

GREEN LETTER

No. 78 from Colombia,
22 November 2005

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These Letters are collected, compiled and edited by Jenny James of **Atlantis Ecological Community, Belen, Huila**, email atlantiscol@hotmail.com

Instead of longer articles, we have dedicated this issue of the Green Letters to a collection of 'News in Brief' to give the reader a sense of the political climate, protests and officially-supported violence in Colombia, plus other items of interest, via a series of news reports and personal experiences.

Murder is OK if you're a paramilitary....

A recent news item told the story of a group of people in a motel hearing a woman's frantic screams and cries for help. They rushed to the room the sound was coming from and saw a young man standing over a woman obviously about to murder her. The man was armed and threatened the people not to intervene. And he killed the woman.

The murderer was a recently 'reinserted' paramilitary, and in accordance with President Uribe's softly-softly approach to his protégés (the paramilitaries), the incredible verdict the Judge pronounced when the murderer went on trial was: that **the killing was 'obviously' an act of 'momentary madness'**.

So 'obviously', he let the man go scot free....

The Making of a Paramilitary Murderer – by Katie (20)

"My boyfriend has, or rather had, a friend who is now a paramilitary. They used to play together when children. Then my boyfriend came to live in Popayan and a few years later got the terrible news about what his friend was doing. One day they met again after the paramilitary was let out of prison by President Uribe's new laws, having spent only 8 months there, presumably for murder.

"They talked for ages. My boyfriend wanted to know why his friend had joined the paramilitaries and this is what the man answered: That when he was 14, he had a girlfriend who he really loved. One day, walking along

the road at night with her, three men came out, overcame him and tied him up, then raped his girlfriend, forcing him to watch. He had never been with his girlfriend sexually and she was a virgin.

"The girl was badly hurt and was taken to hospital, but she went mad, she couldn't look at any man, including her boyfriend, without screaming hysterically, and eventually she died. The boy lived with this night and day, full of anger and hatred and in the end decided to join the paramilitaries so as to be able to kill rapists. The problem is, of course, that rapists were not the only people he killed...

"One day, he was on a bus and the guerrilla stopped it and asked everyone for their papers. They had a list of names of people they were going to kill. His name was on that list, but there was some error and it wasn't exactly the same as the name on his papers, so he managed to convince them that he wasn't the person they were looking for, that he wasn't a paramilitary. And they let him go.

"Later he was with a group of paras. and went to someone's house looking for guerrillas and there was the very same guerrilla man who had stopped the bus that time. The guerrilla went pale and said, 'Spare me my life'. My boyfriend, listening to the story, expected that his friend would have shown mercy. But no, his friend boasted that he just shot the FARC man in the head.

"This ex-paramilitary is now working in a glass shop and says he never wants to go back to that kind of life, but all his paramilitary friends who were also let out of prison are now common criminals, living by mugging and extortion. The ex-paramilitary knows that the guerrilla have his name and those of all his friends, so he can never travel or even live feeling relaxed. It is only a matter of time till they find him...."

Everyday Family Violence in Colombia – also by Katie

And now a family violence story, which is where it all starts...

K. is a young friend of ours. Most of her conversations

are about the violence in her family. She tells us about her grandmother tying her and her brothers up with their hands tied together above their heads when they were really young. They would be left like this for hours in the hot sun, with the grandmother forcing them to eat huge pieces of raw onion 'so they wouldn't get a cold.'

She tells us about her older brother nearly killing her and her sister because they complained about him coming into the house doped and drunk. He took off his belt and whipped them with the buckle making their legs bleed. When they did things wrong, their parents would always hit them, and of course they learnt to use the same methods on each other. She said she always had physical fights with her sisters.

Her husband later on was no different. He'd come in late and drunk and want to 'make love'. When she tried to stop him, he would hit her for this and for other silly insignificant things too. They have a two-year old child together and of course, she now hits him regularly. The child suffers from constipation (because of the awful diet she feeds him), so she hits him to *make him go to the toilet!* I've noticed that whenever she speaks to him, she is threatening to slap or whip him. The child always looks frightened and ill."

Paramilitary Slogan in Poor Suburb:

"Good children go to sleep at 8.0 p.m., or we'll put you to sleep ourselves"
(in Spanish: '*Los buenos niños se acuestan a las 8 o los acostamos.*') That is, a death threat to young people found on the streets.

'To War Against His Will'

...Is the title of a news item in the high quality communist weekly newspaper Voz, 17th August 2005. The (translated) text is as follows:

"A 20 year old student leader from Saravena, Arauca, Gustavo Monroy, was called up for military service, but he refused to go arguing that he did not want to take up arms and much less to be in the Army.

"It is significant that the Dept. of Arauca is the scene of military operations under 'Plan Patriota' in which the civilian population has been attacked, as when the army assassinated three union leaders there recently.

"In a statement, the organization of students affirmed, 'In Colombia, conscientious objection to obligatory military service has not been legally approved, though efforts have been made in this direction. However, this process will be a long one and because of the state of the country

politically, it will require international support to bring this about, and to make sure that men refusing to serve are not abused whilst in custody in military installations.' Cases such as that of Monroy must open the debate on the subject in youth and student organizations in particular and for the bulk of Colombian youth in general."

Third Murderer Found

We have just heard that the third of the suspected six murderers of our boys Tristan and Javier has been arrested in Fusa, Tolima, for another crime. Our accusations against him can now go forward. Not that it helps Tris or Javier, but it might keep this serial killer from murdering others if he's behind bars for a long time.

Massacre in Icononzo, Tolima (from a report in 'Voz' 21st Sept. 2005)

Violence continues in Icononzo, Tolima. On Wednesday, 14th September 2005 during the night, an armed group travelling in vehicles (longhand for 'paramilitaries') invaded the hamlets of la Fila, La Taja and El Alto de Icononzo, violently murdering five farm workers after torturing them, dragging them from their homes, threatening their families with death and destroying their possessions. They then proceeded to take them to a place called Cueva Grande on the River Sumapaz, approximately 8 km. from where they were kidnapped. Amongst the murdered men were Secundino Macias, Juan Romero, and the brothers Pulido Rodriguez and Ramiro Diaz. Paramilitary groups are active in Icononzo and have been denounced on various occasions by the community without the authorities taking any action in this respect.

This news item is one of dozens that appear weekly in Colombia. Its particular significance for us is that Icononzo is where we lived for 11 years peacefully, bringing up our children, 'La Fila' was just a mile down the road from where we lived, and 'El Alto de Icononzo' is the tiny hamlet where we took refuge in the house of a friend after the guerrilla had thrown us out of our farm in 1999. And it was because of our displacement there that we met our beloved Javier, my son-in-law-to-be. And the place to which he travelled with my grandson Tristan a year later on 9th July 2000 to visit his parents. And from which they travelled to Hoya Grande, another village, to meet their deaths. Then it was the guerrilla ruling and killing at will, now it is the paramilitaries.

UN in Deep Denial (report from Anne)

The United Nations Commission for Refugees in

Colombia holds regular fortnightly meetings with foreign NGOs who accompany the endangered peace community of San Jose de Apartado. When the massacre occurred last February of eight people there, including very small children, and members of the International Peace Brigade accompanied the local people on the long mountain journey to locate the victims, the only comment this UN organization made was that they *should not have absented themselves from the regular meeting*, and that it **could not have been the paramilitaries who committed the massacre** (it was) because they are in the process of 'peace' negotiations with the Government (their employer)!

Paramilitary Threats on the Increase in Dept. of Cauca

As a result of recent demonstrations by Indians in Cauca to recuperate their land, threats against their principal leaders have not been long in coming. The Nasa Indian head of communications, Emmanuel Rozental, has had to leave the country, having been accused by government forces of being a 'terrorist.' A whole list of other leaders have likewise been threatened.

With the ill-named 'Law of Justice and Peace' (which essentially legalizes the paramilitary forces), paramilitarism in various parts of Cauca is on the increase, causing terror amongst the people there. In Silvia, where Indian communities have taken over land, paramilitary slogans have appeared on the walls stating, **"We will enforce respect for Private Property"**.

Since the end of September, leaflets have been circulating in Popayan, capital of Cauca, signed by the paramilitary organization AUC announcing the creation of a 'Cleansing Brigade', threatening people accused of being delinquents. At least 20 young people from poor suburbs have been killed in Popayan, Puerto Tejada and Patia in the last few weeks. One young man of 26, son of a displaced family who worked in building construction, disappeared on 21st October and was found dead next day with signs of torture on his body. (Source: *Voz*, 9 Nov. 2005)

In Popayan, trade union and other people's organizations carried out numerous protests against the arrest of Miguel Alberto Fernandez Orozco, President of the regional branch of the National Trade Union Organization (CUT), who had been taken into custody aggressively by the DAS (Security Police) and thrown into jail in spite of the fact that he has an order of protection from the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights. The people were also protesting at the detention of the Nasa Indian Jose Vicente Otero.

In Popayan and the whole Department of Cauca, there is a climate of tension and insecurity because of the rightwing intransigence of the regional Governor, Juan Jose Chaux.

*At the entrance to Popayan, on the country road leading from the area of our farm, a road sign saying **DANGER**, plus a traffic warning, has been spray-painted to read: DANGER: AUC (i.e. paramilitaries).*

Prelude to the Bombing of San Jose Peace Community

As reported in the last two days, the Colombian Government have now seen fit to bomb the newly resettled Peace Community of San Jose. So far one man has been killed. The community sent out many 'Alerts' in the period preceding this fresh atrocity, including the following report: That on 31st October in Arenas Bajas, the Army broke into the home of Fidel Tuberquia and arrested him in an arbitrary manner, insulting him and accusing him of being an insurgent. "If the guerrilla shoots at us, we will chop you to pieces", they said. Then they left, taking with them all his food and chickens. In the 90 days previous to this incident, there were constant hostile acts against the community on the part of the Army and the paramilitaries, causing the people to fear another massacre. (Source: *Voz*)

A message of encouragement to the Peace Communities

Five peasant communities in resistance, having suffered theft of their land, attacks from paramilitaries, forced displacement and food blockades, received a message of encouragement and hope from the the world network of anti-war Town Mayors. "You are a seed of enormous hope for the end of the conflict in Colombia, demonstrating as a daily reality the possibility of resolution of the conflict by non-violent means" wrote **Tadatoshi Akiba, Mayor of Hiroshima**, President of 'Mayors for Peace', who, representing 1,060 mayors all over the world, signed a letter of solidarity and support for the five peasant communities in resistance.

Popular Militancy in the face of Military Aggression (Source: *Voz* 12th October)

Ibague, capital of Tolima: Military aggression against the National Strike planned for 12th October increased on a par with the determination of the population to confront President Uribe's rightwing policies. In the town of Planadas, the military demanded that the Mayor put out a decree prohibiting a demonstration, arguing that it was organized by the armed insurgency and the Communist

party. Members of the military then tried to sabotage the public meeting in the main square organized by the Agricultural Workers Unions. Captain Vargas of the 68th Mobile Brigade snatched the microphone and arrogantly spoke for over three quarters of an hour incoherently saying that the guerrilla should hand itself over to the Army and that the country people should all become Army spies.

Indignant, the more than 300 peasant farmers gathered there shouted slogans of unity and support for the National Strike and rejection of the US-inspired Free Trade Agreement, demanding respect from the armed forces and guarantees of safety to continue their demonstration, reminding the army that the right to protest is part of the Colombian Constitution. The country women present were incensed and protested with great dignity and determination, shouting in chorus that the military should leave the event and let the delegates and human rights representatives of the National Confederation of Trades Unions (CUT) speak.

In spite of military pressure, threats and the filming of those present, the peasants of the south of Tolima reiterated their determination to protest and demanded social justice, investment in their region and peaceful coexistence based on a political solution to the armed social conflict, plus a humanitarian exchange of prisoners of war.

Indian Militancy (Source: *Voz*, Oct. 12th 2005)

Chaparral, Tolima: More than 100 Pijao and Paez Indians spent 15 days of peaceful protest outside the Public Attorney's office in Chaparral, to demand the release of Fernando Martinez, arrested by troops of the Caicedo Battallion on 26th August.

Martinez was accused of sedition, but Isaias Noscue, governor of the Indian reserve of Nasaquigüe de Las Mercedes, said that the Indian community had been investigating the alleged connection of Martinez with the guerrilla and found him to be innocent. What had happened was that Martinez had been forced into a false confession after being threatened that he would be killed. The Indian leader said, 'Martinez is a member of the Indian Guards but not of the guerrilla. We demand that the State respect the indigenous authorities,' and added that if Martinez was not freed, communities from other areas would come to join the protest and take other legal action.

A Letter from the FARC to the Colombian Army

The FARC guerrilla army stated in a letter to Colombian

military commanders, sub-officers and all those who 'although having to risk their lives in the line of fire are not allowed to rise to officer level because of their humble background': 'Your opinions, which are beginning to reach us via many clandestine routes, tell us that the desires for a new Colombia that unite us are far more powerful than the narrow interests of the oligarchy that force us to fight.' (Source: *Voz*)

Colombia the ever-Paradoxical

One day we had a visit from 40 campesinos (peasants) from a distant area. They ate with us, talked with us, looked at our farm and compost systems, watched our theatre, heard our songs. When it was time to leave, one diminutive dark-skinned Indian-looking little man, who had shown intense interest in everything we said, took me confidentially aside and asked me to put him in contact with the FARC guerrilla! I said I was sorry, but I had no such facility, and what was the problem? He said that ever since the Army had chased the guerrilla from his region, it had become unliveable in, with common criminals returning and making life hell for the inhabitants and that everyone wanted the guerrilla back to keep order...

Some time later, I was waiting for transport on the 'main road' (a dirt track) a couple of hours' walk from our farm, at a communal stopping-point, a shack and shop called 'La Estación.' I bristled somewhat to see that on this day, a large group of army soldiers were lounging around everywhere. I had to wait alongside them for several hours and observed the young men in their boredom. My artist daughter Alice was with me, and we were looking at some of her paintings we had with us, and this immediately gave the soldiers an excuse to come over and start chatting. I got into conversation with the commander, who asked the usual question: 'Do you ever see the guerrilla where you live?' No, I answered, 'and the local people aren't all that pleased about it as they used to keep delinquents under control, but now the buses get attacked and the passengers robbed...' I said this with fairly obvious undertones of complaint, the implication being that the Army did NOT help with ordinary law and order, and I wondered how the soldier would react....

He nodded in agreement, acknowledging the well-known 'policing' function of the guerrilla, and added, well aware of the Army's reputation: 'There's good and bad on both sides, and we have made some bad mistakes' – a euphemism for committing atrocities.

The vehicle I was waiting for arrived, and I left, my mind full of wonderment at this intricate, definitely not black-and-white country...

Canada Persecutes Radical Colombian Refugees

The Canadian authorities have been persecuting Colombian refugees from radical organizations and attempting to deny them their refugee status, using the argument that they belong to the 'political arm of the FARC.' Behind the accusation is the Colombian Embassy. The previous Ambassador, Fanny Ketzman, who was involved in responsibility for the horrific massacre in Mapiripan a few years ago, and the present Ambassador, Jorge Visbal, one time president of the paramilitary-fomenting organization of cattleowners (Fedegan), prepared lists of Colombian refugees in Canada and spread the line that all communist militants are guerrilla fighters.

A simple proof of Election Corruption in Colombia

In Cartagena, Dept. of Bolivar, a woman complained publicly that the **price of the vote had devalued**. She bemoaned the fact that previously she had been paid 50,000 pesos (1 euro = approx. 2,500 pesos) for her vote, whereas now politicians were only offering 20,000!!

Protest at Enforced Hair-cutting (from Voz)

The Indian organization of Ecuador (CONAIE) declared Colombian President Uribe '*persona non grata*' when he arrived in Quito on 23rd October to convince the Ecuadorian president to sign the unpopular Free Trade Agreement with the US. The Indians were protesting that seven Ecuadorian compatriots had been expelled from Colombia and had had their traditional long plaits cut off by the Colombian authorities. CONAIE is a powerful organization that was instrumental in bringing down a former corrupt Ecuadorian president, Jamil Mahuad, and in bringing about significant social changes in the country.

Colombian Govt. To Privatize Forests (Translation of information in a Voz article, 9th November 2005:)

A much-contested Forestry Law is about to be approved by the Colombian Congress. One of the chief bodies opposing this Bill is the Colombian Commission of Jurists, who point out that the law ignores the right of indigenous and Afro-Colombian peoples to be consulted, and favours only the timber industry, whilst ignoring present environmental legislation, the National Forestry Plan and international forestry rules: treaties which Colombia has signed regarding protection of the environment, maintaining diversification, the struggle against drought, protection of indigenous and Afrocolombian communities, the battle against Climate Change, and international agreements on tropical timber. It also ignores agreements made with the Intergovernmental Forestry Panel of the UN.

In the opinion of the Commission of Jurists, it is an exclusive law which will work towards "giving incentive to investors to exploit forestlands economically with no kind of sustainable ecological management. In no way does it guarantee the conservation of the ecosystems. If the law is approved, 60 million hectares of Colombian forestland, approximately 27 million of which belong to indigenous and afro-colombian communities, will pass into the hands of foreign investors."

Greens Not Welcome in Colombia

At the beginning of November, 25 Green members of parliament from Europe, Latin America, Asia and Australia visited Colombia to investigate the political situation and to demand that the government negotiate for the release of their counterpart in Colombia, Ingrid Betancourt, kidnapped several years ago by the FARC. They held meetings with various political parties and institutions, but were not received by the national government who said they had 'no interest in meeting them'. 'We were vetoed', commented one of the Green members of the European Parliament.

Spreading 'Democracy' in South America and elsewhere, US style

The US military is present in 120 of the 191 nations in the world.

(*Testimony before Armed Services Committee, 5.4.04., taken from 'Lepoco' peace activists' bulletin, USA*)

"If the US government were held to the FBI's official definition of terrorism ('the unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives'), their list of victims since World War II alone would include: Cuba, Haiti, Dominican Republic,

Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Panama, Mexico, Chile, Grenada, Colombia, Bolivia, Venezuela, Uruguay, Paraguay, Ecuador, Zaire, Namibia, Lebanon, Egypt, Greece, Cyprus, Bangladesh, Iran, South Africa, the Philippines, Korea, Vietnam, Laos, Iraq, Cambodia, Libya, Israel, Palestine, China, Afghanistan, Sudan, Indonesia, East Timor, Turkey, Angola, Mozambique, and Somalia.”

Chris White, ex-US Marine Corps. 'serving' from 1994-98 in places such as Diego Garcia, Okinawa, Japan, and Doha, Qatar.

Conversion by Des Brittain

“The very first anti-Vietnam war demo I went on was the Moratorium in Australia. I was 21 and **pro-American** then and raged against the long-haired hippy commies. I even got my picture in a Melbourne newspaper as a lone pro-war protestor amongst the hundreds of thousands on the march.

“At the end of the demo, as everyone listened to the speeches, a young couple took me aside and explained things to me. I remember vividly them telling me about the American invasion of Nicaragua in particular and also of Lebanon.

“They spoke quietly to me for about half an hour, gently disillussioning me about all I thought I believed in. They gave me some leaflets and I came away from that meeting a totally changed person. It was most definitely a ‘conversion on the road to Damascus’. God bless that anonymous couple wherever they are now. They don’t know it, but they changed totally the course of one man’s life.” (*Des was brought up on a military base*)

On ‘Education’ – by Anne

The rule that you need diplomas and degrees to get a good job is how this horrible capitalist ‘culture’ controls, buys and sells people’s intelligence and knowledge. You only have to look at how much any of those bits of paper costs in Colombia to realize that what matters most is the ‘*negocio*’ – the business - not the knowledge or education.

The other day, a nice lady from the Bogota City Council was looking at the ‘Moon gardens’ in order to decide whether the Council will give them – and me – some money to run the project. She asked me what *Qualifications* I had as an ‘Agronomist’! It is a normal question here, but I have still not got over it. There she was, looking at the gardens and the tons of black earth we had created in a desert, and all the food growing all over the place, and all the people working happily, but a

University Degree is what really proves you know something. My heart still beats fast when I think of what this question – innocent on her part – really means. It means you only know something if you paid lots to learn it, and not just with money, but with your soul and your braincells too. It means that the only people who get good jobs that give them power over other people are those who have managed to deaden themselves enough to sit and be bored for several years by mediocre teachers, whilst the really intelligent, open-minded, hard-working people who are too poor to get a degree are paid f.all and get treated like dirt.

A Happy Birthday in Prison by Anne

I just had a nice birthday party in prison. The prisoners I visit managed to get a little cake, with fruit and milk. Yesterday, I had a posher celebration, but definitely prison was the best venue, with nice men, good conversation, no loud music, no booze, no fags ... all my posh middle class friends thought I was mad going to jail for the day!

An ‘Ecological’ Dream (by Jenny)

I dreamt I was looking at a very steep muddy mountain slope down which huge boulders were tumbling unstoppably. People were rushing down in front of them, obviously about to be overcome and crushed, with no hope of survival whatsoever.

I stared in utter amazement, as it was equally obvious that all the people had to do to save themselves was to STEP TO ONE SIDE out of the path of destruction....

And on a lighter note:

Old Wives’ Tales, Colombian style - by Louise

Having a newborn baby opens you up to a barrage of unsolicited Advice and Rules from all and sundry. Here is the most recent crop thrown at me in the first weeks of my son’s life:

I’ve been told **never to sit my baby up** (any baby’s favourite position) because ***it’s spine will bend and stay like that for the rest of its life and its cheeks will end up permanently sagging downwards!***

And here’s what to do for Hiccups: ***wet a piece of paper and stick it to the baby’s forehead.*** I’ve actually seen this done throughout my life living in many different parts of Colombia.

By the way, *getting hiccups* means **the baby is feeling cold.**

And *yawning* means **the baby is hungry!**

I have lately been severely told off by all my friends for not completing (or even starting) my “*dieta*”: this means staying in bed for **FORTY DAYS** (heaven forbid!) after giving birth. This ritual has to be carried out in a **dark room** and I have to **eat chicken soup everyday.**

“But I’m vegetarian,” I say, “and I don’t believe in these things.”

“Well, you are going to suffer from *chronic head aches and heavy menstrual pain and back pain and weakness for the rest of your life then,*” they say. Funny that, haven’t seen those symptoms in my mother who was up gardening a few hours after giving birth to my sister Alice!

Also, I’m supposed to wear a tight thick strap around my waist ‘to help the womb go back into place’ and, worse, **to put one on the baby** ‘to avoid a hernia.’

Plus, I have to ‘put a necklace of garlic around the baby’s neck’ to **avoid the Evil Eye**, and he should wear a little image of the ‘Virgin’ Mary and Jesus so that the Devil doesn’t take him away... this was told to me by someone who sells these little images, but I also heard it at school when I was a child.

A few days after having my baby, I was stopped on our street by a lady who said, “Were you the girl who was pregnant?” Yes, I said. “Oh, I got to you too late,” she said, “I needed you still pregnant so you could come and **cure my niece’s hernia** by *putting some of your saliva on it...*”

One day, I was holding my baby in front of a mirror and a young girl said to me almost panicking, “DON’T DO THAT! - If the baby sees himself in the mirror, it will **make him recycle his own poo inside his stomach.**” (For goodness’ sake, where do this get all this from?!)

I have been told by innumerable people that I should not let people look at my baby while he is so small, as so many people have bad energy and an ‘evil eye’ which will make my baby ill, thin and dried up, **especially women who are having their period** will have this effect. Whenever I respond that I don’t believe in these

things, they always insist and tell stories of people in their family it has happened to.

My sister Katie’s boyfriend’s family told me in all seriousness that when a woman who is having a period looks at a baby, the baby will start grunting and groaning and will be very uncomfortable, and that the only solution is to get that same woman **to put a tiny bit of her saliva into the baby’s mouth.**

Colombian leprechauns (from Jenny)

- When travelling the long night hours over the mountains from Popayán to our farm with the local milkman in his van, one of his favourite topics of conversation is *duendes* (dwarfish fairies), - he is worried that I don’t believe in them and seems to feel it his duty to show me the error of my ways.

One night we were talking about Jack, my extremely lively adventurous 2 year old grandson. I was telling my milkman friend Luis how Jack loves to wander off up the steep hills of the mountain behind our house. ‘Oh dangerous!’ said Luis. ‘Yes, I know, it *is* a bit worrying,’ said I, ‘he chases the cows and they might turn on him’. ‘No, no, no,’ says Luis, ‘because the *Duende* might take him away.’ Jack’s Colombian father Mario was sitting beside me, and I then had to listen for hours in silent amazement whilst these two normally down-to-earth, macho working men had a long and very serious discussion about *duendes*, the most notable aspect of which was the following **Final Proof** of their existence – and of their preference for stealing away little girls, the only females in the world the right size for them: The very young daughter of a friend of Luis’s had disappeared. She was tragically found dead, stretched on a rock in the middle of a stream, far from home, with no scratch or sign of injury upon her, in an area she could not possibly have reached alone at her age. **Therefore Duendes exist.** In England, one might at the very least expect a murder investigation.... Not here, they *know* how it happened.....

More next Letter,

With love to all our Readers,
Jenny James