



PHOTO 36

dove into a small stream, guns and all. They held their breath as long as they could, and when they surfaced Dunton said, “You are a sight Leon . . . all swollen up.”

“Wait until you see for yourself,” Gaspard replied. “Your right eye is lower than the left and your moustaches are not where they belong.”

It took them hours to walk back to Taos. The horses had long since bolted for home, and the two sorrowful mountain men made their way on foot through the forest and across the high desert.

Leon said, “It’s late. Do you think we can find Doc Martin?”

“He’ll just give us whiskey, and I don’t think that can help,” Dunton replied, trudging along.

“Maybe he can give us a shot—an antidote,” Leon said. “I feel awful. That’s the most horrible lesson I ever had in hunting.”

Finally, at four in the morning they arrived at Gaspards’ house. Evlyn opened the door warily. “Who are you?”

“Don’t you recognize us? It’s Buck and Leon.”

“My god, what happened to you? What kind of hunting did you do?” Shocked and scared by their appearance, she didn’t know what to do.

“We got attacked by hornets.”

“Oh,” she wailed, “I’m fainting.”

“Fainting, hell,” said Leon. “We came close to dying.”

Evlyn rushed out and ran down the street to get Doc Martin. Breathless, she banged on his door. When he staggered to the door, she cried, “Come quick, something terrible has happened!”

Doc Martin, none too happy about being awakened before dawn, grumbled, “Who is it?”

“It’s Leon and Buck.”

He turned to close the door. “Forget it. I’ll come later.”

PHOTO 37
Gaspard the fisherman