

## **Note 6**

*Tepito, Mexico City, Saturday, June 24, 2017.*

I arrived in the neighborhood at 11 o'clock in the morning exactly as Ivan had asked. Once more I speculated about what could have happened that would hinder us from carrying out the interview. The first thing that came into my head was that at that time there was a football match involving the Mexican team and that this could in some way work against me. Although I must admit that I am in a stage of feeling resigned, I guessed that Ivan's response would once again be negative and I simply wanted to corroborate it, to see what variation the discourse might take. I also had to make a few of my own observations on the new context that I might find on a day like this.

In effect the neighborhood's appearance was totally different on a Saturday, because weekends are a time of increased commercial activity. It was as if everyone had work or something to do on a Saturday. The street corner was no exception and what I saw surprised me a lot, as if all the menfolk usually passed some time there, showing off their addictions in a completely new way, integrated with the commercial life of the surroundings.

Wolf came out of the dwelling unit Ivan was always going in and out of, pushing a cart packed with boxes, followed by two men doing the same. They were in a hurry to take that merchandise to some store. Doll, the youth who told us the story about losing his marijuana, also came by pulling a cart and crossed the road at full speed.

Ivan was at the graffitied corner, snoozing in his folding metal chair. He was wearing a white T shirt which at first sight was covered with black spots, but at closer inspection were little Mickey Mouse faces, and he was wearing a cap practically covering his face. Beto was charging in a car, replying to WhatsApp messages and eating a *sevillana*, but also giving instructions to his customers when they arrived nearby about how to park their cars. It was the first time in all my visits when I saw their *franelero* side. I wakened Ivan and said hello. He told Beto to bring one of the cars entrusted to him over to the sidewalk so that he could sleep in the trunk. I suppose that it must have been more comfortable than in his chair, at least he could lie down properly.

I decided to sit on the ground next to Ivan and to talk about the reason he was so tired. He told me that the night before he had gone to a party with a few girls. I asked him where he had gone to have fun, and he replied in a brusque tone: "To the other side," with his enviable ability to waive questions. The soccer match could be heard on a radio in the used iron shop. Ivan told

me that he preferred not to pay attention because otherwise the Mexican team tended to lose. A very well dressed third age wedding passed by and as it did so the man said:

—My Ivan, you're sleeping instead of watching the match. —And he replied:

We're listening to it boss—but he was back to sleep almost straight away.

Fer passed by on the other side of the street with some bags of food, he entered a dwelling unit and a few minutes later came out to sit in the metal stall and to charge his cell phone. I greeted him from a distance and Beto crossed the street to greet him with a bump of the hand and fist. A teenager I had not seen before appeared at the corner. He did not greet or speak to me, he just went to charge in a car and looked at me and Ivan. I think that he wanted to speak to Ivan but he did not feel like waking him up, and I was in a pretty similar position. The kid left.

After several minutes I decided to wake Ivan up and ask him if he wanted to have a look at the notebook. And he responded that he would rather not, a bit like Bartleby in Herman Melville. He told me he had a nasty hangover and he asked me to come back later that Saturday at nighttime or on another day. He stated that on Saturday nights the atmosphere on the street

corner was more festive because people went out to smoke marijuana and some used the stall to play cards and bet. I told him that I would try to come back, although I knew I would not, because I knew what happened when I came back at night. I also knew that the interview would not take place. I said a friendly goodbye and crossed the street. Fer was with a woman, who, judging by her strong likeness, was related to him. She said “hi” in a really friendly way and I replied just the same as I kept on my way.