

COERLL WORKSHOP
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SAMPLE TEXT

The following is the beginning of a short story by Ernest Hemingway entitled, "The Gambler, the Nun, and the Radio." (1933)*

THEY BROUGHT THEM IN AROUND MID-night and then, all night long, every one along the corridor heard the Russian.

“Where is he shot?” Mr. Frazer asked the night nurse.

“In the thigh, I think.”

“What about the other one?”

“Oh, he’s going to die, I’m afraid.”

“Where is he shot?”

“Twice in the abdomen. They only found one of the bullets.”

They were both beet workers, a Mexican and a Russian, and they were sitting drinking coffee in an all-night restaurant when someone came in the door and started shooting at the Mexican. The Russian crawled under a table and was hit, finally, by a stray shot fired at the Mexican as he lay on the floor with two bullets in his abdomen. That was what the paper said.

The Mexican told the police he had no idea who shot him. He believed it to be an accident.

“An accident that he fired eight shots at you and hit you twice, there?”

“Sí, señor,” said the Mexican, who was named Cayetano Ruiz.

“An accident that he hit me at all, the *cabrón*¹,” he said to the interpreter.

“What does he say?” asked the detective sergeant, looking across the bed at the interpreter.

“He says it was an accident.”

1. *cabrón* (Mexican Spanish) = ‘a goat’ used here as an insult (e.g., ‘the fucker’)

* Public domain text available at: <http://pdbooks.ca/books/english/authors/hemingway-ernest/short-stories/part-one/the-gambler-the-nun-and-the.html>