

**"The Elephant Graveyard"**  
**Story Treatment - by Nicholas Winter**

*Accompanied by illustrations by Jeremy Canton*

Prologue

Japanese Jungle 1944

A group of English soldiers are transporting a Japanese convict through the jungle. This Japanese convict is Hamato Yamaguchi - He holds some important information about the war effort. Among the troops are Daniel Harding and James Connors. Connors is obsessed with self preservation and endangers the other troops with poor decisions, the troops are attacked and the only people to escape are Daniel Harding, with Yamaguchi, while Connors is captured by the enemy troops.

Harding and Yamaguchi spend some time trying to survive in the jungle, while Connors is tortured. Harding and Yamaguchi develop a strange trust and begin to help each other survive. Yamaguchi reveals that what he is carrying is not information but several thumb sized uncut diamonds which are supposed to help with funds for the war effort. Six months later the war is over and they are eventually rescued.

Harding is debriefed in Hong Kong, where he meets some old friends and Yamaguchi. Yamaguchi re-presents the diamonds and agrees with Harding to put them into safe keeping. They walk into a private banking facility and deposit the uncut diamonds into a small tray. Yamaguchi offers Harding the key, but he refuses to take it. They have a photo together and each leave Hong Kong to go their separate ways.

Act One - 50 Years Later

Hamato Yamaguchi has become a very old man, he is the acting CEO of a very successful recycling company in Tokyo. In his office he has a surprise visit from two people he doesn't know, they push him around and show him footage of his son and daughter in law being tortured, through a live laptop video feed. Yamaguchi is completely dumbfounded and scared, he doesn't know what to do. He pleads with the two villains, offering them money, Yamaguchi's son and daughter in law are shot. Yamaguchi falls to the ground and one of the villains pounds on his chest until his heart stops.

Meanwhile Yamaguchi's granddaughter Reiko is being bullied at school, picked on because of her families success. She is trying to hide in school toilets but the bully's are quick to find her. The lead bully gets a bit over zealous and kicks Reiko in the throat. Reiko is taken to hospital. Kenji, Reiko's driver, is the first to arrive. The doctors want to operate in the hope of saving Reiko's voice but are

interrupted by invading thugs who are there to target Reiko. Kenji spots a news report on the television, it reports the death of Hamato Yamaguchi and the suspicious circumstances. Hearing a commotion outside the hospital ward Kenji smuggles the weakened Reiko out of hospital. They make a narrow escape and Kenji is shot once in the shoulder. They go into hiding...



## Act Two - Present Day

We begin to follow our lead character Christopher Harding, Daniel Harding's grandson. Christopher is a teacher at a local six form college in London. He seems a little down on his luck and bored with his life until he meets the beautiful Nicole. They embark on a relationship.

Harding begins to have strange visions and nightmares, he consults Nicole about this, she suggests that maybe he should go and see a therapist.

Harding begins to see a therapist, who delves deep into his dreams and nightmares and explains to Harding the meaning of phylogenic memory. A kind of memory built into humans as a defence mechanism where people experience the memories of a former lifetime. This kind of memory lies latent in everyone, in the form of instinct.

Harding's therapy sessions, rather than help diminish his visions, only help intensify them. Harding becomes increasingly internal and struggles to continue in his work. Events are compounded by the sudden disappearance of Nicole.

Harding reports the disappearance and is visited by a man in his late forties who claims to be a police officer, Connors. Connors asks Harding many questions including what it is that's included in his vision, he shows him an old faded picture (Hamato Yamaguchi and Daniel Harding). Harding feigns ignorance. Connors is an elusive character and doesn't like

Harding one bit.

Harding's deterioration continues, he seeks solace with his therapist. The therapist puts Harding under one last time, Harding experiences vivid visions of his own life mixed with the life of his grand father in world war 2. Incredibly distressed Harding tries to escape his own mind and falls completely unconscious.



Act Three -

When Harding wakes he is disoriented. He is in a waste bin, his dead therapist lying by his side. Harding has no shoes and blood is on his shirt. He has somehow been transported to Hong Kong.

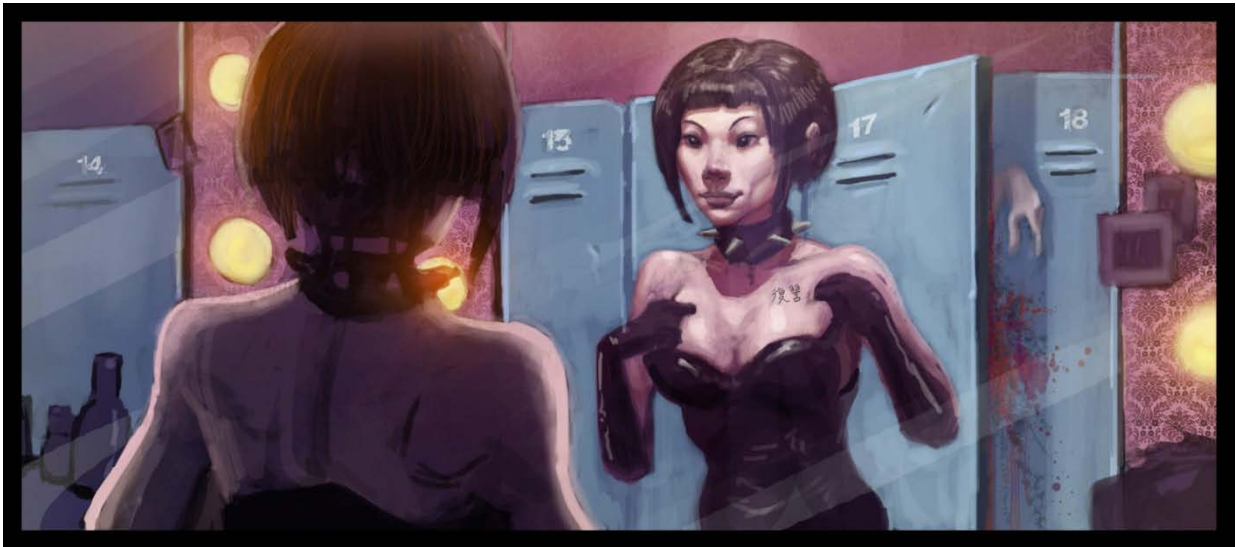
Harding wanders around Hong Kong, until the police confront him and arrest him.

While in the small police cell Harding is visited by again by Conners. Conners has initiated everything up to this point, but Harding has no idea. He questions Harding trying to extract more information from him, threatening him with life imprisonment and violence but he is unsuccessful.

Meanwhile Kenji and Reiko are hiding out in a disused and dusty old gym. Kenji has hired a private detective to try and find answers to the slaughter of the Yamaguchi family. The detective, Takeshi, is a bit of a Joker and flirts a little with Reiko, who can no longer speak because of her throat injury. Piecing together CCTV footage from the hospital attack and the internal cameras at Yamaguchi's recycling firm Takeshi has identified possible suspects and sources of information.

Reiko, now a mean fighter accompanies Takeshi to a night club where they confront one of the murderers. Reiko kills the murderer, while Takeshi raids the clubs computer for more

information.



The computer information yields a new lead. There is a scan of a picture showing two men, one Hamato Yamaguchi and one Daniel Harding. Included in the files is Christopher Harding's passport and other forms of identify. Takeshi quickly finds Harding through his police contacts, he is listed as being detained in Hong Kong.

#### Act Four

Harding is being badly beaten in the small police cell. He doesn't know why he is being imprisoned, the guards produce a picture that was planted in his pocket, they ask about it's significance. Harding is completely unaware, the officers become more and more irate. Connors returns to Harding's cell, Harding quickly realises Connors motives are far more sinister. Connors reproduces the picture together with a key, the key to the safety deposit box containing the diamonds, he questions Harding on its whereabouts and decides to give Harding the key.

Takeshi, Reiko and Kenji arrive in Hong Kong. Takeshi walks straight into the police station, posing as a Japanese Lawyer. He walks into Harding's cell and walks Harding straight out of the front door. An all-too easy escape.

Harding with key in hand travels to a remote suburb of Hong Kong, trying to piece together his memories. The others are frustrated at his slow progress but they eventually find the plot on which the old bank stood. They are informed every box has been moved and now reside in a new facility. They travel there and Harding opens the box, the uncut diamond is still inside, completely untouched. Upon exiting the bank they are confronted by Connors and his men.

They escape through the busy Hong Kong streets. Takeshi is

shot and he dies in the street.

The others regroup and get cleaned up, Harding is unusually introspective, and asks for a few moments alone, he looks at the small diamond and has an idea... Their respite doesn't last long and they have to keep moving as Connors still pursues.

They escape under cover of nightfall, via boat to a small island nearby.

#### Act Five

They hold up inside an abandoned hotel. Kenji fills in the details to Harding who is still completely bemused by the entire situation. The villains are quick to arrive, Kenji is killed, Reiko and Harding escape and run deep into a nearby forest.

Both Reiko and Harding are caught and taken back to the abandoned hotel. Reiko is locked in a room and Harding is made to watch as she tries to fight her way through many enemies. Nicole walks into the room with a gun.

Connors presents Harding with a choice, he must kill Nicole or Reiko will die. Harding can't bring himself to do it. Nicole walks into the room where Reiko is being held and shoot her in the head. Harding can't believe it. Nicole has been working alongside Connors the entire time.

Connors reveals his reasoning for torturing Harding and making him experience everything up until this point. Connors was told the story of how his father was abandoned and left for dead during the war and how Harding's grand father and Yamaguchi betrayed him. How everything he has been doing is fully justified.

Connors asks Harding what was in the box, Harding produces a black thumb sized stone. Connors inspects it and laughs. Connors shoots Nicole, and dials up the police on his phone. Connors hits Harding with the butt of his gun and he falls unconscious.

As Harding wakes he is inside a wire cage. The bodies of Reiko and Nicole are lying nearby. Harding pushes his way out of the cage to the amusement of Connors and they begin to fight, with Connors having the upper hand. After a struggle Harding is the victor. Exhausted he looks over to the horizon; Police boats a helicopter and Connors reinforcements can be heard in the distance, Harding runs for his life.



Harding runs deeper into the nearby jungle, his mind races, he is caught off guard by a few intermittent flashbacks, blurring the boundaries between him and his grandfather. He falls to the ground. The enemy gains on him until he reaches a ravine, and jumps. Engulfed by the water he is finally resurfaces on the other side of the bank.



He coughs up water and then begins to wretch, he regurgitates the real uncut diamond and holds it up, small sections glisten. He looks over to the ravine where the men continue their pursuit, Hardin heads further into the jungle and never looks back.

The End.