

A VERY hot afternoon in 1962, my future wife and I are sitting at the terrace of Bar Eslava at the Plaza del Castillo. That summer temperature reached 40° Celsius during 2-3 afternoons. Anyway, back to the Eslava. I saw some other guys taking off their shirts, and so did I. Wonderful relief in the heat!

It didn't take long until 'una pareja', a pair, of Guardia Civil, approached me from behind, lifted me from my chair. The Guardias always worked in pairs. One of them said, 'you're under arrest', the other one handed me my off taken shirt and they started to lead me down towards el Casco Viejo, while all my friends were cheering and applauding the scene from where they were drinking. I thought the Guardias were joking with me and asked them multiple times, what I was arrested for but they didn't answer.

We came to a house very near the Cathedral, they rang the door bell and I was led into – JAIL! A sergeant at a desk explained to me that it was illegal to expose one's torso in public. They took off my pañuelo, my faja, my belt, the contents of my pockets (some coins) BUT let me keep my watch, my shoes, txapela, bota full with red wine, cigarettes and wax matches, 'cerillas'. I was told that the standard sentence for a crime like mine, was 24 hours in the 'calabozo' and locked the massive door behind my back. I was totally alone in a large cellar cell with 10 wooden barrack-beds, one hole in the floor in one corner and one water tap, producing fresh, cool, spring water from the Navarran mountains. Pamplona was famous for its wonderful drinking water in those days.

I tried to sleep, couldn't. From a distance I could hear the charangas walking through the streets, playing – Fiesta was going on outside, and I was locked up, bloody hell! At one occasion, the door was opened and a soldier gave me one panecillo cut in halves, between which there was a RAW fish! Couldn't eat it! My bota was full, when I came, so I made the wine last for 24 hrs and that and my cigarettes kept hunger away.

After EXACTLY 24 hours, the door was opened, the sergeant came in and said, you are free to go and I came with him to the desk, where I was given my few belongings and we went to the massive gate but he didn't open it! I must have looked at him in disbelief so he stretched his open hand towards me and said:

'Mi propina, por favor!' I couldn't believe my ears! They cut me off from Fiesta during 24 hours, throw me into a cave like cell, then he wants a tip, a service charge in order to let me out. I became upset and gave him all the coins I had, I didn't even count them but I said, 'that's all I have'! He muttered something but did unlock the gate and I was free! I could hardly see ANYTHING in the sun but could feel the heat all right.

Later, I was told by some local friends that I was lucky not having been beaten by the Guardias!