

Introduction

One day several years ago, my wife Jan returned from a trip to Hawaii, and she had an idea for a novel that was simple yet large in scope—as many great ideas are—a story about problems in the ocean that she’d been wanting to write for years.

I spent some time brainstorming with her, and in a spiral notebook I made notes about the setting, characterizations, and plot. Then I began typing it up—a story set in Hawaii that had the ocean (and its problems) in the background. She read what I handed her, and then said, diplomatically, “This is good, Brian, but I was thinking more along the line that the ocean is fighting back against humans. What if the ocean is an entity in itself, and is not going to put up with any more abuse from human beings, and decides to take strong action against the violators? What if it declares war on our civilization?”

And she had a title in mind, one that was simple and clean: *Ocean*.

“Oh,” I said, finally understanding. So I set about creating a new main storyline centered on the ocean, discussing it with Jan as I worked on it, showing her chapters that I had written, and obtaining her suggestions. As I got into the book, discussing it with her constantly, the characters and plot seemed to come alive, and I wrote more than 165,000 words in only a few months of intense work—quite a pace for me. You have before you a slightly longer version than that, after the manuscript went through several drafts, improving it each time.

Over the years, I have dedicated many books to Jan. She has always read my material when it was in progress and commented on it, and she did that on this novel as well. But this time I knew in my heart that it was not enough to give her yet another dedication, or even a long introduction such as this one. Truly, she deserved to be the co-author of the book, because this was *her* book, her fantastic concept. These pages reflect the love Jan feels for the ocean and the incredible creatures that inhabit it, marine animals that have sentience, feelings, and souls. She was the inspiration for this project, and the continuing light that enabled me to proceed with it, and to stay on the right track.

I have often said that I could never write unless Jan permitted me to do so. She has always given me the space for my creativity, has always said that it didn't matter if we had any money at all, that if I ever wanted to sell everything and live somewhere simple, without the daily pressures of owning things and paying bills, she would support me.

For years we have been a creative team—Jan with her painting and photography and me with my writing. On trips to distant lands, we often find places to go where she paints and I write. We sit outside, or in some other place where the creative energy is good around us, and we do our separate projects, with me critiquing her art, and her critiquing my writing. I've always known that she was intelligent, but after she brought me the idea for this novel about the ocean, I realized that she is brilliant. Jan is not only the shining light in my life; she is much more. And truly she deserves credit for this novel, because *Ocean* is her story.

Brian Herbert
Seattle, Washington

Ocean

Preface

Because of the passage of more than four hundred years since the great War of Ocean Liberation, some of the details have been lost to history. The part-fish, part-human Sea Warriors who led the revolt did not find it convenient—or necessary—to write everything down during a time of tremendous turmoil and upheaval. Nonetheless, certain over-arching facts are indisputable, dominated by one: This heroic group sought to gain control over the entire world ocean, so that they could give it back to the sea creatures inhabiting it.

All of us know the results of that war, but other details are sketchy, and subject to discussion. Owing to a lack of information about the day-to-day actions of the principals in this fantastic saga (especially with respect to Kimo Pohaku, Alicia Ellsworth, and Gwyneth McDevitt), this is a historical novel that draws upon news reports of the time, eyewitness accounts of their lives, and family journals that have survived the decades—in all, reports by people who were able to obtain some of the details of what was occurring beneath the ocean waves of the planet.

We can say with a certainty that the account you are about to read accurately reflects the personalities of Kimo, Alicia, and Gwyneth, and correctly portrays many of the events in their epic struggle—although for the purpose of telling such an important story, the authors have found it necessary to make educated assumptions about certain specifics, with a minimum of added material.