

# The Amazon Adventure

© 2016 by David Watkins

I was flying over the Amazon jungle in the latest Air Force stealth fighter aircraft. As a summer intern at the Area 51 test facility I had been asked to put the jet through its paces.

I pushed the throttle forward to kick in the afterburners. As I did I heard a loud BANG and the jet began to shake, rattle, and roll. All of the instrument indicators were flashing and alarms were sounding. The jet was going down and taking me with it.

I reached down and grabbed the ejection lever. I pressed back in the seat and pulled.

BOOOOM!! The canopy exploded up and out. The sound of the rushing wind filled the cockpit. The rockets in the chair ignited, thrusting the seat and me out of the cockpit and away from the jet.

Up, up, up I flew. My ascent slowed and I began to fall back to earth. My speed picked up and I fell faster and faster. Too fast! I looked up and saw the parachute flapping in the breeze – it had failed to open. I tried the reserve chute but it had been damaged during the ejection.

If I landed going this fast I would be killed. My advanced fighter jet training took over. I unbuckled the harness holding me in the seat. I drew my legs up until I was crouched on the seat. I waited until just before the seat hit the ground, then I jumped up as fast as I could and stepped off to the side, unharmed. The old Road Runner maneuver works every time.

I was safely on the ground, but I was lost in the thick, steaming jungle, unaware of my location. I climbed the nearest tree to see if I could get my bearings. In the distance I could see what looked like a large tepui (a large 9,000-foot high mesa found in the Eastern Venezuelan jungle. However, due to security reasons I have to say it was not a tepui in the Eastern Venezuelan jungle). If I climbed to its top I might be able to get my bearings and find my way home.

I slid back to the ground and took off at a quick jog. This wasn't easy, what with the thick trees and vines, the muddy ground and other obstacles. It took almost an entire hour to cover the 20-plus miles. A little slow for me but after all it was a jungle.

As I neared the tepui I came across a well-worn trail that appeared to head straight toward the bottom of the tepui. It must have been a trail made by jungle animals. I would soon realize my error. I followed the trail to the bottom of the tepui. I observed that the well-worn trail continued up to a small cave in the side of the tepui. Maybe it wasn't really a cave but was a tunnel to the top. I decided to check.

I reached the cave and stepped into the entrance. I could feel a strong breeze at my back, showing that, indeed, air was flowing up into the cave. I was right – it was a tunnel after all. I entered the dark tunnel and began to step through the rocks, stalactites and stalagmites. It soon became pitch black – I couldn't see my hand in front of my face.

Fortunately for me, during a previous summer vacation, I had visited a “guru” in Tibet. Among the many things he had taught me was the “Way of the Bat”. He showed me how to extend my sense of hearing to “see” in the dark. I clicked my tongue as I walked slowly through the pitch black tunnel. The sound spread out through the darkness and bounced off the objects in the tunnel. My well-trained ears listened to the returning echoes. The echoes enabled me to sense the rocks and other obstacles. Like a bat I made my way through the darkness without a care. After walking for 25 minutes I sensed that the tunnel had opened into a large underground cavern. It was there the echoes changed. They were no longer being reflected by just hard rock. They were also being reflected by soft, human flesh.

I was surrounded.

I wasn't worried though. After all I had graduated from the Steven Segal School of Martial Arts and Fine Dramatic Acting. I assumed the praying mantis position and prepared myself. I could easily take on twenty assailants without any trouble.

Torches flared around me and I was attacked by at least twenty-one assailants. I fought valiantly but was overcome by the sheer numbers. I quickly found myself being dragged through the tunnel to the top of the tepui. As we left the tunnel I was blinded by the bright light. To keep me from stumbling my assailants picked me up and carried me through the jungle. After a short trek I was dumped unceremoniously onto the ground.

I stood up and brushed the dust from my flight suit. After my eyes had adjusted to the light I looked around. I found myself surrounded by a group of tall, well-built, and attractive women. They were dressed in the armor of what looked like ancient Greece. On their shields was a symbol that looked familiar. Where had I seen that symbol before? I remembered – it was on an archeological dig a few summers ago. I had traveled to Greece to help study the ruins of a city rumored to be the capital of the great Amazonian warriors. Holy cow, I could not believe my luck – I had stumbled upon an ancient tribe of Amazons. Somehow they had crossed the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean to end up here in the jungles of South America. What a fantastic scientific discovery!

I noticed that each woman was eying me in a strange, almost hungry-like manner. I couldn't understand why. I turned and there, on a small, jewel-encrusted throne, was the queen of the Amazons. She looked a little like Lynda Carter of Wonder Woman fame. She spoke to me in the ancient language of Esperanta. Fortunately I had learned to speak it during that archeological dig in Greece and was quite fluent in that ancient dialect.

“Who are you and why have you invaded our sanctuary?” She demanded.

I explained I had become lost and came to the mountain to find my way home. I meant no harm. I promised I would leave and never bother them again.

She paused for a moment, eying me in that same strange and hungry-like manner. It was becoming a little unsettling.

“We cannot let you leave. If you were to tell the world of our existence evil men would come to destroy our way of life.” Isn't that the truth?

“However,” she added, “We will not kill you. You are obviously a very strong, handsome, and virile male [I couldn't argue with that statement]. You could reintroduce strength back into our tribe – something that is sorely missing from our current males.”

Reintroduce strength? At first I thought she was talking about setting up an aerobics class. Then her meaning became clear.

“Excuse me, but are you talking about making me a love slave to all of the beautiful women in your tribe?”

“Yes.”

“Are you talking about me having a non-monogamous relationship with these beautiful women, outside of the benefit of marriage?”

“Yes.”

“Whoa, hold on ma'am. I can't do that. No single, red-blooded American male would ever consider entering into a non-monogamous relationship outside of marriage with dozens of beautiful women. It's just not done.”

She went ballistic! She accused me of insulting her, the tribe, and women everywhere. If I did not reconsider they would cut off my head.

“I'm sorry, but I have to stand by my principles. What kind of example would I be setting for single and married men everywhere?”

I was led to the chopping block. I kneeled down and laid my head on the chopping block. The executioner raised her razor sharp ax over her head. As she began to swing the ax down on my neck I yelled, "Look, it's Elvis Presley" and pointed into the jungle.

Well, the King is the King, even in the middle of a South American jungle. All of the Amazons looked. I yanked my head back to avoid the ax. Unfortunately not far enough and the ax caught the topmost part of my scalp.

Fighting back the pain and wiping the blood from my eyes I took off into the jungle with the Amazons in hot pursuit. I knew I could not run far for I would reach the edge of the tepui. I would be trapped between the sheer cliff on one side and the scorned women on the other.

My survival training took over. I reached into my flight suit and pulled out my emergency sleeping hammock. I held it in my teeth as I ran through the trees. With my right hand I stripped leaves from the trees and vines and with the left I expertly wove them into the netting of the hammock.

I reached the edge of the cliff just as I wove that last leaf into the hammock. I grabbed the ends of the hammock and took it out of my mouth. I turned to see the Amazons burst through the jungle. I held the hammock tightly against my chest, gave the warriors a quick smile, and leaped over the edge of the precipice.

I fell for what seemed like hours but were only seconds. I stuck my arms over my head and spread them wide. Poof, the hammock filled with air. Acting like a parachute, the hammock enabled me to drift slowly and safely to the ground below.

I expected a shower of spears and arrows. None fell. I did hear faint calls which sounded like, "*please, don't leave, we're sorry we....*" But surely I was mistaken.

I was able to make my way back to civilization. I found the nearest "Hair Club for Men" franchise to take care of the little problem area on the top of my head, at least until the hair grew back. I returned to Area 51 Headquarters and provided a full report on my crash, though I excluded any mention of the tribe.

Once I got home I began to think about what the Amazons were offering. I can't believe I was so stupid as to give up such a wonderful opportunity for a detailed, scientific study of the Amazon women, er warriors. I think I'll go back and see if they'll let me stay for awhile – for purely scientific reasons of course.