

# Dirk Pitt Revealed

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Clive Cussler is an extraordinary author whose life parallels that of his fictional hero, Dirk Pitt. Whether searching for famous shipwrecks or cruising in classic cars from his private collection, Cussler's spirit feeds the soul of Dirk Pitt—a hero whose adventures race along at supersonic speed. Now with this truly unique insider's guide, you can dive in and explore the worlds of both Clive Cussler, the grand master of adventure, and Dirk Pitt, the world's greatest action adventure hero.

Inside Clive Cussler and Dirk Pitt Revealed you'll find:

- >> The prologue to Clive Cussler's next exciting Dirk Pitt novel!
- >> An exclusive interview with Clive Cussler—including the evolution of the Dirk Pitt novels and the close ties between Cussler and his hero
- >> "The Reunion"—an original short story in which Cussler crashes NUMA's twenty-year reunion and reminisces with Dirk Pitt and all his favorite characters
- >> A brief synopsis of every Dirk Pitt novel, including why Pacific Vortex!—not The Mediterranean Caper—should be considered the first Pitt novel
- >> A concordance for the Dirk Pitt novels—complete with A-Z listings of every major character, car, ship, aircraft, weapon, locale, and more. Complete with rare photos, dedications, the Clive Cussler car collection, and advanced Dirk Pitt trivia, Clive Cussler and Dirk Pitt Revealed contains a mother lode of information every fan will treasure.

Clive Cussler is the author or coauthor of over eighty previous books in five bestselling series, including Dirk Pitt, NUMA Files, Oregon Files, Isaac Bell, and Sam and Remi Fargo. His nonfiction works include Built for Adventure: The Classic Automobiles of Clive Cussler and Dirk Pitt, and Built to Thrill: More Classic Automobiles from Clive Cussler and Dirk Pitt, plus The Sea Hunters and The Sea Hunters II; these describe the true adventures of the real NUMA, which, led by Cussler, searches for lost ships of historic significance. With his crew of volunteers, Cussler has discovered more than sixty ships, including the long-lost Confederate ship Hunley. He lives in Arizona. "The Reunion"

The evening air was brisk, an overture for the approaching cold of winter, when a yellow and green cab stopped at a security gate on the south end of Washington's National Airport. The guard studied the pass that was extended by a hand from the rear window, then handed it back and spoke in an official tone. "Stay on the road. You're in a restricted area."

The driver swung onto the narrow service road that ran parallel with the east-west taxi strip on the southern border of the airport. "You sure this is the right way?" he asked, seeing nothing but an empty field.

"I'm certain," answered the gray-haired man in the backseat. "I've been here before."

"May I ask what you're looking for?"

The man in the backseat ignored the question. "Pull up at that pole with the red light on the top. I'll get out there."

"But there's no sign of life."

"Can you return for me in about forty minutes?"

"You want to stand out here in the middle of nowhere on a cold night for forty minutes?" asked the uncomprehending driver.

"I enjoy solitude."

The cabbie shrugged his shoulders. "OK. I'll take a break for a cup of coffee and come back for you in forty minutes."

The man passed the driver a fifty-dollar bill and stepped from the cab. He stood in the middle of the road beside the pole until the red taillights of the cab faded in the distance. Then he stared at a ghostly building that seemed to materialize out of the night, its silhouette becoming defined against the lights of the nation's capital across the Potomac River. Slowly, the building became physical and recognizable as an old aircraft hangar with a rounded roof. At first glance it appeared deserted. The surrounding land was covered with weeds, and the corrugated sides of the building wore a heavy coat of rust. The windows were boarded over, and the huge doors that once rolled open to admit aircraft for maintenance were welded closed.

The man standing in the road was not alone, and the hangar was not abandoned. At least two dozen cars were neatly parked in rows among the weeds. As he watched, a Lincoln Town Car pulled up to the front entrance door of the hangar, and an elegantly dressed woman exited the car, her door held open by a valet parking attendant.

As the man approached, he could hear the sound of voices mingled with laughter and the music of a Dixieland jazz band blaring out "Waiting for the Robert E. Lee." Before he made his way to the entrance, the man with the mane of gray hair and matching beard paused for a moment, listening to the wave of conversation from inside. Finally, he stepped through the doorway and handed his overcoat to a girl who gave him his receipt. A doorman, dressed suavely in a tuxedo, came forward.

"May I have your invitation, sir?"

The gray-haired man looked at him and said with quiet authority, "I do not require one."

The doorman's face went blank for a moment, and then, as if realizing his mistake, he said, "My apologies, sir. Please enjoy the party."

Then the intruder passed into a scene that he had envisioned in his mind a hundred times and that could only be described in a novel.

Row upon row of beautifully restored classic cars were positioned across a vast white

epoxy-sealed floor. Their gleaming mirrorlike paint seemed to fluoresce under the brilliant overhead lights mounted on the girders in the rounded roof. A German jet from World War II and an old 1930s Ford Trimotor passenger aircraft stood parked in the far corner of the hangar. Next to them sat an early-twentieth-century railroad Pullman car and what looked like a small sailboat put together by either a small child or a drunk. The man smiled as he examined a bathtub with an outboard motor that sat on a small platform.

Hanging from the girders and along the walls were antique metal signs advertising gasoline brands, car manufacturers, and soft drinks, many of them no longer in existence. Several red signs with white lettering hung in a row, one after the other, that read, HE HAD THE RING. HE HAD THE FLAT. BUT SHE FELT HIS CHIN. AND THAT WAS THAT. BURMA SHAVE.

In another corner of the cavernous hangar an ornate iron circular staircase wound up to an apartment above the main floor where the host lived. The intruder did not make his way up the stairs. Not just yet. There was no curiosity. He already knew every square inch of the apartment in his mind.

Tables arranged in the aisles between the cars were already filled with people conversing as they drank California estate reserve wine or French champagne and dined on the gourmet delicacies from several buffet tables stationed in a circle around an enormous ice sculpture of a Mississippi steamboat that rose from a sea of blue ice with a mist swirling around its paddle wheels. The buffet table featured polished silver chafing dishes and iced platters kept filled with seafood of every variety by a small army of waiters and chefs.

The body of the man hovering around the serving lines was nothing less than colossal. He did not look happy. He was dabbing sweat from his brow and neck as he admonished the maître d' of Le Curcel, the Michelin three-star restaurant he had hired to cater the party. "These oysters you sent over are the size of peanuts. They simply won't do."

"I shall have them replaced within minutes," the maître d' promised before rushing away.

"You are St. Julien Perlmutter." It was a statement, not a question, from the gray-haired man.

"Yes, I am. May I be of service to you, sir?"

"Not really, but I've always been envious of your lifestyle. A gourmand, a true connoisseur of the finer things, the nation's leading maritime history expert. It can safely be said that you're not a common man."

Perlmutter patted his ample stomach. "There are, however, a few disadvantages to loving good food and drink."

"Speaking of food and drink, may I express my compliments on arranging such an

elaborate party? The food and wine selection and table settings are beyond compare."

Perlmutter's face lit up. "I accept your gracious compliment, Mr...."

But the stranger did not answer. He had already turned and began wandering amid the party guests. Unnoticed and unrecognized, he made his way to the bar and waited in line behind a pair of lovely ladies who ordered two glasses of Veuve Clicquot Ponsardin Brut champagne. One was tall, very tall, with blond hair that was almost yellow. She stared from a strong face with high cheekbones and through deep blue eyes. The other woman was smaller, with radiant red hair and gray eyes. She had an exotic quality about her.

"I beg your pardon," he said, looking at the redhead, "but you must be Summer Moran." He shifted his head slightly. "And you are Maeve Fletcher."

Both women instinctively looked at each other and then at the stranger. "Do we know you?" Maeve inquired.

"Not in a physical sense, no."

"But you recognize us," said Summer.

"I guess you could say that I'm familiar with your existence."

Maeve stared at him and smiled thinly. "Then you must know that Summer and I are dead."

"Yes, I'm quite aware of that. You both died in the Pacific Ocean," he said slowly. "Ms. Moran in an underwater earthquake and Ms. Fletcher from the eruption of twin volcanoes. I regret things couldn't have worked out differently."

"Could events have been altered for a happier ending?" asked Summer.

"They might have."

Maeve stared over her champagne glass at him. "This is eerie."

Summer gave the man a calculating look. "Do you think Maeve and I might ever be resurrected?"

"I rarely speculate on future events," answered the man. "But I'd have to say the prospects are dim."

"Then it's not likely we'll ever meet again."

"No, I'm afraid not."

He stood aside as the ladies excused themselves. He watched them move with a feline

poise as they made their way through the crowded hangar and thought it was a great pity that he was seeing them for the last time. He stared at Summer and began to have second thoughts.

The bartender broke his reverie. "Your pleasure, sir?"

"What brand of tequila are you pouring?"

"Patron and Porfido."

"Your host has excellent taste," said the stranger. "However, I would like a double Don Julio anejo on the rocks with lime and a salted rim."

The bartender looked at him thoughtfully. "Don Julio is Mr. Pitt's personal favorite. It's also his private stock. Very little of it is exported from Mexico."

"He won't mind. You might say he drinks it because of me."

The bartender shrugged and poured the tequila from a bottle hidden beneath the bar. The intruder thanked him and stepped to a nearby table where several attractive women were seated engaged in girl talk.

"I guess we should consider ourselves lucky," said Eva Rojas, a pretty, vibrant woman with red-gold hair. "Unlike Summer and Maeve, we survived to the end of our adventures."

Jessie LeBaron, refined and lithe-bodied in her midfifties, patted her lips with a napkin. "True, but except for Heidi Milligan and Loren Smith, the rest of us never reappeared."

The exquisite Julia Lee, her Chinese features soft and delicate, recalled, "After Dirk and I returned from Mazatlan, Mexico, we both went back to our respective jobs, and I never saw him again."

"At least you enjoyed an exotic and romantic interlude with him," said Stacy Fox, brushing aside the blond strands of hair from her face. "In my case, he didn't even say good-bye."

Hali Kamil, a lovely woman with classic Egyptian features, laughed. "Isn't this where somebody says it is better to have loved and lost Dirk Pitt than never to have loved him at all?"

Lily Sharp, striking and svelte, and the captivating Dana Seagram sat quietly, not speaking, their minds far away, Lily remembering when she and Pitt found the treasures from the Alexandria Library in Texas, Dana when she worked with him raising the Titanic.

"It wouldn't be practical for Pitt to have married any of you," said the gray-haired man, breaking into the conversation.

"Why do you say that?" asked Julia Lee as the women all turned and stared openly at the stranger.

"Can you picture Al Giordino coming to your front door and asking if Pitt can come out and play? I'm afraid the scenario would not be acceptable."

Then he smiled and abruptly walked away.

"Who was that?" Dana Seagram asked no one in particular.

"Beats me," replied Lily Sharp. "Nobody I've ever met before."

The party crasher strolled over to a dark metallic blue 1936 Pierce-Arrow sedan that was attached to a matching trailer. A group of men sat next to the trailer. The stranger peered inside at the linoleum floor, the antique stove and icebox. He appeared to be studying the trailer's interior but was in fact listening to the table conversation with more than a passing interest.

A tall, distinguished-looking man who spoke with a German accent pointed across the table to a muscular bull of a man with a clean-shaven head. "Foss Gly here was surely the worst of us all," said Bruno von Till.

A wealthy-looking Chinese man shook his head in disagreement. "My vote goes to Min Koryo Bougainville. For a woman, she made the rest of us villains look like milksops."

Min Koryo, though frail and ancient, still had eyes that burned with evil. "Thank you, Qin Shang. But it cost me a horrible death. If you recall, I was sent hurtling down the elevator shaft of the World Trade Center from the hundredth floor."

Arthur Dorsett, as ugly as any man created, grinned through yellow teeth. "Consider yourself lucky. After Pitt crushed my throat, he left me to be consumed by molten lava."

Foss Gly spread his huge hands expansively. "After beating me with a baseball bat, he jammed his finger in my eye socket clear through to my brain."

Tupac Amaru, the Peruvian terrorist, scoffed. "At least he didn't shoot off your genitals before killing you in total darkness deep in an underwater cave."

Yves Massarde, immaculately dressed in a white dinner jacket with a yellow rose in the lapel, stared vacantly into the bubbles rising in his champagne glass and wondered aloud, "How could Pitt be even more brutal and vicious than the worst crew of villains ever created?"

The gray-haired stranger leaned between Gly and Qin Shang and said, "It was easy."

Before any of the men could say a word, he quickly resumed his course through the partygoers, moving toward the far wall where an old railroad Pullman car sat on a short

section of track leading to nowhere. The gold lettering on the steel sides read MANHATTAN LIMITED. The lights inside had been wired into the main junction box, and the opulent interior was as brightly lit as when the car rolled over the tracks between New York and Quebec. Mannequins were artfully arranged in what was once called the parlor. At one table two men sat as if dining while a porter in a white uniform stood and served.

A distinguished, impeccably dressed man in his seventies sat in a Victorian velvet chair. Next to him on the couch was an attractive woman half his age with ash-blond hair. She wore the uniform of a naval officer, and despite the fact that she was sitting down, it was easy to imagine her standing at a height of six feet.

"I'm sitting in the very same chair where Pitt bounced a bullet off my head," said the elderly man with a British inflection.

"Does he still call you Brian Shaw?" asked Heidi Milligan.

"Yes, but I'm certain he saw right through me."

"He never stopped suspecting you of being James Bond," said Heidi.

The older man reached over, took Heidi's hand, and kissed it. "That will forever be our little secret."

The gray-haired intruder smiled to himself, then slipped away before being noticed.

Inside the old Ford Trimotor airplane, seated in an antique wicker basket chair, a man dressed in Levi's with long blond hair tied in a ponytail peered into the monitor of a laptop computer.

"Surfing the Internet while a party's in high gear?" said the intruder. "That's antisocial."

Hiram Yaeger looked up at the stranger standing in the fuselage entrance. One of the overhead lights was above and to the rear of his visitor, and he squinted while attempting to recognize the face of the man who spoke. The stranger was tall, nearly six feet, three inches, with a slight paunch brought about by age. His hair had grayed over the years, as had the beard covering only his chin. His skin was tanned from the sun. He was probably in his middle sixties, Yaeger estimated, but he looked younger. The stranger wore a faint grin on his lips, but it was his eyes that gripped Yaeger's attention. They were a mysterious blue-green with a light that twinkled from deep inside. The face was that of a man who might have been a ship's captain in a past life, or a prospector, maybe even an explorer.

"Dirk asked me to look up data on a lost ship," Yaeger finally explained. "I could wait until working hours, but I'm not much of a party animal, so thought I'd get a head start on the project."

"What ship?" the gray-haired man asked.



"The Waratah."

"Ah, yes, the passenger ship that vanished with nearly three hundred people off the west coast of South Africa in 1909."

Yaeger was impressed. "You know your ships."

"The Waratah was found by a NUMA South African team several years ago," stated the intruder matter-of-factly.

"No NUMA team headed by Dirk Pitt found the Waratah that I'm aware of," said Yaeger.

"Not Pitt's NUMA," ...

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