

Attack of the suicide chicken

During one of my tours of overseas duty, I found myself in Sierra Leone during the bloody civil war. But from time to time during high stress operations something completely off the wall would step out of the shadows at the perfect time. This story is the perfect example of one of those humorous occasions.

We were heading for one of the outlying bush camps in our trusty Land Rover. As we cut a path through the jungle along a typical jungle path, we came across a very small village. Now, when I say small village, I really mean small. There were only three bush huts, two on the right and one on the left. We were traveling at speeds up to 70 km an hour due to the ambush threat in the country. Normally, on a road or trail like this, we would only go about 20 km an hour max, but that day it was 70 km.

So we hit the village at 70km and out of the corner of my eye I noticed a streak of white ripping out from the closest bush hut on an oblique angle heading for the vehicle at break neck speed. Just seconds before impact I recognized just what it was. I screamed “chicken”! The driver slammed on the brakes and the vehicle began its 15 m slide to its inevitable stop. Just as the chicken hit the grill of our vehicle, there was this huge puff of feathers arching across the front of the hood.

I instantly considered the outcome of this incident. You see, to kill a chicken in country was a big problem for the locals. That chicken would lay hundred eggs or, so it's a big deal. So, as we came to a stop, I started to reach for my wallet in order to pay compensation to the local villagers, knowing full well I would have to.

But, to my amusement, this time was to be quite different. Instead, this possessed chicken popped its head over the front of our hood and locked its eyes onto those of the driver's. You could tell that this chicken was somewhat disturbed and downright pissed off. It came without warning and launched itself over the hood and began its attack on my driver through the window! The bird never took its eyes off of the driver, its eyes narrow and fixed on its intent. The bird now had one claw affixed to the windshield wiper and the other claw scratched at the window! It was now beating the window with its wings as well as trying to break through the glass with its beak. I've never seen anything like this before in my life! This bird was bent on killing my driver or at least wounding him!

After about a minute, the chicken's eyes went back to normal from the bizarre state that they had originally been. The bird then released our vehicle and ran off the hood and hit the ground running. Once it was about 3 m away it stopped, turned and look at us as if to say it's time for you two to leave, or do you want some more? We stepped on the gas and made our escape from the village of the chicken. As we drove away my driver, which was a British Non-Commissioned member with a heavy accent, looked at me with a confused look and said, “ Ay mate! What the hell was that all about?” We instantly both started to laugh until we thought we were going to burst. We knew we would have to travel through this village in the future, so we marked our maps ‘home of the suicide chicken!’

By: Gary A Crosby