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The Man with the Hat

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Elderlandia Batista Silva
Porto Velho, Rondonia, Brasil
December 2018

The Man with the Hat

Brazilian Legend (Supernatural Non-Religious)

Informant:

Elderlandia lives in Porto Velho, Rondonia, Brasil but was born in Manicore, an interior city in the state of Amazonas. She moved to Porto Velho about four years ago. Porto Velho is the capital of Rondonia and is an average sized city near the border of Brazil and Bolivia. I do not know her personally but when a friend of mine heard I was looking for legends she gave me her contact information. My friend said that Elderlandia has a lot of stories.

Elderlandia is married with one son around the age of eight. She is a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, though her husband is not. She works as a janitor at a school but is finishing a degree in Chemistry.

Context:

Elderlandia told me this story after a mutual friend put us in contact when she found out I was looking for legends. We sent messages over Facebook Messenger where she typed out all these stories in her native Portuguese. I copied her messages and then translated them into English. She told me four stories over the course of two days (Saturday and Sunday when she had the most time) and began our conversation by saying, "I have great stories to tell, some are really scary." Most of these stories were told her by the older people in her family. When I asked if she had any personal stories she said no and that she is grateful for it because she doesn't have a psychologist prepared for it.

This story, like the others, takes place in what the Brazilians call "the interior." This term refers to a city or village outside the state's capital and usually has the connotation of being in the middle of the jungle. This story happened in the interior of Amazonas, the state that contains the most of the Amazon Rainforest.

This story has direct reference to a common Amazonian Legend about pink dolphins who turn in to men wearing white who come to village parties and seduce the girls, often leaving them pregnant. It is said that every part of the dolphin transforms except for the nose so the men wear hats to cover it up. This is the second story Elderlandia told me that refers to this legend.

Text:

Portuguese:

Outra como essa.

Minha mãe ainda não tinha idade para ir às festas. Assim só os irmãos e irmãs mais velhas dela iam. Pois os vizinhos sempre moravam longe. As vezes horas de viagem, já que a locomoção era feita de canoa ou voadeira.

Em uma dessas festas aconteceu de aparecer um homem muito bonito e bem vestido usando um chapéu. E já que todos se conheciam, isso causou uma certa desconfiança nas pessoas. Inclusive minha tia mais velha até dançou com esse homem.

Os homens locais começaram a ficar bravos, pois o desconhecido só tirava as mais jovens para dançar. Em um dado momento, alguém puxou o chapéu dele. Para espanto de todos, havia um buraco na cabeça dele. Com isso ele saiu correndo da festa e acredite, ninguém ficou sabendo seu paradeiro ou de onde ele veio.

Isso foi assunto por meses.

English Translation:

Another like this one.

My mother still wasn't old enough to go to the parties. So only her older brothers and sisters would go. Anyway the neighbors always lived far away. Sometimes hours of travel, since transportation was done by canoe or motorboat.

In one of these parties there happened to appear a very beautiful and well-dressed man wearing a hat. And since everyone knew each other, this caused a certain mistrust in the people. Including my oldest aunt even danced with this man. The local men began to get angry, since the unknown man only got the youngest to dance. In some moment, someone pulled his hat. To the surprise of

everyone, there was a hole in his head. With this he left running from the party and believe it, no one knew his whereabouts or from where he came.

This was the topic of conversation for months.

Texture:

Elderlandia definitely believes all the stories she told me and mentioned many times in our conversation that they scare her. This story was told to her by her mother (whose name is Alida) and a lot of her belief comes from that because she doesn't think her mother would lie (which she mentioned in another story she told me).

This story was typed in a Facebook Message so there isn't any form of auditory inflection, though I copied her punctuation use (which is almost always incorrect) and spacing exactly in the English translation. Because I don't know Elderlandia personally, I don't know if her texting reflected anything of her emotions. However, many times when she would tell me how scary the stories she told are, she would follow the text with a nervously laughing smiley face emoji (Finch Stickers on Messenger). It seems that every time I asked her a question or she finished a story she would say again just how creepy the stories she knows are. I get the feeling that she has many more supernatural stories to tell.

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