

Cloud of sparrows short summary review



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Cloud of Sparrows by Takashi Matsuoka 1. The book takes place in 1861, after Perry opens the door to Japan. After centuries of isolation, Japan is lagging behind in ways of science and weaponry. The main character, Lord Genji, is Lord of the Okumichi Clan. He and his family are cursed with visions of the future. His uncle, Lord Shigeru, sees the coming bloodshed and massacre in Japan's future and slaughters his wife and children to prevent them from suffering through it. Heiko, another character, is a ninja who masquerades as a geisha. She falls in love with Genji, and later confesses to him.

He explains that he already knew of her dubious nature and returns her love. Though later, after learning of her irredeemable origins, Genji can no longer feel the same toward her and sends her to America. Brother Zephaniah is a priest wishing to save the "crude heathens," but dies shortly after arriving from a gunshot meant for Genji. Emily, an American missionary engaged to him, is running away from her destructive beauty to Japan, where she is thought of as repulsive. She felt no feelings of love toward him, but agreed to the proposal because he protected her from the horrible men who sought to take advantage of her. Stark accompanies Emily and Zephaniah, but instead of hoping to spread the "True Word," he is after revenge. He is in pursuit of Ethan Cruz, who murdered his beloved Mary Anne and her two daughters. Ethan murdered them because Stark murdered his father-like mentor who ran the whorehouse when he wouldn't let Mary Anne leave. Kawakami is Genji's enemy and despises him above all things. He takes great pleasure in knowing what others do not. They are enemies because years ago, there was a great battle at Sekigahara and their families were on

opposite sides. Both sides are convinced the battle is not truly over and seek to eliminate each other completely. Genji takes the missionaries into his care in the capital of Edo, but when foreign ships fire on Edo, they travel to the well-fortified Cloud of Sparrows castle. 2. Shigeru has visions of the coming bloodshed and mutilation of Japan. This takes place before the wars and defeat of Japan by the British and later, the Russians. I was surprised by the loyalty the characters exemplified, and how easily they shed the blood of those they had known for years. 3. The author is trying to show how honorable Japan was, and how tragic the loss of all of the old ways. He wanted the reader to understand how the Japanese felt and thought, and what a dramatic effect the introduction of guns had on their society. He wanted the reader to feel the depressing sadness and most of all, the painful loss of centuries of history and tradition. I feel that he conveyed this very well. I really cared about the characters and genuinely wanted them to prevail and maintain their way of life, so it was really hard for me to know that in the end, no matter what, history would remain the same. They would be defeated, and their country would forever change.