



## “Provisional Report of Elies Santapau’s Sprint”

Jesús Moncada

The chronicler—on most accounts extremely meticulous, quite particular when it comes to details about events being described—regrets having to confess that at present he is still unable to establish with irrefutable accuracy the precise hour this story began. That is to say, the exact moment when Elies Santapau bolted out of his house on the upper end of the steep bakery road and began his unbridled, memorable sprint through the village, leaving the neighbors who witnessed it in amazement. Nonetheless, what can the narrator do, who can he consult if the eye witnesses of the incident prove incapable of reaching an agreement on the facts?

At that crucial moment, the blacksmith Víctor Cardona found himself at the door of his shop, busy removing the nails from the damaged horseshoe on Florida, Juliet de Peris’s she-ass, and he is quite certain that it was quarter to nine in the morning—"on the dot, boy; I’d just glanced at the clock on the church tower." Juliet, who was holding the animal’s leg (the pliers yanking on the hoof had made the ass nervous and unmanageable) states that it was ten minutes before nine according to the tower clock. However, the baker (occupied at that moment with unloading a wagon of flour in front of the bakery, directly opposite the blacksmith) had just noticed the time on the church tower and swears on the health of various family members (none of importance, incidentally, such as his mother-in-law and a couple of brothers-in-law, since one never knows) that it was barely twelve minutes before nine. Despite the fact that the differences matter little and given that Elies’s speed proves almost incredible if we accept as correct even the most conservative estimation (the blacksmith’s), the discrepancies cited here ignited harsh and bloody arguments that still continue in earnest at village gatherings.

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