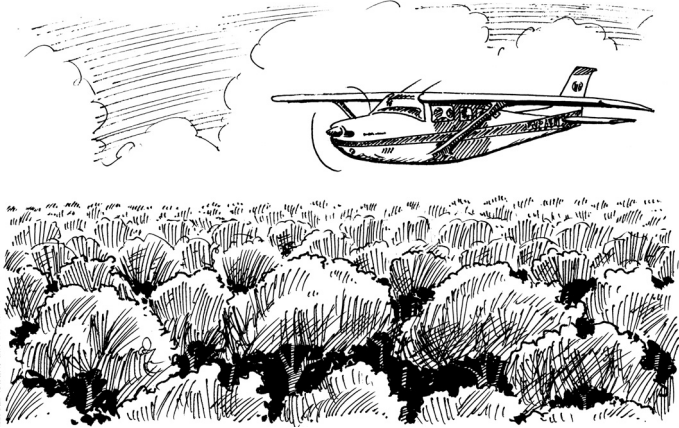



# A Daring Venture



In the thick rainforest, hidden from the world, lived a tribe of Indians known as the Aucas, which means “savage”. The Aucas were very violent. In fact, even their headhunting neighbours, the Jivaro tribe, were afraid of them.

In 1955, four missionaries from the United States felt called by God to preach the Gospel to the Aucas. One of these missionaries was Nate Saint. He was



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thirty-two years old and a pilot. Having learned to fly in high school, Nate flew during World War II. Now, he had joined the Missionary Aviation Fellowship and it was his job to fly medicine, mail, and other supplies to missionaries.

By scouting the area in his plane, Nate discovered an Auca settlement only fifteen minutes from the mission station. Nate and three other missionaries began to plan a way to reach the Aucas. It would be very secretive because if the outside world found out and tried to gain access to the tribe, it would ruin everything. The outsiders would be killed and the missionaries would never be able to contact the savages. As it was, the only person who could help them was an Auca girl who had left the tribe and was living with Nate's sister, Rachel.

Nate found that if he flew over the Auca village in a tight circle, he could then lower gifts



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and keep them almost perfectly still until the natives had taken the gifts. Then on the fourth night, the missionaries spoke to the Aucas through a loudspeaker system. It was not long until the natives began bringing gifts to the missionaries – parrots, cooked fish, and wooden combs.

It surely did seem like a real friendship was forming between the Aucas and the missionaries.

Finally, Nate found a place where he could safely land the small plane. It was a long, sandy beach by the Auca village. He would land and leave gifts as a sign of friendship.

One day, Nate landed the plane and along with four other missionaries, made camp. At first, the Aucas seemed very frightened. Nate flew the plane over their village several times and dropped gifts, then landed again.

Then one man, a woman, and a girl came to their camp. It was Friday afternoon and the visit seemed




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friendly but after a few hours, they suddenly got up and hurried away. The next day, no one came at all. Nate flew over the village, dropping gifts, which seemed to take away their fears.

However, on the afternoon of January 8, 1956, spears suddenly began to fly and all the missionaries were killed.

There had been a lookout in a tree house and he had sensed no danger so the attack had come as a complete surprise. More than twenty pilots from the United States immediately offered to come and take Nate's place.

Much later, one of the Aucas explained why he had helped murder the missionaries. He said they could not understand why white men wanted to be friends so they became suspicious. They did not know how, but in some way, they believed it was all a trap. After the killings, they realized their



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mistake but of course, it was too late. A search party found the missionaries the next day but there were no signs of a struggle. That is how they knew the attack had been a surprise to the missionaries.

Nate Saint was born in 1923 and always loved to fly. He was martyred in 1956 on January 8, a Sunday afternoon and was only 33 years old.

All the men were buried at the campsite where they had given their lives trying to bring the message of salvation to the tribe of savages.

Why did Nate Saint have to die such an awful death when he was doing something so good and noble? Did it make any kind of sense? We will find out in the next story.

*“Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.” (Psalm 116:15)*