



The Charlemagne Pursuit: A Novel (Cotton Malone)

By Steve Berry

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As a child, former Justice Department agent Cotton Malone was told that his father died in a submarine disaster in the North Atlantic. But what he now learns stuns him: His father's sub was a secret nuclear vessel lost on a highly classified mission beneath the ice shelves of Antarctica.

Twin sisters Dorothea Lindauer and Christl Falk are also determined to find out what became of their father, who died on the same submarine—and they know something Malone doesn't: Inspired by strange clues discovered in Charlemagne's tomb, the Nazis explored Antarctica before the Americans. Now Malone discovers that cryptic journals penned in "the language of heaven," conundrums posed by an ancient historian, and his father's ill-fated voyage are all tied to a revelation of immense consequence for humankind. As Malone embarks on a dangerous quest with the sisters, he will finally confront the shocking truth of his father's death and the distinct possibility of his own.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. In bestseller Berry's fourth thriller to feature ex-Justice Department agent Cotton Malone (after *The Venetian Betrayal*), Malone embarks on a search for answers about his father, Capt. Forrest Malone, after learning that instead of dying in 1971 in a nuclear sub accident in the North Atlantic, his father actually died while on a secret submarine mission to the Antarctic. Meanwhile, bad guy Adm. Langford Ramsey schemes to become the next ranking officer of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The two story lines merge as a group led by Malone races to Antarctica, where they find a strange underground city belonging to the Aryans, an advanced race who inhabited the earth at the dawn of our own civilization. A meticulous researcher, Berry carefully integrates such elements as Charlemagne, Nazis, ancient manuscripts, historical puzzles and scientific surprises into the plot. Those who relish suspense in the *Da Vinci Code* vein will snap this one up, the best yet in the series. *10-city author tour. (Dec.)*

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From School Library Journal

Starred Review. Berry outdoes himself in his latest Cotton Malone adventure (after *The Venetian Betrayal*). Using his connections in the federal government, Cotton asks to see a classified file that details the mission that resulted in his father's death. He knew his father died on a submarine but none of the shocking details about where or why he died. But Cotton is not the only person who wants this file, and they kill to get it. Nazi missions to the Antarctic, ancient societies, and a valuable artifact from Charlemagne's tomb all play key roles as Malone uncovers the truth. So much is going on that there is enough material for two good books, let alone one great one. Mixed in with the complicated action, Berry finds the time to explore the characters as well, making this his most personal and best book to date. For all fiction collections. [See Prepub Alert, *LJ* 8/08.]—Jeff Ayers, Seattle P.L.

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From [Booklist](#)

Berry's Cotton Malone series is beginning to develop a case of been there, done that. In this fourth installment, the globe-trotting ex-government agent turned bookseller is caught up in the mystery of Charlemagne, the eighth-century empire builder whose tomb is somehow linked to an early Nazi exploration of Antarctica and, even stranger, to the death of Cotton's own father. The story follows the by-now overly familiar course: Cotton is thrust immediately into life-threatening danger and spends the rest of the novel evading pursuers and pursuing the solution to a historical puzzle. There are colorful bad guys, likable good guys, and plenty of action scenes (it's a mystery why no one has turned these books into Indiana Jones-like movies). As in previous episodes, the dialogue ranges from graceful to clunky, and the frequent chunks of historical background are worked into the narrative in ways that vary from seamless to clumsy. This is a solid action thriller that will appeal to the author's fans, but how long Berry can prolong the series without tinkering even a bit with his formula is the real question here. --David Pitt

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Orlando Bush:

This *The Charlemagne Pursuit: A Novel (Cotton Malone)* is great reserve for you because the content that is

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