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LETTERS

. "Nya-bone" art...

I have visited the San Blas Islands [Panama] where the Cuna Indian ladies make those colorful, intricate "molos." Naturally, I kept asking for a mola with a bat on it. I enclose a picture of one of the most expert of the mola makers, Gladys, holding one of her bat molos. Across each bat and in the center is "murcielago" (Spanish for bat); at the top is "come insectos" (eats insects); at the bottom is "buela noche" (flies at night). I learned that the Cuna word for bat is (I'm putting it phonetically) "nya-bone." Every time I would say that word to the ladies, they would break out into laughter, whether at the way I pronounced it or just that I was asking for bat molos, I don't know...but it amused them a lot.

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