



## Este relato

### está inspirado en hechos reales

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#### The death of a traitor

His shirt was soaked in sweat. His trousers were wet and ripped in a number of places. His machete was covered in blood. Everything about him screamed fear, flight, confusion, violence and ... death. But Diogenes was no murderer. He had had to defend himself.

When he came in, Tomasa stared at him wide-eyed but said nothing. She moved a bench closer to the wall and signalled him to sit down. Then she offered him some water and set about reviving the fire. Shortly afterwards, the kitchen was filled with the aroma of fresh coffee.

“What happened? Come on, man. You look like a slave from the shacks.”

“Quiet, woman! I’ll never forget today for the rest of my life.” He breathed a long sigh, took a sip from his cup and sighed once more.

“But what happened to you, man?”

“Oh Masa, Masa, I am lucky to be alive today,” he said, before sighing yet again.

“Listen here, Diogenes, for God’s sake get on with the story before I die of curiosity!”

Diogenes jumped up as if he had stepped on a hornet’s nest, threw down his cup and grabbed the machete. “Don’t push me, Tomasa, don’t push me. Have you forgotten who I am? You know what I’m capable of ... You haven’t forgotten, have you, Tomasa?” Tomasa stared fixedly at the floor and shook her head. She was afraid. Her husband seemed to radiate violence.

“This morning I wanted to get some meat for grill,” the man began slowly, “so I called Pachuchi and we headed off into the hills. But without realising where we were going, we ended up on the other side of Barranca Blanca and we got lost. Then we heard the wild dogs, and panicked... Oh Masa, I nearly... The damned dogs started to run after us and there was nobody around to help. We ran downhill, further and further, with the wild dogs after us. Pachuchi kept bumping into me ... I was terrified! A whole pack of them were after us... I don't know how many. And they were hungry! They caught up with us at the bottom, in a clearing just down from the river.”

Though Tomasa had never been there, her imagination painted the scene vividly before her eyes. Her heart was beating fast and she found it hard to breathe, as if an invisible noose had been tightened around her neck. Diogenes saw that he was inadvertently strangling her. He paused for greater suspense while he moistened his lips. Oh Masa, it was worse than in the war! I was sure my time had come. I helped Pachuchi to climb on to a rock and stood in front of him with my machete. There was a terrible din all around me and Pachuchi. The dogs were above us and all around us... One yellow bitch that looked like a cross with a lion grabbed my trousers and started to pull me backwards. I was convinced my time was up. I screamed out to Pachuchi to help me, but when I looked for him ... I could not believe my eyes.

The bastard was coming for me like a red-eyed, man-eating demon out for vengeance. I struck him on the head with my machete and split his skull, then I hit him again and again. When the pack turned on him and started to eat him, I ran as fast as I could. You believe me, don't you? Don't you, Masa?

You've got to believe me, eh?”

Tomasa breathed out long and slow. She could relax. Diogenes was not a murderer. He hadn't broken the law. It was in self-defence that he had killed his companion Pachuchi, the best hunting dog the world had ever seen.



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