

evening in 1976, after a dispute, he started to hit me uncontrollably. Terrified by his aberrant behaviour, I fled to a neighbour's house, where I spent the night wrapped in a blanket on the carpet after calling the police. Physical violence was something I had not anticipated. The next morning, I packed all my belongings while an officer observed, and caught a plane to Mexico, where my parents were spending Christmas.

It was a terrible trip. I cried on the plane, knowing it was finally over between Cal and me. On arrival in Mexico City, I learned that the airline could not locate my guitar; bad enough to lose my boyfriend, but losing my guitar was even worse! A girlfriend of Mexico's famous actor Cantinflas, whom I had met on the plane, tried to ameliorate my distress, inviting me to stay in her sumptuous Camino Real suite while the airlines searched for my missing guitar. I could not have been the best of company. After three days of anxious waiting, I was thrilled to see Cantinflas's chauffeur miraculously materialize with my guitar, exclaiming triumphantly, "She is found in Seattle!" I fought my way through the crowded bus station to the only available transportation — a third-class Flecha Amarilla bus crammed to the roof with peasants and bleating goats. I had to support on my knees a wizened peasant woman with a tubercular cough, who dumped a basket containing her squawking rooster at my feet. After four interminable hours of bumping along mountain roads and lurching to an uncertain halt at every dusty village, the bus deposited me in the darkened market streets of San Miguel de Allende. I struggled my way to the central Jardín, where I knew my anxious parents had been waiting for hours, expecting me to arrive on the first-class bus, La Estrella del Norte. The bells of the Parroquia started to ring as I dragged my guitar case over the familiar cobblestoned streets. It was midnight on Christmas Eve. The stresses of the preceding week left me so enervated that I spent the next week in bed, cursing the emotional maelstrom that Cal had put me through.