything he is hearing. He doesn't know what to believe. If he is to believe Parker, Atlas had already staked him out as bait from the very beginning, and the signs seem to point to Magda's involvement at least to some degree. Peter isn't sure why Magda's previous liaisons, as they are referred to by Parker, should bother him, but they do. He feels betrayed even though he knows that is an adolescent reaction, and he chastises himself for it. He remembers her invitation to hide away on her island and wonders if they are predestined to destroy each other. Somehow, even though she knows about his visit to Atlas, he is able to relax with her and all of his doubts seem to fade away.

Peter feels the world come out from under his feet when he opens the plain parcel that was delivered for him when he was gone. He had a terrible premonition beforehand, and even Magda sees the change in his face. Opening it, he finds the delicate finger belonging to his daughter, recognizing the nail polish she was wearing. When he talks to Cynthia, she is equally devastated, revealing it has been two days since she has seen M.J.

Magda wants to come with Peter when he tells Cynthia he is coming, but he insists she would be of more use to him working her contacts from there. She reluctantly agrees. The newspaper already has the story when he gets there, and tells of her abduction by a maroon Triumph that she seemed to get in without fear or alarm. Peter is picked up by Colin and they head to the police station, where Inspector Richards gives them the details as he knows them and asks them if there is anything they can contribute, while making it clear that they have the investigation well in hand.

Peter finally checks into the Dorchester after three in the morning, getting his messages from the clerk at that time. One is from Caliph, with his demand that Peter kill Parker to end his daughter's suffering. He tries not to panic, knowing he has to think. According to the schedule Caliph gives him, he has sixteen days before her hand will arrive. Thor goes into extensive training, and Peter joins Colin, fitting right back in where he had once been. After the training sessions, he plans his attack on Parker, putting together the ingredients to make a bomb.



## Section 8: Pages 241 - 273

### Section 8: Pages 241 - 273 Summary

Thirty miles from Dublin, in the small village of Wicklow hills, a man approaches the store. Known to the shopkeepers as Mr. Barry, his cover is that of a writer. Two men are staying in the old Manse, and their job is simply to keep M.J. under wraps. The former doctor is older, and though no longer practicing, knows M.J. is suffering from sepsis and needs antibiotics. He is the one who removed her finger, and has no desire to do the hand.

Sir Steven Stride offers a reward, and 148 claims of responsibility have been received. While Peter is talking to the Inspector, receiving news that unless they hear something soon they have to assume she's dead, a call comes into the switchboard, telling them that Gilly O'Shaughnessy has her and is holding her at Laragh in Ireland.

It feels right to Peter, and having long learned to trust his gut feelings, he convinces Colin to put the team in Bravo mode. Colin agrees, and minutes later is picking Peter up in a helicopter. They make the four and a half hour flight, arriving just as dark is falling. Meanwhile, Gilly O'Shaughnessy is nervous. He is another man who lives on his nerves and he has the feeling that they've been in one place for too long. He goes out to patrol again and notices a small car with two constables inside. They slow outside the Manse and Gilly happens to see them, noticing their uniform and caps. He knows that they have been discovered and tells Doctor Jameson that they are leaving at nightfall.

The two helicopters arrive and Peter is told that they have confirmation that Gilly is in Laragh and that they know where. Peter convinces the helicopter pilot to fly them the rest of the way inland, angry that the constables in their drive-by may have already given away the fact that they are on to him. When Gilly helps Jameson carry M.J. outside to the car, he hears the sound of the helicopters approaching. He leaves everything and begins to run.

### Section 8: Pages 241 - 273 Analysis

In a small village in the Wicklow hills, a man walks in inclement weather to the local store, resenting the fact that his group was not better prepared. While the cover is good as there are several writers in a twenty mile radius of the town, he feels conspicuous and would rather have been in the city. The shopkeeper and his wife gossip about him and his female company, and he is the subject of the town's most recent diversion. They discuss the eating habits noted by the garbage collector, who sees only whiskey bottles and canned beans, and the overseas calls the telephone exchange contributes along with the lack of mail noted by the postman. Their lives are an open book, much discussed.



He goes back to the old Manse and the doctor tells him that the girl has sepsis where the finger was removed. She needs antibiotics. Barry/Gilly doesn't care. Sir Steven Stride has offered a reward of fifty thousand pounds for information leading to recovery of Melissa-Jane, reviving public interest in the case. The young police woman doesn't recognize the name of Gilly O'Shaughnessy at first when the call comes in, but her partner does and knows Gilly is wanted in the bombing of the Red Lion in Leicester. Gilly doesn't understand why Caliph wants them to stay in Laragh. It seems as though it is the only weak part in a well executed plan, and he wonders if Caliph has done this on purpose for some reason. He decides that he won't make the next check-in call that is scheduled, and when he notices the constables drive by and slow outside the manse, he knows that his gut instincts have again proven correct and they must leave.

Gilly wipes all surfaces and removes all traces of their presence, but even that isn't enough. He piles chairs in the kitchen and rips doors off the cabinets, lighting a fire underneath them. While the only trace that remains is minimal, he feels the need for this kind of destruction. The minutes he spends on this might well be his undoing, as he hears the helicopters approaching. Panicked, he feels betrayed and senses his on death close at hand. He leaves everything and runs.



## Section 9: Pages 273 - 295

### Section 9: Pages 273 - 295 Summary

The helicopter almost abandons its efforts as visibility down to nothing, but at the last moment they see the church spire. They find the manse and the order of Delta is given. The team jumps out at the house, but before Peter can bail the last man out, he notices a car driving recklessly from the garage. He directs the pilot to follow the car. Luckily, the vehicle has a roof rack, and Peter manages to jump down onto it. He barely holds on as Gilly tries to dislodge him. It almost works, but Melissa-Jane's screams from inside give Peter new strength. He pulls forward and leans over the windshield, shooting Gilly several times. Dead, Gilly should have released the gas pedal, but his leg is jammed under the dash and the car hurtles forward. Peter steers through the broken windshield, trying to keep the car from rolling or hitting the wall. Finally, he manages to steer into a fence and through a field, where they finally come to a jolting stop at a rock wall. He quickly pulls Jameson from the car and disables him, leaving him unconscious but alive, and then takes M.J. into his arms, telling her she is going to be alright.

Melissa-Jane is still shaken and stays with Peter for a while. Peter drives her back to Abbots Yew, and on the way she relives much of the horror of her kidnapping as she can remember. She even recalls the name of the faceless man that both her kidnappers feared. The name is Caliph. Once the episode is relived, she is able to let it go, and heals quickly.

Peter is unable to reach Magda, and five days pass where she seems to have dropped off the face of the earth, but his concerns are focused on M.J. Parker arrives and quickly makes friends with both Steven and his wife Pat, sharing many of the same interests. He takes Peter for a walk and explains his position at Atlas and his fight to keep the organization alive while many try to shut it down. He speaks of the ethical dilemma that so much power in one place can create, and Peter assures him that he is the right man for the job. Kingston returns the compliment, telling Peter he needs men like him to help him find and eliminate the super terrorist power that still exists. Peter agrees to come in and continue under Atlas, but before they return to the house, he confesses that he had been contacted about a ransom for M.J., and tells Parker it was his life. Parker takes the news well, and tells Peter that while it may give him a sleepless night or two, it doesn't change how he feels about Peter being part of the group or about how he feels. Peter also asks him whether he's heard the name Caliph, and Parker admits that recently he has and promises to disclose all in the upcoming briefing.

### Section 9: Pages 273 - 295 Analysis

The pilot of the helicopter almost abandons any effort to continue through the dark and the murk. Visibility is next to nothing, and he is afraid that he'll collide with the second helicopter before he sees it. He announces his decision to abort and Peter pulls out his





weapon, realizing that he is willing to kill the pilot if necessary at this stage, but at that moment the steeple of the church looms in front of them and they barely avoid hitting it. Peter manages to convince the pilot to go down again to where they can see, and they quickly determine where the house is. The team has already bailed, and Peter is about to follow when Gilly roars out of the garage in the Austin. Peter instructs the pilot to follow and abandons all ideas of his own safety when he jumps down on top of the Austin's roof rack, hanging on for dear life. All he can think about is his daughter, and when he hears her voice scream out from inside the car, he can think of nothing else but saving her. Gilly fires several shots through the roof which somehow Peter manages to avoid, and when Peter lowers himself over the windshield to see him reloading, he doesn't hesitate to shoot him dead. Once he manages to bring the car to a stop, he exercises more control with Jameson, merely knocking him unconscious before rescuing Melissa.

Melissa remains with Peter afterward for a while, although Cynthia is angry and makes no secret of it. Melissa still feels safer with Peter. He takes her to Abbots Yew and listens to her talk about her ordeal for the first time since her rescue. He has a hard time hearing the details, knowing they happened to her, but at the same time he realizes that she has to talk about it to put it behind her. At one point, she is unable to remember the leader's name and becomes quite distraught until it finally comes to her and she gives Peter the name Caliph. Then, finally having let it all go, she falls asleep. Peter is amazed at her resilience and how quickly she is back to herself.

Parker comes to Abbots Yew and is well liked by Steven, Pat and even Melissa, who refers to him as an honorable man when discussing him with Peter. Peter watches as Parker interacts with his family, and notices no hint of falsehood or put upon airs as he expresses himself - both relieved at Melissa's rescue and health, and his obvious connection with the rest of Peter's family. They go for a walk and Parker makes it clear that he needs men like Peter on his team at Atlas, and Peter agrees to stay on. They head back to the house, but Peter can't let Parker go in without confessing the one thing he hasn't told anyone yet. He stops him outside and tells him about the one ransom demand he received. Without embellishment, he explains the conditions, and when Parker asks him if he would have gone through with it, he admits that he would have. Instead of changing his opinion of Peter because of this revelation, it only reinforces what Parker knows to be his character, and he tells Peter nothing has changed in how he feels. Relieved, Peter mentions the name Caliph, asking Parker if he's heard it, and Parker admits that recently it has come up. He won't divulge more until their next briefing, and they go into the house.





## Section 10: Pages 295 - 340

### Section 10: Pages 295 - 340 Summary

Peter, Kingston and Colin meet to discuss Caliph, comparing notes and information. Colin, with Kingston's authority, discloses some hard facts to Peter. The calls made by Gilly from the Manse in Ireland that appeared to be prearranged signals went to a French number. The number belongs to Magda. Parker continues to give him more background on Magda, including that she and her father were both part of the Communist Party. Parker lays out so much information about Magda that in the end Peter can see the truth of it all. She had cunningly lured him into a honey trap, set him up to be emotionally bound to her, and then had used the only leverage in his life, Melissa, to ensure that he would kill her largest and most prying adversary, Kingston. The information comes at him so swiftly that he has difficulty taking it all in, but Parker seems to sense this and stops several times to ask if he has questions. All Peter can do is listen and try to hide the growing feelings of mortification. At the end of his recital, Parker insists that Peter is the only one who has even a hope of capturing Caliph, as he is the only one currently in her inner circle. He makes it absolutely clear that he wants Magda alive, and that if Peter kills her, he will use all of his power to ensure that Peter spend the rest of his life in jail. He can't make Peter go back to her of course, but he asks it of him all the same, and Peter agrees.

The call that comes from her is a surprise, and citing her dismay at their conflicting schedules, she begs him to meet her even though it can only be for an hour between flights. He does so, and with all of his abilities, he attempts to hide the contempt and loathing that rises in him every time he thinks of Melissa and what was done to her, but after their initial greeting where she is warm and inviting, her demeanor changes. He can see the warmth leave her eyes, although she continues to talk to him as though all is well. She asks him to tell her about Melissa's rescue, and he tells her the truth, certain that she already possesses the details. The call to board comes, and they part after she tells him that she doesn't know when they'll get a chance to see each other again. Peter goes back to work for her armament company and successfully negotiates contracts that increase her wealth, while in his spare time he plans how he will kill her. When the call comes from her, he can barely tell that she is crying, and she asks him to come to her islands off Tahiti. He believes this is the death summons from her to him, and agrees to join her, planning to kill her.

### Section 10: Pages 295 - 340 Analysis

When Parker gives Peter all of the information he has, it is difficult to listen to and even more difficult to deny that Magda is the infamous Caliph. He is sick inside with the knowledge that he was so completely taken in by her, and used by her for both sexual amusement and his ability to get inside Atlas and at the head himself, Parker. He sees with great clarity how events were manipulated in her favor, including possibly even the



attempt on her life as he drove her Maserati. Parker gently points out that it threw the suspicion off her by making her look like she was a target, and questioned whose idea it was that he drive the Maserati. Reluctantly, Peter comes around to all of it, including Parker's supposition that it was likely Magda who arranged for or possibly even killed her husband the Baron, after the Russians threatened to expose her to him. They had been very forthcoming with their files to Parker. Magda had gone so far off the reservation that they saw no choice but to expose who she was. It was the only play they had left in light of the fact that she was now working for herself, power hungry and no longer of any use to them. Her own greed had become her undoing. Instead of allowing the Baron to discover her real identity and motives, she had the threat eliminated and secured her position of wealth and power by taking away the only leverage her former handlers had. It was a brilliantly cold and calculating move that Peter both admired and hated her for. He could scarcely think of her without his body and heart betraying him, so he confined himself to thinking of her as Caliph.

His confirmation came when they met briefly at the airport. Her warmth and tenderness were quickly replaced with a wary look that he saw in her eyes when she realized that something in him had changed. She still talked the talk, but her actions belied her knowledge as she no longer touched him or made efforts to kiss or caress him. In place of that tenderness, Peter now saw the predatory side of her. He now saw Caliph in her eyes. When she left him at the airport, she bade him goodbye instead of her usual 'until we meet again', and somehow it had the ring of ominous intent. He realizes that if she suspected him, her next move would be to eliminate him. He went back to work for Altmann Industries, increasing her wealth further and quietly planning how he would kill her. When she called him again, wanting to meet and sounding like she was crying, he believed without doubt that she now summoned him to his death. Intending to turn the tables on her, he agrees to meet her on her private islands off Tahiti.



## Section 11: Pages 340 - 368

### Section 11: Pages 340 - 368 Summary

On the way to Magda's holiday island, Polynesian customs officials thoroughly check Peter's bags and ask him to submit to a random body search. Anticipating that Caliph would make this kind of move, he had left his Cobra in a safe deposit box in Brussels. A young Polynesian girl greets him and takes him to a bungalow, where he has a chance to clean up, rest and marvel at the elegance of his surroundings before she returns to take him to the main house. He is surprised to find three other couples socializing, and Magda greets him warmly without any trace of the distress she exhibited on the phone.

The next morning, Magda sends the company on their way, and finally she and Peter are alone together - with the many servants. She had not yet trusted him enough to be alone with him, but now she suggested they go out on the boat together. She tells the Captain to stay behind, and together, alone, they leave the shore for a morning of fishing and scuba diving. She sends him below for rods and lures, and he finds a bait knife adequate to do the job, knowing he has to kill her before she kills him. He goes up behind her quickly, but before he can strike, she hits him and he is unable to gain immediate advantage. After much struggle, during which Magda has the upper hand most of the time, Peter finally manages to regain control and looking into her eyes, he begins to crush the life from her. Just before she is beyond breath, she whispers that they told her he would come for her but she hadn't believed it, and asks him why. He lets go of her at the last moment, and she struggles to breathe again.

He holds her in the aftermath, and she asks again why, but he can't answer. Finally, he tells her he couldn't do it, and he doesn't care if she is Caliph. He loves her. Confused, she tells him that she had been told he was Caliph and the knife below deck was a test. She had not been able to believe that he would kill her, but they had told her he would come for her. Each had thought the other was Caliph, and they had almost killed each other in the confusion.

### Section 11: Pages 340 - 368 Analysis

Peter goes to Magda and is surprised to find her surrounded by company. He watches her throughout the first evening, noting that she is not relaxed, and she is surreptitiously watching him without trying to appear as though she is. At one point, she motions for him to meet her on the beach, and he goes to her. He holds her and she whispers her apologies for the company but promises they will be gone the following morning. She kisses him passionately and he finds himself returning her embrace with the same feeling. He is unable to kill her then, although the opportunity had seemed to present itself. When she goes back to her company, he senses a presence behind him and is poised to attack when Carl greets him. He realizes that her caution even extended now to romantic interludes, and if he had needed more proof, he had just gotten it. They



would not be alone again. The next morning, she takes him out on the boat, and to his surprise, leaves the captain behind. He knows now that this will be when she kills him. He can't give her the chance to get the upper hand.

When she sends him below decks for fishing gear and he finds the bait knife, he believes it is providence, and quickly returns to her to finish her while he can. She sees him coming and counters his attack neatly, employing all of her skills to stop him. They spend many minutes fighting for their lives, each of them knowing that it will be a fight to the death. He sees only determination in her eyes, and for the most part, she is able to maintain the upper hand with him. He knows he has to finish soon. Finally, he grabs her hair and begins to choke the life out of her using a piece of ash she had wielded against him. As her face shows the oxygen deprivation, she manages to ask why, and tells him that they had told her he would kill her. Confused, he lets her go, with just seconds of life remaining. Out of breath and both suffering injuries extended to one another, she asks again why, but Peter has no answer. He simply couldn't kill her. He confesses that he loves her, for better or worse, even if she is Caliph, and her confusion is immediate. She had been told that he was Caliph. He takes her in his arms, but she shows fear of him, and he tells her that it's alright. He is done. He still doesn't understand what is going on, but his feelings for her are sure. He loves her.



## Section 12: Pages 368 - 398

### Section 12: Pages 368 - 398 Summary

Peter tends Magda's injuries, giving her pain killers and rubbing salve onto her neck bruises. They spend the night on board, taking turns talking out the entire situation, beginning with Peter. He tells her about Melissa's rescue and includes the details of his meeting with Kingston and Colin. She denies very little until he gets to the part where she is suspected of killing her husband, and of kidnapping or arranging for the kidnapping of Melissa. She promises him that she will hide nothing from him, and he agrees to the same. When he finishes, he admits that even though he believed she truly was Caliph, he realized that he couldn't kill her. He loved her too much to lose her.

Then it is her turn to admit all. She tells him that her past is accurate, but her husband was killed by Caliph after meeting with him and denying him the partnership he wanted. Caliph not only took her husband's life, but took the money as well. When Melissa was kidnapped, she was racked with guilt and attempted to go through her Mossad contacts in Israel in an effort to get information. Since she was there under an assumed name, she was unable to call him or to contact him in any other way, and her handler stalled her for days upon days, during which she confesses she badgered them relentlessly, even threatening to expose their connection. Finally, she is given a code name - Cactus Flower - that supposedly belongs to Caliph's right hand man, and probing still further, her handler gave her the name Stride as Caliph's extended arm in the world. That is the reason that she thought he was Caliph, or at least working under him.

She tried not to believe it, but her handler had never been wrong before, so she created the opportunity on the boat for Peter to kill her if that was his plan. Despite allowing him to have a knife, she was ready for the attack, and the rest is a collection of bruises and sore spots. Peter is as surprised by this as she was by his accusation that she was Caliph, and they both realize that Caliph has pitted them against each other. The only good things that come out of all of it are the admission by Peter finally that he loves her and the fact that this love is strong enough to have stopped him from killing her. After everything is talked out, Magda asks him what he wants to do now, and all Peter can think of is going home.

### Section 12: Pages 368 - 398 Analysis

Peter and Magda spend the night on the boat, revealing all to each other. It is an unburdening for both of them, revealing the misconceptions each had about the other and clearing up the details that might have still given them pause. He tells her that he knows about Odessa and about her time and the many men in Paris. He also tells her of the details of his rescue of Melissa and how Caliph had contacted him and given him the ultimatum that to save his daughter's life, he would have to deliver the death of Kingston Parker. He tells her without reservation that he would have done it. Thankfully,



the tip they received made following through with that decision a mute point. Some of the details of his meeting with Kingston and Colin are wrong, and when he is finished his recital, she corrects him.

Magda admits to having been trained in Odessa, and offers to tell him about it all if he really wants to know, but her admission that she was there is enough for him. She also confesses to her part in the communist ideal that led her to Paris and to the many men with whom she cultivated relationships, but insists that there had never been a man before him that she loved. The story unfolded further still as she told him of her meeting the Baron and her decision to pursue him, even getting permission from Russia to do so, but after some time with him, she learned the flaws in the communist system. He converted her to Mossad, and again, she is completely forthcoming. She admits all to him, holding nothing back, just as he had with her. She had nothing to do with her husband's death or Melissa's kidnapping. The fact that he had to deal with the kidnapping at all ate at her, because she knew how he was feeling, having gone through the very same thing with her husband. She tells him that her feelings for him could not be denied, although she tried. When they met in the airport, she saw a difference in him and it scared her, making her wonder if her handler could be correct. She fled to her island retreat in an effort to forget him, but the time to herself only made things worse. Finally, she decided that she had to know, and had to bring things to a close one way or another.

When all was talked out, all they both wanted was to go home.



## Section 13: Pages 398 - 434

### Section 13: Pages 398 - 434 Summary

Peter convinces Magda that the only way to keep her safe is to make Caliph believe that he has killed her. It will also allow Peter to gain access to him if he thinks he has control of Peter. She agrees, and makes arrangements to go underground under an assumed name. They falsify a shark attack, with only few men knowing the truth - the chief of police in Tahiti, the man she entrusts to run her island retreat, Hapiti, her contact in Mossad, those who pick her up in Tahiti, and Peter himself. Peter makes it through questioning and goes back to Abbots Yew. Somehow, he knows this is the only link to Caliph. He watches Steven through new eyes, forcing himself to forget he is his brother, and sees the truth of the possibility. The first opportunity he has to question Steven, Peter does, and staying hard and forceful, he manages to glean the information he is looking for. He gets a direct admission from Steven that he is connected to Caliph and can contact him if necessary. When Peter confronts him about Melissa's kidnapping, he swears he had no part in it, and agrees to prove himself that he will help Peter in his efforts to bring Caliph down. His fear of the man is palpable.

Contact is made by placing a personal ad, and Steven does so on Monday morning. After that, all he can do is wait for contact, but on the second day, he is sorely afraid of the consequences of his actions.

### Section 13: Pages 398 - 434 Analysis

Magda realizes Peter is right, and makes arrangements to go to Israel under the name Ruth Levy. She gives Peter a way to find her and a way to contact her. After three romantic days where they agree not to mention Caliph or their problems, Magda cuts her hair, changes her style, and is boated to Tahiti in the dark of night. Hapiti sees her go ashore, and is Peter's ally if the police do not believe a shark attack, but that is unlikely as she has informed her long-time friend the chief of police as to their plan. It all works exactly as Peter hopes, and Magda gets away clean.

Going back to Abbots Yew, he pays closer attention to Steven, seeing a new determination and hardness in his eyes that he had not wanted to see in the past. Trying not to read too much or too little into anything, he waits until he has an opportunity to talk to him privately. It isn't long before they are out walking the property, Steven hunting the fox who has been causing trouble and Peter following behind, taking note of how out of shape his brother has become. Finally, when the shotgun is out of Steven's reach, Peter questions him directly. At first denying all, Peter threatens his life, and finally Steven begins to reluctantly tell him about his recruitment.

There are many things Steven denies having any knowledge of. He adamantly denies having anything to do with the attempt on Peter's life, the kidnapping of Melissa, the



death of Magda Altmann or the attempt to force Peter to kill Kingston. Peter asks him if he still believes that Caliph is the man he thought he was, and Steven admits he is not. He agrees to place the ad that will ensure contact from Caliph and from there arrange a meeting. Steven has never been so afraid in his life.





## Section 14: Pages 434 - 451

### Section 14: Pages 434 - 451 Summary

Peter knows Caliph is likely watching and struggles to act predictably. He flies back to Brussels and Narmco headquarters, and tries to remain neutral despite the undercurrents and intrigue as a result of their CEO's death. On Tuesday, he finds the advertisement that Steven placed and he settles in to wait for the response, knowing it would not likely come on the first day. Steven is as afraid as he has ever been as he waits to hear from Caliph, and on Thursday the phone finally rings with the first instruction. He leaves on foot and walks quickly to the destination given to hear a telephone ring with yet another destination. The mechanically distorted voice probes him for information, but as Peter instructed him, Steven will only say that he has information vital to the safety of Caliph, and must meet with him face to face to give him the details. No other way is safe. He knows that the call will be thirty seconds or less to avoid chances of a trace, and is told that someone will be in touch.

Peter passes the time busy with contracts all merging to closing in seemingly at the same time and scours the papers for news that might be related to Caliph. He finds one article of particular interest. The President has appointed Kingston Parker as special negotiator in attempt to settle the dispute in the Middle East. He purchases a wig and spends an afternoon cutting, shaping and dyeing it to resemble Steven. Then he works on the mustache, and putting it all together, he practices his brother's stance and walk in the mirror. Both brothers shopped for their suits at the same store, so that was not a problem. Finally, Steven calls with the news he has been waiting for. A meeting is arranged. Steven has been instructed to fly to Orly where the next set of instructions will be waiting. Peter tells Steven he'll book a room in his name at the Air Hotel and will be there before him, but even if he sees him there, he is not to acknowledge him. Steven agrees.

The next day, Peter watches as Steven strides into the hotel and glances only briefly at Peter. He repeats the room number loudly enough for Peter to hear, and leaves the door unlatched while Peter ensures no one is following him up. He goes into the room and tells Steven he will be replacing him for the next leg of the trip. Steven is sure Peter is mad until Peter goes into the bathroom and comes back out with wig on and adopting his mannerisms. He practices Steven's signature and they exchange identities. While Peter carries out Steven's instructions to continue on to Israel, Steven will go to a hotel on the left bank as Peter and wait.

### Section 14: Pages 434 - 451 Analysis

Steven is afraid. He has heard that a mark of true courage is to face fear and overcome it, but he does not feel like a brave man. He is almost frozen with fear for the task he has at hand. Still, he knows he has to look normal as he leaves for the rendezvous



arranged, lest his staff become aware something is amiss. Caliph is more than just careful. His precautions take on a paranoia in their complexity. Steven must answer yet another call before talking to an electronic voice that will talk to Caliph on his behalf.

Peter keeps busy, but stays near a phone at all times, and waits with the patience of a hunter. He knows that the upcoming confrontation will take all of his skill and attention to survive. He reads about Kingston Parker's appointment as special negotiator in the Middle East, and admires the man anew for his seemingly endless resourcefulness and energy, feeling that they picked the right man for the job. He readies himself, making himself look like the twin he has always admired, practicing his stance and mannerisms in front of a mirror once he has the appearance as close as he can get it. Peter is not afraid. This is his arena, and in this way, he and Steven are very different. Peter is a soldier at heart. When the meeting is arranged and Steven and Peter are together once again in the hotel, Peter tells Steven his plan to take his place, and Steven is both relieved that his part in this is over and convinced that Peter's plan will never work. To convince him, Peter dons the persona of his brother, and adopting his demeanor, greets him again. Steven can't believe the transformation. Peter is so much like him that it is unnerving.

When Peter discovers the next meeting will be in Jerusalem, his skin crawls and he feels the weight of betrayal. Magda is in Israel, and for a moment his mind plays tricks with him, but then he remembers he has already been down that road. Magda is not Caliph. Caliph is so devious and so knowledgeable, it is certainly possible that the destination is deliberate. The last thing Peter does before they part is ask Steven to look out for Melissa-Jane should anything go wrong. Steven gives his solemn word and they shake hands, oddly unable to communicate the affection for each other that they both feel, even though each knows that this may be the last time they see each other.



## Section 15: Pages 451 - 487

### Section 15: Pages 451 - 487 Summary

Peter flies to Jerusalem to be met by a driver holding a placard with Sir Steven Stride written on it. He asks Peter/Steven if he can drop a parcel off on their way, promising it won't take two minutes. The driver pulls a parcel from the trunk, leaving Peter in the car as he goes into a building, again telling Peter two minutes. It takes a full minute for Peter to realize the ticking he is hearing is not either the engine or a clock. He realizes in that moment that Magda's Mossad connection is Cactus Flower, and he bails from the car, grabbing his bag and runs for a low brick wall just fifty feet away, diving behind it. He opens his mouth to absorb the concussion just as the bomb blows up in the car.

Peter gets to his feet quickly and leaves the area, following the only lead left. He checks into the hotel, but changes the room Caliph has arranged to a suite. He cleans up, checking the room for its security and orders a drink. A knock at the door comes quickly and he opens it to see a familiar face. Magda introduces herself, telling him that he is in great danger and must leave at once. Peter asks Magda why she would warn him, and she replies only that he is Peter's brother and that is reason enough to risk her life. He reveals himself to her then. Stunned, she goes to him. They have little time together, during which she explains how she learned he was there, and Peter has an idea. He tells Magda to return to her Mossad connection and tell him that he is actually Peter and she has no idea why he wants to meet Caliph but it is not to reveal his identity. She makes him promise to leave by way of a prearranged signal between them if it is too dangerous and leaves.

When Peter is summoned by phone and told a car is waiting, he goes down expecting to hear the code, but it is not given. Satisfied, he sits back as the driver takes him to a remote monastery. They climb a great distance outside, then again inside before arriving at an inner courtyard where flashlights are set up to guide a helicopter in. Only Caliph's closest and most trusted aide waits with him, and as the helicopter arrives, Peter recognizes the scent that has teased at his mind. The aide is Colin! He hears the helicopter approach and crosses the space between them quickly, disabling Colin while he has the chance. He almost kills him, but Colin manages to reveal that he is Cactus Flower - the insider working against Caliph. Peter turns in time to see Kingston Parker emerge from the helicopter. He calls out to Caliph and Parker turns, confirming his identity. Peter fires Colin's pistol, but only injures Parker as he dives back into the bird, having recognized Peter and the danger he is in. The helicopter lifts off, but Peter fires until the fuel tank erupts, killing Parker.

Peter runs for the only way out he knows and is shot by Caliph's guards more than once before he vaguely hears Colin give the command to cease fire. He regains consciousness briefly once or twice before finding himself with Magda at her island retreat once more. Weak, she stays with him, allowing only one visitor. Colin explains Atlas, and its purpose as the last hope for mankind in the face of madness. He tells



Peter about the countries involved, and confirms that all three branches of Atlas are involved. Then he tells Peter that Atlas is intact and only Caliph is dead. While Kingston had seemed to be the right man for the job at first, he had exhibited character flaws that made his leadership go foul. Peter is asked to replace him as head of Atlas with the same mandate, and feeling a sense of purpose, he accepts the appointment with serious demeanor before Magda kisses him in congratulations.

## Section 15: Pages 451 - 487 Analysis

Something about the destination is tickling the back of his mind, but the driver maintains nonstop chatter that won't allow him to think it through. Behaving like Steven, Peter is reluctant to allow the driver to make a stop on the way, but inside, he welcomes the time to think for a moment and come to the conclusion that he will not be permitted to give away the identity of Cactus Flower, and in the same breath knows with certainty who it is. It takes his mind a minute to put it all together and to realize the ticking he hears is something he should be paying more attention to. His escape from this attempt on his life is much closer than he would like, but he manages to get behind a small retaining wall to minimize his injuries. When the falling debris brings him back to consciousness, he knows he has to get out of the area or face questions that will certainly reveal his duplicity. He walks toward the hotel, knowing it is the only lead he has, and somehow sure that Cactus Flower would have gone through with the arrangements even though he never intends Peter to fulfill them. The room Caliph has arranged for him is just a small step up from the YMCA and Peter has no intentions of staying there. He puts on Steven's air of entitlement and demands a suite, claiming a mistake has certainly been made. The changes are made and Peter is led to a suite overlooking the valley to the Jaffa Gate in the wall of the Old City. His training takes over as he carefully considers the security of the suite and minimizes the risks as much as possible. He is stunned when the knock at the door reveals Magda instead of the room service he ordered, and he does not reveal himself immediately, allowing her to think he is Steven until he discerns her motives for being there. It is clear almost immediately that the risk she took in coming was balanced by her love for Peter, and it is her turn to be stunned when he reveals who he really is. They hold each other with a desperation that comes partially from the length of time they have been apart and partially from the knowledge of the danger they are both in. They talk out the newest events and she leaves after making him promise that if she senses Cactus Flower - her control at Mossad - still intends to have him killed, he will accept her prearranged signal and leave.

The signal doesn't come, and Peter heads to the rendezvous. Again, the precautions taken are convoluted and extreme. The area he is taken to is remote, and then he is walked to an area still more remote. The man leading him has a scent that tickles in his memory somewhere, and it takes until the helicopter is almost there before he realizes that the man he is with is Colin. Surprised, Peter knows that this is going to be one of his most difficult tasks, but the cover noise of the helicopter provides him with the opportunity he needs to remove the risk. He disables Colin and likely would have killed him had Colin not identified himself as Cactus Flower. He takes Colin's pistol and, finally



armed and feeling some semblance of normalcy, he gets his next surprise. Caliph is Kingston Parker.

He manages to kill Parker by firing at the fuel tanks of the helicopter as Kingston tries to flee, and then does his best to get out the same way he came in. He is shot, and would likely have been killed but for Colin, who issues the order to cease fire. The next while is a blur of hospitals and semi-conscious states, during which he is aware that Magda is near. When he wakes, it is on her private island retreat, and he is greeted by her showing great relief that he is okay. The surprises continue when Colin arrives and explains that Atlas is the network Caliph used and the ideal is correct, but unfortunately their leader had been corrupt. Colin is there with an invitation for Peter to take the reins and run the operation with the kind of hand necessary. He accepts with little hesitation, knowing it is his destiny.



# Characters

## Peter Charles Stride

Peter Stride is a General and the new commander of Thor Command, which is one of the three Atlas offensive arms. He has lived most of his adult life in officer's quarters, and for the first time is enjoying relative privacy in a cottage he rents just four and a half minutes from the base. He still feels occasional guilt over his privacy despite the high value he places on it. He is divorced from his wife Cynthia, who lives in Cambridge with their daughter, Melissa Jane, and her new husband, George. His marriage to Cynthia lasted only two years.

Peter is thirty-nine years of age. He has a heavy jaw line and his aristocratically straight nose is narrow, leading up to thick, dark brows that almost meet. He was born in 1939 as one of a twin in war time. His family was a military family, and his father was killed in action when he was just three in 1942. Throughout his years in school, he displayed a tendency to prefer solitary sports instead of group activities, excelling in golf, tennis and long distance running.

As a young adult, he joined his father's regiment, where his exceptional abilities singled him out for a career in army intelligence. In sixteen years, he makes only one mistake. He worked in British defense, reaching a staff rank before turning thirty, and made friends on both sides of the Atlantic, with large credit given him for his work on terrorism in Ireland as well. He was on the short list for the project Atlas at its inception, but was not Parker's choice for the position. Parker sensed he would be troublesome, dangerous and ambitious. Instead, Stride chooses to work in the lesser position at Thor Command without any apparent animosity.

He likes his women to be tall, intelligent and successful, and he is knowledgeable in wines. He has a physique that he has kept in shape, weighing just pounds less now than he did at the age of twenty-one. He is a marksman who won a gold medal for the British at the Munich Olympics where he competed in the 50M class. He still spends at least one hour each day at the range.

## Dr. Kingston Parker (aka Caliph)

Dr. Kingston Parker is the Chairman of Intelligence Oversight Board, reporting directly to the President, who is also his friend. Both graduated in the top twenty of their class at Annapolis.

Kingston is an artist as well as a talented musician. He is a grand master in chess and is the author of four books dealing with philosophy and politics. He has an overwhelming presence combined with a towering intelligence but lives a life that is secretive, preferring to avoid the media spotlight. He is the perfect head for the Atlas project as he is adept at being both a diplomat and philosopher, depending on which is



necessary. His skill in diplomacy allows him to successfully mediate the high strung ideals and inputs of men who work for him, making him a great candidate for the position he holds at the head of Atlas.

He is a large man, well dressed but in clothes that have seen better days. His shoes are scuffed and his collar is frayed, yet he wears them with panache, nonetheless. He looks ten years younger than his age of fifty-three, with only a few strands of gray throughout his thick head of hair. He has large hands, with long and slender fingers that accompany the talent he displays on the Beckstein grand piano that occupies too much of the space in his office. He smokes a black briar pipe that has a big round bowl, that he uses as a prop to give himself time to organize his thoughts and give dramatic pause to his orations.

His inner office is lined with books on all shelves, and reflects the general intelligence of the man. He comes across as hard and unyielding, but his underlying motivations are pure and noble. He is dedicated to the job he has as the head of Atlas, and is described as a man of honor. He has varied interests that make him a good conversationalist on a variety of subjects, and enable him to fit comfortably in a wide range of circumstances and with a large base of people.

In the end, Peter discovers that Parker is the leader of the terrorists, who has taken the name Caliph which is also the title of a religious or civil leader. Atlas leaders are convinced that Caliph sees himself as altruistic - a force for good and for the betterment of all. The paternal tyrant, it appears that his goal is to cure the world of its ills by way of radical surgery. He is certain that he can control the health of the world in general through fear and by use of unrestrained force. It turns out that he has used Atlas as his personal security service, and his greed and desire for control have corrupted the very group established to prevent those like him from gaining control. He is killed by Peter shortly after the discovery of his identity.

## **Colin Noble (aka Cactus Flower)**

Colin Noble is second in command to Peter Stride at Thor Command. He is a Colonel in the US Marine Corp, and in their six weeks of training together, he quickly earns the respect of Peter.

Though he resembles a used car salesman in appearance, he is anything but. He is of medium height, but is a big man despite that. He has the body shape of a toad, but it is comprised entirely of bone and muscle, without fat of any kind. He has eyes that are bright and intelligent, and a nose that just below the bridge was broken, making it twist slightly with a lump. His mouth is wide and laughing, and he is intelligent, with a midwestern American drawl to his voice.

Colin previously boxed for both Princeton and for the Marines, proving that he is tough and able to hold his own. Colin begins as Peter's second in command at Thor, but when Peter defies a direct order to launch a rescue operation on BA flight 070, Colin is given





the leadership of Thor. He assumes the position, and seems to gain some character flaws in the process. He becomes more cocky and full of himself, and while his promotion would dictate a certain amount of self confidence and pride, Colin becomes outright agitated when his theories are challenged or disagreed with. It is a direct result of the corruption of power. He becomes more condescending and thinks of himself as the top of the food chain - referring to Peter as 'Peter, Baby' and making snide comments where they aren't justified. He seems a role model for the phrase that 'absolute power corrupts absolutely'.

Colin is also second in command to Caliph, and uses the code name Cactus Flower to hide his identity. Peter discovers this and almost kills him before Colin can reveal that he is working to undermine Caliph and bring him down.

## **Baroness Magda Altmann (nee Kutchinsky)**

Her dark green eyes are the color of emeralds and she is tall and finely proportioned. She has long legs that would befit a dancer and a husky, low voice with a slight accent that makes it all the more attractive. She has black, glossy hair that she wears pulled back tight from her forehead to reveal a distinct widow's peak. She has high cheekbones and skin that is perfectly unblemished. Her mouth has a determined, almost arrogant line to it, and is in the condition of a well trained athlete. Her arms are well toned, her waist line narrow and her breasts are small but well shaped. Her skin is tanned and clean, with a look of health and impeccable grooming. Her fingers are long, slim and elegantly tapered. She is a woman of strength and achievement. At twenty-nine years of age, she had already been widowed by her husband who had been abducted and mutilated, and now, at the age of thirty-one, she continues to run his enormous and complicated empire.

Born in Warsaw, where her father was a professor of medicine, she lost her father at a young age. He had escaped to the West and was killed in a traffic accident in Paris when she was a child. From there, she drifted from family to family of friends or distant relatives. She showed musical and academic talents from an early age, and by thirteen was a chess player of some distinction. There is a period of time where she simply vanishes, and one foster mother reveals she told her she was going home, but home is a vague destination for someone who has lived all over. It is later discovered that these years were spent with an 'uncle' in Warsaw. During this time, she was carefully educated in a special college in Odessa, attended to by only the best and brightest. There, she spent years learning languages and politics, finance and mathematics. She graduated to a higher and more specialized branch of the Odessa college at the age of seventeen, having excelled in all her endeavors. Next, she was taught specialized memory techniques, how to fit in to Western culture, and given an education in a variety of areas that would be helpful to any respectable spy. She learned to fly, was taught how to manipulate men, was educated in everything from flying to skiing. She was a star in all cases. By nineteen she had returned to Paris more educated than most men or women that are twice her age, and took a position as a competent secretary who spoke five languages fluently. Beautiful and graceful, she meets her husband to be, the





Baron Aaron Altmann, marrying him in a Catholic ceremony although he is known to have been one of the top agents of Mossad in Europe. His connection was so well hidden that few were aware of it.

## **Steven Stride**

Older than Peter by only three hours, Steven is admired by his brother Peter. Steven had always endured the moniker 'Poor Steven' by his family, until shortly after leaving Sandhurst, he returned a millionaire. Steven lived in and restored Abbots Yew, the family estate, and was known to entertain an interesting array of guests that either wielded power, wealth or had extraordinary talent. While Steven is as tall as his brother Peter, living the good life had made him somewhat thicker around the middle. His hair is gray at the temples and showing in his bristled mustache. The twin resemblance is remarkable, nonetheless. Steven takes great care to cultivate the country squire impression which shields his quick and shrewd business mind. He is married to wife Pat.

While his brother is the one who has the training and is used to putting his life on the line, Steven is cut from a more business oriented cloth. He is forced to face his own fears when Peter asks him to help him set Caliph up and does so, but with little bravery. In too deep to get out when he discovers Caliph has a violent and self serving agenda, Steven has no choice but to help Peter, and he manages to do so. He is more than a little relieved when Peter tells him he will act as his double in the actual meeting that follows.

## **Melissa Jane Stride**

Melissa is the daughter to Peter and is just fourteen years of age. She is slim and full of life - her violet eyes sparkling with enthusiasm and excitement. She has the porcelain beauty that is common to the English and physically she is almost completely developed. Her attitude is mature beyond her years by almost a decade.

She enjoys the time she gets with her father, thinking of him as a young Gary Cooper, and resents the intrusion of his career into their time together.

## **Hilda Becker (aka Sally Anne Taylor; aka Ingrid)**

Hilda is a tall girl who moves with the deliberate grace of a predatory cat. She is blond and wears her hair coiled in a braid on her head, accentuating her height over her companions. She dresses with provocative intention, drawing the attention of males around her, wearing tight cut off jeans and a tee-shirt with "I Am A Love Nut" across the front and a photo of a coco-de-mer underneath. Her eyes change from the dark blue color of pansies to green and she has a nice smile that shows her attractive rows of straight white teeth. She speaks fluent German, English and passable French. Her nationality is third generation American of German extraction, and she is thirty-one



years of age, but has a much more youthful appearance which does nothing to soften her ruthless and single minded mentality where her cause is concerned. She is determined, intelligent and enjoys a position of power and control over others, using her sexuality to gain it whenever the opportunity arises.

Her father, widowed in 1959, was a successful dentist. She attended the University of Columbia from 1965-1968, mastering in Modern Political History and is a member of the Students for a Democratic Society. She has an I.Q. of 138, and has been active in several causes that included Vietnam war protests, draft evasion pipelines, and has been implicated in a variety of riots and bombings and associations which included the notorious Weathermen. She also has a doctorate in Political Economics and has for the most part led the life of a classic modern revolutionary. She enjoys sex with males and females alike, and is addicted to smoking pot, according to the information that can be found out about her.

She is the leader of the group of terrorists that takes over the British Airways Flight designated at Speedbird 070 as it leaves the airport on the island of Mahè with 401 passengers aboard. She is killed by Peter Stride after the successful rescue/insertion of Atlas's Thor division while in custody.

## **Baron Aaron Altmann**

Husband to Magda Altmann, they married when she was young and he was already wealthy, influential and considerably older. She was the perfect wife, and worked with him to run Altmann Industries until his kidnapping and murder. He was a top Mossad agent in Europe, and used his wealth and power to further the cause of Zionism, although on the surface he was a practicing Christian - a cover his grandfather converted to in order to further his business aspirations.

## **Captain Cyril Watkins**

Captain Cyril Watkins is the pilot on British Airways Speedbird flight 070 that departs from the island of Mahè with just over four hundred passengers on board. He has an unshakable and calm manner that is reflected in his steady eyes. His hair is more gray than black, closely cropped curls on a skull that is large and round. He has a ruddy and beefy looking face of a farmer, and a bull neck. He is strong and intelligent, and confident in his position.

## **Henri Larousse**

Henri is a twenty-six year old Frenchman. He is slim of stature and his face is soft and youthful, making him look more like a poet than a terrorist. He is blond and has a drooping mustache and the eyes of a dreamer. He is enamored with Sally Anne, who uses her sexuality with him like a lure to keep him focused and intent. One of the four hijackers of BA flight 070, he is killed in the insertion rescue by Thor/Atlas men.



## Gerald

With straight black hair that is cut ragged to a fringe, he has the dark Irish look about him with eyes like a falcon - fierce and alert. His upper lip reveals that a mustache has recently been shaved by its smooth texture and lighter color. He is lean and lithe, in prime condition. Gilly was born in Belfast in 1946 and has a track record that is long and varied in criminal enterprise. He thrives on the thrill of the hunt, and enjoys the cat and mouse situations that his 'profession' place him in. He is ruthless and believes that he is a true revolutionary. He can almost recite Bakunin's The Revolutionary Catechism by heart and particularly likes the section that defines the true revolutionary, referring to him as 'The lost man, who has no belongings, no outside interest, no personal ties of any sort - not even a name'. He thinks of himself as someone who has broken with society and with its laws and convictions. It is the single vanity he indulges himself in. He has honed his particular 'talent' to the degree that he can sense when things are not right, and in the case of Melissa's kidnapping, he has the uncomfortable feeling that the way things are set up will lead to his eventual downfall or capture.

## Alan Richards

Inspector in charge of Melissa-Jane's kidnapping, he is a wiry and small man who would pass easier for a jockey than a policeman. He has long wisps of hair that he combs across his head in an effort to hide the fact that he is balding, and his eyes are intelligent and quick. He has a manner that is decisive and direct, and has a face that is wizened prematurely.

## Claude Bertram Morrison aka Dr. Jameson

Doctor who cuts off Melissa-Jane's finger and is part of the two person team who secrets her for Caliph, but who loses his stomach for the whole thing quickly. It takes little time before he is arguing with his partner over M.J. and her dignity as well as her health. Despite having done abortions in his past and treated wounds for men who couldn't use traditional channels, he would rather forget his past now. A dedicated alcoholic, he was struck from the medical rolls in 1969 for his abortion activities, and while his activities have been on the wrong side of the law, he is not as ruthless as his partner, Gilly.

## Cynthia Barrow

Peter's ex-wife and M.J.'s mother.



## **Maeve**

Shopkeeper's wife in Laragh who suspects Gilly O'Shaughnessy is trouble from the beginning.

## **Hapiti**

Polynesian boatman who Magda trusts with her life on her island retreat off Tahiti.



## Objects/Places

### Coco-de-mer

Known as the love nut, it is a large fruit distinctive because of its shape. The female tree grows love nuts that resemble a woman's anatomy both from behind and from the front, and the male tree sports a stamen that is as thick and as long as a human arm.

### Seychellois

Creole people who occupy the island of Mauritius five hundred miles south of Mahè island.

### Atlas

Combined, it is three branches of an offensive unit that includes Mercury based in Indonesia, Diana in Washington and Thor based in Britain.

### Mauritius

Departure zone on the island of Mahè for BA flight 070.

### Johannesburg Airport

Destination of the hijacked plane.

### War Office

Branch of government overseeing the Atlas project.

### Action Commando for Human Rights

The terrorist group that takes over flight 070.

### Abbots Yew

Name of estate home in Britain belonging to the Stride family and run by Peter's twin brother Steven.



## **La Pierre Bènite**

Former home of Baron Altmann and current residence of Baroness Magda Altmann in France.

## **Laragh**

Thirty miles from Dublin, the village of Laragh is in Wicklow County and is the isolated site where M.J. is being held.

## **Old Manse**

Name of the house in Laragh where M.J. is held.

## **Les Neuf Poissons (The Nine Fishes)**

Magda's holiday island in the Iles sous le Vent off the island of Tahiti.

## **Narmco**

One of Magda's companies. It is the business she hires Peter to work at, one dealing with arms and armaments.



# Themes

## Terrorism versus Prevention

With the current system of justice, terrorism definitely has the upper hand. Even if a plot is uncovered, there is little that the government agencies are allowed to do by law. Certainly, items that relate to a terrorist attack could be impounded, and in some cases, charges could be laid if it can be proven that a plot involving terrorism is in play, but in all likelihood, the perpetrators would be back out on the streets in a very short time, wiser and prepared to begin again with a more cohesive plan. Terrorism is rampant in the world today. The stakes are high, but so are the rewards. Terrorism can be financed by kidnapping involving ransom or by theft, and once the hurdle of money is out of the way, the rest can be quite simple. So many different kinds of weapons and explosives are available to the well heeled buyer that any plan can be put in motion if the person or persons is motivated and determined.

On the other hand, government is relatively harmless. They are strictly reactionary instead of preventative in nature. Until an actual crime is committed, their hands are tied. Evidence that stands up in a court of law is required, and that usually means that the criminal has to have been caught in the act in order for serious incarceration to occur. This book is written before the World Trade Center disaster, and since then a few things have changed, but until the laws are altered to allow for stiffer sentences for those who plan acts of terrorism, it will likely be an escalating situation. Teams such as Atlas in this story are reactionary in nature - and only brought into play when the crime has been committed.

## Motivations - Terrorism versus Altruism

In *Wild Justice*, Smith creates a character or group of characters given the name Caliph. Throughout the story, the reader is given a wide variety of acts attributed to Caliph, and this man or group of men can be considered responsible for acts of terrorism beginning with kidnappings for ransom and continuing with kidnappings for power struggles such as the manipulation of the cost of oil in the East or power plays such as the elimination of the head of Atlas, Kingston Parker. In each case, the villain named Caliph is ruthless and dangerous, and liable to any degree of violence or atrocity in order to accomplish a single minded goal. The kidnappings for ransom were conducted with the sole motivation of funding further operations. In these cases, there were no victims left behind who could identify him or his group and he or they manage to get away cleanly and without problems. In the case of kidnapping for power plays, Eastern leaders find their families under attack with pressure put to bear on the price of oil. Again, Caliph succeeds in ensuring that the price of oil does not rise and in fact decreases by five percent. Not only does Caliph again get away cleanly, but the overall outcome is one that might even be considered to be desirable. In the case of the kidnapping of Melissa-Jane, the motivation was to have Kingston Parker killed, thereby effectively removing



him from power over Atlas. Is this a case where the outcome is designed to keep Peter so busy that he stops baiting Caliph and remove the head of the powerful group seeking him at the same time?

While the acts in each case are violent, heinous and without mercy, they seem to be conducted with careful design and a great deal of forethought. In the beginning, the acts are all geared toward financial gain, but this does not appear to be motivated strictly by greed. It would seem more likely that the motivation is as simple as the desire to finance further action. Given that were the case, the following actions attributed to Caliph involve the outcome of the reduction of the cost of crude oil worldwide. This would seem more altruistic than terrorism, with the exception of the degree of violence that Caliph is ready to commit in order to maintain the privacy of his or their identity. What follows is simply a play for more control. Whenever an intelligent source gets close to figuring out who is behind the menace that is Caliph, a series of events occur that are designed to distract or remove the threat occur. While typical terrorism is generally motivated by a desire simply for money or a particular political outcome, Caliph seems to have a more altruistic motivation. By the time the reader reaches the midpoint of this story, it almost seems as though there may be a more intelligent design behind Caliph, even hinting that Caliph is of Western world origin or thinking. Altruism seems to play a larger part than terrorism to some degree, even in the kidnapping of M.J., which seemed designed to ensure either the capture or death of two very dangerous men in the process.

## **Power of Love versus Programmed Duty**

Peter Stride is used as a pawn by Caliph in several instances in this story. In the beginning, Kingston Parker uses his position as Peter's boss to attempt to manipulate the outcome of the terrorist attack on BA flight 070. He wants Peter to be there and to look like he is doing his job, when in reality Kingston wants Peter to stand down. It is his character and training that won't allow him to sit by and watch while everyone gives in to the demands being made, even if he has to do so without support. It is this same character that Kingston counts on when he expressly tells Peter not to harm Magda Altmann after he has spent a great deal of time making it appear as though she is Caliph. He counts on Peter to react the same way he did with the hostage situation. Kingston would ideally like Magda dead because she is pushing to find out the identity of Caliph, and he has given Peter the impression that Magda is directly responsible for his daughter's kidnapping.

Peter behaves predictably at first, but Kingston doesn't count on Peter's love for Magda, which is surprising in its strength and capacity to forgive. Peter almost kills her, but once he has the upper hand and is choking the life out of her, she asks him why. The simple question is enough to stop him, and after a few moments he realizes that revenge is not the answer and will solve nothing. Instead, he comes to the conclusion that his love for her is strong enough to survive even if she is Caliph. It's a heart wrenching decision, but Peter would rather live with Magda as Caliph than lose her. His love for her overshadows his duty to Kingston, to his country, to his daughter, and to the world. It is





the strength of this love that saves her life, giving her the time to explain that she is not Caliph, and as a result, Peter is able to hunt him down and take him out.

Magda also takes many chances as a result of her reciprocal feelings for Peter. When Melissa is kidnapped, she goes to her handler in Mossad and threatens to tell all unless he comes clear with information that will lead her to Melissa. It is a dangerous ploy that goes against all of her programmed duty and could cost her the ultimate price of her life, but she pushes anyway. Later, when Peter arrives in Israel disguised as Steven, she risks her life again by approaching him to warn him that he is in great danger. Peter reveals his identity, but only after she has confirmed her intentions. Then she again risks her own safety by arranging a plan to get Peter to safety if necessary.



# Style

## Point of View

Wilbur Smith uses the third person perspective throughout his novel, *Wild Justice*, centering on the main character, General Peter Stride. Throughout the novel, the reader is given intimate knowledge of Peter's feelings and actions interspersed with dialogue he has with a variety of the characters. *Wild Justice* is centered on how Peter interacts and responds to a given set of circumstances. While there is a small amount of descriptive text surrounding his brother Steven and an equal amount of attention given to the terrorists and how they respond, the central figure is definitely Peter Stride. Dialogue and descriptive passages that pertain to both the terrorists and to his brother lend depth to the story and are used to keep the flow of continuity.

Peter is a dedicated and honorable professional who takes his job seriously. He leads a team that is part of a global group called in whenever there is a major crisis, and his calm manner and strong leadership skills allow him to see with clarity how to diffuse even the worst of situations. He is certainly put to the test on more than one occasion. When BA flight 070 is taken hostage, and Peter and his team are called in, he repeatedly asks for permission to engage the terrorists but is denied and in fact forbidden to do so. He uses his better judgment, experience and on-site knowledge to make the decision to go in anyway. His decision is the right one, and all aboard flight 070 are rescued. He is frustrated when the leader of these terrorists tells him with that she will be free to commit the same act and worse in no time, and throws away his career by killing her while in custody. When his daughter is kidnapped, he must see past the panic he feels to act on instinct again, but the love he feels for her pushes him to take risks he might not have taken in other circumstances, but again he prevails, rescuing her and either killing or capturing the men responsible. When Peter learns that a single terrorist is responsible for all of the recent events, it upsets his interpretation of an ever present and unassailable evil. Instead of perceiving this as a multi-headed snake that has infinite lives, he can now focus his energies on a single enemy. Instead of simplifying his job, this knowledge complicates things as his enemy is intelligent and ruthless, using any means to throw him off track - even convincing him that the woman he loves is responsible at one stage. When he almost kills her, he realizes he can't live without her and the only way to keep her safe was to make the rest of the world believe she was dead and that he had killed her. The final threat comes from within his own organization, involving everyone from his brother to his second in command and his boss. The story takes many turns, but Wilbur Smith does a wonderful job of keeping the pace and story line consistent and reliable so the reader never gets lost.

## Setting

*Wild Justice* takes the reader from the islands off Tahiti to England, with stopovers in New York and Israel. Beginning with the terrorist takeover of British Airways flight 070,



which is forced to land in South Africa after departing from Mahè, the terrorist response arm of Atlas called Thor responds from New York. This begins a trail that leads the main character, General Peter Stride, on a wild chase to identify and locate the person or persons responsible for a string of heinous crimes that range from kidnapping to killing. When he is forced to retire from Thor command after killing the leader of the four terrorists who took flight 070, he goes home to Britain for just long enough to find himself recruited by Baroness Magda Altmann. She is looking for those responsible for the kidnapping and murder of her husband, and Peter's handling of flight 070 convinces her that he is the man to help her. He works out of her company Narmco, in France, while using his spare time to try to flush out the man they've come to know as Caliph.

Peter is asked to return to New York, and while he is meeting with his former boss, Kingston Parker, Peter's daughter Melissa is kidnapped and held in a small town in Ireland. Peter is told that to save her life he must kill Parker, but an anonymous tip leads Thor, commanded by Colin Noble and joined by Peter, to her rescue. When he returns, he is unable to reach Magda, but in a subsequent meeting with Parker, he is made to believe that she is the enemy he has been chasing all along. He joins her on her private island retreat off the coast of Tahiti with murderous intentions, but finds that his feelings for Magda won't allow him to kill her as he intended. Thankfully, she lives through their altercation, and tells him enough to make him realize that they have both been manipulated. He convinces her that she must appear to be dead, so she leaves for Israel under an assumed name. The final confrontation between Peter and Caliph occurs on Israeli soil, and in an explosive finish, Peter finds himself in control of the most powerful group assembled.

## Language and Meaning

The language of this novel is straightforward and current, leaving the reader with the impression that this novel could easily be describing an issue involving present day events. The context of *Wild Justice* centers around power and terrorism, control and greed. As these are global issues, the story evolves on several continents and in many countries. As is true in real life, the end result finds that the evil is closer to home than expected. There are references made that distinguish one country from another, the language and dialects of the different areas coming through in the characters involved. In Israel for example, greetings are "Shalom", and in Britain, idioms that can be traced to that country are quoted. In Ireland, where Melissa-Jane is held, the language and mannerisms of the storekeepers are true to their environment, as are the staff and police of the islands in the area of and surrounding Tahiti. Terrorists choose local fruit called coco de mer to hide their weapons inside, Baroness Magda Altmann occasionally mixes words or phrases as she attempts to translate from the French language she thinks in to the English she is speaking in.

All in all, Wilbur Smith does a wonderful job of representing the varying areas without confusion or overkill that would drown out the details of the story line itself. He is a master storyteller with a wide range of knowledge that comes through in his writing. He presents a wonderful representation of the world of terrorism and response teams.

## Structure

Wild Justice is written in a structure that Wilbur Smith has used in several of his previous works. Without chapter breaks that are distinguishable by numbers or letters, Smith instead chooses to merely separate changes in theme or content by creating an extra space and making the first letter of the next paragraph bolder and considerably larger than the remaining font. At 487 pages, the divisions are random in length from as little as one pages to as many as twenty-four. Despite the omission of typical chapter breaks, Smith does a good job of dividing his thoughts and creating breaks between one thought and another, making this read straightforward and easy to follow. As is usual with his writing, Smith is a master storyteller here, adept at bringing the reader from the beginning of the plot to its conclusion.

Wild Justice begins with a terrorist attack on a Boeing airliner leaving the airport at Mahè. The plane is rerouted by the hijackers to Johannesburg, where a team of specialists belonging to one arm of a secret group called Atlas which is a branch of the War Office comes to help. Despite orders to the contrary, Peter Stride leads a rescue effort that manages to bring the terrorists down, ending his illustrious career in the process. Offered a job he cannot turn down, he helps Baroness Altmann hunt the man responsible for the terrorist attack and the kidnapping and killing of Baron Altmann as well. Kingston Parker, head of Atlas, tells Peter he is still employed by Atlas and shows him continuing deposits representing his pay, and asks for his help to conquer Caliph once and for all. In a complex twist of plot, Magda Altmann and Peter Stride are pitted against each other, each believing the other is the enemy and almost killing each other. The truth is even more difficult to believe.



## Quotes

"Never hate your adversary blindly....understand his motives, recognize and respect his strengths - and you will be better prepared to meet him." Section 1, p. 29

"If destruction is beautiful, then self-destruction is immortality." Section 2, p. 73

"You and your evil capitalist masters must understand completely that we will not let a single deadline pass without executions." Section 3, p. 92

"We must all of us learn to welcome death, to welcome the opportunity to take our place and add our contribution, no matter how humble it might be, to man's great reawakening." Section 4, p. 111

"There is a proven sixty-seven per cent chance of success, the capital outlay is minimal, with outrageous profits in cash and publicity, with instant result - and potential power not even calculable." Section 5 p. 155

"Some women are excited by blood and violence - the bullfight, the prize ring, there are always as many women as men at these, and I have watched their faces." Section 6, p. 201

"I admit that personal chagrin swayed my reasoned judgment - and by the time I was thinking straight again you have been provoked into offering your resignation..." Section 7, p. 213

"Peter baby, we are going to hit anything and everything that moves in the target area, and we are going to hit them hard." Section 8, p. 266

"You are a man with the hard ruthless streak we need, if we are to survive." Section 9, p. 295

"It's a way to sway and direct the destiny of the entire world - you just cannot guard all the world's decision makers from personal attack." Section 10, p. 301

"Whatever way it goes, Peter, we have had something of value, you and I." Section 11, p. 349

"One thing we must never let out of sight for a moment is the quality of the opposition."  
Section 11, p. 397

"Drunk with power, they were no longer amenable to reason, like spoiled children in a sweep shop - we had to put a stop to it, or face a breakdown of the capitalist system."  
Section 13, p. 421

"If they knew it was Peter Stride impersonating Steven Stride, would that make them curious enough to let the meeting go ahead?" Section 14, p. 463

"You are the man best suited by nature and by training to fill the void which Kingston Parker has left." Section 15, p. 486



## Topics for Discussion

What is the stated objective of the terrorist group that calls itself the Action Commando for Human Rights? What are the first sets of demands given to Peter directly, and what is the first flaw he notices but she quickly corrects?

What act causes Peter to torpedo his career? Knowing he will be replaced as head of Thor Command, what does Peter do that ensures his career is over? He has mixed feelings about this action. Why?

Parker summons Peter to New York and explains his feelings regarding Atlas. What does he see as the major flaw of Atlas?

What subterfuge does Parker reveal about Peter where his position at Atlas is concerned? What details bother Peter about Magda and what details does he leave out in his discussion with Parker?

How does Parker convince Peter that Magda is Caliph? What does he ask Peter to do?

Why was Magda unreachable during the time that Melissa was kidnapped? How did that affect how Peter perceives her role in the situation?

What training did Magda receive in her youth that made Peter believe she might be capable of the Caliph persona?

How does Peter resolve the conflicting emotions he has regarding Magda when he is faced with killing her?

What does Magda do to stop Peter from finishing her off? How does it affect him? What does he finally confess to her and what is the outcome?

What events led directly to Baron Altmann's death and who was responsible for putting those events in motion? What mistake did this person make?

Who does Steven wish could step into Caliph's shoes, and what qualities does he cite that man as possessing that make him believe he would be the kind of man who could do it?

What is the lure used to bring Caliph out in the open? What weakness does Peter think he can use to expose him?

What is the source of Caliph's power, and who is in line to assume power when he is gone? Why is the organization kept alive?