

Bookkeeper

By Chris Hirschhorn

After working as business partner with my college doctor friend testing new drugs on patient volunteers, and after his charging me with 'stealing the money from the testing business' and suing me and after my winning, I decided that I wanted to work in a business where I merely did data entry and printed periodic reports. I looked into a law firm and after visiting their quarters, I decided that working for a law firm was too dull.

Next, a warehouse advertised for a data entry person. I'd never worked in a warehouse so I decided to check it out. While I was being interviewed, the trucks were pulling in and I saw the drivers, the trucks, how the men returned cash, foods, sodas, etc. The boss showed me their computer and I was familiar with their system. I was offered the Data Entry job and accepted it.

Working with people who barely made it out of high school or who got into the US somehow from South America or Mexico and had families to support was an interesting situation.

Anthony, the boss, and I shared an office. His was a cash business. His machines dispensed sodas, candy and sandwiches and accepted quarters, dimes and nickels.

After working a few months, conditions changed. The factories, where our machines were installed, began to generate less cash. Apparently, the industry was entering into a slump period. Factories began to reduce staff. So with fewer persons buying foods, sodas and candies, and the products aging in machines, we were forced to purchase less from our sources. We had to fire a driver or two and absorb the cost of foods that had outlived their shelf life.

I remember the boss pleading with soda companies to deal directly with him rather than the middlemen companies. One day, the boss informed me that he was having a high-powered meeting in his office and I was not to look at the faces of any of these men directly.

A couple of days later, there was a fire in our warehouse. Our sprinkler system sprinkled water all over. The books and records and products left in our warehouse were drenched. I was called to help Anthony clean up and dry the business papers. Anthony notified the insurance company, they interrogated me too because Anthony and I were supposedly the last people in the warehouse before the fire. Our warehouse business closed.

The driver, Elio, who I was especially friendly with, returned to his home in Lima, Peru. Before he returned to Peru, Elio asked me to come to Peru and visit with his family. I did and when I got off the plane, Elio and his eight-year-old daughter were waiting for me in the terminal with a high school band playing tunes welcoming the people who had just off-loaded. We hailed a taxi and drove to his home in a gated community. The guard opened the gate. Our cab entered.

The next day Elio, his wife and children took me to an evening of classical music in a local park. The high-water fountains moved according to the music. Some waters were colored. Mothers with young children rushed into the park to hear the concert and view the moving waters. I think that it is always wonderful visiting a new country and experiencing a local event.

Next, Elio took me to visit Masa Picchu – beautiful mountain with interesting history. We, with

his children, also did bus tour in the mountains surrounding Lima.