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# Big River Man

By Unknown

When I see a swimmer,  
I paint a drowned man.  
Jacques Prevert  
Is that OK?  
I am going to do,  
no man has ever done,  
swim at the Amazon.  
I'm Martin Strel.  
I'm going to do...  
FEBRUARY 2, 2006  
...what...  
what no one has never do.  
...what no one has ever done.  
...what no man has never do.  
...what no one has ever done.  
swim at the Amazon.  
I'm Martin Strel.  
I'm going to do, what...  
no man has never...  
It's Ok.  
It's Ok.  
...no man has ever done.  
I'm Martin Strel.  
I'm going to do,  
what no man has never do,  
swim at the Amazon.  
This is Martin Strel,  
the most famous endurance  
swimmer in the world.  
He's the only person  
to swim the Mississippi  
and the Yangtze rivers.  
Now in 2007,  
he will be attempt to  
be the first person,  
to swim at the Amazon.  
My father is not an average  
world famous athlete.  
First of all,  
he's little bit over weight,  
maybe even  
very over weight.  
Second, he's a big drinker.  
Even while he's swimming,

he drinks two bottles  
of wine a day.

Thirdly,

he's accomplished most of his  
fits over the age of 45.

When he swims at the Amazon,  
he'll be 53 years old.

How long does he  
swim without stopping?

That's a good question.

How long does you  
swim without stopping?

Average. Every day.

Average, every day?

-50, 60 miles.

Without stopping?

-Yeah, non-stop.

What he say?

-Without stopping per a day.

Yeah, per a day.

-Yes.

What's your name?

I'm worried for my  
father's safety

but more I worried for  
my father's health.

When he's swimming

in the Yangtze,  
the world's most  
polluted river,

he became so ill

I didn't know

if he would survive.

I wanted to make him stop

but I couldn't.

Swimming in the world's

most polluted rivers

is the family business.

**BORUT STREL:**

My name is Borut Strel,

I am Martin Strel's son

but I am also his

main assistant.

My main job is  
helping my father at his  
swimming adventures.  
I am the head of logistic.  
I coordinate  
the whole team.  
YANGTZE SWIM 2004  
I help incurred him  
all the time and we trust  
each other the most.  
He swims through  
this dirty waters  
hoping to race the illness  
and the disappearance of clean  
waters around the world.  
But the Amazon is  
a special problem.  
In the river  
has crocodiles,  
deadly fish and snakes,  
parasites and insects,  
many of which is be  
hard to avoid.  
The deadly can the Candirue fish  
can swim up your penis  
and if it does  
no more penis.  
Martin understands  
this dangerous  
but he consider this dangerous to  
the Amazon more serious.  
If the global attention is  
not pay immediately  
to the rapid destruction  
of the rain forest  
then will all be in  
very serious trouble.  
Martin hopes that his swim  
will inspire people  
to wake up and care  
about saving this lands.  
I don't know how I  
feel about this swim.  
When he was finishing

the Yangtze swim 2004  
he was saying, I am not gonna  
do anything more swims.  
It's too hard,  
too hot,  
too much infections,  
too much troubles  
but then after a  
couple of months  
when he recovered,  
he just came up with  
another idea over night,  
I am going to the Amazon.  
SLOVENIA,  
February 2006

#### **TRAINING FOR:**

#### **AMAZON BEGINS:**

My father Martin  
is very famous in Slovenia  
but even when he's  
going abroad  
he's very famous too.  
Some people say that he's  
like an Slovenian ambassador.  
Slovenia's shape  
is like a chicken.  
Slovenia's shape  
is like a chicken.  
Head...you can see.  
Some people say  
it's no big deal  
to swim downstream with  
current. I say to them  
trying by selfs.  
When Martin swims 60 miles  
per a day downstream  
means the same as swimming  
on a still water.  
Try doing that every  
day for 75 days  
when you are  
and you weight

over 200 pounds.  
Amazon swim publicity  
campaign Hollywood, California  
Where you swimming to?  
Acapulco?  
It's actually  
kind of funny.  
He's actually gonna swim  
entire Amazon river.  
I don't think he's  
gonna make it  
with all that piranha.  
Mokronog, Slovenia  
Martin's home town  
Martin got a free car  
from his sponsor  
for the rest of his life.  
Mazda was  
car of the year...  
...in 2004. Mazda was  
car of the year.  
Many Slovenians are  
drunk and drivers.  
We are at the top in  
Europe by statistics  
and my father  
Martin is one of them.  
But he does  
when he drives  
he eat a lot, drink a lot  
and we are at the  
phone all the time.  
But he is very  
good in driving.  
He's very good driver  
and he can make it  
even if he's drunk.  
He has a really good  
connections with policeman.  
They stop him, hey Martin,  
you're drunk.  
You are over dozed.  
Ok, just come  
safe to the home.

We will not give  
you a ticket.  
You are very  
famous people.  
Be safe.  
Goodbye.  
Martin parks this Mazda 626  
where ever he wants  
and nobody could  
stop him.  
If I park by myself  
I get a ticket right away.  
What you want to order?  
Horse burger.  
-Horse burger, yes.  
Many Slovenians  
eat horse burgers.  
Horse burger is one of the most  
popular food in our country.  
Me and Martin  
love them too.  
The horse burger is  
like a chicken burger.  
The only different is  
that is made from horse meat.  
Horse burger, yeah.  
Horse burger.  
He will make it all the  
way through on Amazon? -No.  
VENICE BEACH, CALIFORNIA  
But how far?  
I don't know. About is far  
he made it on Mississippi river.  
You mean all  
the way? -No.  
You not believe it?  
-Nobody's ever done that.  
Number seven  
on the countdown.  
First is swim.  
The mighty Mississippi river  
it measures over  
In 2002 endurance swimmer  
Martin Strel took it on.

He swam the entire length  
from the Minnesota  
to the gulf of Mexico.

Along the way,  
Strel battled strong currents  
deadly whirlpools  
and vicious storms.  
Starting his record swim  
Strel reached the  
gulf of Mexico.

Besides being a swimmer  
my father has a day job  
is a flamenco guitar teacher.  
Before that he was a  
professional gambler  
but that was  
before I was born.

KONGO CASINO,

LJUBLJANA, SLOVENIA

Martin likes to say something  
over and over again.

One of these is  
if you work you get money  
if you don't work no money.  
I have been a professional  
gambler, yes

but for that you must  
stay here over the night.  
I put here 1000 dollars.  
If it will be black  
It's very simple.

Before I was a swimmer  
I was a gambler.  
Now I gamble with my life.

Martin was bitten  
very badly as a child.  
He says that's why  
he is able to endure  
such an extreme pain.  
He promised himself  
he would never treat  
me the same.

Instead he battles  
demons at the rivers.



DANUBE 2000,  
MISSISSIPPI 2002,  
YANGTZE 2004,  
To swim the Amazon  
is almost 1000 miles  
further then the Yangtze.  
It will be the longest,  
most dangerous  
swimming in history.  
My father always told me  
that someday he's  
going to be somebody.  
But he never knew  
what to call him self  
that people would  
remember his name.  
I told him  
you are Martin Strel.  
You are the big river man.  
Self pictures presents  
in association with  
EARTHWORKS FILMS

**MARTIN STREL:**

in

**BIG RIVER MAN:**

**SLOVENIA:**

Lipizzaner horse demonstration  
in honor of Martin

**AMAZON SWIM:**

ATLANTIS, WATER PARK  
SLOVENIA, LJUBLJANA  
This is Atlantis  
where Martin has a free  
membership here  
for the rest of his life.  
He's the only  
person in Slovenia  
with this and the  
really in the whole world.  
He's like a mascot for them

because of his extreme  
achievements  
go with the  
fact that Atlantis  
is the largest  
indoor water park  
in the whole Europe.  
This is where you  
can find Martin always  
Martin trains every days in  
a swimming pool for 5 hours.  
He swims 4 km  
one hour in the pool  
so he's training  
At the end of the day  
he spends time  
some tanning  
and tubing at the Atlantis  
water slides.  
Martin's physical training  
is very important.  
but his mental training  
is maybe even more  
important than that.  
POSTOJNA CAVE,

**SLOVENIA:**

This is way Martin has  
been spending  
the whole summer  
underground.  
He has a special  
password  
from the Slovenian  
government  
to enter into a giant cave.  
He just typed on his PDA  
and the door just open.  
Martin does this  
it get closer  
to the underground  
animals.  
And I think he's  
looking kind of

for a passion how  
how all the animals  
sleep underground.  
that's he's gonna understand in  
the Amazon all this animals.  
Martin believes that if he  
thinks like an animal  
while he'll swimming the Amazon  
he will not be eaten.  
Slovenians likes to do many  
things at the same time.  
When the Martin is drunk  
driving while go in  
but also doing  
two tabs of training.  
He's power breathing  
which is good  
for his lungs  
and he's also  
learning English.  
"You look young."  
"Oh, Mary. I am your  
husband Henry."  
"I am good looking  
in about forty  
and I wear glasses."  
"Oh, I don't like glasses."  
"And you Jessica?"  
"What do you do?"  
"I am a drug dealer."  
-What?"

#### **AMAZON SWIM:**

Slovenia is one of  
the cleanest  
countries on the earth  
and Martin grows  
up swimming  
in only pure waters  
like a 1000 years ago.  
That time was  
also communism  
and every one was  
very depressed.

He was always poor  
and lived in the tiny house  
from the government.  
So Martin would  
drink and drink  
and then shout

**and say:**

I am going away  
for a few days.  
When I ask him where  
he went he would say:  
"I just went  
to Italy to relax."  
U.S. EMBASSY  
LJUBLJANA, SLOVENIA  
Martin always says,  
to be a winner you must  
be a friend of winner.  
He knows a lot of them.  
One of Martin's  
favorite winners  
is American ambassador  
in Slovenia.  
They likes each other  
because Martin likes America  
and America like him too.  
People think Martin is rich  
and powerful like them  
but it's really  
me and Martin  
try to save money  
for Amazon swim.  
"I come and you follow  
me with the basket."  
"Then bring on  
that table."  
"OK? Go there."  
Mr. ambassador.  
Thank you very much.  
Good representation.  
Bye bye and hope... -Martin.  
We will meet each  
other again, right?

Bye bye.

-On the web.

He see there all friends  
in the same fields.

That's helps  
get better votes  
and at the end you  
become a winner.

Besides a guitar teaching  
Martin has to make money  
by playing in  
Slovenian movies

TV promotions  
promoting

his personal wine  
doing TV commercials

"When I drink Monster  
it makes me feel  
totally agrow."

Judging beauty contest  
promoting American food chains

"Martin Strel. Give him  
an applause here."

and speaking  
at conventions.

You said you sell product?

-We sell water.

A what?

-Water. -Water.

Based vacuum cleaners.

Everything about  
vacuum cleaners, guys.

Uh, let's go.

Let's go. Let's go.

Mick.

I'm ready.

You know the project  
is ready by itself.

We have boats ready.

We have equipment ready.

Of course, we are  
advertise Martin's projects  
every time he goes.

To make his big projects

we advertise his pictures  
his web side  
and in a couple of days  
in a few days  
you will see Ljubljana  
actually the whole Slovenia  
covered with the billboards  
huge jumbo banners  
we call them here  
and it's gonna to  
be Martin's pictures.  
I made a design  
an art work  
with the Amazon  
background.  
It's like this.  
Hey, his picture  
look like he's  
vibing to the  
whole country.  
He's kind of putting  
vibes on everybody  
taking the control  
to the whole country  
and I'm very proud  
I designed that.  
Martin is very excited  
about this banners.  
because he gets  
very famous.

**NEW YEARS EVE:**

GOING AWAY PARTY

Martin Strel.

Welcome to Slovenia.

Martin didn't seems

scare at all to leave

but my mom said

he was have nightmares

every night

and wake in

up screaming.

He said he felt like

the whole world

was waiting for him  
to jump in the  
river and die.

**SOUTHWESTERN:**

**PERUVIAN AMAZON:**

Martin Strel is  
attempting to defeat  
what is no other  
human been done yet.  
... but he swears  
by the Slovenian  
red wine dealing by.  
He's already swam  
the Danube,  
Mississippi  
and the Yangtze.  
We have an alligators  
can be fatalness  
then very deadly snakes  
including anacondas.  
We have the Candirue  
which is much fear fish  
very small fish  
but it's end up in your rigram.  
ATALAYA, PERU  
We are in  
Atalaya, Peru.  
This is just  
below Machu Picchu  
and I'm started  
swimming tomorrow  
at 8 o'clock in  
the Amazon river.  
People think that because  
we have big  
media for swims  
that also we  
have big publicists  
but I'm main  
Martin's publicist  
and also perform  
Martin's voice

for all worldwide interviews  
because I understand  
what's media likes  
and appreciates.

FEBRUARY 1st, 2007

Yes, we have  
a protection  
we have a machetes,  
we have guns,  
we have knives.  
We have all kind,  
you know, weapons  
on the boat. Well,  
for example  
is somebody badgering you  
and if you need  
to kill an animal  
you use a gun.

... and I never urinate.  
I never urinate  
straight into the water.  
I always urinate  
into my wet suit.

Blood.

Blood, hm?

If piranha for example  
start attacking  
or something like that  
we will through  
a bucket of blood  
over there on the other  
side and you know,  
the piranhas  
will just redirect there.

You must clean  
have to go.

Mosquitoes.

Mosquitoes.

FEBRUARY 1st, 2007

AMAZON SWIM, DAY 1

The chances  
of Martin die  
on the first day of the swim  
were pretty high.



It had been raining  
for a weeks  
and the river was  
in the flood stages  
and since then  
had been no one  
that have ever  
gone in the Amazon  
in tvoz like this.  
No one knew  
what to expect.  
Martin! Martin!  
Martin! Martin!  
After 1100 days  
of preparations and training  
the Martin finally begin  
the first swimming  
expedition in history  
down the river Amazonas.  
And even though  
we were scared,  
exhausted and totally alone  
the day ended perfectly.  
Seventy days  
that would follow  
would be the  
strangest of my life  
and also the worst.  
DAY 2

**MATT MOHLKE:**

**NAVIGATOR:**

Martin is pissed  
we forget the machetes.  
This is Mathew Mohlke  
Martin's head  
river navigator.  
It is Matt job to make  
sure Martin doesn't die  
or get lost in one  
of the thousand  
of channels on Amazon.  
He has been with Martin

on expeditions for years.

He lived in Fountain  
city, Wisconsin.

Matt is a professional  
poker player by night  
and at day works for  
Sam Welten's family.

He quit his job with them  
to come on the  
Amazon expedition.

Martin trusts him more  
than anyone on the world  
except for me  
even though his not a  
professional river navigator.

Matt, you know  
where we are? -Yes.

It's difficult  
to see ahead.

You know?

-Yes. -OK.

Martin is afraid we lost  
because he can't  
see shit an far.

The problem is  
if the river turns quickly  
we can't see a coming  
and if there a bad water  
we are fucked.

We are top on it.

It's too late.

So, it's gonna be a  
really dangerous day.

The river was extremely  
high and moving fast.

This creates  
deadly whirlpools.

This fortaccess  
can suck down  
entire boats full of people  
much less a swimmer.

Dangerous, Martin.

More this way.

More this way.

Dangerous.  
Sound like fucking  
death trip today or something.  
I am telling him  
it's dangerous  
but he swim right into it.  
Motherfucker.

STREL'S CREW BOA

This is the Cielito Linda  
the boat we will be living on  
for the next three weeks.  
People told us  
it was the  
worst boat in Peru  
and they were right.  
It was a very bad boat.

**ALFREDO CHAVEZ:**

**BOAT CAPTAIN:**

This is Alfredo Chavez  
captain of the Cielito Linda.  
I was concern  
that our boat  
will crushing the banks  
like a pink pound  
after only two days  
but Alfredo said  
things like this  
happen a lot in Peru.  
No need to worried about.  
Alfredo is a very special  
taboo Amazon to the guy.  
Alfred said  
there are three  
rules in Peru.  
The first is to through  
away your plan A  
the second is to through  
away your plan B  
and the third is to relax.  
Peruvians accept  
they can not control nature  
and especially not

the Amazon river.  
We would have  
to do the same  
or the river would break  
us by the end.  
He ask me where  
we were this morning.  
I'm natural guy. I don't  
know how to use GPS.  
I'm learning.  
I just have...  
first training yesterday.  
Borut teach me how.  
So, when we have fog  
like that Martin ask me:  
"Do you know  
where we are?"  
Look, I don't  
know where we are.  
We are lost in  
Amazon somewhere but  
I just try to find  
the best curve  
and keep him not to hit  
by a damn log or  
something.  
You know, he cuts  
right through.  
I mean, that tree gonna stick  
right through his stomach.  
There had been  
so much rain  
that whole  
pieces of forest  
was floating down  
stream with Martin.  
They were as heavy  
as straight trains  
and if they hit him  
he would be dead.  
I'm pretty good  
in the river  
but I'm just a fisherman  
from Wisconsin.

I'm doing this for free.  
I'm doing this for adventure.  
If Martin wants  
to give a big money  
he can get the experienced  
Amazon river guy.  
I'll do the best I can.  
I learning the GPS,  
I learning the maps.  
When he ask  
where we are  
just tell him like I  
know where we are.  
The doctor said  
Martin's blood pressure  
was already  
dangerously high.

**RIFAT LATIFI:**

**PHYSICIAN:**

I examined Martin Strel briefly  
and measured  
the blood pressure.  
It was 150\95.  
Anybody else with  
elevated blood pressure  
probably should be  
evaluate and not start  
swim in the Amazon.  
He said that Martin  
needed to stop swimming  
if he wanted  
to avoid the stroke  
but Martin wouldn't stop.

**PERUVIAN AMAZON:**

On expeditions  
Martin usually sleep  
only 4 hours at night.  
The currents had die down  
but know he was getting  
more and more sun burn.  
He has second

degree burns  
all over his face.  
And he thought  
that cure for this  
was more beer.  
But doctors told him  
it only makes him  
more dehydrating.  
I try to convince him  
to stop drinking  
so much at night  
but I couldn't.

DAY 6, SOMEWHERE  
IN PERUVIAN AMAZON

Incredible.  
What a freak.  
Martin expect rain  
more of the heavy rain  
in the Amazon.  
We haven't much rain  
in the last of few weeks.  
So, it is crazy  
how the weather  
is happening.  
Will be worm or  
something is happening  
down here?  
Completely unusual.  
And he has some kind of  
terrible sun burn.  
In this part of the earth  
the sun can give you  
a cancer disease  
on the skin  
is from the pleasure  
somebody doing this  
crazy shit.  
In 2005 the  
Peruvian Amazon  
experience the worst  
drought in 40 years.  
This was a crises for  
an indigence people  
on a massive scale.

People had to be  
air lifted out  
and food had to be air  
lifted in by helicopters  
just like in New  
Orleans the same year.  
The scientists has  
blamed for draught  
a higher ocean temperatures  
caused by global warming.  
Rising air in the Atlantic  
pushing Amazon clouds away  
which stops rainfall  
and kills the forest.  
The scientists say  
the global worming  
is the biggest single threat  
to the rain forest  
because lowest rainfall  
can easily turn the rain  
forest into a desert.  
Even though it was a  
middle of rainy season  
and had rain at the end  
but hadn't rain for  
at weeks on a river.  
Without a rain  
sunburn would  
fry a Martin's skin  
like a piece of bacon  
until it melted  
off his face.  
And he was  
already looking  
piece of beef jerky.  
Finally I couldn't  
take any more  
and came up with  
genius original idea  
that would change the  
Amazon swim forever.  
The wait mask style  
which was  
actually my idea

allowed Martin to swim in  
global warming conditions  
and created an unique  
style an Amazon swimming  
that made headlines  
around the world.

IQUITOS, PERU

The wait mask  
got the sun off  
and got him  
back to normal  
but he was coming down  
with another worsen  
problem.

Martin's wetsuit swim  
smells like a shit.  
Probably because  
he shit inside  
and all that dirty water  
all that dust and garbage  
that flows down the Amazon.  
Of course,  
get inside of his body  
and that's way is  
smells really bad.  
Bad day for me today.

#### **YANGTZE SWIM:**

On the Yangtze  
Martin swimming in the most  
dangerous rapids  
that human  
ever swimming.  
In the great gor  
with no support services  
on either side of the river.  
Martin swam alone  
through class 6 rapids  
on one of  
the most polluted  
and dangerous rivers  
on the world.  
The river was so toxic  
that's Martin's blood



had to be washed  
every day by doctors.  
Martin was even  
swimming pass  
dead bodies in the water.  
DR. MATEJA DE

**LEONNI STANONIK:**

**PHYSICIAN:**

This is dr. Mateja.  
Martin's biggest fan  
and personal doctor.  
She is a brain surgeon here  
to make sure nothing  
happened to Martin's brain.  
She's also looking into  
his heart and lungs  
but she wouldnt  
have a microscope  
to see all that parasites  
in the Amazon  
that entering into  
Martin's body every day.  
I was so used  
to watching Martin's  
battle polluted rivers  
that I expected that Amazon  
would be the same.  
But that was shocked  
to find that Amazon  
was a clean river  
with virgin forest  
along the banks  
and not a single  
piece of trash  
for a hundreds of miles.  
It was like a river  
at the beginning of time  
before man's kind.  
Martin said it was  
clean enough to drink  
but I told him  
to stop drinking it

because it will  
make him sick.

DAY 9

I don't know  
what we can do to...  
Well, I think,  
you know, Martin  
he's always  
like you know,  
very tired  
but still have some...  
still has some  
extra power.

-Yeah.

You remember him  
on the Mississippi.  
He came out from the  
water and couldn't walk.  
We brought him in  
the car, in the van  
you know and  
he didn't even eat.

You remember some...?

-That was 60. day.

Yeah, it was at the end.

-Yeah.

Toda is 9.day.

And he is,

I hate to say but is like  
his fallen apart.

He's fucking feather.

He shouldn't have  
a shoulder problems  
quite yet.

It's too early for that man.

He needs to be absorb  
this destiruations  
through curse in  
this expedition  
but in 9.days

he lost 11 or 12 pounds.

How much is he lost?

-Yeah, something like that.

Yeah, that's nine days.

I mean,  
he's gonna fall  
through own  
bang hole by the  
end of this trip.  
PEBAS, PERU  
If you ask Martin  
what is the most  
dangerous thing  
on the Amazon was  
he would says people.  
Martin only believes and  
trust completely  
animals, rivers and Indians.  
These are the only  
living beings I think  
that truly understands  
Martin also.  
In the town of Pebas  
Martin swam up to an  
ancient Indian tribe.  
They were called  
the Yagua tribe.  
I'm afraid must sad  
that they are  
one of the last  
original tribes on Amazon.  
When I was kayaking  
in escorting him in  
down the Danube  
he was telling me  
the personal stories  
that I could never  
hear from him  
standing on two legs.  
One of this was  
that his father was  
so unsatisfied  
with his life  
that he would take out  
all his rage on Martin.  
When the father  
had been drinking  
Martin was so scared to

come home in the house  
that he ended up  
sleeping in the barn.  
His mother would  
set him out  
the clothes and  
food each night.  
My grandmother said  
Martin actually  
spend the most  
of his childhood  
in that barn.  
When in one occasion  
Martin was been chased  
and jump in an freezing  
creek to escape  
the father waiting for  
him on the banks  
so Martin  
swam downstream.  
The father walked  
alongside him  
for a long time  
but Martin swam so far  
that father gave up  
and went home.  
This was Martin's  
first endurance swim.  
I think he  
repeat something  
of this same feeling  
on every expedition.  
There are many myths in  
creatures lives in Amazon.  
One of the myths  
is about wild man  
who lives in the  
underground world  
beneath the river.  
He's call the Pishtakos  
and if you see him  
his bringing  
the apocalypse.  
That's way Indians never

swim in the main channel.  
They were afraid of us  
because they thought  
we are demons.  
Face peelers.  
They use this...  
They skin it the face  
take the fatness  
from the humans  
after they are killed  
and things like  
that can actually  
they call it these  
people, Pishtakos.  
Pishtakos.  
And he said in front of us  
that the captain  
and myself...  
No, they got to be Pishtakos.  
I'm sorry. Look for  
another village  
but we don't want you  
stay here tonight.  
Alfred of said they  
could just decide  
to kill us in the night.  
So, we slept  
with machetes  
but mostly we  
didn't sleep at all.  
The Amazon is almost  
as largest the 48 united states.  
People don't realize  
that the Amazon  
the last frontier on earth.  
It is still  
There were rivers  
that go for 1000 km  
that are totally uninhabited.  
But people who lived here  
are some of the poorest  
in the world.  
This is the main problem  
of Amazon destruction.

For example,  
one single mahogany tree  
in the Amazon  
can be worth up to 20.000\$  
in Europe or America.  
People will cut in entire  
road into the forest  
just to reach one tree.  
This mahogany  
tree is are made into  
expensive boats  
and furniture  
but mostly  
musical instruments  
especially electric guitars.  
As of 2006 20% of the  
Amazon forest  
has been cut down.  
At the current  
rate of cutting  
half of the forest will be  
gone in twenty years.

DAY 23

Monkeys around.  
In the morning...  
In the morning is very...  
very exciting.  
Talking.  
So much crying.  
Very famous must be  
in the morning.  
Early in the morning.  
Now it's...  
more peace.  
More quiet.  
Nobody crying,  
nobody talking.  
Peace... ha, peace.  
That's not big town,  
Los Angeles.  
Many cars.  
No cars here.  
People need this  
but people don't

know what is Amazon  
what is jungle.  
I can look around  
to see some animals.  
Must be careful,  
ok, but...  
I think is not  
so dangerous.  
It's dangerous  
in the bank.  
It's dangerous, yeah  
but in the water, no.  
Every year  
it's good to stay  
in the jungle  
Be big difference  
for all the people.  
DAY 25,  
PERU/BRAZIL BORDER  
"Martin Strel,  
example for the kids."  
When Martin cross  
the border to Brazil  
there was a huge  
party with dancing girls  
and marching bands  
all saying  
how Martin was an  
example to children  
and all human race.  
My father was  
the first person  
that anyone  
had ever seen  
that swam to  
Brazil from Peru.  
All of this people  
wanted to hear  
what this  
man had to say  
but instead of speaking  
Martin swam away  
from the reception  
with only the Brazilian

chase boat driver  
and left us at the port  
not have even a clue  
how to find him.  
This was for expedition  
into the dangerous  
night time search.  
When we finally picked  
up the boat signal at 3.AM  
and found him about  
he had no explanation.  
I had seen this irrational  
behavior before  
and he never had  
an explanation.  
The news that there was  
a man swimming the Amazon  
was spreading fast  
through out the Brazil.  
We were told that crowds  
in the thousands  
will be waiting for  
Martin downstream.  
We did not yet realize  
how big this thing  
was going to get.

**SAN PABLO DE:**

OLIVENCIA, BRAZIL  
His blood pressure  
has gone up tremendously  
and that's quite worried.  
I've been monitoring  
this very closely  
because diastolic heart failure  
is very serious problem  
and it could be  
a stroke for example  
which could kill him.  
Martin confessed to me  
that he had  
been hallucinating  
and hearing  
a voices in his mind.



He hadn't told  
anyone else  
because he thought  
they would put him  
immediately in the hospital  
and still he  
kept swimming  
and drinking.

Must be a little  
different sometimes.

Matt!

I'm tired, Matt.

Ha?

Maybe you have  
something to drink?

Yeah, I have some drinks.

You have maybe  
some whisky? -Whisky?

Whisky.

The doctor said you should  
be drink more fluid  
because you  
are dehydrated.

This is for doctor  
not for me.

This guy  
is not understood by  
anybody.

Who's that guy in mediaeval  
and mythological stuff that  
they changed him a  
rock or something  
and the birds  
pecked on his head until...

Is that Hercules  
or some athletes lady?

Piece like...

He's like this except.

He's got to swim  
all those rivers

What's he  
doing here is  
almost self sacrificial  
for the world.

It's almost Christ  
like in a way  
if I can say that.  
It's almost Christ like.  
It's bigger then  
I can comprehend.  
and I'm just darting  
the essence  
after been in all  
that expeditions  
how great is thing is.  
Yeah, he might  
be a little fat  
he might be  
a little drunk  
but OK, he can...  
sometimes yell on  
us a little but  
he's the last super  
hero in the world.  
Look, what's  
he doing here.  
He's connecting all  
of the greatest  
rivers on the world  
by swimming them  
giving hope to people  
all over the world.  
Everyone in the  
world is on there  
edgeter fiv right now  
hoping, praying some  
of them probably  
morbidlier kind of just  
waiting for him to get killed  
in actuality because,  
yeah, this is dangerous.  
He's 52 years old.  
He swimming in the  
most dangerous  
place in the world.  
He's the last  
American super hero.  
He's the last super

hero on the world.  
He's the world's  
last super hero.  
Here's the world's  
last super hero.  
That's it.  
This is the last five  
minutes to midnight  
and we got one  
super hero left  
to save us all  
bring us all down  
into the eternity.

**SAN ANTONIO DE:**

ICA, BRAZIL

out to see Martin  
in the small town of  
San Antonio de Ica.  
There was a near map scene  
as people try to get  
near to the "homem peixe"  
in English, the fish man.  
The crowd got so big  
that it held like the  
Martin was going to be  
the most famous  
man in the world  
if he made it somehow.  
The TV talk shows  
were calling non-stop.  
They all wanted  
to speak with Martin  
but no one  
could reach him  
not even me.  
The media kept asking  
why Martin doing this.  
Martin only said  
it was protect  
the rain forest  
but no one knew exactly  
what the hell  
he meant by that.

**TWO WEEKS LATER:**

MANAUS, BRAZIL

This is first city we  
seen it in two months.

I don't

wanna go, man.

I just stay in the boat.

Matt was starting to get  
very affected

after so many hours

and days besides Martin.

He was talking about God,

the rain forest,

the river

and Martin's as they

were all the same thing.

You see this river?

That river is between

heaven and hell, man.

This is river purgatory.

And Martin...

All of us.

We are all here.

We are all

stuck right here.

We are on

the river, man.

There's a heaven.

We can almost reach

it. You see that.

We can almost

reach it.

And there's a hell.

There's were we live, man.

We lived there in hell

but now we are

somewhere in the middle.

You can see that.

That's heaven.

That's so close it is.

It's right there.

It's right there, man.

I can grab it.

I can grab heaven.  
I can grab it.  
I can grab it.  
But then I go there.  
I go there.  
I go to hell.  
I go to hell.  
It's five seconds to  
midnight right there.  
Manau was a the city  
the size of New York  
but in the heart of Amazon.  
It felt like just  
in United States.  
They had a  
Mc Donald's there  
they had a Burger's King  
they had a shopping malls  
and lot of money.  
Our boat even duck  
at the high five star hotel  
and the managers booked  
us all three rooms.  
But Martin and Matt  
has gone at 5. AM  
before we woke and swam  
away without telling us.  
Slovenian's endurance  
swimmer  
Martin Strel has gone missing  
well attempting to  
brake the world record  
the longest  
swim in history.  
I still don't understand  
why Martin did this.  
He put not  
only himself but  
but entire expedition  
at failure  
because our Brazilian boat  
was not equipped to navigate  
the river at night  
and could easily

have sun.

At the midnight they  
were still lost.  
Matt had left his GPS  
and radio behind  
so we have no idea  
how to find them  
and we were force to do  
another dangerous  
night time search  
scanning the banks  
with flood lights.  
We finally found  
Martin and Matt  
on the stretch of  
sandy bank  
in a very white channel.  
Martin was totally naked  
and unresponsive.  
Matt was also in a  
strange state of mind.  
It was as if they hade  
seen or a heard  
experience something  
that had transform them.  
At this point  
Martin had exceeded his  
previous world record  
but this no longer seems  
like a world record  
expedition at all.  
I was very scared  
because he had over  
and he was obviously  
going insane.

PARINTINS, BRAZIL

DAY 47

At the 47. day  
Matt stays up  
for three days  
and he was scribbling poems  
about Martin and Jesus.  
That shoe's jacked, man.  
Mad had been ranting

and raving for days  
and he was getting  
on everyone nerves.  
It was like Matt  
was infected  
by how Martin felt  
and was that  
enough comprehend  
how crazy he was going.  
...as like third  
dog in the slay.  
I was by  
now use to this  
seeing my father  
goes crazy.  
I had spent  
half of my life  
watching him  
go to this point.  
But only he knew  
what is was about.  
The areas east and  
south of Amazonas  
are the worst example of  
forest station in the Amazon.  
The state of Rondonia  
is big like England  
has been  
and in the state of Para  
and Mato Grosso  
and the area of jungle  
the size of small country  
disappears each year.  
Most of this is do  
the cattle ranches.  
Each year the  
sky turns black  
which smokes for months  
as priest in forest  
is burn to make  
way for a new  
car fits.  
Countless species  
of animals and plants

become extinguish  
each burn season.  
This is all simply  
because of the world  
demands to eat beef.  
Even though the UN  
relist a reports saying  
that cattle production has  
more humfer environment impact  
then all the  
cars in the planet.  
The fast  
food companies  
are spending millions  
to promote even more  
cosumshen and  
bigger burgers.  
At the current rate  
half of Amazon  
will be cattle funds  
by the year 2030  
and by the end of  
the century  
not only the Amazon  
but all the world's rainforest  
will have to be  
cut down to accommodate  
the needs of planet  
with 14 billion people.

**ILHA DO PATACHO:**

DAY 52

At the day 52.

Martin scowlen was  
flame dought by Amazon  
and the doctor said  
the swim was over  
but Martin said, no.  
I will find another  
way to swim.

DAY 55

Now I cross...

fourth dimension.

DAY 60



On April 1.  
we found out  
from the doctor  
that Martin has  
been haven  
subcontineus larva  
infection in his brain  
for nearly two weeks.  
She hid this fact from  
us on Martin's request  
that we not stop the swim.  
But her official diagnoses  
was that Martin's problems  
were the mostly mental.  
What's happening?  
What do you think  
what's happening?  
I think he's  
at the low, low,  
lowest level, lowest  
level with the energy.  
Probably his head  
wants to like explode.  
So, it's a really  
weird reaction  
I didn't expect that.  
Clocking batteries, wires...  
You guys just  
get let him swim?  
What else we  
suppose to do?  
What can I do?  
What we can do?  
I mean, what can  
I tell Martin Strel?  
Martin, I think you have  
fucking mental problems.  
Do you think... Think  
you can please stop  
yours world  
record expeditions for  
so maybe you can go to  
see the fucking shrink.  
DAY 63

Martin had  
become so insane  
by this point in the swim  
that we even  
didn't look on him  
like a person anymore.  
It was like he had  
taken on the stado  
of an animal  
or a monster.  
He was like Frankenstein  
or The elephant man  
but in the Amazon.

DAY 64

By the 64. day  
Martin didn't want  
to spent energy  
on anything that  
wasn't swimming.  
He stops feeding himself.  
He only want to spent  
the physical  
energy on swimming  
and he wanted to  
swim day and night.  
This was also  
nothing new to me.  
I fed him  
the same way  
on the Yangtze and  
Mississippi.  
It was like keeping  
a baby alive  
but one that your father  
swimming the Amazon.  
The doctor advise  
that Martin stand down  
for at least a week  
to avoid a heart attack  
but he wouldn't listen.  
I not allowed you.  
-I must swim tonight.  
At this point if you  
are going to the water

I would recommend  
against it  
because he's too weak  
he has some  
experiences in delirium  
and we can't have  
him swimming like that.  
The doctor made Martin  
sign a paper  
saying that she  
was not responsible  
for anything that  
happen to him  
if he swam at night.  
There were also  
a big concerns about  
firevits at night.  
Not even crazy Matt  
want it to take the risk  
and try to talk to  
Martin out of it.  
Finally I decided  
to lead him myself.  
I had been  
in this situation  
of swimming  
with him at night  
before in the Danube and we  
are run over by a barge  
and we are almost die.  
All of us felt like  
we are doing something  
incredibly pointless  
and stupid  
but I knew it if  
we didn't go with him  
he would swim out  
at night alone.  
We get one life jacket.  
One life jacket  
on the boat  
for six men and one gun.  
One gun,  
one life jacket

and the swimmer that  
can barely stand up.  
A little bit to the end.  
Go.  
Go.  
A little bit.  
Martin all of the sudden  
jump out of the river.  
We thought that  
might he seen the shark.  
But he said that  
he saw a little  
girl under the water  
and it horrorfright him.  
We got you. We got you.  
You just need to lay down.  
Give him a bucket  
or something.

DAY 66, EASTER SUNDAY  
APRIL 7, 2007

Martin got to with in  
His body was in such  
state of shock  
that he could have an heart  
attack every second.  
Even though he  
had already bitten  
his previous world record  
by nearly 1000 miles  
he swam the last three  
which was still water  
just like a lake.

BELEM, BRAZIL

There was media  
from 20 countries  
waiting for us  
at the finish line.  
It was the  
hugest moment  
in Martin's life  
and I felt  
like I should write a  
statement for him  
to read to the world

explaining why he did it.

"I like it to drink...

and I'm a simple man."

"There are

many people like me."

But the things

was so chaotic

that I lost my original

and I had to rewrite it

on the boat

we us approached.

Please. Please,

give as some room.

What's your name?

What's your name?

We'll write a fish man.

You are OK, fish man.

Fish man.

No, no, no!

No, no.

Do you remember

what we must tell?

How many can...

-Excuse me, no.

They are many

people like me?

...they realized that

even impossible...

...to save the world.

I hope the people

will remember me...

...I am very tired...

I just want that...

A,B,C, D, E, F, N...

Martin was visited

by many people

in the next days

who try to helped

him out from

of his fourth

dimensional state.

One of this was

the hotel preacher

who prayed for him and

even practice English.  
Another was  
a Brazilian band.  
Finally, Martin refuse  
to see anyone  
and only allowed  
the Brazilian preacher  
to stay with him  
who's also been a papito.  
He was in there  
with Martin for days.  
A person,  
who apparently  
took his own life.  
That would be  
the shooter.  
That's right. Now to  
rezavnig question  
why wasn't  
the alarm sound it  
in between  
those two shootings.  
Why was that first  
shooting see in the morning.  
APRIL 7, 2007  
BELEM, BRAZIL  
FIVE MONTHS LATER  
In a few months  
Martin gambled away  
all over  
sponsorship money  
and had to return  
to his day job.  
I waited for the  
talk show to call back.  
Leather man, Conor o'Brain  
and Jai Lenno  
had all promise  
to help him on  
but they never called.  
Martin Strel.  
Who is this guy?  
Some people describe  
him like a dare devil.

Fish man, human fish  
even craziest  
man on the world.  
Take a long time to  
writing that statement.  
Are you sad that didn't  
get read to the world?  
Yeah, it took  
a lot of time,  
energy and creativity.  
Well, we would  
try to present it  
to the world by internet,  
over the book.  
It was really bad that  
he couldn't make it  
but what  
we could do.  
Nothing else. You know,  
is only a human  
and was not  
able to do it.  
Do you have the  
statement here still?  
I have.  
I think I have.  
You had it right there.  
Should I read?  
-Yeah.  
My name is Martin.  
You can see I'm not  
Lance Armstrong.  
I'm a little fat  
and a little old.  
I like to drink a little.  
I'm a simple man.  
There are many  
people like me.  
I hope they  
see this swim  
and realize they can  
do impossibility things  
even save the world.  
I hope people remember

this rainforest is our friend  
and stop destroying it.  
Now I am very tired.  
Please, excuse me.  
I just swam the Amazon.  
But he couldn't do it.  
Now, I finally read it  
and I hope you realized  
it's worth now than never.  
I set down with Martin  
and told him ours  
finished helping with him  
ultra American swimming.  
I going to college.  
From the looking his eye  
I realize that meant  
he was finished too.  
This is one horizontal.  
And have more.  
Very special picture.  
Borut!  
You have another one?  
After Amazon,  
Martin had the same  
dream over and over.  
He was swimming  
the Amazon again.  
He had to start over  
from the beginning.  
When he  
started swimming  
the Amazon picked him up  
and let him fly over it.  
And show him  
the way it was  
in the beginning  
before man kinds.  
And the Amazon said  
this is the  
way is was, Martin  
and will be again for you.  
No more distraction  
no more suffering  
and no one will ever die.



**END:**