

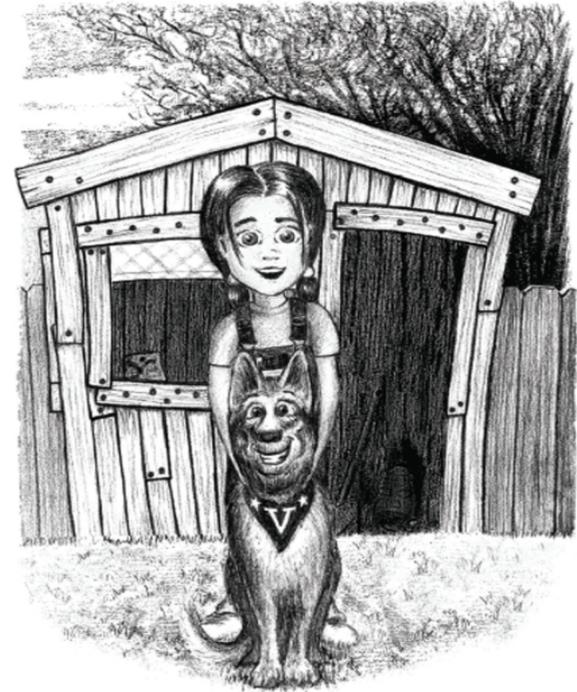


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¡Hola!, hello, everyone! It's me, Perla Garcia and my fabulous German Shepherd, Valiente, which means "brave" in Spanish. Tonight, mystery busters, I want to share with you our latest case, The Mystery of La Llorona, The Weeping Woman.



This misterio started this evening, just as a full moon rose over el Barrio de Guadalupe and our amigo, Javier, started banging on our clubhouse window.

“Perla! Valiente! Please, you gotta help me! I was throwing rocks into the arroyo, the stream, when La Llorona started chasing me.”

“Chasing you? La Llorona,” I asked, then quickly added, “I don't think so.”

“It's the truth, Perla,” Javier exclaimed, “I swear!”

“Come on, Javier,” I said, “everyone knows that La Llorona is not real.”

“She is real,” Javier cried. “My parents told me and my sisters that she's a ghost, a fantasma, who haunts the arroyo at night looking for her children, and if she sees one of us she grabs us and we're never seen or heard from again.”

“Our parents tell us that story,” I said, “so we'll make sure and get home before it gets dark outside.”

“But I saw her with my own two eyes,” Javier said, then pleaded, “Please, Perla, you and Valiente have to figure out if La Llorona is real before she snatches one of our amigos.”



Something or someone had scared Javier, but was it La Llorona, the weeping woman? There was only one way to find out, we had to visit the spot where this misterio first started.

Reaching the stream, I asked, “Javier, are you sure it was here by the arroyo where you first saw La Llorona? Because there are no footprints anywhere around here except for ours.”

“That’s because ghosts don’t walk, they float,” Javier said, as Valiente barked.

“Did Valiente find a pista, a clue?” Javier asked me.

“Yes, yes, he did,” I answered. “His paw prints...you can see ‘em on the bank, but they disappear at the spot where he walked into the water.”

“What does that mean?” Javier asked.

“It means,” I answered, “that the woman chasing you might not have been a fantasma, a ghost. Because, if she was walking or running in the water, she would not have left any footprints on the ground.”

As I finished talking, Valiente barked and I asked him, “What is it, boy?”

Valiente barked three more times and looked toward the bridge.

“Valiente hears something by the bridge,” I said to Javier, “come on, let’s go see if it’s La Llorona.”



“No,” Javier exclaimed, “I better get home before my parents get worried about me.”

“Good idea, Javier,” I told him. “Why don't you take Valiente with you just in case, meanwhile I'll stay here and get to the bottom of this misterio.”

Disagreeing with my idea, Valentine barked twice.

“I don't think Valiente likes the idea of you staying here by yourself,” Javier said to me.

“Don't worry about me, boy,” I said to Valiente, “I'll be okay until you get back.”

Valiente barked three times, then I petted him saying, “Yes, I promise on.”

“Adiós, Perla,” Javier said, sadly.

“Bye, Javier. See you tomorrow.”



Whining, Javier said, “I hope so.”

“As Javier and Valiente walked away, I searched for clues as I walked toward the bridge.

“Hum...there are no footprints or pistas anywhere, but wait... there's something tangled in a bush and it's fluttering in the wind, like a little flag. What is it?”

I pulled the clue from the bush and looked it over.

“It's...it's a torn piece of silky white cloth. Could it be a piece of La Llorona's gown? No, it can't be, because if La Llorona is a fantasma there is no way her ghostly gown could have torn.”



The wind howling, I heard a lady cry, “My niños! My babies! Where are you? Cry so mama can find you!”

“Who is that?” I asked myself.

“Wait,” I said to myself as I saw her. “I think I can see La Llorona standing by the arroyo. She's wearing a silky white gown and she's floating in the air like a fantasma.”

Suddenly, I heard her babies crying in the distance.

“My niños! My babies!” La Llorona cried, “I can hear you, but I can't see you! Cry, cry again so mama can find you!”

“What was that,” I asked myself, “La Llorona's babies or just my imagination?”

Once again I heard her babies crying in the distance. “My babies,” La Llorona, yelled, “I hear you! Don't worry, Mama's coming to save you!”



Suddenly, I saw La Llorona standing in front of me, then beside me, then behind me! Then running right at me. I took off running as fast as I could.

“Can you feel me getting closer?” La Llorona asked me. “Can you feel my hand on your shoulder? Can you feel my breath on your neck?”

“Yes, yes, I can!” I cried.

“You better keep on running Perla,” La Llorona exclaimed, “because if I catch you, you'll never see Valiente or your parents and amigos, again!”

“No, I will not run from you anymore! I am brave! I am strong! I am the one and only Perla Garcia! You do not scare me anymore. I will turn and face you, head on!”

Suddenly, out of nowhere, Valiente leapt inbetween us barking and growling.

“No, Valiente,” the lady who I thought was La Llorona screamed, “please don't bite me!”

“Stop, Valiente, stop,” I ordered him, “that voice, it sounds familiar.”



“Who are you?” I asked the lady.

“It's me,” she answered, “Cecilia Osman.”

“The sixth grade teacher at my school?” I asked.

“Yes,” she said, “at Guadalupe Elementary. Por favor, Perla, you and Valiente have to help me. I was walking my niños by the arroyo when a racoon scared them and they ran away.”

Valiente barked.

“What is it, boy?” I asked him, when I suddenly heard the faint sound of kittens meowing.

“My babies,” Señorita Osman said, “I can hear them, but I can't see them.”

“Look over there,” I said, “where Valiente is pawing at that bush.”

The sound of kittens meowing getting louder, I asked Valiente, “What did you find, boy?”

Valiente whined as I saw them. “Yes, yes, I see them...two kittens! One black and one white!”

“My niños!” Señorita Osman cried, “My babies! Valiente, you found them!”



The kittens stopped meowing and started purring. “Muchas gracias, Perla y Valiente!” Señorita Osman exclaimed, “Thank you! Thank you!”

“You are welcome!” I said as Valiente barked twice.

“I better get my babies home,” Señorita Osman said, “and the two of you better get to your casa before La Llorona snatches you.”

“Yes, yes, we better,” I said, adding, “buenas noches, Señorita Osman.”

Walking away, Señorita Osman said, “Good night, Perla y Valiente, and thanks again!”



Well, there you have it, the case of La Llorona, The Weeping Woman, solved.

I can't wait to tell Javier who La Llorona turned out to be. I bet he'll be surprised.

Until next time, this is Perla Garcia y Valiente inviting you to join us in solving our next misterio.

Exactly when that mystery will take place is anyone's guess!

But rest assured, if we're on the case, there's no misterio, easy or hard, big or small, that the greatest mystery busters in the history of el Barrio de Guadalupe can't solve! Good-bye for now, mystery busters, adiós!

