

Mariano Silva Fuentes, 33, was one of Mexico's leading cave explorers and biologists. He worked in the biospeleology lab with the science faculty at the Universidad Autónoma Nacional de México. Among many notable accomplishments, he was a member of the 2003 Sistema Cheve expedition, where he joined

the limited fraternity of individuals to have reached the Cheve sump. He died on April 6, 2004 while undertaking a sump dive in the Cueva Oztoquito, Municipio Tzicatlacoyan, Puebla. (See *AMCS Activities Newsletter 27*, page 18.) He and Soriano lived on Mt. Oyameyo.—Bill Stone

Carta para un amigo — Letter for a Friend

Hoy la montaña "El Oyameyo" huele diferente, falta algo de pasión, algo de alegría. En tu casa no humea la chimenea y ya no tenemos esas pláticas donde reíamos. Nuestros vasos ahora no brindan, el vino es diferente y las cosas algo raras. Nos dejaste un poco solos, pero sigues en ese viaje explorando. Y no sé por qué, pero comparto tu pasión por las cuevas y la naturaleza. Estoy triste y creo que la búsqueda de nosotros mismos está más allá de lo que conocemos. Pero hoy sólo quiero decir que te extrañamos, todo por acá está bien. Mucha gente piensa que te has ido, pero yo te veo en cada árbol y cada flor de tu trabajo. Ahora sólo estás en una forma diferente. Me has recordado el compromiso de hacer esto cada día mejor, con todas nuestras fuerzas, porque la vida así es, sin importar el precio, si no todo es en vano. Katy, Chen, Frodo, la Chiquita, Cheve y Soriano, tus perros amigos te mandamos un abrazo, allá donde tu espíritu sigue explorando.

Today, Mt. Oyameyo smells different. It lacks the passion, the joy that used to exist here. And in your house the chimney does not smoke. No longer do we have those chats where we laughed, our glasses raised in toast. The wine is now different. Good times more rare. You left us a little alone. But you continue on that journey of exploration. And I don't know why, but I share your passion for caves and nature. I am sad, and I do believe that the search for ourselves is further away than what we know. But today I only want to say that we miss you, and that everything on this side is OK. Many people think you have gone away, but I see you in every tree and every flower of your work. Now you are just in another form. You have reminded me of the commitment to make every day better, with all our strength, because life is precious, that nothing was in vain. Your dogs and friends—Katy, Chen, Frodo, the Chiquita, Cheve and Soriano—send you a hug, over there where your spirit keeps on exploring.—José Antonio Soriano, translation by Bill Stone