

Chapter 2

Begining

When 1975 began, Harry Plum made a life change.

He was finishing college when the Central Intelligence Agency, came to his campus looking for new talent. “Yes, we’d want you Harry but get a graduate degree in journalism, study geography we would like to see And get more language skills....” Then a second interview. He signed on for America, and after completing a Master degree with some addition course work he would spent the next

six months at Camp Peary in Williamsburg Virginia.

In 1979 he flew to Jakarta, and was driven to the U.S. Embassy, there to meet the Trade Representative. "Read and listen to every word spoken about President Suharto's "New Order" government.", he was told.

Harry started learning his new trade-craft from the retiring field agent. He flew every week to another island territory. He had studied Indonesia in graduate school, that's what they wanted. Indonesia was three times the size of Texas, but composed of 16,000 islands, with plenty of humidity and heat. He soon understood the process of mining Nickel ore and his mission was to make certain it was secured as it was exported to USA. This was his first prime responsibility. American

steel producers needed Nickle to produce 316 stainless steel. America was in Indonesia to support this industry by protecting the security of the ore and making certain it was not diverted.

“Just become a set of watchful eyes in and around the ore mining, and the transit to shipping. You’re now an official US Trade Representative. While you are at it, there may be other assignments for you.”

Embassy staff was protected by Marine unit; but, after leaving the compound, Harry learned to be self-sufficient. After two months he was able to drive and return safely, and then fly to the next ore mining site and return safely usually one week later. He remained focused on his assignments, protecting him-

self and other staff and avoiding any local or international relationships of any sort.

During his fourth year on the job, on January 15th, the DC-3 he was flying in did not return to Jakarta. It crashed in South Sulawesi, three hours flying time to Jakarta's Soekarno-Hatta International Airport. Harry had passed out, his head bleeding when he woke; but he was alive. Harry knew nothing about aircraft electronics, had no idea where he was. His Timex watch still appeared to work and he thought it read 2:17. He had taken off at 5:00 PM.

He climbed through the wreckage and tried to listen for signs of life, there was none. His head seemed to have stopped bleeding; he struggled out the broken rear doorway. The wreckage was on level ground and not on

fire but was a mangled pile of scraps of metal; its cargo littered on a surrounding jungle floor. Harry listened for sounds: people, animals, anything, only silence with occasional birds rustling.

He sat and thought, "Where are we?" and "How the hell do I get out of here? Does anyone know where we went down? The pilot said nothing to us before the crash, there was no explosion just the whistle as we rapidly descended from about 2500 feet."

Using only the luminescent hands of his watch, Harry guessed twenty minutes pasted. His training at Camp Peary began to come back. Harry stood and returned and climbed back into the plane. When they had taken off there were eight passengers and a crew of two, no flight attendants. He started by re-

moving all the baggage from inside the passenger compartment. He left the dead behind but tried to cover them over when he found random clothing. Next, Harry went up front to the cockpit and looked in. They were both dead but Harry found maps and a compass that had come lose. Behind the pilot's seat he spotted a flashlight, hatchet and the flare gun with 4 cartridges. He took a jacket from behind one of the pilots and then placed what he gathered into a pile inside the jacket and carried it on his shoulder out the rear door.

It was 4:30 AM, when he had finished cleared out what he thought were essentials from the interior of the plane; Harry was exhausted. He collapsed by side of the plane, used the flashlight to scan the area around the plane hoping to figure out

what was out there. Moments later he passed and woke when the sun began to come up. Harry believed that the pilots died trying to save everyone. The plane had come down about 100 yards short of a massive cliff. He assumed they saw what was ahead as they were losing altitude and forced a crash on the flat dry land to avoid the cliff. Unfortunately, darkness blinded the pilots from seeing the large boulders that penetrated the belly of the plane, snapped off one wing and buried the nose into a massive rock formation. But Harry was alive.

During his search inside the plane, Harry had found four bottles of water and two small bottles of Gordon's Gin. He assumed a rescue team would be launched so he decided to remain near the crash site. Although Har-

ry had minimal jungle training at Fort Peary, he would have to improvise a plan. With morning sunlight steaming into the wreck, he made a final attempt to find anything useful for survival, but nothing else caught his attention. The storage area below the plane had been destroyed by the landing and there was little to search through. Harry found a single hard hat that he could use, maybe as a scoop.

After a short rest, he completed searching all that he removed. He found two cigarette lighters, matches, three small knives. The passengers had all been laborers working for the mining companies in Indonesia not tourists. He reached up to his left shoulder for his holstered pistol. He felt it still there. "Thank God for that." Harry thought to himself, but he wondered when he would need

it, it contained seven rounds. He hadn't removed it from his holster since he arrived in Jakarta. He was alone, very alone.

Harry added hunger to his list of "to does". He cleared an area near the plane and used the hatchet to hack away at the ground cover and crafted a six-foot-long arrow to indicate to any search plane what direction he would walk when he was ready. He intended to return to the plane before night but hoped he might find fruit trees that might provide some energy to sustain him. Later, he would use rocks if he could find some and make a bigger arrow. Tonight, he would start a fire. Between the fire and smoke he hoped that a rescue plane would notice his wreckage and send in help. His goal now was to just stay alive.

Harry found paper in his trouser and a pen in his pocket and began a schedule:

9:30 AM leave plane and walk south using his new compass; walk two hours.

Every 15 minutes, tie some fabric scrapes to use as markers, to avoid getting lost or disoriented.

Take a shirt from the baggage and make a sack to hold and fruit or things of potential use

Find a long straight piece of bamboo, fashion a spear for protection

Harry had no knowledge of this environment except what he had studied in school. He now remembered that these jungles contained many predators that did not deal well with humans. In his short time in Indonesia he was aware of the jungle wildlife:

monkeys, bears, leopards, bats, orangutans, tigers, rhinos, elephants, gibbons, macaques, and deer. Harry tried to listen with every step he took. He was alone and his Browning BDA-380 pistol wouldn't go far, He would use it only as a last resort weapon. He had tied the largest of the knives to the six-foot-length of bamboo and secured it as best he could with shoelaces from another passenger boot. A pair that was too small for his size twelve feet.

He took one of the four bottles of water with him not knowing how long he would need it . He knew he needed to preserve it. After two hours of walking south via his compass, Harry was exhausted. He turned around and made his way back to the plane. The crash site lay in a barren area. But within one hundred

yards in each direction was dense jungle. So far, south did not appear to Harry to be the way out, or so Harry thought. On his way back, Harry spotted a banana tree and cut off a stalk of six bananas and then found a tree with durian fruits which he carefully gathered to avoid their thorns. Inside was an edible tasty bit of protein, at least for tonight, Harry should be able to survive.

He spent the afternoon gathering material to burn for a signal fire and remove the bodies of the dead from the plane. Although it could not be secured or watertight, tonight it would provide some protection from the elements if he was able to sleep. Before laying down on the center aisle of the plane, he ate four of the bananas and drank half of one bottle of water. He also started a signal fire burning

what he could from the plane as well as some dead growth nearby. Keeping a signal fire going might be a challenge. for the moment he had at least started a fire with scrapes of wreckage. How long it would burn he could not tell. With that, Day One was ending for Harry Plum.