

STRANGE EXPEDITIONS

CREATED BY
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Nature never ceases to amaze us. We've all witnessed its beauty, power, and wonder.

But what about the things we don't see?

What is nature doing when no one is watching?

We all know the age-old question. "If a tree falls in the woods and nobody is there to see it, does it make a sound?"

What mysteries and secrets does nature still keep from us? What earthly enigmas continue to baffle and defy reason? And how has mankind's beliefs and theories shaped our understanding of "the unexplained" in our world?

Intrigued by natural and supernatural mysteries and driven by curiosity and truth, mystic explorer **Daniel Byers**, scientist **Ulyana Horodyskyj** and adventurer **Ricardo Peña** are on a mission for answers.

STRANGE EXPEDITIONS chronicle the global adventures of our team as they investigate the unexplained in nature - not just paranormal, but paranatural activity in the most remote regions of the world.

Armed with creds in archeology, science, and arcane knowledge of indigenous cultures - not to mention a thirst for adventure - **Daniel, Uly** and **Ricardo** will investigate and challenge each other's beliefs, assumptions and theories about otherworldly events, unsolved supernatural wonders, and unexplained phenomena that challenge conventional logic and reason.

Each episode of **STRANGE EXPEDITIONS**, our team will travel to some of the world's most far-flung locales to interview key eyewitnesses and uncover recent developments in the story, then springboard into a fully immersive exploration. Each stop and every clue will lead our team closer to the truth behind these oxymora - and the cultural beliefs that have shaped them.

Whether they trek through the Kunlun Mountains to investigate and document a Tibetan exorcism, travel to the Hopi Reservation of New Mexico to identify mysterious audio disturbances in the local skies known as the "Taos Hum," or visit the Quechua people to explore the legend of cannibal giants living in the cordilleras of Peru, **Daniel, Uly** and **Ricardo's** expeditions will shed new light on the mysteries our world still holds secret.



EXPEDITIONS

1. EASTERN NEPAL — MYSTERIES OF HONGU VALLEY; GHOSTS OF EVEREST

Our team will embark for the legendary Hongu Valley, home to many unsolved paranormal — such as the Yeti — and paranatural phenomena. We will meet **Daniel, Uly** and **Ricardo** as they trek to the village of **Chheskam**, where a **Kulung shaman** will bless the team in a ceremony with the **Rangkemi** — the guardian monkey spirit of difficult, dangerous places.

The team will investigate a supernatural encounter **Daniel** and his guide had years before with vengeful ghost-like spirits in Hongu Valley that led to the discovery of a fresh corpse in a cave the morning after. They will also visit with members of a team led by explorer **Jack Cox**, who on a failed attempt to navigate the valley in 1995, nearly starved to death. His team was allegedly saved when the guide, a **Tibetan monk**, levitated across the 30-foot-wide raging Hongu River in order to affix a rope. There are many accounts in the literature of early explorers to Tibet of monks with supernatural abilities, including levitation and the ability to run at superhuman speeds. **The team will gather eyewitness accounts from villagers and monks, and attempt to scientifically explain the presence of these spirits, and determine what caused a monk to levitate. Is there a logical answer? Was it Chi energy? Or something otherworldly?**

The team travels next to the Himalayas, where they will use their mountaineering skills to reach Camp 4 of **Mount Everest**. Everest is home to many paranatural phenomena, such as the mysterious flag clouds that hang above its peak, or the strange red snow that baffles climbers. **The team will investigate the science behind these phenomena and put to rest what causes these strange natural wonders. We'll also learn what are the life and death factors that make up the notorious "Death Zone", where so many climbers have met their fate?**



The team will meet **Sherpa Pemba Dorie**, who's renowned in the climbing world for two reasons. First, his record-speed ascent of Everest in 2004. Second are the events that occurred three days later. While approaching the summit from the South, **Dorie** came across a group of deceased climbers whose bodies were frozen in the snow. Suddenly, he claims, he was surrounded by something of the supernatural variety. In his own words:

"When I paused at a mound of rocks I saw some spirits in the form of black shadows coming towards me, stretching their hands and begging for something to eat. I think those were the spirits of the many mountaineers killed during and after their ascent of Mount Everest. The bodies of many of those who died are still on the mountain and one climber who died from an accidental fall is still hanging from a rope."

Many Sherpas believe the ghosts of Everest will not be appeased or leave the mountain until the bodies of the deceased are given a proper burial.

The team will investigate Dorie's claims and seek to find a scientific explanation for this and other such paranormal encounters. Does lack of oxygen and high altitude cause these bizarre hallucinations? Do other climbers have similar stories to share? Can sensors and spectral analysis help determine if the dead climber's ghosts are real? The team will find out.



2. MUSTANG, NEPAL — FORBIDDEN KINGDOM; VALLEY OF BONES

Our team will travel to this isolated region of the Nepalese Himalayas, formerly Lo Manthang, or the **Forbidden Kingdom**, where they will meet up with one of National Geographic's most famous explorers, **Alton Byers, Ph.D.** If the name sounds familiar, that's because Alton is Daniel's father, and he's offered to escort the team, and share the personal experiences of his last expedition to this region.

During their journey, Alton confides in Daniel that he believes a curse has attached itself to him and followed him back to the States during his last expedition to the region. Alton believes it could be the demon/succubus **Kichkandi**, a beautiful female entity in all white with backwards feet that sucks the life force from men, and who Alton had a direct encounter with back in the 70's. **Daniel and his father will visit Nepalese shamans together in an attempt to free Alton of the supernatural entity.**

They will visit the mysterious Sky Caves along the Gandaki River... man-made caves that date back 14,000 years and often used as burial chambers that locals believe are haunted by spirits and demons. Our team will follow up and investigate a story by their Nepalese guide, who claims his Uncle was pushed off and cliff and killed by a demon in a mountain range of steep, deep red peaks that look like they were splashed with blood. **Can the team answer whether spirits still dwell in the sky caves using sensors and spectral analysis? Will the mystery of what killed their guide's family member be solved using good old-fashioned detective work? Our team will find out.**



3. INDIA — SKELETON LAKE OF ROOPKUND; BHANGARH FORTS; TIBETAN EXORCISMS

Our team will travel to the remote **Roopkund Lake** region to investigate one of India's most eerie paranatural phenomena. In 1942 a British patrol guard made an alarming discovery. Some 16,000 feet above sea level, a frozen lake absolutely full of skeletons. That summer, the ice melting revealed even more skeletal remains – some 200 people – floating in the water and lying haphazardly around the lake's edges. Something horrible had happened here.

All the bodies date to around 850 AD. DNA evidence indicates that there were a family or tribe of closely related individuals. Rings, spears, leather shoes, and bamboo staves were found, leading experts to believe that the group was comprised of pilgrims heading through the valley with the help of the locals. Among Himalayan women there is an ancient and traditional folk song. The lyrics describe a **goddess** so enraged at outsiders who defiled her mountain sanctuary that she rained death upon them. Strangely, all the bodies had died from blows to the head. **What led to these ancient traveler's bizarre, sudden death? Is there a scientific explanation for what killed them all, or did something supernatural occur? Our team will find the answers.**

Next our team will travel to the Alwar district of Rajasthan to visit **Bhangarh Fort**, a 17th-century stronghold infamous for being the "Most haunted place in India." Because of the numerous ghostly experiences and happenings, villages have sprung up far away from the fort, due to the fear of what lies within. Even the **Archaeological Survey of India** has forbidden the locals and tourists from entering the fort at night. Several legends have attested to the paranormal happenings inside the fort. **Daniel, Uly and Ricardo will test the fortress for paranormal activity to see what is real from rural legend. Is the fort truly haunted? Is the unrequited love of a black magician for Princess Ratnavati of Bhangarh responsible for the curse put upon the fort? The team will seek to answer these questions.**



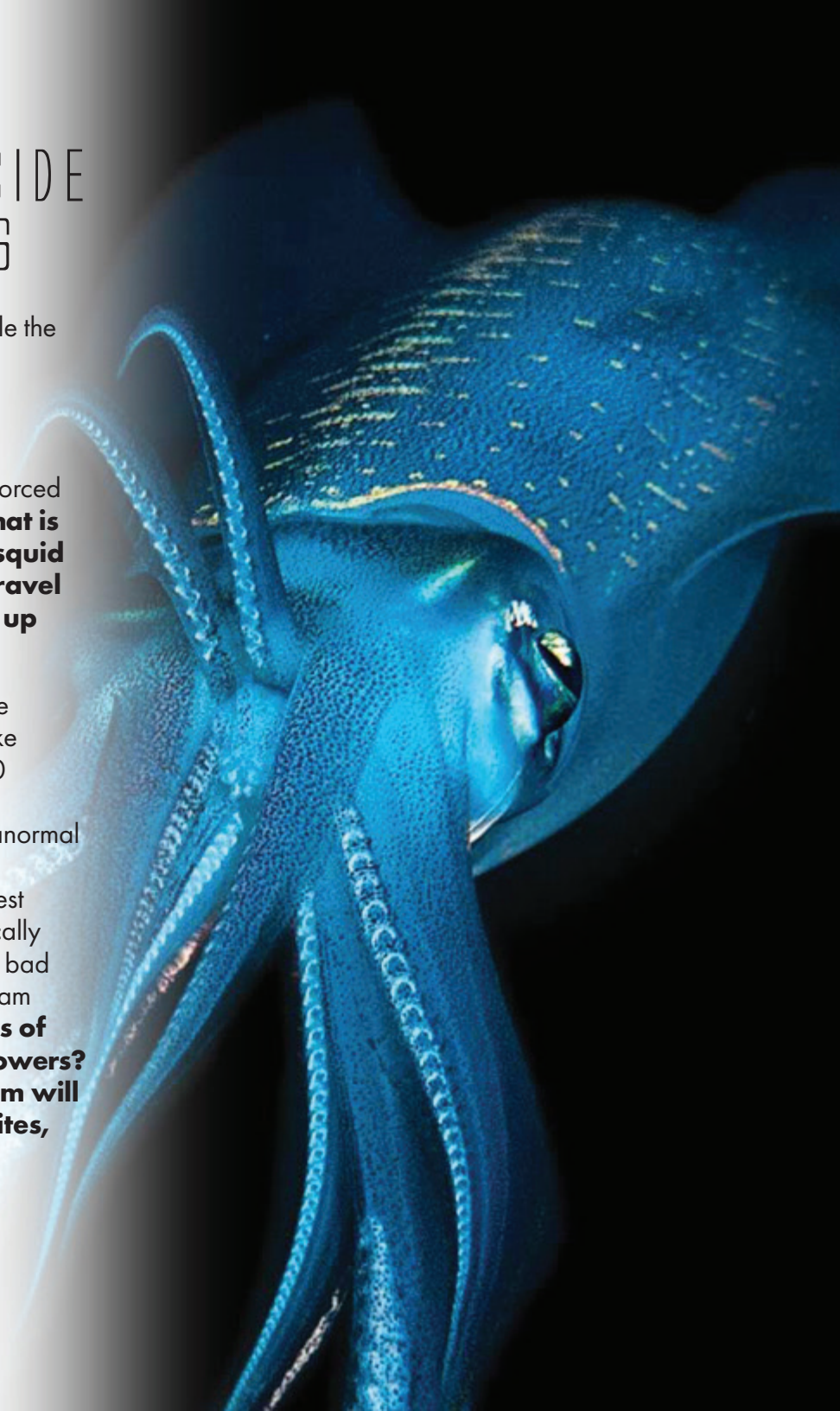
In the 21st Century, **Tibetan Exorcisms** still take place in **Ladakh, India**. Daniel and the team will meet up and speak with one of these exorcists, who wear demon masks, and use red-hot heated blades called *phurbas* to burn and beat themselves and their clients during the exorcisms, which get extremely violent. (The exorcist actually brings a demon into themselves in order to drive out the demon in the possessed person.)

The team will investigate the practices behind these rituals. Can the act of demonic possession be explained in any logical, scientific way? During an exorcism, is there a real psychological catharsis from a shared metaphorical belief system, or battle on a metaphysical plane? The answers are out there.

4. JAPAN - FIREFLY SQUID OF TOYAMA BAY; AOKIGAHARA SUICIDE FOREST; KANMANGAFUCHI ABYSS

The team will travel to **Toyama Bay** off the central Sea of Japan to chronicle the mysteries of the **Firefly Squid of Toyama Bay**. *Watasenia scintillans*, as they are known to marine biologists, are only 3 inches long, but packs a stunning, bioluminescent feature that looks like something out of Avatar. Normally living deep beneath the sea, a v shaped canyon in Toyama bay pushes the current, and the squid, to the surface in massive numbers where, forced up, the millions of squid turn the bay into a writhing, gleaming blue froth. **What is the science and bio-organic explanation that makes the firefly squid glow? What gives them their bioluminescence? Our team will travel into open waters and conduct a dive mission to study the squid up close and photograph these paranatural wonders.**

Called "the perfect place to die," the **Aokigahara Forest** in Japan has the unfortunate distinction of being the world's second most popular place to take one's life. (The first is the Golden Gate Bridge.) Since the 1950s, at least 500 people haven't wandered out. Japanese spiritualists believe that the suicides committed in the forest have permeated Aokigahara's trees, generating paranormal activity and preventing many who enter from escaping the forest's depths. According to some reports, forest workers must carry the bodies from the forest to the local police station, where they are put in a special room used specifically to house suicide corpses. Some believe that if a corpse is left alone, it is very bad luck for the **yurei (ghost)** of the suicide victims. Their spirits are said to scream through the night, and that their bodies will move on their own. **What forces of nature and man have collided to give the forest its paranatural powers? Why are compasses rendered useless inside the forest? The team will trek into the forest and investigate some of its most notorious sites, interview local law enforcement and Japanese spiritualists to separate what is fact from superstition about this beautiful and ghostly place.**





In the wooded area of Japan's **Kanmangafuchi Abyss** stands a row of stone Jizō statues. How many? Nobody knows for sure, because apparently each time you count them, you end up with a different number because they routinely disappear. Jizō is one of Japan's most beloved deities and is regarded as the Bodhisattva who cares for travelers and lost souls and is also the guardian of children. There are roughly 70 of them, lined up in front of a wall stretching around 320 feet and overlooking the Daiyagawa River. Due to their apparently ghostly nature and disappearing tricks, they are also called *Bake Jizō*, or "ghost Jizō." **What is the history of this exotic "Bermuda Triangle of Japan?" Is there some sort of paranormal algorithm at work that defies logic? Our team will venture to the Abyss to investigate and answer its mysteries.**



5. BALI-GUNUNG PADANG PYRAMID; BURIAL SITES OF TORAJALAND; RAKASA DEMONS

The team will begin their expedition at the **Ogoh-Ogoh Museum**, where they will be joined by someone who's steeped in Balinese culture, Daniel's sister **Barbara Byers**. This museum displays the towering effigies of terrifying-looking demons and monsters known as **Ogoh-Ogoh**. On the night of March 16th each year, the day before the annual **Nyepi Festival**, locals celebrate by parading huge, impressively handcrafted Ogoh-Ogoh figures before setting them on fire. The demons take the form of figures from Hindu legends, and the ritual is based on a tradition to banish evil spirits. But these ceremonies are not limited to the living. Barbara will lead the team behind the scenes of a corpse exorcism - and eerie ritual trance which involves roaring fires, Gamelan percussion, a shadow puppet show, and a dance of witches and **Raksasa demons**, also known as "man-eaters". The participants enter a possession trance to take on these roles where they become the witches and demons during the ceremony, after which the "cleansed" corpse is taken to a graveyard where the body is resurrected.

Our team will next travel to **Campaka, Indonesia** to a hill covered in a mass of stone-age columns, but what lies beneath could change history... Here they will meet geologist **Dr. Danny Hilman Natawidjaja**, who in 2011 noticed something peculiar about the hill known as **Gunung Padang**, or "**Mountain of Light**". The hill isn't an actual hill, it's a buried pyramid that may have been built 22,000 years ago. There's even evidence of human-made chambers that show carbon — dating as far back as 26,000 years. If proven true, this claim could rewrite history as we know it and expose a forgotten civilization. The predominant understanding among historians is that all human civilization began after the last Ice Age that covered the Earth in 11,500 BC. If this pyramid-like structure dates further than 11,500 BC, then it would prove that Plato's account of a sunken civilization in Timaeus and Critias was not merely Ancient Greek legend. **What secrets lie deep inside the pyramid at Gunung Padang? What was the advanced ancient civilization that built it? Is there gold buried deep inside the pyramid? Are clues of more pyramids hiding beneath the Java Sea? Our team will get the answers.**



The team will next trek to **South Sulawesi** in **Indonesia**, a mountainous region that is home to the cliff cemeteries and tree tombs of the **Toraja**. For the **Torajans**, life very much revolves around death, but not in a morbid sense. A funeral is a celebration of life, much like a going-away party, and is an occasion in which the entire family of the deceased, and all the members in the village take part. Their ancient traditions involve funerary customs that have been practiced over many centuries and are known to be the most complex funeral traditions in the world.

When a **Torajan** dies, family members of the deceased are required to hold a series of funeral ceremonies, known as **Rambu Soloq**, over many days. During this time, the deceased is not buried but is embalmed and stored in a traditional house under the same roof with his or her family. Until the funeral ceremonies are completed, the person is not considered to be truly dead but merely referred to as "a person who is sick" or "the one who is asleep". And every year in August, a ritual called **Ma'Nene (The Ceremony of Cleaning Corpses)** takes place in which the bodies of the deceased are exhumed to be washed, groomed, dressed in new clothes, and walked through the village. **The team will visit Torajaland to chronicle a Rambu Soloq funeral celebration and share the Toraja's unique perspective to life after death.**

6. PERU-HUAYLLAY STONE FOREST; NAZCA LINES; CANNIBAL GIANTS

Our team will take a climbing adventure to **Pasco, Peru** to explore the desolation and unbelievable geology of the **Huayllay Stone Forest**, a weirdly paranatural wonder few know about that resembles an alien world, but one look at the prehistoric cave and rock paintings found and you know you are, in fact, still on the same planet as the rest of us – even though you might have to look back thousands of years to find some evidence of human life. **Our team will explore the forest and learn what created this strange geography.**

In the arid plains of southern Peru lies a mystery that's baffled scientists and archaeologists for almost a century. Etched out of the sandstone by ancient indigenous people for reasons which are still a mystery, the purpose of the **Nazca Lines** has spawned countless theories since their discovery. Why were they created? How were these birds, lambs and snakes so impeccably drawn? Were they a way to communicate with aliens, as some believe? New theories have emerged about the mysteries of Nazca, and why they were created. **Our team will visit with two people who've spent years studying the Nazca Lines, Rosa Lasaponara of the National Research Council and writer James Woodman, and investigate the evidence and research behind their amazing claims. Are the lines actually a complex irrigation system? Did the ancient Indians master hot-air balloon technology to orchestrate Nazca's creation from the sky?**

Our team will next visit the **Quechua Indians** of the central Andes to learn about the mythical **Cannibal Giants** that for centuries were believed to live in the cordilleras... and who are still feared to this day. The **Quechua** will share with the team their stories handed down by Spanish Historian **Pedro de Cieza de León** and **Quechuan** forefathers:



“They came from across the sea on reed rafts as large as ships, some men were so big that an ordinary man of good size scarcely reached up to their knees... it was a monstrous thing to see their enormous heads and their hair hanging down about their shoulders. Their eyes were as large as small plates. They say they had no beards and that some of them were clad in the skins of animals, and others only in the dress nature gave them. There were no women with them.”

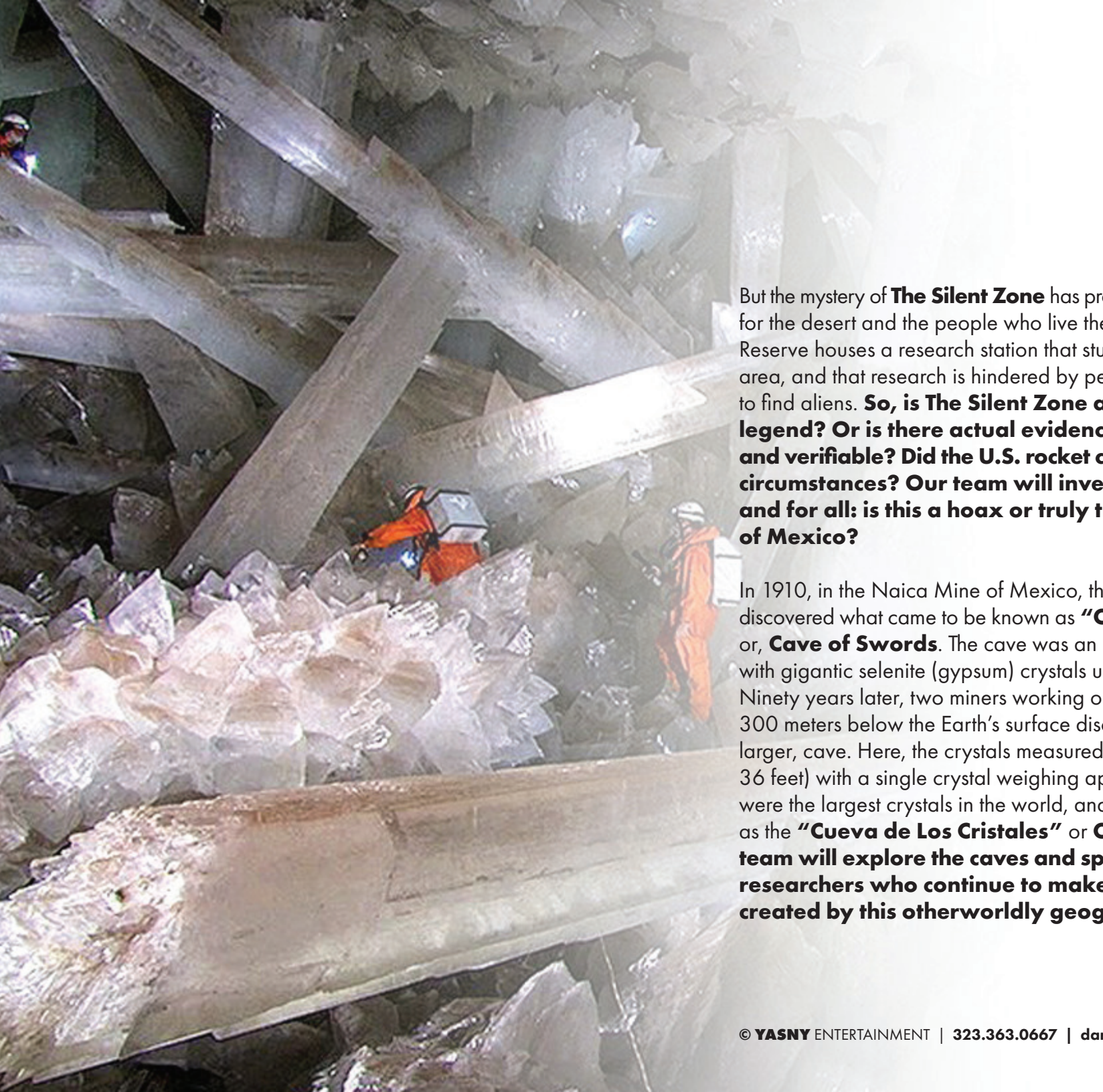
As our team digs deeper into the mystery they will meet up with Anthropologists **Renata Davila** and **Pablo Bayabar** to investigate the bizarre infant mummy they unearthed in the **Cuzco** region of **Peru**. “Its skeleton is 20 inches tall. Its large triangular head and eye cavities don’t coincide with any human being,” explains Davila. **Our team will investigate the bizarre link between the pre-Incan Cannibal Giants and similar legends told by Navajo, Choctaw, and Inuit tribes of Alaska. Were these ‘giants’ a sub-species of man? Were they European explorers who were ravaged by hunger due to lack of supplies on their journey to the New World and succumbed to cannibalism?**



7. MEXICO-MAPIMI SILENT ZONE; THE CAVE OF CRYSTALS

Four kilometers from **San Ignacio, Mexico**, in an area also known as the **"Trino Vertex"** is **"The Silent Zone"** or **Zona del Silencio**. Frequently compared to the Bermuda Triangle – both are located between 26th and 28th parallels and have similar mythologies – the legends say radio waves cannot be transmitted in certain areas of the silent zone due to local magnetic fields, aliens, and "Earth energy" among other explanations. The story of how these stories came to be is much stranger, and more interesting, than the paranormal legends would suggest. On July 11, 1970 an Athena rocket being used in a training exercise by the US Air Force lost control, accidentally invaded Mexican air space, and crash landed in The Silent Zone. The rocket was carrying two small containers of Cobalt 57, a radioactive element. The U.S. government covertly isolated the area and removed the rocket and containers. But strange phenomena in the area was reported as far back as the 1930s, when Francisco Sarabia, a Mexican pilot, crash landed after his radio had mysteriously failed to function while flying over the zone. Similar claims have been made by other persons who have visited the zone, (though only after the missile accident) that radio signals didn't work, and compasses were unusable. Other claims are that the area attracts meteorites and causes various mental problems.





But the mystery of **The Silent Zone** has produced other consequences for the desert and the people who live there. The Mapimí Biosphere Reserve houses a research station that studies the ecology of the area, and that research is hindered by people flocking to the area to find aliens. **So, is The Silent Zone a paranormal urban legend? Or is there actual evidence of something real and verifiable? Did the U.S. rocket crash under paranormal circumstances? Our team will investigate and learn once and for all: is this a hoax or truly the Bermuda Triangle of Mexico?**

In 1910, in the Naica Mine of Mexico, the Penoles mining company discovered what came to be known as **“Cueva de Las Espadas,”** or, **Cave of Swords**. The cave was an 80-meter hallway filled with gigantic selenite (gypsum) crystals up to two meters in length. Ninety years later, two miners working on an excavation tunnel 300 meters below the Earth’s surface discovered another, much larger, cave. Here, the crystals measured up to 12 meters long (over 36 feet) with a single crystal weighing approximately 55 tons. These were the largest crystals in the world, and the cave became known as the **“Cueva de Los Cristales”** or **Cave of Crystals**. **Our team will explore the caves and speak with scientists and researchers who continue to make amazing discoveries created by this otherworldly geographical wonder.**

8. SOUTHWEST U.S.-AH-SHI-SLE-PAH AND BISTI BADLANDS; THE TAOS HUM; SAILING STONES OF RACETRACK PLAYA

Residents and visitors of the small city of **Taos, New Mexico**, have for years been puzzled by a mysterious and faint low-frequency hum in the desert air. Some believe it is caused by unusual acoustics; others suspect mass hysteria or some secret, sinister purpose. Whether described as a whir, hum, or buzz and whether psychological, natural, or supernatural no one has yet been able to locate the sound's origin. The team will visit **Physiology Professor Steve Iannuccilli** of St. Joseph's college, who's spent years studying the bizarre phenomena and examining the people of Taos, and interview residents who've been cursed and afflicted by the hum. **What is the scientific explanation for this strange aural anomaly? Are the hums the result of some bizarre military experiment, like the sounds used in the low frequency attack at the U.S. Embassy in Cuba in 2017? Are the sounds manifested in Apache, Hopi, and Navajo teachings that identify the hum as the song of lost spirits trying to speak from the other side?**

Our team will next travel to the arid desert of northwestern New Mexico to explore the As-Shi-Sle-Pah Wilderness Study Area and Bisti Badlands, a hidden paranatural wonder of geologic eye candy. With its muted colors and striking formations, these two unusual landscapes feel like a Martian planet. Pale, mushroom-shaped hoodoos loom above the rocky earth like enormous alien trees. Petrified tree stumps and ancient bones speckle the badlands like prehistoric markers of its long-gone inhabitants.



On their last expedition, Daniel Uly and Ricardo will venture to **Death Valley California**, to explore the utterly magical **Sailing Stones of The Racetrack Playa**. Scattered about the desert valley floor are large rocks with mysterious trails left behind them. The trails show that these rocks have rolled and zig-zagged across the ground, sometimes for as long as 860 feet. The trails last for years before fading, yet no one has ever seen them move. The team will visit with local scientists who've spent years studying the moving stones, and set an array of instruments and cameras to record this amazing phenomena. **What is the scientific explanation behind the stones' paranatural movements? Or is there some otherworldly act taking place that defies human logic?**



THE EXPLORERS

Il mondo ha più lingue che il cielo ha stelle e l'universo ha più lingue che il mondo ha lingue



THE MYSTIC EXPLORER **Daniel Byers**

Daniel is a photographer, filmmaker, and an avid explorer who has studied and lived with indigenous cultures from Nepal to Peru to the Southwest U.S. Daniel has lensed

over 20 expeditions to all areas of the globe, from immersive explorations into the lives of Tibetan Monks, to following a wolf over a thousand miles by bike to accompanying Zuni Rain Priests along their sacred migration paths through the Grand Canyon. Daniel's film, photographic, and written publications have appeared in National Geographic Expedition News, Anthropology Now, The Guardian UK, NOVA, BBC Science & Environment, Venu magazine, among others. His films have been selected for international festivals such as Banff and International Wildlife Film Festival, and screened at major venues including the UN Climate Conference.



THE SCIENTIST

Dr. Ulyana "Uly" Horodyskyj

Ulyana's infatuation with nature started at a very young age. At 6 years old, she saw mountains for the first time – the Swiss Alps – and was hooked. At age 12, she started dabbling in science fair projects. Uly was able to mesh her interests in the outdoors and science as a geology major at Rice University. By the time she turned 23, she had traveled to and worked on all 7 continents. Uly has worked with National Geographic Student Expeditions as a Geology/Climate Change Instructor in Iceland, and the Girls on Ice program, as a Glaciology/ Volcanology Instructor on Mt. Baker, Washington and the Gulkana glacier, Alaska. During a Fulbright to Nepal, she was able to immerse herself in the culture, and grow The Sherpa- Scientist Initiative, to educate the locals on their changing climate. In 2016, Uly was chosen as mission commander for the NASA Johnson Space Center's HERA (human exploration research analog) 30-day isolation experiment, simulating a long-duration mission to an asteroid. She was named a semifinalist for NASA's 2017 astronaut class.

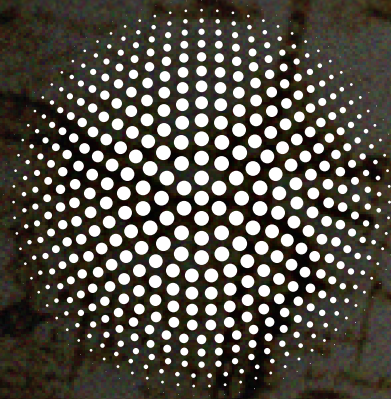




THE ADVENTURER Ricardo Peña

Ricardo is an experienced mountain climber and explorer who has led expeditions throughout Colorado, the Argentinean, Chilean and Bolivian Andes, Mt. Denali, Mt. Elbrus and the Caucasus mountain range in Russia, the Khumbu region in the Himalaya, and Mexico (where he's originally from). In 2005, Ricardo discovered the coat and documents of Andes Survivor Eduardo Strauch as well other previously undiscovered airplane parts, while climbing near the impact point of the famous plane crash popularized in the book and movie 'Alive'. In December 2005, with a grant from National Geographic, Ricardo led the first and only to date complete re-tracing of the historic escape route done by Andes Survivors Roberto Canessa and Nando Parrado in 1972.

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