



Lesson 16

A FREE MARIACHI CONCIERTO?

Part 1



A FREE **MARIACHI CONCIERTO?**

By Robert Goss

My wife and I were **en Mexico Ciudad**. It was **en** the evening. We had just gone to a **restaurante** and had eaten Pollo con Mole. It had been a very nice meal that we both had enjoyed. The evening was still kind of young. We looked **en** our **guía** book and noticed that **La Plaza Garibaldi** was not too far away. It was **famosa** for having **Mariachi bandas**. After eating la cena, I didn't have very **mucho** money left. Most of it was still **en** the **Hotel** for safe keeping. We **decidimos** to take a **taxi** to check out the place. I knew that I didn't have enough money on **me** to go to a **show**,



The **taxi** driver dropped us off at the square. There were a lot of **opciones**. I nonchalantly tried to have us stroll by the **entradas** to several places. I was hoping to see the **precios** of the **entradas**, and catch a little glimpse of the **músicos** and **decoraciones** on the inside. It was hard to be inconspicuous. Any time we got near to an **entrada**, we would be accosted by some **representantes** trying to usher us in. I noticed that the going rate for the tickets were **equivalentes** to about \$25 **dólares**. I knew that the **entretenamiento** would **probablemente** be well worth the **precio**, but **disafortunadamente**, I didn't have the amount with **me**. I had only about the **equivalente** of \$10 **dólares**. Maybe enough for a couple of soft drinks and the **taxi** ride home. So we just wandered around **en** the lively **festivo** atmosphere. I got lots of chances to **practicar mi español** as the workers standing at the doorways of the **entradas** tried hard to entice us **en**. I



AN OFFER TOO GOOD TO REFUSE

I was about ready to give up and go get a **taxi** and maybe **planear** to return the following evening when a worker came running across the **plaza** to greet **me**. He said that **en** his **club**, the **precio** of **entrando** was "Gratis". The only **estipulación** was that I had to buy a drink **en orden** to be able to stay and sit at a table. **Finalmente**, here was an **oferta** that was so good that I could not **rehusar** it. Trying to be careful, I **expliqué** to him that I didn't drink **alcohol**. I asked him if it would be **ok** to just **ordenar** soft drinks for my wife and myself. He assured me that this would be **completamente aceptable**. We excitedly **entramos** the **club**.

I ordered two Sprites. Within a few **segundos**, **mi** wife and I both were handed glass **botellas** of Sprite. We set back, **relajamos** and watched the **show**. I had seen wandering **mariachis** before **en** some small **restaurantes**, but I had never heard the **calidad** of these performances. A performer and his **grupo** would play a couple of songs. They would be replaced by **otro grupo**. Every **grupo** was **maravilloso**. They were skillful. They were **enérgico** and **entusiástico**. Some **miembros** would sing. Some would play the **instrumentos**. We sipped on our drinks trying to make them last. But after an **hora** the 12 **onzas** were gone. I felt **obligado** to buy **otro orden** of Sprite for both of us. The **show continuó** on. I was **en** awe of most of the performances. I was having a great time listening to the **música**. Some songs were **familiar**. Some weren't. But I enjoyed them all. Everyone else **en** the place was enjoying the songs. There was clapping and yelling and singing along. Everyone seemed to be really **contento**. That is, **excepto** one **otro gringo** and his date. He seemed to be



My wife and I had nursed our soft drinks for another **hora** and a half. I was **congratulando** myself on the shrewdness that I had **usado** to get into this **maravilloso show** with many performers. I had been in a **show** that would have cost at least \$50-60 **dólares** to be able to see in the **Estados Unidos**, (maybe even twice that **precio**) I wasn't even sure that I could have seen a **show** of this **calibre** in the **Estados Unidos**. I was thinking to myself that all I had to pay was the **precio** of 4 soft drinks. I had been to many places **en México** and had **ordenaba** many soft drinks. The going rate had always been slightly less than a **dólar por botella**. I figured that I would **probablemente** owe about \$4 **dólares** for the soft drinks. I thought maybe I might even have to pay \$6 **dólares** since this was a nice **restaurante**. I even thought about **ordenando otro round** and staying there



MORE THAN WE BARGAINED FOR



I whispered to **mi** wife that we had better go because I didn't think that I would have enough for **otra botella**. She agreed. I signaled to the waiter that I was ready for the bill. He brought it over. I was expecting to pay somewhere between \$4-\$6 **dólares**. I almost fainted when I saw that we had been charged over the **equivalente** of \$24 **dólares** for 4 **sodas**. I was upset. That seemed to be robbery. I talked to the waiter. I told him that I thought \$24 was **extremadamente** high for 4 **sodas**. I told him that the going rate was about a **dólar por botella** everywhere else. He politely agreed that it was. But he was also quick to point out that this was **no** everywhere else. He **explicó** that this was a place where you got to listen to world class **Mariachi música** while you sipped your **soda**. I had to agree. He also pointed out that it would have been a little more **prudente en mi parte** to ask how much something **costó** before **ordenar** it and that if I was **sorprendido** by the **cantidad** that it was really my own fault for **asumiendo** that this high **clase, elegante** place would be the same as any **otro ordinario** place. I had to agree that I should have



I told the waiter that I agreed with his **lógica**. I agreed that it was an outstanding **club** with outstanding performances. I agreed that I should have asked for **precios** before I **ordené**. He seemed quite **aliviado** that I seemed to be agreeing with him without making a big scene. I told him that there was just one **problema**. I **expliqué** that I didn't have the money. He said that it was **ok** because he could take a **crédito** card. I hated to break the news to him that I didn't have a **crédito** card either. He wasn't quite as pleasant. He told me that he would have to go get his manager and have him talk to me.

Pretty soon, both he and his manager appeared. He once again **reiteró** to **me** that I had **ordenado** something and that they had **en** good **fe** brought me what I **ordené** and that I was expected to pay for it. I once again told him that I did not have the money or a card with me. I **expliqué** that we had heard about **La Plaza Garibaldi** and had come by to just look around. I **expliqué** that we were searched out by his workers who had **explicaron** that the performance was free if we would **ordenar** a **soda**. I told him that I was naïve enough to believe that the **precio** of **sodas** would be somewhat **comparable** to the **sodas** that I had purchased in many places in **México** and that I was **totalmente** taken by **sorpresa** with the **cantidad** that his establishment had charged **me**. He was **incrédulo** that I only had the **equivalente** of \$10 **dólares** on me. I **procedí** to pull everything out of my pockets. In fact, I left them hanging outside of my **pantalones** as a witness that I wasn't hiding anything from him. I told him that I would give him everything except enough for the **taxi** fare back to **mi hotel**. I figured that I needed about \$4 **dólares** for that. He **decidió** that \$6 **dólares** and a little bit of change wasn't enough. He wanted the **entero** amount. I asked him how we were supposed to get back to

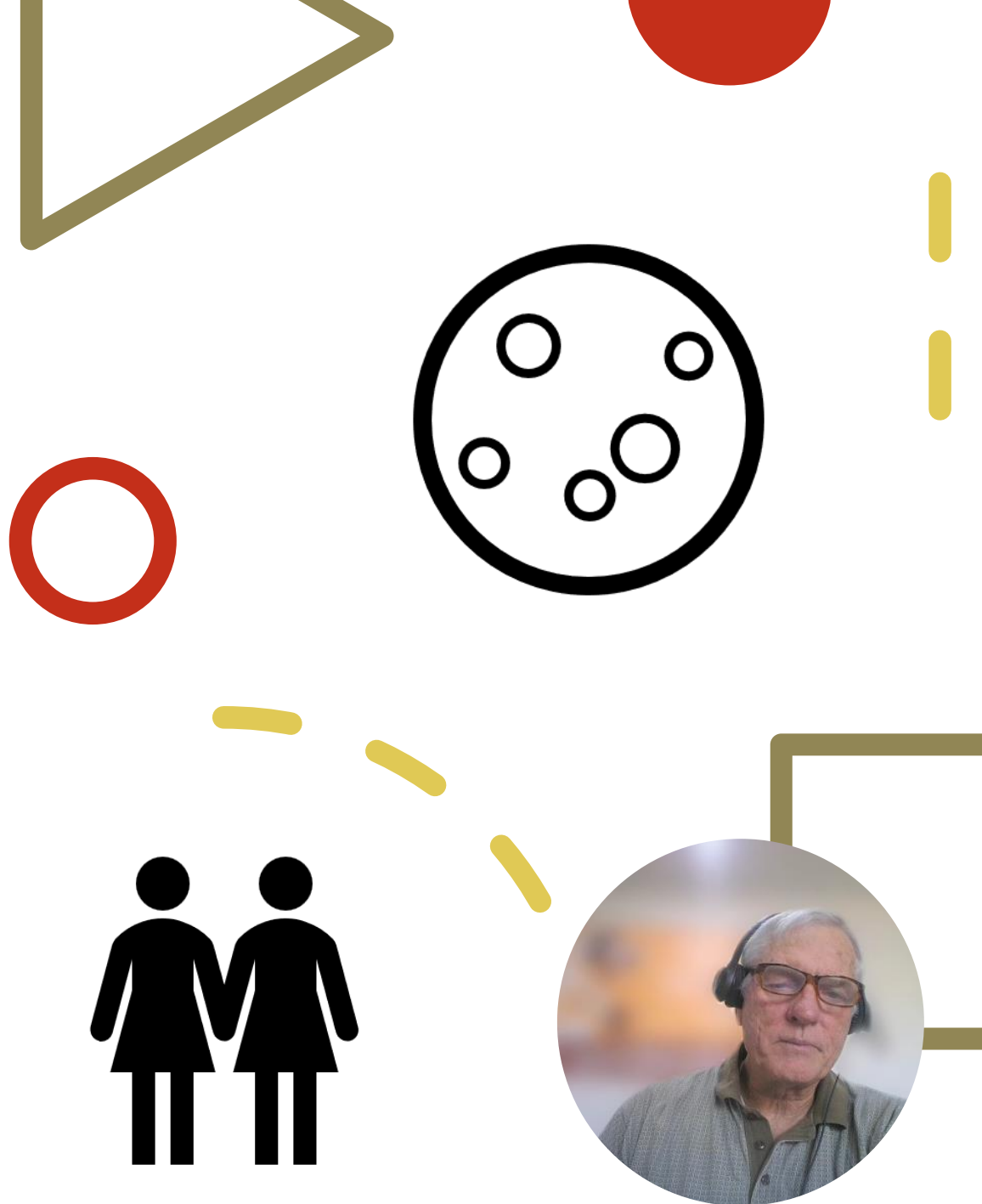


I asked **mi** wife if she felt like she would be up for a long **romántico** stroll in the moonlight. She smiled and told me that she would love to take a walk arm in arm with **me**. I gave the waiter every **peso** and every penny that I had on **me**. I asked his **perdón** for not being able to pay the **entera** bill and we left. We walked 2-3 **millas** back to our **hotel**.

Some people might be quite **ofendido** by what happened here. Were they **deshonesto** with me? Well, **técnicamente, no**. They didn't lie to **me**. They let **me en** for free. They told me that I **necesitaba** to **ordenar** a drink **o soda en orden** to be in their establishment. That was all true. Were they misleading? Well, yes. I had **no idea** that a **soda** would **costaría** more than 6 times the going market rate.

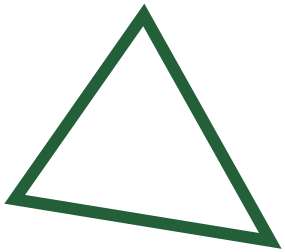
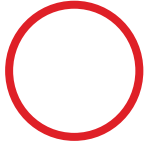
If I look at myself in the mirror and look deep down inside, was I hoping to see a **maravilloso show** at a greatly **reducido precio**? You bet I was! I was thinking that I would get to see the same **tipo** of **show** that **otros** were paying \$20-30 **dólares por** ticket to see for the cost of \$4-6.

Do I regret what happened? Yes! It was a **maravillosa** evening until I realized that I didn't have enough money to pay the bill. It was kind of embarrassing to be searched to make sure that I





WHAT I LEARNED



What have I learned as a **resultado** of this **experiencia**? I have learned some **importantes lecciones** from this even: (1) If something seems too good to be true, it **probablemente es**. (2) Never take anything for granted when it comes to money. It is always better to ask a **precio** than to be unpleasantly **sorprendido** by it.

Would I ever go back there? You bet I would! The **música** and the **entretencimientos** were **maravillosos**. There **es no substituto** for being **en** the **presencia** of **maravillosos** singers and **músicos**. Next time I go, I would **planearía** ahead and bring enough money to pay for what the **experiencia** is worth. I would know enough to ask the **costo** of the **sodas** before I **ordené** them. I would figure that \$30 **dólares en sodas** with a free cover charge is **realmente** about the same as a \$30 cover charge and free **sodas**.

Would I **recomendaría** **La Plaza Garibaldi** to anyone else? Of course! If anyone likes good **entretencimiento** performed with great **habilidad** then this is a **maravilloso** place. Just go there with your eye for the best performances are **probablemente no** going to be free.

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Actividad 1:

Answer the following **comprensión** questions!

1.What was the **Plaza** Garibaldi **famosa** for **en** Mexico **Ciudad**?

2.How did the **autor** and his **esposa** pick the establishment that they **entraron**?

3.What was a rule or **estipulación** in order to **entrar** that establishment?

4.Why was the **autor** **sorprendido** at the bill the waiter handed him?

5.What **problema** did that bill **causar**?

6.How was the embarrassing **situación** resolved to the establishment's **satisfacción**?

7.What other **problema** did that **causar** for the **autor** and his **esposa**?

8.How did the **autor** and his **esposa** turn the **desafortunado** event into a **romántico** **encuentro**?

9.What two **lecciones** did the **autor** learn from this **experiencia**?

a.

b.

