

1 Week in Costa Rica

By: Tanner Duke

I am in the middle of the plane. It's cold in here but I'm also excited so I don't mind that I'm cold. I'm sitting next to the window. There's lots of clouds and it's dark. If it was light or the clouds were not there I think I would see the ocean or a bunch of plant life. We've been in the air for 5 and a half hours and there is only 30 minutes left until we land. I look over and Tyler, my brother, is asleep. He has a neck pillow around his neck. It's blue and it has the plane's logo on it. They wash it after every time they land. I wonder what the pillow feels like but I know that if I took it he would wake up and be mad. So I take the one from out of the pocket from the chair in front of me. It gets stuck and my mom looks over. She's sitting next to Tyler on the aisle seat. She was watching a movie on the ipad attached to the back of the seat. She says "do you need help with that". I say yes so she scoots over a little bit and helps me get the neck pillow out. Mom says "there's only 30 minutes till we land." I see my dad. He is reading on his phone on the aisle seat across from my mom. He looks at me and does a kissing motion at me. I smile and say I say okay. I am excited because we're going to be in Costa Rica soon.

My family decided to go on vacation to Costa Rica. We took an airplane and it took 6 hours. We land and get out of the plane. It feels warm and kind of humid outside and I smell flowers and dirt. The air feels sticky and it's different then the smell at home because the flowers are everywhere. We went to the hotel in an

Uber. In the Uber I'm wondering what the hotel is going to be like. My brother is bugging me because his music is blasting in his airpods and one of the only things I can hear is brrrrppchy brrrrpch brrrrrrphcy. I wish that he could turn his music down. He spends about like a quarter of his day on his phone.

The hotel is fancy. There's golden statues of sloths hanging off of the top of the archways. It also has good lights. I bet it smells good inside. It has a fountain in front like the one in front of the museum at Balboa Park. It's big. It has a breakfast area, a lunch area and a dinner area but the dinner area was the only place open because it was night time.

We went to the dinner area and it was like a cafeteria. We didn't have dinner yet and it was late. We ate and then we went to our room. It was on the fourth floor and it was the second room to the right. It's number was 439. My mom says "We are going on a hike tomorrow so get some rest please it's almost 9." There is a couch that flips out a bed and I sleep in that. I went fast asleep.

I wake up in the morning and I feel good. I slept nice because I didn't sleep in the plane. The first thing we do is we go to the breakfast area and eat. Then my dad says "hurry up and eat cause we got to get supplies at the hiking shop and then go on the hike.". I hurry and eat my pancakes. I am excited because I can't wait to go on the hike. I want to explore and see sloths and slimy frogs.

We go to the hiking shop that's by the hotel. Inside they sell hiking sticks, trail mix, boots, and gloves. My whole family is there when we walk inside my mom

and dad go to look at the gloves and the hiking sticks. My brother and I go to the food and the drinks. My brother is nice a lot of the time but sometimes he is annoying. Right now he's nice. He gave me gummies that I really wanted but I couldn't find and then we both chose a Gatorade. He gets blue while I get green. Then me and Tyler go to our mom and she's wondering what she should get. She can't decide between brown boots or black boots. Then dad tells mom "why would you buy boots the day we go hiking!". So we walk away and buy the food that me and Tyler picked out and water packs. My dad is talking to the man at the counter. They are talking about their jobs and laughing. The guys asked "what are you gonna do with all this?" my dad says "this is a hiking shop. It's for hiking." The man laughs at my dad's response and says "I would know. Beware I hear rumors that there are tribes of people around. I hear they enslave you until death." My dad says "we'll be careful." Me and Tyler are kind of worried. Tyler has an expression on his face that looks scared. My mom laughs like it's funny that there's a tribe in Costa Rica. When we walk out of the store the guy says "good luck on your hike".

At the hotel we get on a tourist bus that leads to a hike. The bus is silver with the words Tours Bus in black on both sides. We are the only family on the bus because it can only fit up to four people. The bus is kind of cold on the inside because it has air conditioning. The windows are kind of blue. It takes about 2 hours to get to the jungle. When I look outside the windows I see a jungle. Tyler is on his phone and even though he can't get reception he is playing a game that doesn't need to go online. My mom and dad are talking and taking pictures. They are talking about the hike and taking pictures of the jungle outside. I see some monkeys, one sloth, and a snake. I think it was a snake or it could have been a vine.

I couldn't tell because we were moving fast. I am thinking about how I want to find sloths and slimy frogs.

We finally get to the start of the trail and the bus driver says "bye. Good luck." Then it leaves. We are happy and excited. it smells like flowers and water and mud. I see lots of greens and dark brown. There are lots of flowers that are tropical colors. Dad is looking in his backpack and he can't find the map. Mom says "did you forget the map?". Dad says "yes but let's just follow the trail." We decide that we will just follow the trail because the bus picks you up at the end of the hike. The hike is only supposed to be an hour or two so we get going.

We are hiking on what we think is the trail. There are signs that point to areas that are cool looking. There are arrows that point to where you need to go. Then the jungle gets really thick and we follow what we think is the trail but then dad says "we're lost". It's only been 30 minutes into the hike and we haven't seen any more arrows or signs. We decided to try to go back to the area that we came from but we can't find it. We just see plants. I do see slimy frogs jumping in circles around me. It kind of makes me happy because I wanted to see them but I care more about getting back to the bus. I walk away from them because I am kind of weirded out that they are only doing it around me.

Tyler is kind of worried and is trying to help me feel better. But I can tell he is worried because he keeps making weird faces and walking back and forth. He is anxious because I can see him sweating. He seems fearful and scared and he says "what if the tribe's people are real and they find us?". My mom says "Don't say

that you're gonna scare Tanner". She says it in an angry tone. I say "I don't believe that there's tribes of people around. I don't believe that they're real."

"We need to eat cause I'm getting hungry" says my dad. "Then let's eat" says my mom. There are some rocks that are near where we are. They're just there and waiting for us to sit on them. We go and sit on them and open our backpacks. Mom and dad have trail mix and water. Tyler has shrimp chips and a gatorade. I have my gummies and gatorade. My mom also has tangerines and sandwiches in her bag. We eat our food and everyone is pretty quiet. While I'm eating I look up and I see up in the tree something furry. The fur is grey and green and brown. It isn't even moving. It's just hanging there looking at us. I get accomplished feelings because I finally saw a sloth in the wild. I say "guys look, it's a sloth!". My dad and my brother take out their phones and start taking pictures. My mom says "wow guys that's so cool". We feel happy and energized after seeing the sloth and eating. We continue our journey to find our way back on the trail.

Not long after we eat only like an hour after lunch it seems to get dark. It gets dark earlier because we're in the jungle and we're not able to see through the trees for light that much. Dad says "we need to start looking for shelter if it's going to get dark." I know it's so we're not easy prey for predators. We still haven't found the bus or the trail. I am feeling kinda worried and tired. Tyler sees light up ahead. He points at it and I see it. It's kinda orangeish like fire light. I feel happy because we're finally near somewhere and I don't have to walk anymore. Our whole family gets excited and goes to the light. Mom thinks it's a cabin and we can get help. I think she's right. I hope the cabin has somewhere to sleep.

Tyler is exhausted. His legs are dead. He hopes that there's a phone charger at the cabin because his phone is going to die. Dad hopes that there's a phone charger and reception. He said he's going to the police so we can get rescued.

We get closer to the light and we don't see a cabin or a house. We see a temple with a light in it. It's kinda shaped like a pyramid but the top is flat and square. It's at least 20 feet high. It's made out of stone bricks. It looks old because the writing and the carvings and statues look extinct like dodo birds and weird writing. The temple is all dirty and some parts are broken and it has vines all over it. There looks like there is only one opening and that's where we see the light through. It's a fire light. when we get closer there are torches on the inside. I am worried and I start to realize that the tribe's people might be real. Tyler is kinda mad because his phone is dead and he can't take pictures. My parents' phones are dead too so they can't take pictures either. My parents are kind of quiet and mumbling to themselves. I think they're deciding on if the tribes are real or not and if they're real if the tribes people are going to help or not.

Dad announces "this place is our only shelter so we're probably going to have to stay in it for the night." Mom agrees and Tyler thinks he's funny and says "I wonder if they have wireless TV?" they start to walk towards the temple. I follow them but then I walk backwards, then I walk forwards again. And then I am in the temple. I just want to see if there is any one or any thing following us.

Inside there's just one big room with pillars with the lit torches and statues of ancient tribe people. I think that they are past tribe leaders because they have

lots of feathers and weapons with them. They're all lined up around the room against the wall. There is a pillar at each corner and there are four corners. On the pillars there are a bunch of ancient looking drawings. There are tribe people hunting. There are leaders leading the tribe in hunts or feasting.

Being here makes me kind of worried because the tribe leaders do not look friendly. Tyler was excited because of the ancient statues and drawings in the temple. He's walking around looking at the statues and pillars. It's not that big inside this room and we kind of start to go around checking stuff out by ourselves. While we're about to go around we all hear a bunch of people talking in a weird language and stuff. We try to find a place to hide but we can't. Then standing in the only door we see these people in red dyed clothes and feathers in headbands made out of leathery material. There's one guy that is holding a dead pig with a spear in it. There's a bunch of blood on his shoulder from holding the pig. There's like 15 people. They see us.

They're talking in a weird language. I don't think it's Spanish. Mom and Dad try talking to these people with Spanish, English, and hand gestures. But I don't think they understand. The people have more torches so we can see more of the temple. That's when me and Tyler see all kinds of mixed skeletons around the temple. Even humans. I see a guy who looks like the leader yelling at the tribe's people. It looks like he's yelling at the tribe's people to get out of the temple because he's grunting and making hand gestures like they need to move. The entire family notices it too. Tyler says "what are they saying?". Then in the only doorway a boulder from the top falls in front of the door trapping us in the

temple. All the tribes people are outside. We can hear them chanting something. They sound excited.

I feel scared. I feel like this might be my last day on earth. I am standing in silence. Dad is trying to push the boulder out of the way but it's not working. Mom and Tyler try to help but the boulder won't budge.

Mom says everyone calm down so we do. After a little while thinking of how to get out of the temple I finally have an idea. So I explain how my idea goes and my idea is we search the temple for clues. Dad says we should all look at different sections of the temple. He says "Tyler go to look on the ceiling and the tops of the pillars maybe you can find something to climb out. Mom needs to look at the pillar drawing to look for clues for anything we need to do for the tribes people. Tanner you need to look at the statues to look for clues too. I will look at the door to see if I can open it".

We all go look at our assigned things to look at. Tyler starts to climb one of the pillars to look for things that can open. Mom looks at the drawings on the walls. Dad keeps trying to find something like a stick or something to push the boulder so we can get out. There's about 11 statues with space for at least 4 more around the room. The statues are built on stands that have tally marks on the front of them. I go to look at one of the statues. I go to the one with only one tally mark. I think the tally marks stand for the when they were the tribe leaders of the tribe.

The statues are like 7 feet tall without the stand there like 6 feet tall. So the statues are like life. The one I'm looking at has lots of cracks in it and skin details that are all wrinkly. It has plant life on it and it's probably the oldest. One hand is holding a golden egg. The other hand is held out like with its palm open. It reminds me of what sign language for stop looks like. The egg has jewels in it and has ancient writing and snake carvings in it. I take the egg and put in my backpack and I don't say anything. In the palm of the hand I see like a tattoo that goes up down down left left right right. I think it's a pattern for some sort of code. I look on the side of the stand that's next to another statue and I see like a stick that looks like a lever.

In a normal voice I say "hey guys I found something" cause I don't want the tribe people to hear me. We can hear the tribe still and they sound like they're packing up more spears for more hunting. They're not chanting anymore. They sound like they're putting up more stuff in front of the boulder so we don't escape. My family all comes to look at what I found. Tyler climbs down from the pillar. Mom and dad are looking at the hand tattoo. I say it's a pattern. I think if we put in the hand tattoo pattern with the lever then maybe we can escape. Mom says "let's wait until the tribe leaves so we can put in the hand tattoo pattern"

We try to find another way out while we wait for the tribe to leave. We don't find one. Then we finally get a chance to try the pattern out because the tribe leaves. We know they're gone because it's silent after we hear their footsteps going further and further away. I go to the statue with the levers and I do the pattern. Up up down down left left right right. A trap door in the middle of

the temple opens up. We grab all the torches in the temple and go to the trap door so we can see.

We go in it and we hope it leads to an exit because once you get in the trap door it's so far down that once you get in there's no getting back out. Dad goes into the trap door by hanging off the side with his hands and sliding down. Then we all go down one by one and Dad catches us at the bottom. In the trap door there's a tunnel. We go through the tunnel. We keep walking straight and go along with torches that we brought with us. We go on like forever but we finally get out to the end of the tunnel. The tunnel ends at a cave opening. We keep going in the jungle for like 10 minutes more. We have to hurry so the tribe doesn't find that we escaped. We have to go over a bunch of rocks and logs to get away from the tunnel and all of a sudden we see a fence with rope and posts. It looks like the trail.

On the trail we see a searching team that is looking for us. We go running towards them and we start yelling. It turns out that the bus driver called them when we didn't show up 4 hours after we were supposed to meet at the bus. We're finally saved. They take us back to the hotel. On the way back we are able to tell the search team about all the skeletons that we found and about where we found the tribe. They think it's where the missing hikers have gone. Dad tells them about the cave. We decided after our adventure that we should still stay in Costa Rica and not go deep into the jungle anymore. I know that I have my secret but I don't tell anyone about the egg. It kind of freaks me out the rest of the week

because I am worried that the tribe will come and try to find us. But we stay in the city the whole time so we end up being safe.

The day before we leave I show my family the egg. Everyone is excited. But mom says we can't keep it because it belongs in a museum. Dad calls the police people to show them the egg. The city gives us a million dollars for finding an ancient artifact. I feel really happy about it but I'm kinda sad because I wanted to keep it. But I know it belongs in a museum. Besides, mom says that she will buy me a phone with the money that they gave us. At the end of the week we go back to the airport. Because we are heroes we get to go to the VIP section of the plane. I can't wait to get back home.

The End

Dedicated to my mom because she helped me throughout the entire story and its her birthday today.