

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:08,000

If these artifacts are real, what would it mean?

2

00:00:08,000 --> 00:00:11,000

We would change the whole history of the world.

3

00:00:13,000 --> 00:00:15,000

This is a bottomless pit.

4

00:00:18,000 --> 00:00:20,000

Look at the size of this room.

5

00:00:23,000 --> 00:00:25,000

Snake, back up, back up, back up.

6

00:00:26,000 --> 00:00:28,000

This just got real.

7

00:00:28,000 --> 00:00:30,000

Come on, Tess!

8

00:00:42,000 --> 00:00:44,000

My job is to investigate legends.

9

00:00:44,000 --> 00:00:48,000

But there's one story that, if I'm being honest, I've avoided.

10

00:00:48,000 --> 00:00:51,000

Because, frankly, it makes me nervous.

11

00:00:51,000 --> 00:00:53,000

I know it won't be easy.

12

00:00:53,000 --> 00:00:56,000

But then again, great adventures seldom are.

13

00:00:58,000 --> 00:01:02,000

In the mid-1960s, a prospector named Juan Moritz

14

00:01:02,000 --> 00:01:05,000

treks into the dangerous jungles of Ecuador

15

00:01:05,000 --> 00:01:08,000

and discovers a foreboding and seemingly endless cave.

16

00:01:09,000 --> 00:01:12,000

Inside, he claims to find man-made architecture,

17

00:01:12,000 --> 00:01:15,000

perfectly carved walls and ceilings,

18

00:01:15,000 --> 00:01:17,000

and in the deepest recesses,

19

00:01:17,000 --> 00:01:20,000

a collection of shimmering metallic tablets,

20

00:01:20,000 --> 00:01:22,000

inscribed with mysterious symbols.

21

00:01:23,000 --> 00:01:27,000

He believes they represent a priceless library of knowledge

22

00:01:27,000 --> 00:01:30,000

left by an advanced ancient civilization.

23

00:01:30,000 --> 00:01:33,000

Others decry it as an elaborate lie.

24

00:01:35,000 --> 00:01:39,000

A best-selling book brings international attention to the story,

25

00:01:39,000 --> 00:01:41,000

which inspires a major expedition

26

00:01:41,000 --> 00:01:43,000

launched by engineers Stanley Hall

27

00:01:43,000 --> 00:01:47,000

and none other than astronaut Neil Armstrong.

28

00:01:48,000 --> 00:01:50,000

The team reaches the remote cave

29

00:01:50,000 --> 00:01:52,000

and maps part of its interior,

30

00:01:52,000 --> 00:01:56,000

but the location of the metal library remains an enigma.

31

00:01:58,000 --> 00:02:02,000

Now, Eileen Hall is picking up where her father left off,

32

00:02:02,000 --> 00:02:05,000

and a team of geologists is planning on pushing deeper

33

00:02:05,000 --> 00:02:08,000

into the cave than ever before.

34

00:02:08,000 --> 00:02:12,000

The golden tablets of the metal library could be worth millions.

35

00:02:12,000 --> 00:02:14,000

They could rewrite history,

36

00:02:14,000 --> 00:02:17,000

or they could be nothing more than an elaborate hoax.

37

00:02:17,000 --> 00:02:21,000

And so, it's time to solve this mystery once and for all.

38

00:02:28,000 --> 00:02:30,000

My name is Josh Gates.

39

00:02:32,000 --> 00:02:36,000

With a degree in archaeology and a passion for exploration,

40

00:02:36,000 --> 00:02:40,000

I have a tendency to end up in some very strange situations.

41

00:02:40,000 --> 00:02:44,000

It's just straight down! Unbelievable!

42

00:02:44,000 --> 00:02:47,000

My travels have taken me to the ends of the earth

43

00:02:47,000 --> 00:02:50,000

as I investigate the greatest legends in history.

44

00:02:50,000 --> 00:02:52,000

We're good to try, let's go.

45

00:02:52,000 --> 00:02:55,000

This is Expedition Unknown.

46

00:02:55,000 --> 00:02:59,000

My mission to check out the metal library begins in Cuenca, Ecuador.

47

00:02:59,000 --> 00:03:01,000

When it comes to beautiful colonial cities,

48

00:03:01,000 --> 00:03:04,000

Ecuador's capital of Quito gets all the attention,

49

00:03:04,000 --> 00:03:06,000

and maybe that's a good thing,

50

00:03:06,000 --> 00:03:09,000

because it means that here in the colonial city of Cuenca,

51

00:03:09,000 --> 00:03:12,000

the streets are quieter, cleaner, and a lot more laid back,

52

00:03:12,000 --> 00:03:15,000

making this place a truly undiscovered gem.

53

00:03:17,000 --> 00:03:19,000

With dozens of people in the city,

54

00:03:19,000 --> 00:03:22,000

the city is a place of great success.

55

00:03:22,000 --> 00:03:24,000

It's a gem.

56

00:03:24,000 --> 00:03:28,000

With dozens of stunning churches and a quaint central square,

57

00:03:28,000 --> 00:03:30,000

Cuenca may look like a slice of Europe,

58

00:03:30,000 --> 00:03:33,000

but we're in the heart of South America.

59

00:03:38,000 --> 00:03:40,000

Perhaps the most famous thing about Cuenca

60

00:03:40,000 --> 00:03:42,000

is its most fashionable export.

61

00:03:42,000 --> 00:03:45,000

The always stylish Panama hat.

62

00:03:46,000 --> 00:03:48,000

Don't be fooled by the name.

63

00:03:48,000 --> 00:03:51,000

These hats were actually born right here in Ecuador.

64

00:03:51,000 --> 00:03:53,000

And at the Homero Ortega factory,

65

00:03:53,000 --> 00:03:58,000

they still weave, die, and sell these iconic beauties.

66

00:03:58,000 --> 00:04:00,000

This one, look at me. Look at this.

67

00:04:00,000 --> 00:04:02,000

El jefe.

68

00:04:02,000 --> 00:04:04,000

And the real deal doesn't come cheap.

69

00:04:04,000 --> 00:04:06,000

How much is this guy?

70

00:04:06,000 --> 00:04:07,000

\$2,000.

71

00:04:07,000 --> 00:04:08,000

\$2,000?

72

00:04:08,000 --> 00:04:10,000

There you go. I'm gonna hand that right back to you.

73

00:04:10,000 --> 00:04:12,000

It's a beautiful hat.

74

00:04:12,000 --> 00:04:14,000

I'm just gonna look at that one from afar, I think.

75

00:04:16,000 --> 00:04:18,000

Originally called a toquilla,

76

00:04:18,000 --> 00:04:20,000

in 1906, trendsetter Teddy Roosevelt

77

00:04:20,000 --> 00:04:23,000

was photographed wearing one while visiting the Panama Canal,

78

00:04:23,000 --> 00:04:25,000

and the name just stuck.

79

00:04:27,000 --> 00:04:28,000

Too much?

80

00:04:28,000 --> 00:04:30,000

I try on hat after hat.

81

00:04:30,000 --> 00:04:31,000

Now?

82

00:04:31,000 --> 00:04:34,000

Until I finally meet my match.

83

00:04:35,000 --> 00:04:37,000

Ooh, wait a minute.

84

00:04:37,000 --> 00:04:39,000

It's speaking to me.

85

00:04:39,000 --> 00:04:40,000

This is your hat.

86

00:04:40,000 --> 00:04:41,000

This is my hat?

87

00:04:41,000 --> 00:04:42,000

Yes.

88

00:04:42,000 --> 00:04:46,000

This is my genuine Panama hat from Ecuador.

89

00:04:46,000 --> 00:04:48,000

All right, let's do it.

90

00:04:48,000 --> 00:04:51,000

To solve the mystery of the Meta Library,

91

00:04:51,000 --> 00:04:54,000

my wild adventure begins in an unlikely place.

92

00:04:54,000 --> 00:04:56,000

A lawyer's office.

93

00:04:56,000 --> 00:04:57,000

Gerardo.

94

00:04:57,000 --> 00:04:59,000

I'm here to meet the attorney who represented

95

00:04:59,000 --> 00:05:01,000

the original explorer who discovered

96

00:05:01,000 --> 00:05:03,000

the so-called Meta Library.

97

00:05:03,000 --> 00:05:04,000

Oh, thanks.

98

00:05:05,000 --> 00:05:09,000

So, look, I know you were a big part of the beginning of this story.

99

00:05:09,000 --> 00:05:13,000

You knew the main man here, Juan Mariz.

100

00:05:13,000 --> 00:05:17,000

Well, I didn't know Juan Mariz until the first day

101

00:05:17,000 --> 00:05:20,000

he showed up in my office.

102

00:05:20,000 --> 00:05:24,000

He told me the most incredible story

103

00:05:24,000 --> 00:05:26,000

about the Subterranean world.

104

00:05:26,000 --> 00:05:29,000

And when you say Subterranean world, you mean like a cave?

105

00:05:29,000 --> 00:05:31,000

It's not exactly a cave.

106

00:05:31,000 --> 00:05:33,000

It's just a whole world.

107

00:05:33,000 --> 00:05:38,000

In 1965, prospector Juan Mariz travels deep into the Amazon

108

00:05:38,000 --> 00:05:41,000

and discovers a gaping vertical crack in the Earth.

109

00:05:41,000 --> 00:05:45,000

The natives call Cueva de los Taos, or the Taos Cave.

110

00:05:45,000 --> 00:05:50,000

Inside, he finds a labyrinth of what appear to be man-made tunnels,

111

00:05:50,000 --> 00:05:53,000

and in the deepest recesses, a collection of artifacts

112

00:05:53,000 --> 00:05:56,000

unlike anything seen before.

113

00:05:56,000 --> 00:05:58,000

And what did he say was down there?

114

00:05:58,000 --> 00:06:00,000

A library.

115

00:06:00,000 --> 00:06:04,000

A metallic library in some particular cavity.

116

00:06:04,000 --> 00:06:10,000

There are metallic plates all over them.

117

00:06:11,000 --> 00:06:15,000

Mariz returned and drew up legal documents to stake his claim.

118

00:06:15,000 --> 00:06:16,000

May I see?

119

00:06:16,000 --> 00:06:17,000

Yes.

120

00:06:17,000 --> 00:06:18,000

Wow.

121

00:06:18,000 --> 00:06:23,000

So this is an official deed saying that Juan Mariz discovered this place.

122

00:06:26,000 --> 00:06:29,000

To prove that the cave and metal library exist,

123

00:06:29,000 --> 00:06:32,000

Mariz mounts a larger expedition,

124

00:06:32,000 --> 00:06:35,000

taking along the lawyer and a team of explorers

125

00:06:35,000 --> 00:06:37,000

who trek into the wilds of the Amazon.

126

00:06:37,000 --> 00:06:39,000

This is from when he took you out there?

127

00:06:39,000 --> 00:06:40,000

Exactly.

128

00:06:40,000 --> 00:06:42,000

It's a photograph of Mr. Mariz.

129

00:06:42,000 --> 00:06:43,000

Wow.

130

00:06:43,000 --> 00:06:46,000

Mariz is good to his word and leads them to the mouth

131

00:06:46,000 --> 00:06:48,000

of a terrifyingly deep cave.

132

00:06:48,000 --> 00:06:50,000

After using ropes to reach the bottom,

133

00:06:50,000 --> 00:06:54,000

he shows off formations that appear to be anything but natural.

134

00:06:54,000 --> 00:06:56,000

It looks man-made.

135

00:06:56,000 --> 00:06:57,000

And this arch, too.

136

00:06:57,000 --> 00:06:59,000

It looks like masonry.

137

00:06:59,000 --> 00:07:01,000

He was telling the truth.

138

00:07:01,000 --> 00:07:04,000

But what about the metal library?

139

00:07:04,000 --> 00:07:08,000

These incredible artifacts from this advanced civilization,

140

00:07:08,000 --> 00:07:10,000

none of that is anywhere to be found.

141

00:07:10,000 --> 00:07:13,000

He said, this is just the beginning.

142

00:07:13,000 --> 00:07:14,000

So it's much deeper?

143

00:07:14,000 --> 00:07:16,000

Much deeper.

144

00:07:16,000 --> 00:07:19,000

Peña tells me that they exhausted their supplies within the cave

145

00:07:19,000 --> 00:07:23,000

and were forced to turn back before reaching the library.

146

00:07:25,000 --> 00:07:28,000

Do you believe that he actually saw this library deeper in the caves?

147

00:07:28,000 --> 00:07:30,000

Yes, he saw it.

148

00:07:30,000 --> 00:07:32,000

How do you prove it's real, then?

149

00:07:32,000 --> 00:07:34,000

You have to rediscover it.

150

00:07:34,000 --> 00:07:35,000

You have to find it.

151

00:07:35,000 --> 00:07:38,000

That is the only possible proof.

152

00:07:40,000 --> 00:07:44,000

And so Juan Mariz wrote the first chapter in the legend of the metal library

153

00:07:44,000 --> 00:07:46,000

by discovering the remote cave,

154

00:07:46,000 --> 00:07:48,000

and the story could have ended there.

155

00:07:48,000 --> 00:07:51,000

But like all great plots, this one has a twist.

156

00:07:51,000 --> 00:07:53,000

The introduction of a surprise character.

157

00:07:53,000 --> 00:07:58,000

Father Crespi, the priest that supposedly had actual metallic artifacts

158

00:07:58,000 --> 00:08:00,000

from the mysterious cave,

159

00:08:00,000 --> 00:08:03,000

artifacts that may still be here in the city of Cuenca.

160

00:08:05,000 --> 00:08:07,000

So who was this priest?

161

00:08:07,000 --> 00:08:10,000

And did he really have materials from the metal library?

162

00:08:10,000 --> 00:08:13,000

To find out, I'm headed to the Pumapungo Museum

163

00:08:13,000 --> 00:08:16,000

to meet archaeologist Dr. Florencio Delgado

164

00:08:16,000 --> 00:08:19,000

in the usually restricted archives.

165

00:08:19,000 --> 00:08:22,000

Ho-ho! My God!

166

00:08:22,000 --> 00:08:23,000

How many pieces are down here?

167

00:08:23,000 --> 00:08:25,000

Around 10,000.

168

00:08:25,000 --> 00:08:27,000

10,000 that are not even on display?

169

00:08:27,000 --> 00:08:28,000

No, they are in reserve.

170

00:08:28,000 --> 00:08:29,000

That's extraordinary.

171

00:08:29,000 --> 00:08:33,000

And out of the 10,000, how many come from the collection of this priest,

172

00:08:33,000 --> 00:08:34,000

this Father Crespi?

173

00:08:34,000 --> 00:08:36,000

Around 5,000.

174

00:08:36,000 --> 00:08:41,000

In the 1920s, Italian missionary Father Carlos Crespi Croci

175

00:08:41,000 --> 00:08:43,000

is stationed in Ecuador to minister

176

00:08:43,000 --> 00:08:46,000

to the indigenous Schwar Indian community.

177

00:08:46,000 --> 00:08:49,000

He also collects thousands of artifacts from the natives,

178

00:08:49,000 --> 00:08:51,000

including mysterious metal plates

179

00:08:51,000 --> 00:08:54,000

that are purportedly from the Tio's cave.

180

00:08:54,000 --> 00:08:58,000

The tablets attract the attention of author Eric Vondanikan.

181

00:08:58,000 --> 00:09:02,000

In 1972, he publishes *The Gold of the Gods*,

182

00:09:02,000 --> 00:09:04,000

a worldwide best-selling book

183

00:09:04,000 --> 00:09:07,000

that concludes that the metal plates are not only real,

184

00:09:07,000 --> 00:09:09,000

but were made by an ancient civilization

185

00:09:09,000 --> 00:09:13,000

that had contact with extraterrestrials.

186

00:09:13,000 --> 00:09:16,000

And so, what do we know about the metal pieces?

187

00:09:16,000 --> 00:09:19,000

We don't know much. It hasn't been studied.

188

00:09:19,000 --> 00:09:21,000

Is it possible to see any of those pieces?

189

00:09:21,000 --> 00:09:23,000

Yeah, they are not in public display,

190

00:09:23,000 --> 00:09:25,000

but we can arrange to show you.

191

00:09:25,000 --> 00:09:26,000

Really? Yes.

192

00:09:26,000 --> 00:09:27,000

I would love to go to look at them.

193

00:09:27,000 --> 00:09:29,000

Let's go.

194

00:09:29,000 --> 00:09:32,000

The most controversial objects in the Crespi collection

195

00:09:32,000 --> 00:09:35,000

are held in the museum's secure lab,

196

00:09:35,000 --> 00:09:38,000

and many have never been shown to the public before.

197

00:09:38,000 --> 00:09:41,000

This is the Archaeology Conservation Lab.

198

00:09:41,000 --> 00:09:42,000

Okay.

199

00:09:42,000 --> 00:09:43,000

This is the museum.

200

00:09:43,000 --> 00:09:44,000

I'm Josh.

201

00:09:44,000 --> 00:09:45,000

I have an introduction.

202

00:09:45,000 --> 00:09:46,000

There you go.

203

00:09:46,000 --> 00:09:47,000

Marcos, nice to meet you.

204

00:09:47,000 --> 00:09:49,000

Okay, so, where are the materials?

205

00:09:49,000 --> 00:09:50,000

Here they are.

206

00:09:50,000 --> 00:09:51,000

This is it?

207

00:09:51,000 --> 00:09:52,000

This is it.

208

00:09:52,000 --> 00:09:53,000

Let's see it.

209

00:09:53,000 --> 00:09:54,000

Guys.

210

00:09:54,000 --> 00:09:59,000

Oh, my God.

211

00:10:24,000 --> 00:10:26,000

We also get a look at metal tablets

212

00:10:26,000 --> 00:10:28,000

that were supposedly taken from the cave

213

00:10:28,000 --> 00:10:30,000

and brought back to civilization.

214

00:10:30,000 --> 00:10:33,000

Oh, my God.

215

00:10:33,000 --> 00:10:35,000

Are you kidding me?

216

00:10:35,000 --> 00:10:36,000

No, they are.

217

00:10:36,000 --> 00:10:38,000

Look at this stuff.

218

00:10:40,000 --> 00:10:42,000

The artifacts are beyond strange.

219

00:10:42,000 --> 00:10:45,000

While some look like existing native art

220

00:10:45,000 --> 00:10:47,000

and can be easily dismissed,

221

00:10:47,000 --> 00:10:49,000

other pieces look completely bizarre.

222

00:10:49,000 --> 00:10:50,000

What's going on here?

223

00:10:50,000 --> 00:10:52,000

These don't look like anything I've ever seen before.

224

00:10:52,000 --> 00:10:55,000

You know, look at this.

225

00:10:55,000 --> 00:10:56,000

Looks like an elephant.

226

00:10:56,000 --> 00:10:57,000

Looks like an elephant.

227

00:10:57,000 --> 00:10:58,000

Right.

228

00:10:58,000 --> 00:11:00,000

An old-world iconography.

229

00:11:00,000 --> 00:11:03,000

Something that nobody in the ancient Americas would have seen.

230

00:11:03,000 --> 00:11:06,000

And what about this strange one with the hole in it?

231

00:11:06,000 --> 00:11:09,000

I hate to use the A word, but it looks kind of alien.

232

00:11:09,000 --> 00:11:12,000

Well, this is exactly why some people have claimed

233

00:11:12,000 --> 00:11:15,000

that this might be alien.

234

00:11:15,000 --> 00:11:17,000

If these artifacts are real, what would it mean?

235

00:11:17,000 --> 00:11:20,000

It would change the whole history of the world.

236

00:11:20,000 --> 00:11:22,000

This would give us evidence of a civilization

237

00:11:22,000 --> 00:11:23,000

that we know nothing about.

238

00:11:23,000 --> 00:11:24,000

Exactly.

239

00:11:24,000 --> 00:11:26,000

So how do you determine if it's real?

240

00:11:26,000 --> 00:11:31,000

We need to look at the components of the material

241

00:11:31,000 --> 00:11:34,000

and try to compare with chemical composition

242

00:11:34,000 --> 00:11:36,000

of archaeological metals.

243

00:11:36,000 --> 00:11:38,000

We may be able to help with that part.

244

00:11:38,000 --> 00:11:39,000

Really?

245

00:11:41,000 --> 00:11:45,000

We wheel in an X-ray fluorescent spectrometer, or XRF,

246

00:11:45,000 --> 00:11:48,000

a highly specialized tool that I've brought along

247

00:11:48,000 --> 00:11:50,000

for just such an occasion.

248

00:11:52,000 --> 00:11:54,000

It's like a Star Trek tricorder.

249

00:11:54,000 --> 00:11:56,000

Just point it at an object, squeeze the trigger,

250

00:11:56,000 --> 00:12:00,000

and it detects the exact atomic elements inside that object.

251

00:12:00,000 --> 00:12:05,000

So it is copper, but it's filled with zinc.

252

00:12:05,000 --> 00:12:08,000

It's a big percentage.

253

00:12:09,000 --> 00:12:13,000

Modern alloys indicate certain artifacts aren't ancient.

254

00:12:13,000 --> 00:12:16,000

89.52% lead.

255

00:12:16,000 --> 00:12:17,000

Lead.

256

00:12:17,000 --> 00:12:18,000

And if that's lead...

257

00:12:18,000 --> 00:12:19,000

It's definitely modern.

258

00:12:19,000 --> 00:12:21,000

Yeah, no lead production in ancient times.

259

00:12:21,000 --> 00:12:23,000

No lead production in ancient times.

260

00:12:23,000 --> 00:12:25,000

Now let's try our literal metal plates.

261

00:12:25,000 --> 00:12:26,000

All right.

262

00:12:30,000 --> 00:12:33,000

But then the results turn from disappointing

263

00:12:33,000 --> 00:12:35,000

to much more interesting.

264

00:12:35,000 --> 00:12:36,000

Wait a minute.

265

00:12:36,000 --> 00:12:39,000

Oh, copper 99.

266

00:12:39,000 --> 00:12:40,000

Pure copper.

267

00:12:40,000 --> 00:12:41,000

Yes, that's pure copper.

268

00:12:41,000 --> 00:12:43,000

That means it may not be modern.

269

00:12:44,000 --> 00:12:46,000

The plate's composition and general state of corrosion

270

00:12:46,000 --> 00:12:49,000

indicate that it might indeed be ancient.

271

00:12:49,000 --> 00:12:52,000

Or what if it's just a modern piece

272

00:12:52,000 --> 00:12:54,000

made with ancient techniques?

273

00:12:54,000 --> 00:12:57,000

There's only one way to find out.

274

00:12:58,000 --> 00:12:59,000

So how do we solve the mystery?

275

00:12:59,000 --> 00:13:01,000

We have to go to the source.

276

00:13:01,000 --> 00:13:02,000

We have to go to the cave.

277

00:13:02,000 --> 00:13:04,000

To the cave?

278

00:13:09,000 --> 00:13:11,000

Florencio is eager to join,

279

00:13:11,000 --> 00:13:13,000

and we hit the streets to gather supplies

280

00:13:13,000 --> 00:13:16,000

before leaving beautiful Cuenca in our rear view

281

00:13:16,000 --> 00:13:19,000

and setting off on a journey into the true unknown.

282

00:13:19,000 --> 00:13:20,000

What do you think of my new hat?

283

00:13:20,000 --> 00:13:22,000

Did you know the Panama hat is from Ecuador?

284

00:13:22,000 --> 00:13:23,000

Of course.

285

00:13:30,000 --> 00:13:33,000

Florencio and I put together a team of scientists

286

00:13:33,000 --> 00:13:36,000

and climbing experts that will meet us at the cave.

287

00:13:39,000 --> 00:13:41,000

But Florencio tells me we're collecting

288

00:13:41,000 --> 00:13:43,000

our most important team member

289

00:13:43,000 --> 00:13:45,000

just a few miles outside of town.

290

00:13:46,000 --> 00:13:48,000

Do you know that there is one person

291

00:13:48,000 --> 00:13:49,000

we have to pick up along the way?

292

00:13:49,000 --> 00:13:50,000

Okay, who?

293

00:13:50,000 --> 00:13:51,000

It's Eileen Hall.

294

00:13:51,000 --> 00:13:52,000

The donor of the explorer?

295

00:13:52,000 --> 00:13:53,000

Yes.

296

00:13:53,000 --> 00:13:54,000

Wow, okay.

297

00:13:55,000 --> 00:13:58,000

After the publication of Von Donnecken's book

298

00:13:58,000 --> 00:13:59,000

Gold of the Gods,

299

00:13:59,000 --> 00:14:01,000

Scottish engineer Stanley Hall

300

00:14:01,000 --> 00:14:03,000

becomes obsessed with the legend.

301

00:14:04,000 --> 00:14:08,000

In 1976, he launches the largest ever expedition

302

00:14:08,000 --> 00:14:09,000

to Tios Cave,

303

00:14:09,000 --> 00:14:12,000

deploying more than 100 scientists

304

00:14:12,000 --> 00:14:14,000

and military personnel to reach the site.

305

00:14:15,000 --> 00:14:17,000

Oh, and if that isn't badass enough,

306

00:14:17,000 --> 00:14:19,000

the honorary expedition president

307

00:14:19,000 --> 00:14:22,000

is none other than astronaut Neil Armstrong.

308

00:14:22,000 --> 00:14:25,000

Hall, Armstrong, and the team reach the cave,

309

00:14:25,000 --> 00:14:29,000

descend, and map a sizable portion of the tunnels.

310

00:14:29,000 --> 00:14:31,000

Like explorer Juan Mareeks before them,

311

00:14:31,000 --> 00:14:34,000

they also describe strange architectural features

312

00:14:34,000 --> 00:14:36,000

that seem man-made.

313

00:14:36,000 --> 00:14:38,000

But the metal tablets elude them.

314

00:14:40,000 --> 00:14:41,000

It's tough here.

315

00:14:41,000 --> 00:14:42,000

There she is.

316

00:14:43,000 --> 00:14:44,000

Hello.

317

00:14:44,000 --> 00:14:45,000

Hi, how are you?

318

00:14:45,000 --> 00:14:46,000

Hi, Josh.

319

00:14:46,000 --> 00:14:47,000

Now, more than 40 years later,

320

00:14:47,000 --> 00:14:50,000

Eileen Hall is determined to finish the work

321

00:14:50,000 --> 00:14:51,000

her father started.

322

00:14:51,000 --> 00:14:54,000

So you're the daughter of the famous expedition leader.

323

00:14:54,000 --> 00:14:55,000

I am indeed, yes.

324

00:14:55,000 --> 00:14:56,000

It's great to meet you.

325

00:14:56,000 --> 00:14:58,000

I'm very excited to be here, Josh.

326

00:14:58,000 --> 00:15:00,000

Eileen, did you know that Panama hats are from Ecuador?

327

00:15:00,000 --> 00:15:02,000

Yes, of course, everybody knows that.

328

00:15:03,000 --> 00:15:04,000

And so I'm learning.

329

00:15:04,000 --> 00:15:07,000

Did you talk with your father a lot about his expedition?

330

00:15:07,000 --> 00:15:08,000

I did a little bit.

331

00:15:08,000 --> 00:15:10,000

And what did he tell you about it?

332

00:15:10,000 --> 00:15:12,000

That it was one of the hardest things he's ever done,

333

00:15:12,000 --> 00:15:14,000

and it was one of the most challenging

334

00:15:14,000 --> 00:15:16,000

but most incredible things he's ever done.

335

00:15:17,000 --> 00:15:18,000

Here's to that.

336

00:15:18,000 --> 00:15:20,000

So to follow Eileen's father,

337

00:15:20,000 --> 00:15:22,000

we'll be driving 150 miles

338

00:15:22,000 --> 00:15:25,000

towards Ecuador's remote eastern frontier,

339

00:15:25,000 --> 00:15:28,000

where the Amazon rainforest meets the Andes Mountains.

340

00:15:28,000 --> 00:15:31,000

Then we'll take a boat to the island

341

00:15:31,000 --> 00:15:34,000

followed by a punishing hike to Tios Cave.

342

00:15:38,000 --> 00:15:39,000

Turn here.

343

00:15:39,000 --> 00:15:40,000

This is us?

344

00:15:40,000 --> 00:15:41,000

Yes.

345

00:15:45,000 --> 00:15:47,000

Not the best road in Ecuador?

346

00:15:47,000 --> 00:15:48,000

No, not at all.

347

00:15:51,000 --> 00:15:52,000

Okay, here we go.

348

00:15:52,000 --> 00:15:53,000

All right.

349

00:15:55,000 --> 00:15:57,000

At the banks of the Rio Santiago,

350

00:15:57,000 --> 00:15:59,000

we meet our river guides,

351

00:15:59,000 --> 00:16:03,000

who will transport us into Xoar territory.

352

00:16:03,000 --> 00:16:06,000

From here on out, there are no roads.

353

00:16:06,000 --> 00:16:07,000

Okay.

354

00:16:08,000 --> 00:16:10,000

Metal library, here we come.

355

00:16:13,000 --> 00:16:16,000

The Rio Santiago runs south through El Salvador,

356

00:16:16,000 --> 00:16:19,000

and the San Diego River is the largest river in the world.

357

00:16:19,000 --> 00:16:21,000

And it's the largest river in the world.

358

00:16:21,000 --> 00:16:23,000

And it's the largest river in the world.

359

00:16:23,000 --> 00:16:25,000

And it's the largest river in the world.

360

00:16:25,000 --> 00:16:28,000

The Rio Santiago runs south through Ecuador,

361

00:16:28,000 --> 00:16:30,000

eventually feeding into the mighty Amazon.

362

00:16:30,000 --> 00:16:32,000

And as we head downstream,

363

00:16:32,000 --> 00:16:35,000

civilization is replaced by natural wonders.

364

00:16:37,000 --> 00:16:39,000

This is like another planet.

365

00:16:39,000 --> 00:16:41,000

It really is.

366

00:16:41,000 --> 00:16:42,000

Lost World.

367

00:16:48,000 --> 00:16:51,000

The ride isn't all smooth sailing, though,

368

00:16:51,000 --> 00:16:54,000

as the muddy river is famous for its wild currents.

369

00:16:54,000 --> 00:16:57,000

Running a boat like this on a river with this much current,

370

00:16:57,000 --> 00:16:59,000

not very safe.

371

00:16:59,000 --> 00:17:01,000

Move these cameras up.

372

00:17:02,000 --> 00:17:03,000

Hang on, boys.

373

00:17:05,000 --> 00:17:08,000

But eventually, we make it to our next relay point

374

00:17:08,000 --> 00:17:10,000

with most of our gear intact.

375

00:17:13,000 --> 00:17:14,000

Hola.

376

00:17:14,000 --> 00:17:15,000

Hola, ¿cómo están?

377

00:17:18,000 --> 00:17:21,000

At Abandon the River, we're met by local Xoar natives

378

00:17:21,000 --> 00:17:25,000

to help get us and our cargo safely to the cave.

379

00:17:25,000 --> 00:17:28,000

We're going to load the mules and start a hike.

380

00:17:28,000 --> 00:17:29,000

OK.

381

00:17:29,000 --> 00:17:30,000

But it's all uphill.

382

00:17:30,000 --> 00:17:31,000

OK, great.

383

00:17:31,000 --> 00:17:33,000

That's exactly what I was hoping to hear.

384

00:17:37,000 --> 00:17:38,000

Here we go.

385

00:17:47,000 --> 00:17:49,000

Welcome to the jungle.

386

00:17:49,000 --> 00:17:51,000

It's not exactly a walk in the park.

387

00:17:51,000 --> 00:17:53,000

The trail is nearly nonexistent,

388

00:17:53,000 --> 00:17:56,000

and it is unforgivingly hot and steep.

389

00:17:59,000 --> 00:18:01,000

And then there's the mud.

390

00:18:01,000 --> 00:18:03,000

Come to Ecuador.

391

00:18:03,000 --> 00:18:04,000

Find the metal library.

392

00:18:04,000 --> 00:18:06,000

Have some laughs.

393

00:18:07,000 --> 00:18:10,000

Just about everything here bites or stings.

394

00:18:10,000 --> 00:18:12,000

Big wasp nest here on the left.

395

00:18:12,000 --> 00:18:13,000

Tread carefully.

396

00:18:16,000 --> 00:18:17,000

Up, up.

397

00:18:17,000 --> 00:18:18,000

Never ends.

398

00:18:19,000 --> 00:18:21,000

And it doesn't get much better in the dark.

399

00:18:21,000 --> 00:18:24,000

What you can't see can and will hurt you.

400

00:18:28,000 --> 00:18:30,000

Luckily, those thorns broke my fall.

401

00:18:32,000 --> 00:18:34,000

Six hours into the grueling hike,

402

00:18:34,000 --> 00:18:36,000

we find a spot to stop for the night.

403

00:18:36,000 --> 00:18:38,000

We are back on the trail.

404

00:18:38,000 --> 00:18:41,000

We are hiking to the actual cave.

405

00:18:41,000 --> 00:18:43,000

There, we should be meeting up with the rest

406

00:18:43,000 --> 00:18:45,000

of our local expedition team.

407

00:18:45,000 --> 00:18:47,000

They've been working on logistics

408

00:18:47,000 --> 00:18:49,000

and should be waiting for us.

409

00:18:51,000 --> 00:18:55,000

And suddenly, the trail next to us disappears into a dark.

410

00:18:55,000 --> 00:18:57,000

And then we're going to the cave.

411

00:18:57,000 --> 00:18:59,000

And then we're going to the cave.

412

00:18:59,000 --> 00:19:01,000

And then we're going to the cave.

413

00:19:01,000 --> 00:19:03,000

And then we're going to the cave.

414

00:19:03,000 --> 00:19:05,000

And then we're going to the cave.

415

00:19:05,000 --> 00:19:07,000

And then it appears into a dark,

416

00:19:07,000 --> 00:19:09,000

seemingly bottomless chasm.

417

00:19:09,000 --> 00:19:10,000

Oh my God.

418

00:19:10,000 --> 00:19:12,000

Look at that.

419

00:19:12,000 --> 00:19:15,000

Guys, be really careful here on the left.

420

00:19:15,000 --> 00:19:16,000

It's a sheer drop.

421

00:19:16,000 --> 00:19:18,000

Oh my word.

422

00:19:20,000 --> 00:19:22,000

We carefully skirt around the edge of the pit,

423

00:19:22,000 --> 00:19:25,000

where we're greeted by a former colleague of Stanley Halls,

424

00:19:25,000 --> 00:19:28,000

geologist Dr. Theophilos Tukoridis

425

00:19:28,000 --> 00:19:31,000

and his team of experts who will descend with us

426

00:19:31,000 --> 00:19:33,000

to explore and map Taos.

427

00:19:33,000 --> 00:19:34,000

Nice to meet you.

428

00:19:34,000 --> 00:19:35,000

Nice to meet you, family.

429

00:19:35,000 --> 00:19:36,000

Look at this.

430

00:19:36,000 --> 00:19:39,000

This is the most unique cave in the whole continent.

431

00:19:39,000 --> 00:19:42,000

And this is the reason why everybody knows your father.

432

00:19:42,000 --> 00:19:45,000

Whoever is doing research in caves knows the name Stanley Hall.

433

00:19:45,000 --> 00:19:46,000

Wow.

434

00:19:46,000 --> 00:19:47,000

That's amazing, isn't it?

435

00:19:47,000 --> 00:19:49,000

He inspired many people, not only me.

436

00:19:50,000 --> 00:19:53,000

What percentage of this cave system do you think has been mapped?

437

00:19:53,000 --> 00:19:54,000

Not even a third.

438

00:19:54,000 --> 00:19:55,000

Not even a third?

439

00:19:55,000 --> 00:19:56,000

Not even a third.

440

00:19:56,000 --> 00:19:59,000

And this is like three and a half miles, which is explored and mapped.

441

00:19:59,000 --> 00:20:00,000

Three and a half miles down there?

442

00:20:00,000 --> 00:20:01,000

Yeah.

443

00:20:01,000 --> 00:20:02,000

It's huge.

444

00:20:04,000 --> 00:20:05,000

Okay.

445

00:20:05,000 --> 00:20:06,000

Are you ready for this?

446

00:20:06,000 --> 00:20:07,000

Yes.

447

00:20:07,000 --> 00:20:08,000

Are you guys ready for this, crew?

448

00:20:08,000 --> 00:20:09,000

No.

449

00:20:09,000 --> 00:20:11,000

Everybody's ready to go.

450

00:20:11,000 --> 00:20:12,000

Let's do it.

451

00:20:12,000 --> 00:20:13,000

Come on.

452

00:20:19,000 --> 00:20:20,000

Okay.

453

00:20:20,000 --> 00:20:21,000

You stay right there.

454

00:20:25,000 --> 00:20:29,000

The only way in and out of Taos is via a perilous and terrifying

455

00:20:29,000 --> 00:20:32,000

200-foot vertical shaft.

456

00:20:34,000 --> 00:20:39,000

The team drills anchors into the rock face and sets up a state-of-the-art

457

00:20:39,000 --> 00:20:43,000

winch system to haul us all back out, at least in theory.

458

00:20:44,000 --> 00:20:48,000

I then edge out toward the opening, clip into the main line,

459

00:20:48,000 --> 00:20:50,000

and say goodbye to Terra Ferma.

460

00:20:52,000 --> 00:20:53,000

Okay.

461

00:20:57,000 --> 00:20:58,000

Here we go.

462

00:20:58,000 --> 00:20:59,000

Here we go.

463

00:21:02,000 --> 00:21:04,000

This is a bottomless pit.

464

00:21:05,000 --> 00:21:07,000

Unbelievable.

465

00:21:13,000 --> 00:21:17,000

My expedition team and I are deep in the jungles of Ecuador,

466

00:21:17,000 --> 00:21:21,000

at the precipice of a death-defying drop into the Taos Cave.

467

00:21:21,000 --> 00:21:25,000

Legend says the caverns here have man-made chambers

468

00:21:25,000 --> 00:21:28,000

that lead us home to the archives of a lost civilization.

469

00:21:28,000 --> 00:21:29,000

Here we go.

470

00:21:29,000 --> 00:21:31,000

So we're going in.

471

00:21:34,000 --> 00:21:36,000

This is a bottomless pit.

472

00:21:42,000 --> 00:21:43,000

Unbelievable.

473

00:21:45,000 --> 00:21:47,000

It's just straight down.

474

00:21:48,000 --> 00:21:51,000

I lower myself down and reality sets in.

475

00:21:51,000 --> 00:21:55,000

Without this thin rope to haul my team 200 feet back up,

476

00:21:55,000 --> 00:21:58,000

there is no other way out of this cave.

477

00:21:58,000 --> 00:21:59,000

This is insane.

478

00:22:03,000 --> 00:22:06,000

Houston, the Eagle has landed.

479

00:22:06,000 --> 00:22:07,000

Excellent.

480

00:22:07,000 --> 00:22:09,000

Okay, let's get the rest of the team down here.

481

00:22:11,000 --> 00:22:16,000

One by one, our 20-person expedition team repels down into the cave.

482

00:22:16,000 --> 00:22:21,000

Scientists, producers, camera crew, guides.

483

00:22:22,000 --> 00:22:24,000

Nice work, man.

484

00:22:25,000 --> 00:22:27,000

Eileen, you ready to rock here?

485

00:22:27,000 --> 00:22:28,000

I'm ready to go.

486

00:22:28,000 --> 00:22:32,000

All at the mercy of a few pins in the rock face high above.

487

00:22:32,000 --> 00:22:33,000

Careful.

488

00:22:33,000 --> 00:22:35,000

Watch the walls.

489

00:22:38,000 --> 00:22:39,000

Nice work.

490

00:22:39,000 --> 00:22:40,000

Yes.

491

00:22:41,000 --> 00:22:42,000

That's everybody, right?

492

00:22:42,000 --> 00:22:43,000

Yeah.

493

00:22:43,000 --> 00:22:44,000

That's everybody.

494

00:22:45,000 --> 00:22:47,000

Look at the size of this room.

495

00:22:55,000 --> 00:22:58,000

We finally finished getting all the scientific equipment lowered down,

496

00:22:58,000 --> 00:23:02,000

including a 3D laser scanner that will allow the researchers to create

497

00:23:02,000 --> 00:23:05,000

a digital map of the cave's interior.

498

00:23:05,000 --> 00:23:09,000

Okay, so this is the first time we've seen a 3D laser scanner

499

00:23:09,000 --> 00:23:12,000

that's been used to create a 3D laser scanner.

500

00:23:12,000 --> 00:23:14,000

Okay, so Theo, walk me through this.

501

00:23:14,000 --> 00:23:15,000

What do we got?

502

00:23:15,000 --> 00:23:17,000

The map that we have right now is from 76.

503

00:23:17,000 --> 00:23:19,000

This is the map from your father's expedition.

504

00:23:19,000 --> 00:23:20,000

That's right.

505

00:23:20,000 --> 00:23:21,000

That's the map.

506

00:23:21,000 --> 00:23:22,000

Wow.

507

00:23:22,000 --> 00:23:23,000

Yeah.

508

00:23:23,000 --> 00:23:28,000

Stanley Hall, Neil Armstrong in the 1976 expedition created the only real

509

00:23:28,000 --> 00:23:30,000

map of the Tios cave.

510

00:23:30,000 --> 00:23:34,000

Using this as a guide, our mission is to go where they couldn't

511

00:23:34,000 --> 00:23:38,000

and to see if there's any truth to the legend of the metal library.

512

00:23:38,000 --> 00:23:39,000

The end of the map?

513

00:23:39,000 --> 00:23:40,000

Huh.

514

00:23:40,000 --> 00:23:41,000

Not of the cave.

515

00:23:41,000 --> 00:23:42,000

Meaning nobody's been past this point?

516

00:23:42,000 --> 00:23:43,000

No, nobody.

517

00:23:43,000 --> 00:23:45,000

Do you believe there's more cave past this?

518

00:23:45,000 --> 00:23:46,000

Much more, for sure.

519

00:23:46,000 --> 00:23:48,000

So why has nobody been there?

520

00:23:48,000 --> 00:23:49,000

It's flooded.

521

00:23:49,000 --> 00:23:50,000

Hard to reach and hard to go through.

522

00:23:50,000 --> 00:23:52,000

But there could be more past there?

523

00:23:52,000 --> 00:23:53,000

For sure it is.

524

00:23:53,000 --> 00:23:54,000

Let's do it.

525

00:23:54,000 --> 00:23:55,000

Come on.

526

00:23:57,000 --> 00:24:01,000

We gather our gear and leave behind the last rays of light.

527

00:24:01,000 --> 00:24:07,000

From here on out, we are entering a world of complete and total darkness.

528

00:24:09,000 --> 00:24:10,000

Into the darkness.

529

00:24:10,000 --> 00:24:11,000

You ready?

530

00:24:11,000 --> 00:24:12,000

Yeah.

531

00:24:12,000 --> 00:24:13,000

Let's go.

532

00:24:13,000 --> 00:24:14,000

Let's go.

533

00:24:14,000 --> 00:24:16,000

Stephen Slipper here, guys.

534

00:24:19,000 --> 00:24:20,000

We got that.

535

00:24:23,000 --> 00:24:25,000

The cave quickly envelops us.

536

00:24:25,000 --> 00:24:29,000

We convoy ahead, looking for a flat area to set up camp for the night.

537

00:24:29,000 --> 00:24:33,000

Before long, we spot one of the most recognizable and strangest

538

00:24:33,000 --> 00:24:35,000

features of the Tios cave.

539

00:24:36,000 --> 00:24:37,000

This is awesome.

540

00:24:37,000 --> 00:24:38,000

Look at this.

541

00:24:38,000 --> 00:24:39,000

Is this one more?

542

00:24:39,000 --> 00:24:40,000

It's arch.

543

00:24:40,000 --> 00:24:41,000

Yes.

544

00:24:41,000 --> 00:24:46,000

This arch is such a huge part of the metal library story.

545

00:24:46,000 --> 00:24:48,000

I can't even believe I'm seeing this thing in person.

546

00:24:48,000 --> 00:24:53,000

This seemingly sculpted arch led Juan Mares and the explorers who followed him

547

00:24:53,000 --> 00:24:56,000

to suspect the cave was modified by man.

548

00:24:56,000 --> 00:24:59,000

Look at how large it is, how flat it is,

549

00:24:59,000 --> 00:25:02,000

and how can you get a piece of stone this big, this flat?

550

00:25:02,000 --> 00:25:07,000

Really, this one spot, this one feature has done more to build the mystery

551

00:25:07,000 --> 00:25:09,000

of the metal library, I think, than anywhere else.

552

00:25:09,000 --> 00:25:13,000

But when you get up close to it, you start to see a different story.

553

00:25:13,000 --> 00:25:16,000

You know, this is sedimentary rock, for sure.

554

00:25:16,000 --> 00:25:19,000

And these different slabs that look like different bricks,

555

00:25:19,000 --> 00:25:21,000

these are just different layers of sediment.

556

00:25:21,000 --> 00:25:26,000

It creates these really flat, sheer surfaces that just come off in pieces.

557

00:25:26,000 --> 00:25:30,000

You see that all over the cave, all just right angles.

558

00:25:31,000 --> 00:25:35,000

It's easy to see why the previous expeditions were mesmerized by this place,

559

00:25:35,000 --> 00:25:40,000

but it's going to take more than these blocks to confirm the legend of the metal library.

560

00:25:40,000 --> 00:25:43,000

Well, let's get through the arch and see what's beyond it.

561

00:25:43,000 --> 00:25:44,000

All right, let's go.

562

00:25:48,000 --> 00:25:53,000

After rigging ropes at the surface, we've descended down the entrance shaft

563

00:25:53,000 --> 00:25:55,000

and hiked through the famed Marets arch.

564

00:25:55,000 --> 00:25:59,000

Now, we push on toward the belly of the beast.

565

00:26:01,000 --> 00:26:05,000

Just past the arch, our flashlights seem to lose their effect.

566

00:26:05,000 --> 00:26:09,000

That's because the cavern widens into a massive chamber so deep

567

00:26:09,000 --> 00:26:13,000

you could lay a 20-story building on its side in here.

568

00:26:13,000 --> 00:26:16,000

Wow, it is spectacular in here.

569

00:26:16,000 --> 00:26:22,000

The expansive space makes this an ideal place to set up a proper camp for our team.

570

00:26:24,000 --> 00:26:27,000

Perfecto, let's do it, come on.

571

00:26:28,000 --> 00:26:33,000

We work in the darkness to pitch our tents and take stock of our new home.

572

00:26:33,000 --> 00:26:37,000

The good news is that the ground here at the campsite is extremely soft.

573

00:26:37,000 --> 00:26:42,000

The bad news is that it's extremely soft because it's three solid feet of back guano.

574

00:26:45,000 --> 00:26:47,000

The Lord giveth and he taketh away.

575

00:26:47,000 --> 00:26:52,000

Our bedroom for the night is teeming with life, primarily of the creepy crawly variety.

576

00:26:53,000 --> 00:26:57,000

Whip scorpions, giant tarantulas,

577

00:26:57,000 --> 00:27:01,000

and one of the researchers even managed to snag a bat.

578

00:27:02,000 --> 00:27:05,000

Look at that thing. That's incredible.

579

00:27:05,000 --> 00:27:08,000

Look at how delicate looking the wings are.

580

00:27:08,000 --> 00:27:10,000

The elastic tissue and you see those white splotches?

581

00:27:10,000 --> 00:27:11,000

Yeah.

582

00:27:11,000 --> 00:27:12,000

Those are...

583

00:27:12,000 --> 00:27:13,000

Ebola?

584

00:27:13,000 --> 00:27:14,000

No, no.

585

00:27:14,000 --> 00:27:16,000

Sometimes they get into a fight with another bad.

586

00:27:16,000 --> 00:27:19,000

And so how many of these guys do you think are in this cave system?

587

00:27:19,000 --> 00:27:20,000

Several thousands.

588

00:27:20,000 --> 00:27:21,000

Wow.

589

00:27:22,000 --> 00:27:26,000

While Dracula here gets ready to start his day,

590

00:27:26,000 --> 00:27:29,000

ours is drawing to an end.

591

00:27:29,000 --> 00:27:30,000

Good night.

592

00:27:40,000 --> 00:27:41,000

Good morning.

593

00:27:41,000 --> 00:27:45,000

And the only reason I know it's morning is because my watch says it is.

594

00:27:45,000 --> 00:27:48,000

Time kind of loses its sense of meaning down here,

595

00:27:48,000 --> 00:27:50,000

looking up through the top of the tent.

596

00:27:50,000 --> 00:27:53,000

It's just endless, perpetual darkness.

597

00:27:53,000 --> 00:27:56,000

But I can hear voices, people stirring around the camp,

598

00:27:56,000 --> 00:27:59,000

which means it's time to get up and start exploring again.

599

00:28:06,000 --> 00:28:07,000

Okay.

600

00:28:07,000 --> 00:28:13,000

We've got tuna, potatoes, mixed veggies, and a big bowl of coffee.

601

00:28:13,000 --> 00:28:15,000

What else do you need in life?

602

00:28:16,000 --> 00:28:19,000

Clumbliness goes out the window pretty quickly when you're living in a cave.

603

00:28:19,000 --> 00:28:23,000

We're sleeping in the dirt, there's baths above us, food's all uncovered.

604

00:28:23,000 --> 00:28:25,000

But you know, it'll be fine.

605

00:28:29,000 --> 00:28:33,000

After breakfast, we gather our gear and set out from camp.

606

00:28:36,000 --> 00:28:38,000

As we walk deeper into the unknown,

607

00:28:38,000 --> 00:28:42,000

I can't shake the feeling that the cave is somehow endless.

608

00:28:42,000 --> 00:28:47,000

Chamber after chamber after chamber.

609

00:28:47,000 --> 00:28:50,000

Soon, Eileen and I find ourselves at the front of the group,

610

00:28:50,000 --> 00:28:54,000

which as it turns out, is a dangerous place to be.

611

00:28:54,000 --> 00:28:56,000

Oh, Snake! Back up, back up, back up!

612

00:28:56,000 --> 00:28:57,000

Oh, God.

613

00:29:06,000 --> 00:29:09,000

At the start of our trek into the bowels of the Taos Cave,

614

00:29:09,000 --> 00:29:12,000

Eileen, Hall and I discover that what's down here

615

00:29:12,000 --> 00:29:15,000

might be just as dangerous as what's in the jungles above.

616

00:29:17,000 --> 00:29:19,000

Oh, Snake! Back up, back up, back up!

617

00:29:23,000 --> 00:29:24,000

Oh, boy.

618

00:29:26,000 --> 00:29:27,000

Look at that guy.

619

00:29:27,000 --> 00:29:29,000

That is a rainbow boa.

620

00:29:29,000 --> 00:29:31,000

And a pissed off one at that.

621

00:29:31,000 --> 00:29:34,000

You can see the actual rainbow pattern.

622

00:29:34,000 --> 00:29:36,000

Okay, ready? Everybody back up?

623

00:29:36,000 --> 00:29:37,000

We're gonna let him go?

624

00:29:37,000 --> 00:29:38,000

There you go.

625

00:29:40,000 --> 00:29:43,000

We give the Snake room to slither on.

626

00:29:44,000 --> 00:29:47,000

And we keep hiking into the Inky Void.

627

00:29:47,000 --> 00:29:51,000

After another hour, we arrive at a geologically stunning area

628

00:29:51,000 --> 00:29:54,000

known as the Hall of Stellactites.

629

00:29:56,000 --> 00:29:58,000

It's the second otherworldly landscape

630

00:29:58,000 --> 00:30:01,000

made famous by the first man on the moon.

631

00:30:02,000 --> 00:30:04,000

I mean, this is a stalemite

632

00:30:04,000 --> 00:30:07,000

where Neil Armstrong was standing on to take a picture.

633

00:30:07,000 --> 00:30:08,000

Wow.

634

00:30:16,000 --> 00:30:18,000

Careful, careful.

635

00:30:20,000 --> 00:30:21,000

Like this.

636

00:30:21,000 --> 00:30:22,000

Armstrong was right here.

637

00:30:22,000 --> 00:30:25,000

One small step for man, one giant leap for Eileen Hall.

638

00:30:25,000 --> 00:30:26,000

Nice job.

639

00:30:27,000 --> 00:30:29,000

Let's make sure we get a photo of you here.

640

00:30:29,000 --> 00:30:30,000

Okay.

641

00:30:35,000 --> 00:30:38,000

Reading your father's book, his journals, his writing,

642

00:30:38,000 --> 00:30:40,000

is being down here what you imagined?

643

00:30:40,000 --> 00:30:41,000

Yeah, it's magical. Yes.

644

00:30:41,000 --> 00:30:43,000

It is magical? Yeah.

645

00:30:44,000 --> 00:30:46,000

All right, well, we've got a lot of ground to cover.

646

00:30:52,000 --> 00:30:55,000

From our base camp, we've now hiked more than a mile into the cave,

647

00:30:55,000 --> 00:30:58,000

passing the Hall of Stellactites.

648

00:30:59,000 --> 00:31:02,000

And soon, we'll be able to see the whole of the city

649

00:31:03,000 --> 00:31:08,000

and soon, we arrive at an entrance to a truly shocking space.

650

00:31:10,000 --> 00:31:12,000

Welcome to the Amphitheatre.

651

00:31:12,000 --> 00:31:14,000

Look at this.

652

00:31:16,000 --> 00:31:17,000

Incredible.

653

00:31:17,000 --> 00:31:22,000

You can see why when the first explorers came down here,

654

00:31:22,000 --> 00:31:26,000

they thought that this must have been more than just natural.

655

00:31:26,000 --> 00:31:29,000

There is a kind of architecture to it almost.

656

00:31:29,000 --> 00:31:30,000

Exactly.

657

00:31:30,000 --> 00:31:31,000

It's wild.

658

00:31:32,000 --> 00:31:33,000

Okay, onward.

659

00:31:33,000 --> 00:31:34,000

Let's go.

660

00:31:37,000 --> 00:31:41,000

We leave the amphitheatre and follow the map made by Eileen's father,

661

00:31:41,000 --> 00:31:44,000

but we soon face a major obstacle.

662

00:31:47,000 --> 00:31:50,000

Well, this looks challenging.

663

00:31:52,000 --> 00:31:54,000

He's going to put the rope down.

664

00:31:54,000 --> 00:31:55,000

Okay.

665

00:31:55,000 --> 00:31:59,000

This is where our journey begins to get really dicey.

666

00:32:01,000 --> 00:32:03,000

Okay, ready?

667

00:32:03,000 --> 00:32:04,000

Go.

668

00:32:05,000 --> 00:32:07,000

Yeah, coming up.

669

00:32:23,000 --> 00:32:27,000

Theo, Eileen and the others also make it up and over.

670

00:32:31,000 --> 00:32:35,000

On the other side of the falls, everything looks different.

671

00:32:35,000 --> 00:32:39,000

No more expansive caverns where we can spread out and explore.

672

00:32:39,000 --> 00:32:41,000

We go down now, Theo?

673

00:32:41,000 --> 00:32:42,000

Yes.

674

00:32:42,000 --> 00:32:45,000

It's going to get really slippery here, so be careful guys.

675

00:32:48,000 --> 00:32:50,000

This just got real.

676

00:32:52,000 --> 00:32:53,000

180 degrees.

677

00:32:53,000 --> 00:32:54,000

Uh-huh.

678

00:32:54,000 --> 00:32:55,000

I feel the foothold.

679

00:32:55,000 --> 00:32:56,000

Okay?

680

00:32:56,000 --> 00:32:57,000

Exactly.

681

00:32:57,000 --> 00:32:58,000

What's that?

682

00:33:01,000 --> 00:33:05,000

If you're claustrophobic, now would be a good time to change the channel.

683

00:33:05,000 --> 00:33:07,000

Unbelievable.

684

00:33:19,000 --> 00:33:22,000

I'm trying to see why not more people come down here.

685

00:33:23,000 --> 00:33:27,000

We have now entered the water park of my nightmares.

686

00:33:27,000 --> 00:33:33,000

Thousands of gallons of water rushing through passages that get progressively tighter and tighter.

687

00:33:36,000 --> 00:33:38,000

Come on, Tash!

688

00:33:41,000 --> 00:33:43,000

Get me out of here!

689

00:33:53,000 --> 00:33:58,000

I'm in the heart of Tyos Cave, hundreds of feet below the Ecuadorian Amazon,

690

00:33:58,000 --> 00:34:03,000

seeking unexplored chambers that may hold the fabled metal library.

691

00:34:05,000 --> 00:34:10,000

I've been in lots of underground caves, but this is a special kind of hell.

692

00:34:22,000 --> 00:34:24,000

This is crazy.

693

00:34:33,000 --> 00:34:36,000

Keep one with the chains. Keep one with the chains. Keep one with the chains.

694

00:34:36,000 --> 00:34:38,000

Get me out of here!

695

00:34:52,000 --> 00:34:53,000

Tash!

696

00:35:02,000 --> 00:35:03,000

Tash!

697

00:35:03,000 --> 00:35:04,000

We have to go back!

698

00:35:04,000 --> 00:35:05,000

Why?

699

00:35:05,000 --> 00:35:07,000

This isn't the right way!

700

00:35:07,000 --> 00:35:08,000

Tash!

701

00:35:08,000 --> 00:35:09,000

Stay in!

702

00:35:09,000 --> 00:35:10,000

Okay.

703

00:35:11,000 --> 00:35:13,000

Go back! Go back!

704

00:35:16,000 --> 00:35:17,000

Tash is going out!

705

00:35:17,000 --> 00:35:18,000

We have to go back.

706

00:35:18,000 --> 00:35:22,000

Since it is, just into the huge waterfall and it crowds out,

707

00:35:22,000 --> 00:35:25,000

we've got to go back to the last junction and turn around.

708

00:35:27,000 --> 00:35:30,000

As we retrace our steps to get back on track,

709

00:35:30,000 --> 00:35:36,000

I keep my eyes peeled for any side chambers or glimmers of metal tablets in the rushing water.

710

00:35:38,000 --> 00:35:42,000

After a few more wrong turns in the tight maze of flooded passages

711

00:35:42,000 --> 00:35:47,000

and nearly three miles underground, we finally arrive at our destination.

712

00:35:47,000 --> 00:35:49,000

The end of the map.

713

00:35:52,000 --> 00:35:55,000

We've come all the way through here and we're literally here.

714

00:35:55,000 --> 00:35:57,000

This is as far as anybody's been.

715

00:35:58,000 --> 00:36:01,000

Nobody else has been further than this part. This is usually flooded.

716

00:36:01,000 --> 00:36:03,000

Why is it so much lower?

717

00:36:03,000 --> 00:36:04,000

We have a dry summer.

718

00:36:04,000 --> 00:36:06,000

So have you ever seen any of this before?

719

00:36:06,000 --> 00:36:08,000

No, nobody has seen this before.

720

00:36:08,000 --> 00:36:09,000

Let's check it out. Come on.

721

00:36:09,000 --> 00:36:10,000

Okay, let's go.

722

00:36:11,000 --> 00:36:17,000

The low water levels in this chamber reveal something that the 1976 expedition couldn't see.

723

00:36:17,000 --> 00:36:20,000

A tight tunnel that goes even deeper.

724

00:36:21,000 --> 00:36:26,000

Could this be where the cave's original explorer, Juan Maritz, found his metal library?

725

00:36:28,000 --> 00:36:32,000

Like everything else in this cave, the passage looks uncomfortably narrow.

726

00:36:32,000 --> 00:36:34,000

I think those are wish-trys.

727

00:36:34,000 --> 00:36:36,000

Alright, I'm right behind you. Let's do it.

728

00:36:41,000 --> 00:36:43,000

This is a leap of faith.

729

00:36:43,000 --> 00:36:45,000

There may be a chamber beyond this tunnel,

730

00:36:45,000 --> 00:36:50,000

but to reach it, we'll have to swim underwater in hopes of finding another air pocket.

731

00:36:50,000 --> 00:36:54,000

If we become trapped, there is a very real danger of drowning here.

732

00:37:05,000 --> 00:37:07,000

Come through! Come through!

733

00:37:07,000 --> 00:37:09,000

Alright, Josh, we're coming through.

734

00:37:10,000 --> 00:37:12,000

I'm coming through.

735

00:37:23,000 --> 00:37:24,000

Look at this!

736

00:37:25,000 --> 00:37:27,000

There's a whole, another world back here!

737

00:37:29,000 --> 00:37:32,000

With a soaring ceiling and smooth, flat walls,

738

00:37:32,000 --> 00:37:35,000

it feels like we're in the corridor of a grand temple.

739

00:37:36,000 --> 00:37:37,000

Josh, look at these walls.

740

00:37:37,000 --> 00:37:39,000

Everything here has been flooded.

741

00:37:39,000 --> 00:37:42,000

All this kind of sticky material is clay.

742

00:37:42,000 --> 00:37:45,000

Nobody has filmed or documented this before.

743

00:37:45,000 --> 00:37:46,000

Undiscovered.

744

00:37:46,000 --> 00:37:47,000

Undiscovered.

745

00:37:50,000 --> 00:37:51,000

And what is that?

746

00:37:51,000 --> 00:37:52,000

There.

747

00:37:53,000 --> 00:37:54,000

It looks like stairs.

748

00:37:54,000 --> 00:37:55,000

There's a staircase here.

749

00:37:56,000 --> 00:37:57,000

Look at that!

750

00:37:57,000 --> 00:37:58,000

Unbelievable.

751

00:37:59,000 --> 00:38:00,000

But where does it go?

752

00:38:00,000 --> 00:38:01,000

I don't know. Let's go through.

753

00:38:02,000 --> 00:38:03,000

It's solid.

754

00:38:03,000 --> 00:38:04,000

It's solid.

755

00:38:06,000 --> 00:38:11,000

Each step is perfectly proportioned, as though carved by hand.

756

00:38:11,000 --> 00:38:15,000

We could be standing in the antechamber to the fabled metal library.

757

00:38:22,000 --> 00:38:23,000

Oh my God, look at this!

758

00:38:23,000 --> 00:38:25,000

Come here. Get a camera here.

759

00:38:25,000 --> 00:38:27,000

It brings shoulders overdue to itself.

760

00:38:28,000 --> 00:38:29,000

There.

761

00:38:30,000 --> 00:38:31,000

encrypt

762

00:38:31,000 --> 00:38:32,000

and

763

00:38:33,000 --> 00:38:34,000

soar

764

00:38:34,000 --> 00:38:37,000

Choose

765

00:38:38,000 --> 00:38:39,000

Hm.

766

00:38:39,000 --> 00:38:44,300

Not a real dot, child,

767

00:38:44,300 --> 00:38:45,980

but a blood,

768

00:38:45,980 --> 00:38:47,000

blood hole.

769

00:38:47,000 --> 00:38:49,000

Probably part of the trail.

770

00:38:50,000 --> 00:38:51,000

It's quite broad.

771

00:38:53,000 --> 00:38:54,000

It's like a short■ we can take.

772

00:38:54,000 --> 00:38:56,000

Oh, wow!

773

00:38:56,000 --> 00:38:58,000

Look at this thing!

774

00:38:58,000 --> 00:39:02,000

It's as though we've entered the beating heart of Taos,

775

00:39:02,000 --> 00:39:04,000

a chamber hundreds of feet high,

776

00:39:04,000 --> 00:39:08,000

filled with the most spectacular formations I've ever seen.

777

00:39:08,000 --> 00:39:12,000

It's just being made by the dripping of the water coming down.

778

00:39:12,000 --> 00:39:13,000

Yeah, can you imagine?

779

00:39:13,000 --> 00:39:15,000

But this is thousands and thousands of years.

780

00:39:15,000 --> 00:39:17,000

This formation, this is all calcium?

781

00:39:17,000 --> 00:39:19,000

Calcium carbonate, yes.

782

00:39:19,000 --> 00:39:21,000

Forming calcium carbonate.

783

00:39:21,000 --> 00:39:23,000

I can't believe this.

784

00:39:23,000 --> 00:39:25,000

I see it and I can't believe this.

785

00:39:25,000 --> 00:39:26,000

It's insane!

786

00:39:26,000 --> 00:39:28,000

That's so huge!

787

00:39:28,000 --> 00:39:32,000

We don't have this kind of structure at any part of the whole cave.

788

00:39:32,000 --> 00:39:34,000

It's a chimney.

789

00:39:34,000 --> 00:39:37,000

It looks like at least 150 feet.

790

00:39:37,000 --> 00:39:40,000

The first people ever to lay eyes on this.

791

00:39:40,000 --> 00:39:42,000

This is us.

792

00:39:42,000 --> 00:39:43,000

Wow.

793

00:39:43,000 --> 00:39:44,000

And look at this.

794

00:39:44,000 --> 00:39:46,000

Look at the walls.

795

00:39:46,000 --> 00:39:49,000

It's like an old house.

796

00:39:49,000 --> 00:39:51,000

This looks like a writing.

797

00:39:51,000 --> 00:39:53,000

It does look a bit like a library.

798

00:39:53,000 --> 00:39:55,000

Yeah, it does.

799

00:39:55,000 --> 00:39:58,000

But I assume there's a lot more cave to be found.

800

00:39:58,000 --> 00:40:00,000

So we can't say for sure that it doesn't exist,

801

00:40:00,000 --> 00:40:02,000

but treasures nonetheless.

802

00:40:02,000 --> 00:40:06,000

The map ended there at the sinkhole, and we extended it.

803

00:40:06,000 --> 00:40:09,000

So we've just taken the map from your father's expedition.

804

00:40:09,000 --> 00:40:11,000

We've added a little onto it.

805

00:40:11,000 --> 00:40:12,000

We've added something on.

806

00:40:12,000 --> 00:40:13,000

Yeah, this is incredible.

807

00:40:13,000 --> 00:40:14,000

It's amazing.

808

00:40:14,000 --> 00:40:15,000

What more can you wish for?

809

00:40:15,000 --> 00:40:16,000

I know.

810

00:40:16,000 --> 00:40:18,000

Our team is going to be able to make it to the top.

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00:40:18,000 --> 00:40:22,000

Our team has extended Eileen's father's expedition map

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00:40:22,000 --> 00:40:25,000

and revealed a whole new region of the Taos cave,

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00:40:25,000 --> 00:40:28,000

a discovery that adds another chapter

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00:40:28,000 --> 00:40:30,000

to this truly legendary place.

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00:40:30,000 --> 00:40:31,000

Thank you so much.

816

00:40:31,000 --> 00:40:32,000

My pleasure.

817

00:40:32,000 --> 00:40:34,000

Eileen, a real honor.

818

00:40:34,000 --> 00:40:35,000

This is incredible.

819

00:40:35,000 --> 00:40:36,000

Okay.

820

00:40:36,000 --> 00:40:38,000

Now how do we get out of this thing?

821

00:40:43,000 --> 00:40:47,000

The journey out of Taos is just as hard as the way in.

822

00:40:47,000 --> 00:40:49,000

We swim back to the rest of our team

823

00:40:49,000 --> 00:40:54,000

and begin the long, dark trek back to our base camp.

824

00:40:54,000 --> 00:40:56,000

And remember when I said,

825

00:40:56,000 --> 00:40:57,000

Food's all uncovered.

826

00:40:57,000 --> 00:40:58,000

It'll be fine.

827

00:40:58,000 --> 00:41:00,000

Well, it wasn't fine.

828

00:41:00,000 --> 00:41:03,000

A severe case of rotavirus swept through the crew,

829

00:41:03,000 --> 00:41:05,000

landing three of us in the hospital

830

00:41:05,000 --> 00:41:08,000

where I had time to reflect on our adventure.

831

00:41:11,000 --> 00:41:13,000

Juan Mareeks claimed he had discovered an archive

832

00:41:13,000 --> 00:41:15,000

that would change the world.

833

00:41:16,000 --> 00:41:19,000

Eileen's father Stanley Hall and Neil Armstrong

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00:41:19,000 --> 00:41:22,000

delved deep underground, seeking our connection

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00:41:22,000 --> 00:41:23,000

to the ancients.

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00:41:23,000 --> 00:41:28,000

And author Eric Vondanekin claimed proof of alien contact.

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00:41:28,000 --> 00:41:32,000

The truth is, I think the cave does hold answers.

838

00:41:32,000 --> 00:41:34,000

There is no literal library,

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00:41:34,000 --> 00:41:38,000

but rather a geological chronicle etched over eons.

840

00:41:38,000 --> 00:41:42,000

Nature has carved arches, corridors, and temples

841

00:41:42,000 --> 00:41:46,000

that are as spectacular as anything made by man.

842

00:41:46,000 --> 00:41:49,000

And with more yet to be explored,

843

00:41:49,000 --> 00:41:53,000

there are undoubtedly new chapters yet to be written.

844

00:41:57,000 --> 00:41:58,000

Okay.

845

00:41:58,000 --> 00:42:00,000

Time to go home.

