



LA OPERA

Mexico City

If travels, by chance, lead to the Cathedral district, don't forget that a good place to relax is La Opera. Yes, it's well-known. Yes it's well-deserving of attention. It was first on my list before arriving in Mexico City. And now, upon my return home, it still is.

With ornate elegance and crisp service, it's a fine place to meet someone, say an agent or an editor, who just had to track down a reclusive writer with a convincing cash offer for two manuscripts. Also, a few of us proposed that the gentlemen in the booth near the front door might control more of Mexico City than they care to let on.

Keeping an eye on them proved easy with the number of mirrors hanging in La Opera. The beautiful carved ceilings—twenty feet high—also bestow a proper Colonial atmosphere. I believe someone said the place dated to the 1870s, but I can't be sure. I also can't be sure if that thing, just out of the frame (you can't see it), up on the ceiling and looking like a watermark—I can't tell if it's real. The jacketed waiter tells my friend Lew that it's a bullet hole from Pancho Villa shooting up the place back in 1910. He was on a horse at the time, if the waiter is to be fully believed.

I had Jack Daniels rocks. I was glad those men were still sitting in the booth by the front door.

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