

## **Wake in Fright: Richard Vasey**

Exhaustion was about to take over as Agnes and Richard trudged down the gangway from the plane. Richard's demeanour was not enhanced by the over enthusiastic search by security, which triumphantly unearthed a bottle of mouthwash 50mL over the limit!

The taxi rank snaked along the wet sidewalk, headed by a whistle blowing attendant, who calmly trousered bundles of notes from each passenger as they climbed into the ancient Detroit made cabs. Richard called out 'Jiron de la Union 958 gracias' and without a word the cab lurched headlong into the dark, wet streets. The driver was dressed in dark colours, a rather greasy looking puffer jacket with a hoodie underneath. The cabbie grunted back in American English to Agnes' rusty Spanish.

They drew up in front of an impressive colonial building in Plaza San Martin and the sign 'Grand Hotel Bolivar' appeared out of the gloom. 'Are you guys sure about staying here ... not a good area', said the driver who proceeded to clumsily deposit the baggage on the curb. He defiantly requested double the fare quoted and left in a spray of storm water.

Richard and Agnes gingerly approached the vast entrance door. There were no lights on inside and it seemed an eternity before large bolts were released, the door slowly opened with a comical creeeeeak! The vast hallway revealed pictures of Hemmingway, John Wayne and Mike Jagger lining the gloomy walls. Richard was dumb struck when he noticed their names in the register! They were led through a maze of corridors to a small room with a musty unused smell and dominated by a large timbered bed. Agnes asked how many guests were in the hotel tonight and was shocked to hear THEY WERE THE ONLY GUESTS!

Feeling hungry and apprehensive the couple ventured out into the night and found a bar nearby. In the corner there was a large table of boisterous young people. They became 'instant friends' and the pisco sour flowed freely. Richard attempted to buy a round of drinks which was ignored. They had forgotten to get some currency and the cashcard system was down.

Sophia drunkenly asked which hotel they were in and when Richard responded 'Bolivar', knowing looks were exchanged within the group. Agnes understood it was something about 'paranormal activity between floors 5 and 6!'

'What room number do you have?'

Richard responded 506!