

## THE MOST HATED MAN IN MEXICO

Tuesday, on the beach in Mazatlan,  
vendor after vendor comes by,  
trying to sell me his wares.  
And though I don't want to buy anything,  
it's a good excuse to give my Spanish a workout.  
"No necesito esto toalla hoy pero volve manana por la  
manana por favor."

I say the same thing to every one of them, changing only  
the name of the article I am supposedly considering the  
purchase of.

Wednesday, still buying nothing and surrounded by  
short vendors with long memories,  
I am the most hated man in Mexico.

"HEY MISTER, YOU WANT TO LOOK AT MY JUNK JUST FOR THE  
HELL OF IT?"

The vendors who work the strip of sand outside the Hotel  
El Cid in Mazatlan all seem to use the same sales pitch.

"Practically free."

"Good deal."

"Best deal."

"Good quality."

"Best quality."

"For you, a good deal."

It's so uniform, I figure someone is offering these guys  
a sales class in the lobby of one of the hotels.

But I look at the stuff just the same.

And some of it is nice,  
and some of it is so-so,  
and some of it is positively godawful.

But regardless the pitch is the same.

"Good quality, best prices, practically free."

Finally, a very worn-looking guy in some very worn-looking  
olive flares accosts me,

"Hey mister, you want to look at my junk just for the hell  
of it?"

How can I resist?

I figure I've found the guy Diogenes was looking for  
without so much as a flashlight.

So I give his stuff a look and the junk isn't half-bad.

And I'd like to be able to say here that I purchased  
something from the guy just to reward his veracity,  
but sorrily I didn't.

I looked his junk over very carefully,  
but in the end all I ended up getting from the guy was the  
body to the cover letter for all my subsequent submissions.

— Eric Grow

Brea CA