



Lost in Shangri-La

By Mitchell Zuckoff
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Introduction

Award-winning former *Boston Globe* reporter Mitchell Zuckoff unleashes the exhilarating, untold story of an extraordinary World War II rescue mission, where a plane crash in the South Pacific plunged a trio of U.S. military personnel into a land that time forgot. Fans of Hampton Sides' *Ghost Soldiers*, Marcus Luttrell's *Lone Survivor*, and David Grann's *The Lost City of Z* will be captivated by Zuckoff's masterfully recounted, all-true story of danger, daring, determination, and discovery in jungle-clad New Guinea during the final days of WWII.

Questions for Discussion

1. The story of the rescue mission told in *Lost in Shangri-La* was not well-known in recent years. Did this surprise you? How much did you know about World War II as it affected this part of the world before reading this book? What did you learn about the war for the first time while reading?
2. How does the author describe the natives' view of war as it compares to World War II? Were the Dani more of a threat to the survivors or were the survivors and their rescuers more of a threat to the tribespeople? Does either group really let down their guard?
3. Meeting the American and Filipino soldiers left a mark on the Dani people. Do you think the meeting had a positive effect on the Dani? What was one of your favorite stories shared by the modern villagers about the impact of the soldiers?
4. Were those who took part in the rescue mission heroes? Would you have been able to parachute into the valley without knowing how you would get out? What makes a man or woman a hero, and does that definition change during wartime?
5. How did the experience of Margaret, the one woman lost in Shangri-La, differ from that of the men? Why do you think the American public was so interested in her plight in particular? What does that say about the status and lives of women during that time?
6. How would you have reacted if you were on that fateful plane ride? What about if you were one of the rescuers? Has there been a time in your own life where your courage and determination were tested in this way?

About the Author

Mitchell Zuckoff's honors include the 2000 Distinguished Writing Award from the American Society of Newspaper Editors. His book *Choosing Naia: A Family's Journey* was a *Boston Globe* bestseller and won the Christopher Award.