



DIPLOMARINE: Terrorism, Turf Wars, Cocktail Parties and Other Painful Joys My First Thirty Years of Foreign Affairs

Timothy C. Brown

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Through his pull-no-punches writing style, Brown acknowledges that sometimes things are not quite as they ought to have been in our conflict-ridden world.

Most people consider themselves lucky to find and establish themselves in a career that challenges them, uses their talents, and offers possibilities for advancement. For many, such an existence remains a dream. Timothy C. Brown is fortunate enough to have enjoyed three distinctive and rather thrilling careers. In *Diplomarine*, he shares the trials, tribulations, and occasional moments of nail-biting tension he experienced throughout his years as a marine, career diplomat, and then academic and scholar.

Throughout his recounting of all these various professional phases, Brown uses anecdotes and revealing details to convey his personal philosophy, which could probably be summed up roughly as: remain open minded, don't jump to conclusions, and look before you leap. In addition to having lived in varied and disparate far-flung corners of the world, Brown has had the privilege of seeing the modern world—from Asia to South America—evolve as it progressed from the Cold War period to our own tumultuous times. He winningly intersperses the drama of international conflict with some of the quirkier individuals he met on a professional and personal basis during his postings.

A wealth of photographs from the author's personal archives give background and context, and help bring to life the rich, intricate web of distinctive characters and fascinating places. Above all, it's Brown's knack for describing human foibles and quirks with disarming charm that draws readers into the narrative.

Apart from a cornucopia of political drama and maneuvers with high economic and human stakes, Brown gives wry insights into human nature and how the sometimes delicate—and occasionally rough-and-tumble—world of diplomacy really works. Lively chapter headings like “Whore Houses, Labor Relations, and Coca Cola,” and “The Prophet and the Stripper” pique interest and whet the palate for a well-told tale—and Brown certainly delivers.

With an abundant flair for storytelling, Brown takes us across the globe and on a trip along the corridors of power. He has an incredible head for detail, and also the ability to pull the overall bird's-eye view into quick focus for those not as familiar with the details of global power shifts.

Diplomarine offers rousing accounts of the world we live in and how it got this way, as well as plenty of personal glimpses into how real flesh-and-blood individuals—with all their fallibility—can have far-reaching impacts on the inevitable march of history. Overall, the book presents Brown as possessing a blend of pragmatism and idealism that sets apart those who are brave, intelligent, and skillful enough to make a career in the complex arena of international relations.

SEAMUS MULLARKEY (November 14, 2014)

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