

Adventures by the Mayan way

By Maxim Dyshlevyi

Those temples: they seem to have no purpose except to make this place look better. Or it can be a defence structure, while it could be a literal place for tourists. People started going up the temple, and on to the roof. And every time they are there, doing something, the sun gets brighter until they get down. No one wants to tell me... even my parents (who are the direct assistants to the king), so I will find out by myself.

I got my friend Gabor, but he thought it was a stupid idea and that we will know when we grow up. Yes, I think we will know when we will grow up, but I want to grow up knowing it. So, I got Gabor and we got our plan.

Later that day, I went to Gabor's house, and his parents were not there. After that, we went to the Great Jaguar's Temple. There was an entrance, and we went in. It was dark, what was worse, the entrance sealed by itself. And then a light was lit, it was a torch I took it and we followed the corridor. It led into a room with some kind of rectangular thing. I realized that there was a lid, and took no time to get there and open it until Gabor stopped me, told me not to. I ignored him, and opened it. There was an old body, for some reason. Then we heard: *CREAK.....THUMBLE and then we heard the sound of lions, or tigers, but what made sense: jaguars. I told Gabor to climb up one column and I climbed up another one. We were in safety just in time before the jaguars came. And then out of nowhere, light at the top appeared.

"Hey, that's a hole there they opened" Gabor mumbled.

Indeed, it was, because we could see some moving figures.

"HELP! HELP! HELP!" I cried, while at the same time, Gabor was shushing me.

After 30 minutes of hanging, *THUD...tick tick TICK tick TICK CREAK*

Gabor muttered "they heard us."

And sure enough, two men were coming down the hallway, with a surprised look on their faces. They were lost for words. He made the Jaguars go back from where they came from, and he signalled us to come down. He then took us out of the temple and took us to the main building, to something that looked like court. They put us on a chair, and locked us up on it. The man that took us explained something quietly to another man wearing unusual clothes, they looked the same but something looked strange about his clothes.

"So" he started, "you were found in the great jaguar's temple... WHAT ON EARTH WERE YOU KIDS DOING THERE!?!?! Oh, of course, exploring. Like always, almost all incidents involving kids were just exploring! Is that right?"

"Yes" we replied, but his response, however was different than I expected:

"Well going in a temple is one thing, BUT OPENING THE LID OF THE KING!!! HOW DARE YOU!!!"

"We did not open the lid, and I don't even know what you are talking about!" I answered

"Then why were there Jaguars when Aapo found you? They are released when the lid is opened! CASE CLOSED! YOUR PUNNISHMENT: A MONTH OF WORK IN THE FIELDS!" The man apparently named Aapo took us to the fields and we started working.

It was ridiculously hard work, and after a week, Gabor told me that we needed to escape. I got all I knew about nearby cities, and told that information to Gabor. But Gabor said that we need to escape to another civilization. He told me that the closest civilization there was were the Aztecs, but it was north and it wasn't too close.

Our first city of our destination was Piedgras Negras, and it was directly west. So, when we went to the fields, we creped to the east, in one direction. After a week of walking, we found Piedgras Negras, it was surprisingly small, if you are used to living in Tikal. There were only 2 temples (WHAT!?) and it had about 800 people. After we arrived there, people started asking questions such as: what is Tikal like? Or how many temples does Tikal have? Or even do they have a lot of food there? And all we answered is that we need a map. We really needed a map, because after we came to Piedgras Negras we lost our sense of direction. We came here and started searching for an abandoned house, it was actually way easier than we thought. We settled for the night, and we slept strongly. The next morning, we set out for a map. People kept telling us to stay, and not giving a map. Eventually one cartographer agreed to give us a map, and I don't even know what possessed him.

We found out that we need to go toward a town named Tonina, it wasn't very promising. The trip was pretty boring, and the village was small, even smaller then Piedgras Negras. We got some food from the plains and got on with it. This was our last Mayan point before Aztec civilization, as the map said. And to the side of where Aztecs should be, there was a big wall and lots of weapons. We waited till night and went through the wall.

Finally, some civilization seen! It has been a long time since Tonina. We entered, it was pretty different, no people seen for now. Then I saw a person out of the corner of my eye, he was cleaning some house. He wore clothes that looked like slave clothes... except it was new and clean. We also did not realize that Aztecs spoke another language than Maya, and that guy was singing in Mayan. two hours through exploring the village, some more and more people were starting to come. The Aztecs looked different from Mayan

people, except for that guy who was cleaning the house. After a while, we were eventually spotted, too many people came. I ran one direction, Gabor the other. This was the first time we actually regretted that we went, instead of just staying at Piedgras Negras. Tonina was far away, even though it was the closest. Nowhere to run... and as I just realized we had four Aztec people chasing us... with weapons. I saw Gabor was to the left and behind me, he had 6 people on his tail. I eventually climbed up a tree, to rest, but they did not know how to get me. They whispered to each other, and two people ran away two were left to look after me. About five minutes later, different people came with the people that ran away, except the new people carried axes... they were lumber jacks. And one Mayan looking guy arrived, telling us: "You better get out of that tree, or they are going to cut it down with you. They will indeed get you into slavery, but you can buy your way out." Just as I was about to answer, I saw Gabor running at top speed away from the four people, just next to the tree.

"Are you a slave?" I asked the Mayan looking guy.

"I was, but I bought my way out. Slaves here are way better treated than Mayan slaves do." I decided to climb off the tree then to fall off the falling tree, and just as I wanted to start climbing off, 3 things with people on them with extreme speed dashed and stopped at the bottom of the tree. The things were brown, 4 legs, a head that had a long nose and neck, about 3 times the size of a person, and a tail. They also carried some long shiny objects with wood and some shiny silver colored thing, and they put something in those shiny things. They spoke another language than the Aztec, and the Aztec were afraid. One person was very brave and stood in one place, and those new people just waited.

Eventually, the new people just took their shiny objects, put some small mysteries matter in, in, closed one eye so that the other was just on top of the shiny thing, as if he was aiming at the person. After 5 sec of what seemed aiming, with a deafening sound, the shiny object did something, and the person was lying dead. The shiny object was smoking but smelled like a powder rather than smoke. Then one of them spoke in Mayan with some other accent:

"Are you Mayan?"

"Yes" I replied.

"Then get down here and sit, or we will do the same thing we did to him", pointing to the dead body. I sat down on one of the brown things after the new people, and the things moved.

After about 3 days of sitting on the things and sleeping, we moved way past the Mayas and to what seemed like another civilization.

We arrived at about 3 hours before sunset, and at some kind of city, it was high in the mountains, higher than I ever seen. They returned the things into some kind of their home, and took me to some building. They questioned me about maya, like what is their

capital, is their army big, how skilled they are and how people live. That took about an hour, after which they let me out to freedom.

While I was exploring the city, I saw Gabor on one of those brown galloping things. They took him to the same place as they did to me. As about the city, it was small, but high in the mountains and a lot of water channels. I found those men, and asked:

"How am I supposed to communicate with others?"

"Oh yes, you will have lessons every day. For now, you can work in the fields, you can eat those straight away, but remember to plant new ones too." So, I tried to find some fields, but how were fields possible if we were in the mountains high up? When I finally came to the edge of the city, there were literally rows of crops in rectangles that kept them straight horizontal. And I started working. A week later, I was already able to communicate with other people, and after a month, almost fluently.

This civilization was apparently called Inca I got worked at the fields and got money. I got enough to move to some kind of Machu Pichu city, it was supposedly bigger. I moved, and it was a million times bigger, even maybe bigger than Tikal. A year has passed, I have a house, a decent one. 3 years later, I was high in profit, and I'm only 16. I still miss maya, but personally, I think this was all worth it.