

# *Meeting A Real Mobster*

**H**OWARD SEEMED SOMEWHAT occupied and not

paying attention to details on the first afternoon of March, when there was rain in the forecast. Finally after half way listening to me, Howard said there was something very important to do the following day.

After I asked what it was, Howard told me, "MO is having some real problems with the Las Vegas Gaming Commission and the Vegas Police. He had someone kill a gaming official." "Wow", I said. He added, "They are sending this guy to Brazil to have facial reconstruction, and he is going to be here tomorrow afternoon! And, then he could have knocked me over with a feather! "I would like you to entertain him."

I did not know what to say! I asked who this guy was and Howard said, "You have nothing to worry about, He has no reason to hurt you?" "Great!" That night I slept maybe an hour, lying awake and wondering if I would even be alive after tomorrow?

I do remember drinking extra coffee the following morning, to get my head awake. As I headed to the office, I wondered what it would be like hanging out with a real gangster?

About 11 a.m. a semi-truck pulled up full of hay, (you could smell the hay). Since I had been looking out the window, every time I heard a vehicle. Out of the cab of the hay truck, climbing down was a thin man maybe five foot six inches tall, weighing about 160 pounds.

He walked towards the office, came in and asked for Howard. A few minutes later, Howard called for me, and introduced me to Rocco Barbosa. Howard told Rocco that I would take him out to lunch and spend the afternoon with him until the car for Mexico arrived. Howard said, "You guys have fun and stay out of trouble, and be back here by 4:30 p.m. Sharp."

Rocco came into my office and I asked him what kind of food he would like to eat, and he said "whatever." Then he said, "Do you have any titty bars that serve food in this town?" I told him that I could only think of one, and that I had never been there, but it was on Washington near Arizona State. "Arizona State? Coeds?" he said.

Driving over to the east side of town we hardly spoke. Rocco was too busy checking out all the Phoenix AM and FM Radio Stations. When we arrived at the bar, Rocco said, "Let's get a booth in the

back, then the girls will think we are not interested, and they will try even harder for our attention.”

Rocco ordered a double martini, me a seven-up. Rocco gulped his drink and yelled for another. After the second drink, he asked, “You are probably wondering why I am here, and who I am?” I nodded, he went on, “I had to leave Vegas in a hurry. There was a Commissioner from the gaming authority giving MO a hard time about running the Millennium.” He continued, “MO tried everything and this mother would not budge, so yesterday I broke into his car at home in the early morning. When he came out I put a gun to his head and blew his brains all over the inside of his windshield.” Adding, “The cops have an idea that it might be me, so I am going to Mexico, I am heading down the coast, then to Peru, and then on to Brazil where this doctor is going to make me look like a movie star,” he boasted.

I asked him how long he had been doing this type of work, and he replied, “Since I was in junior high school when these two kids kept robbing me of my lunch money, back in Brooklyn. I got my mom’s kitchen knife and the next day when they came for my money, I stuck it in both of them, and only one kid survived and you know what, I enjoyed sticking that knife in them.”

I didn’t know what to say? Rocco ordering another drink, “After a stint in reform school I went home and found out that this guy had hit my mom. He was dead the next day, and I had to leave town and headed for Chicago, where I eventually met MO.” He went on, “MO was doing the numbers and gambling and I was sent out to see anyone who did not pay” he added, “One guy kept refusing to pay us, and he was a big tough guy so roughing him up was out of the question. He owned a bar on the south side of Chicago, and one morning about 4 a.m. me and this other guy go over there with several sticks of dynamite. We light the fuse and break a window and tossed the dynamite inside. We used a little bit too much of the explosives, we not only blew up the bar, but several businesses on the block!” He continued, “I had to leave town and I went to Seattle, where I chilled for a while.” He added, “When MO moved to Las Vegas he called me and asked me to come out, so I went.” He went on, “For a while all I did was lay around the pool and chase Girls. Then MO had this guy that wouldn’t repay a loan. He then went to the cops when we put pressure on him. The next day I put his lights out, and MO let it be known, that is what will happen if you not pay!” He took a gulp, “The worst thing is I had to drive out in the desert the night before, and dig a hole for the body. At times I had a hell of a time finding and remembering the place, where the hole was the following night, when I had the stiff in the trunk of my car.”

I asked how many people he executed and he said, “Plenty, the worst

thing was digging those damn desert holes. After a while I couldn't remember where I had buried the last guys." Finally we ordered some food, just burgers and sandwiches.

I ordered a burger and Rocco asked for a grilled ham and cheese, with bacon. He sat quiet for a while watching this young girl dance. He finally asked, "You married?" I nodded yes. "Not me, too many to have and explore!" he said. Then he went back to the history. "The best thing that happened in Vegas was that MO got in tight with a guy that owned a funeral home in Pahrump, about 60 miles West of Vegas. They cremate bodies there." Rocco explained that with all the development taking place around Vegas, they were worried that some bodies would be found.

Rocco told me about

Rocco told me about one in particular, "We shot this very fat bastard several times, and me and this other guy dumped him in the trunk of my Cadillac. I drive to the funeral home and there is only one guy working there. We can't get Fatso out of the trunk! It's night and the funeral guy wants to cut him up in pieces, and I tell him, "Hell no! Not in my trunk." His face lit up as he continued, "I ask what is around, and the guy says only some farms. So off I go on foot and finally I find this farm and I knock on this farmers door, and when this farmer answers he is pissed that I bothered him. I ask him if I can rent his horse? He looks at me like I am crazy. I hand him a \$100 and he said I can own the horse for that." He went on trying not to laugh, "I went back to the funeral home with the horse. We then get a rope around the Fat Bastard. The horse then yanks him out of my trunk, I hear crack, and another crack, it was his bones breaking! He was really stiff, and then we drag him over to the dolly, and then the horse pulls him up on it."

Rocco said this went on for years, until they figured the cops might be watching, then they used delivery trucks, until the law changed when funeral homes had to account for the body ashes "That's when we started putting the bodies in the trunks of cars to be smashed," he said. Rocco was really in a talking mood, "I only really enjoyed killing one person. This guy borrows money from a friend of MO, and then when it is time to pay he shoots our collector in the head. Then before he leaves town, this ass hole goes to the collectors home, and the only one there is the guy's wife. He rapes her and then slices her throat."

"I volunteered for this one, because I knew everyone involved. It took me three weeks to catch up with this loser," as he went on. "I finally caught up with him in Boise Idaho! When I finally cornered him I shot him in his manly hood, then in each leg and arm and put the last one in his mouth. When I pulled the trigger his brains went

everywhere." Continuing, "Afterwards I thought to myself that I was really stupid, because I had to clean the mess up and get the body out of there." He went on, "I then had to find a saw, cut the stiff up and put him into trash bags, then I hauled the bags to an industrial area and tossed them in the refuse bins. It took me four hours and I was totally exhausted"

After a couple minutes of silence he started laughing, "Remember when the Arabs jacked the price of oil up and there was no gas? Well, me and this other guy went to a truck stop north of Las Vegas. We sat and waited until a tanker full of gasoline pulled in." After taking another sip from his drink, "We wait for this guy to come back to his rig and I make like I am real friendly and ask if he can fill up my car?" laughing, "The guy tells me that the hose on the truck is too big for my car. I asked him how many gallons he has? And the guy says 20,000 gallons of premium!" A moment later he continued, "I scratch my head which is the sign for my partner to come over and he sticks a gun in the ribs of this guy and they get in the cab of the truck."

Furthermore he said, "We tie this guy up and gag him, and then I follow them with my car. I go to this gas station, and that one where we finally find a guy with cash and we sell him the gas cheap for some green." He added, "It took all night, but we finally got rid of the gas for about \$12,000. Then we took the empty taker to a remote area and left the guy tied up in cab!" He went on to tell me that MO was not to happy about the gas moonlighting job, and that was the only time he stole a tanker of gas. He also said, "This operation I am having is going to cost me a hundred grand. I have been saving and planning for it for a while.

I needed some extra money, so I started hanging around the air freight warehouses. I keep asking everyone who comes out, who the boss is. Everyone tells me that it is a guy named Kenny Lang." He continued, "I finally get an appointment with this Kenny Lang, and after I tell him he could make a lot of money helping me out, he starts complaining to me that they don't pay him enough for all the crap he has to take and so forth. I make him an offer he can't refuse, and all he has to do is call me when a load of something good comes in and then leave a door unlocked."

Rocco said, "A load of valuable oil paintings from some museum on loan came in for one of the big casinos, and guess what, Kenny called me and that night they mysteriously disappeared from the warehouse." Laughing Rocco bragged, "I ended up putting them in the trunks of cars we rented and then hired drivers to deliver the paintings to many different cities and I made a bundle. There was one painting that the newspaper reported was worth a quarter of a million dollars. I did a few

other loads and then the FBI started to get involved, and we had to quit.”

I noticed it was about time to leave, if we wanted to get back in time for Rocco to make his trip to Mexico. As we were driving back to the yard I asked Rocco exactly what he was going to Brazil for, and exactly what they were going to do? He said, “I am now a wanted guy. Every law office in the country has my mug shot. I enjoy my life and I want to get made over so I can walk down the street without worrying.” He concluded, “It is going to take me a week to get there, because we have to take the back roads, not to be recognized, four to six weeks to recover and then I will be back.”

After a few minutes of quiet driving, he added, “There is this doctor in Brazil who can rearrange my face and hair line and make me look like Paul Newman!” I didn’t ask any more questions, but as we were getting close to the yard, I only thought of Reader’s Digest “My Most Unforgettable Character,” and I just met him!

After Rocco left I went into Howard’s Office and I told him about the afternoon. Howard said, “I wanted you to get to know this guy and realize that they are different from us, but not that different.” He added, “They want the same things, but just go about different ways of getting it!” I said to Howard, “That does not justify breaking the law and killing people, though I will admit that there are people who deserve that kind of fate!” Then I told Howard good night and headed home.