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La Llorona Loca: The Other Side

Growing up, my mother would tell me scary stories of the Latino folklore character known as La Llorona Loca—the crazy crier. According to my mother, “...this woman drowned her children—apparently woke up on the wrong side of the bed—a little pissed off...” And as the story goes, La Llorona Loca, realizing she had done this horrible act, tried to deal with her crazed sorrow by searching and crying desperately for her children. The story also states that, as she wailed, she wore a long white gown and, I’m guessing, low heels—remember, she’s searching.

I have always been fascinated by the legendary Llorona Loca, and I knew there had to be more to her. Was she trying to wean herself from caffeine when this notorious incident happened? What was her astrological sign? And did she know about networking? My curious mind led me to the Llorona Loca Archives at UCLA and there, my friends, I found a story that was never told to me. I now present it to you.

Many years ago, in Mexico, lived a very beautiful woman by the name of Caliente! Every man wanted her—every woman wanted to be like her. She would walk down the street and the men would shout out:

“Ay, mamasita!”

“Come here, baby.”

“Let me touch your chi-chi’s.”

Yeah—she was really beautiful.

But there was something different about her, something that the townspeople could not figure out. As beautiful as she was, she had never married. She was never seen with a man. And this girl was thirty years old! So it was like—you know—what’s up? The townspeople would whisper amongst themselves.

“Lack of male companionship.”

“She wears spurs—on her house slippers.”

“She’s always eyeing the señoritas. I bet she’s a PE teacher!”

One glorious day, a stranger rode into town, looking for a woman. The stranger galloped down the main drag when all of a sudden, the stranger caught the eye of Caliente, who was sitting on her porch balancing her checkbook. Their eyes locked. Caliente walked towards the stranger. The stranger took off her hat—that's right—I said *her* hat! Her black curly locks fell down to her leather chaps. Caliente dropped her checkbook. The stranger, who was looking mighty fine and very voluptuous to Caliente said, "If you want something good, you will ride with me and you will be my woman, *mi mujer!*" Caliente quickly jumped on the stranger's horse and the new couple briskly rode out of town. They had no choice—they were being chased by many macho Mexican dudes.

The women stopped in Tijuana, got married by a curandera and eventually settled down in Bakersfield. Happy, in love, and always "doing it." Until the morning came when La Stranger (as she was affectionately called by Caliente because her real name was Petronilia de la Chihuahua y qué!), took Caliente to their favorite spot by the river. Caliente was looking as radiant as ever, dressed all in white, her skin aglow and her lips red with passion. La Stranger put Caliente's hand in hers, "Mi vida, I am like the river, I am the happiest when I am moving." Caliente gave La Stranger a perplexed look and then said, "Cut the crap. Get to the point!" La Stranger smiled, "Mi reina, every Wednesday during the last six months, while you were at your "Latina: I Am Woman—You Are Scum," support group, I was having an affair with—with Trixie!" Caliente brought La Stranger's hand up to her mouth and bit it. "Puta! Trixie is such a sleaze ball. She'll do anything with anybody for a quarter!" La Stranger chuckled and said, "I know. Yeah, that's Trixie." Jealousy filled Caliente's body from head to toe. La Stranger could see the fire in Caliente's eyes. (She kind of looked like my mom when I came home drunk from my friend's quinceañera.) La Stranger blurted out, "Now look, baby, let's talk. Let's get into a feeling circle." Caliente slapped La Stranger, who then said, "Okay, let's not get into a feeling circle. You can have all the property!"

By now, Caliente could no longer control herself. She jumped on La Stranger and pushed her into the river, holding her head down until La Stranger's body went limp. Caliente, realizing that she had done this horrible, horrible act, started to cry uncon-

trollably until she fainted into the river and died. I'm sorry to bring you down folks, but that's life.

Two hours later, a group of women on a boat returning from a sexual healing weekend, spotted the two floating bodies and buried them together by the river bank. A week after the burial, a villager was getting water from the river and was startled by the eerie cry of a woman. At first the man thought it was really loud Carly Simon music, but as he listened closely, he could hear something about "a stranger." The villager walked towards the cry and a woman appeared from the bushes, dressed all in white and wearing clogs. He jumped back and gasped, "Clogs?! That's so '70's." The ghostlike woman sobbed to him, "Have you seen La Stranger?"

The man ran back to the village to tell the others who had also heard the crying. From this time on, the people heard and saw this woman almost every night—searching, crying desperately for La Stranger. Her crying was so hysterical, everyone began to call her La Llorona Loca—the crazy crier.



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