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O Boto Cor de Rosa (The Pink Dolphin)

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Iadson Carvalho dos Santos

Manaus, Amazonas, Brasil

October 2018

O Boto Cor de Rosa (The Pink Dolphin)

Brazilian Legend (Supernatural Non-Religious)

Informant:

Iadson (pronounced Yead-son) is a native Brazilian. He lives in Manaus, Amazonas though he was born in Boa Vista, Rondônia. Rondônia is the state above Amazonas and borders Venezuela. Manaus is the capital of Amazonas and is a fairly large city though less developed than other cities in Brazil. Iadson moved to Manaus when he was 11 or 12. I met him as a missionary for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints when I was serving in Manaus. He was baptized into the church while I was in Manaus. He is now in his early twenties and lives with his mother and step-father. He is a former soldier in the Amazonas army.

Context:

Iadson told me this legend when I asked about stories from the Amazon Rainforest. It seems to be a common legend/belief and he made a point to tell me that you can still see and find amulets, like the ones he described, in Manaus. He said he did a project for school once on things like this and he learned about various legends. He told me this particular story in his native Portuguese through voice message on an application called WhatsApp. This app is the most common way of digital communication in Brazil. From his voice recording, I transcribed and translated his words to English. He mentions June Festivals which are like big parties that happen in June where people dress up in rural, cowboyish outfits and celebrate the rain. They go on for the whole month and include traditional food and dance. It is at these parties that Iadson says the dolphins supposedly appear.

Text:

Portuguese:

A lenda do boto cor de rosa, acho que você já ouviu quando você estava aqui em Manaus, em Brasil, em fim em algum lugar, más resumido em...como posso dizer...nas festas Juninas quando aparecia... em fim diz a lenda que aparecia nas festas Juninas um cara todo de branco e que usava sempre chapéu. Esse chapéu era pra tapar a narina do boto, porque diz a lenda que mesmo ele se

transformando em homem ela não sumia então para isso ele usava chapéu. E ao final das festas eles geralmente pegavam, chamavam algumas meninas a fim de seduzir e levavam pro rio para mergulharam com eles [ficou um pouco com vergonha falar]... então tudo mais, e dessas coisas, ele acabava eh...todo vez que levava as meninas e sei la sumia com elas, e algumas, as mais conhecidas, que ele engravidava as meninas e isso ficou conhecido muitas das vezes como essa e a lenda do boto que e dito como pra dizer que uma menina vai ser mãe solteira, que o pai é desconhecido no caso. Entao, fica mais ou menos isso, é uma coisa meio besta [deu pequeno risado] que as pessoas inventam mas fazer o que né? É lenda, a gente só pode respeitar as coisas.

English Translation:

The legend of the pink dolphin, I think you already heard when you were here in Manaus, in Brazil, anyway somewhere, but summarized in...how can I say...the June Festivals when they appeared...anyway the legend says that there appeared at the June Festivals a man wearing all white and who always used a hat. This hat was to cover the dolphin nose, because the legend says that even though he turned into a man his nose didn't go away and so that's why he used a hat. And at the end of the festivals these men generally grabbed, called some girls in order to seduce and take them to the river to swim with them [he said this with a little embarrassment]... then everything else, and these things, he ended up um...every time they took the girls and I don't know went off with them, and in some legends, the better known ones, are that he get the girls pregnant and this is known of a lot as the legend of the dolphin that is told as a way to say that a girl will be a single mom, that the dad is unknown in the case. So, it is more or less like that, it is a thing a bit silly [he laughed a little] that the people invent but what can you do? [laugh] It's a legend, we can only be respectful of these things.

Texture:

Iadson told this story with a very objective tone and told me afterwards that he does not believe in it. At the end he admitted that it is a silly thing to believe in and laughed a bit at the story. Some of the pauses were him thinking about the what words to use but the pauses around the parts about what the dolphins did with the girls left him a little embarrassed. He paused in these places to find a way to tell the story in a more subtle way. It seemed really hard for him to get through that section. I'm not sure if he would be less embarrassed to tell it to other friends but I don't think so, he is a soft-spoken kind of person.

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Dr. Lynne S. McNeill

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