

Tale of a La Paz Streetwalker: How and Why I Became One

(Author Anonymous)

I got off the plane yesterday afternoon in La Paz and checked into a moderately priced hotel on the waterfront. Down the street a bit, in the late afternoon, I watched a sunset to knock your eyes out: glowing oranges (I know, I know, just pollution) and a strip of blue just above the horizon. I'd been told that La Paz was a safe town, so I decided to walk up to the main square to see what was happening there, and to see the church. I watched the kids playing, running up and down the bandstand steps, and the other oldsters talking to their friends. A bunch of people were playing some version of Bingo, a caller yelling out words in Spanish I couldn't understand. By the time I had seen what I wanted to, and eaten a dish of mango sherbet, it was 7:30 and full dark. I looked at the map I had picked up and figured I could walk back to the hotel by a different route, and see what the neighborhood was like.



So there I was, walking along, not minding my own business, rubber-necking over the fences, speculating on what the families inside the houses were doing (mostly watching TV, it seemed, from the blue glow), when BAM. I staggered back and realized I had hit my forehead on the corner of a low-hanging air conditioner. Luckily I had a not-too-greasy dinner napkin in my pocket, so I could staunch the blood I could feel trickling down my forehead into my eyebrow. That's what comes of being so nosy.

At the next house I dodged their air conditioner, but wasn't watching my feet and caught my toe on a piece of metal. Turned out to be a length of rebar sticking out of an unfinished set of steps. I don't think my toe is broken, but will check it out when I get back to the hotel.


At the next lot the house seemed to be under construction; at least there was one pile of sand and another of the pink rock that they use a lot of here. My hands took most of the weight when I tripped, and I don't think my wrist is more than sprained. Then, when I fell over the log in front of the next house, I only scraped my knee. I didn't have another napkin, so just had to let the blood run down my leg.

The following house must have been owned by someone quite prosperous. I thought that because there were two almost new cars parked across the driveway (and it was paved, not dirt), and I am sure it was a purebred Doberman pinscher which lunged at the fence and grabbed my elbow when I squeezed between the cars and the fence. Mostly he just tore my shirt...it had long sleeves; and I had a sewing kit back at the hotel to make a repair with.

By the light of the streetlight I checked my map; only a couple of blocks to the hotel. The napkin I held to my forehead was pretty soppy by now, and my limp was getting worse. Maybe I did break my toe. Maybe I can tape it to the next toe to stabilize it, just in case. With my next step I realized there was nothing underfoot, and the world turned black.

Lyrids Meteor Shower

The Lyrid meteor shower will be appearing in 2004 from the 16 to the 25 of April and will peak around April 22, 2004. [More Astronomical Events for Baja](#)

The hospital room was pretty decent, and the nurses were efficient and clean. When they let me out of here in a day or two I'll go back to see how big the drop-off in that sidewalk really was, and I'll remember that it doesn't take frousy hair, a pretty face, and a big bust and bottom separated by a tiny waist to become a streetwalker in La Paz. What it does take is common sense and a strong sense of survival. 

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