

BIRDS ARE COMING

DAVID CÁNDIDO OSORIO





DAVID CÁNDIDO OSORIO is a graphic designer graduated from the School of Design of the Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes (EDINBA). He is specialized in cinematography and comics.

His experience consists of 27 years as a graphic designer/art director in advertising agencies, television channels, production houses and at the Instituto Mexicano de Cinematografía (IMCINE).

Currently, he works as an art director, copywriter, scriptwriter, and freelance cartoonist.

As a cartoonist he has collaborated for a year and a half for magazine *Muy Interesante*, first as a colorist and then in the creation of the script and artwork for the monthly strip.

He has been teaching courses on graphic narrative and screenwriting for film and television for four years, as well as art classes in private schools.



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Birds are coming

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PRESENTATION

Colección *Árbol* is presented by the Instituto Nacional Electoral with the intention of disseminating, in a simple and entertaining way, topics that contribute to the strengthening of democratic values, while promoting the formation of analytical, critical, and participatory readers among girls, boys and young adults.

Although it may be of interest to the general population, this volume is aimed at teens to make them aware that in Mexico, those who for some reason are in pretrial detention have political rights under the principle of the presumption of innocence, which entails full recognition of their citizenship. In recent years, INE has implemented important actions so that persons deprived of their liberty and who have not been sentenced can vote in a special ballot box, installed for this purpose, given the impossibility of leaving the center where they remain while awaiting the conclusion of their process.

This brief fictional work tells the story of Juancho, an 18 year old boy who lives with his sister and grandmother. He dreams of becoming a mechatronics engineer, he plays soccer with his friends and gets involved, unwittingly, in a situation for which he is arrested. The story shows his concerns, dreams, fears, and family needs, as well as the way in which, despite his circumstances, he decides to participate in a nearby electoral process that can directly benefit his family and his neighborhood.

In addition to the care we have taken in dealing with the contents to be transmitted in the colección *Árbol*, the titles that comprise it explore multiple literary subgenres and various illustration trends to provide readers with aesthetic experiences that are enriching. *Birds are coming* is a graphic novel that echoes the great tradition of comic strips in our country. It communicates accurately and offers a very pleasant reading. At the end of the story the section “For reflection and dialogue” is a tool for further understanding of the subject. We hope that this story will allow us to recognize the rights of a disadvantaged social group and that, in doing so, we will strengthen our democratic practices.



JUAN -OR "JUANCHO" AS EVERYONE CALLED HIM- HAD JUST TURNED 18 AND WAS BEGINNING HIS LAST YEAR IN HIGH SCHOOL. HIS BIRTHDAY WAS DURING THE PAST HOLIDAYS AND, AS SOON AS HE TURNED 18, HE IMMEDIATELY WENT TO GET HIS VOTER'S CARD, SO HE COULD CARRY AN OFFICIAL ID WITH HIM.



INE

Instituto Nacional Electoral





HIS PARENTS WERE KILLED IN A COACH CRASH ON THEIR WAY TO VISIT THEIR FAMILY IN HIS FATHER'S HOMETOWN.

THAT HAPPENED WHEN HIS SISTER XIMENA WAS EIGHT YEARS OLD, AND JUANCHO WAS SIX. SINCE THEN, THEIR GRANDMOTHER, LUPITA, A STRONG NORTHERN WOMAN, HAS TAKEN CARE OF THEM.



THEY SUPPORTED THEMSELVES OUT OF AN ORPHANAGE GRANT FROM THE FACTORY THEIR FATHER USED TO WORK FOR AND FROM SOME LITTLE JOBS JUANCHO DID HERE AND THERE FOR HIS ACQUAINTANCES IN LA VILLITA NEIGHBORHOOD.

XIMENA WORKED ON WEEKENDS AT THE BEAUTY SALON AROUND THE CORNER. THEY DIDN'T PAY HER THAT MUCH, BUT IT GAVE HER A CHANCE TO PRACTICE WHAT SHE WAS LEARNING AT THE BEAUTY ACADEMY.





HERE YOU GO, MADAM.
YOUR BLENDER'S READY.

THANKS A LOT, JUAN,
(SHE CHECKS THE BLENDER'S PLUG) ... WOW,
IT LOOKS BRAND NEW!... YOU'VE REALLY MADE THE
MOST OF THAT APPLIANCE REPAIR TRAINING COURSE
YOU'VE TAKEN AT SCHOOL, HAVEN'T YOU?



OF COURSE, SURE,
DON'T WORRY. I'LL BE
WAITING FOR YOU
RIGHT HERE.

TOMORROW I'LL
BRING THAT IRON THAT'S
BEEN BROKEN FOR A
WHILE... SO YOU CAN CHECK
IT. WE CAN SETTLE UP
LATER, RIGHT?

SEND MY
GREETINGS TO
YOUR GRANDMA,
LUPITA!

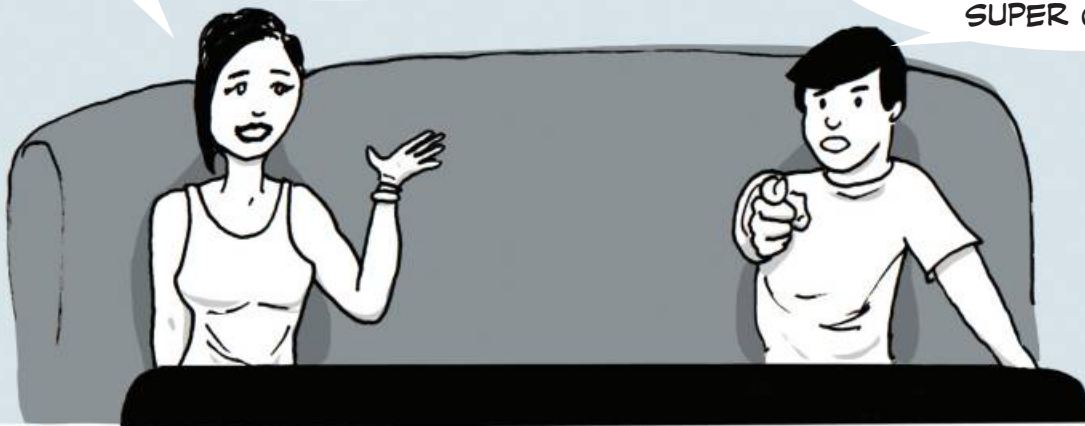
JUANCHO WAS VERY GOOD AT SCHOOL, AND THE FIRST THING HE USED TO DO IN THE AFTERNOONS WAS HIS HOMEWORK.



I'VE GOT TO WORK HARD AT MATH...
HOW ELSE AM I GOING TO BECOME A
MECHATRONICS ENGINEER? I'D BETTER
HURRY UP WITH THESE EQUATIONS OR I'LL
MISS THAT FILM...

OH PLEASE
CHANGE THE TV CHANNEL, JUANCHO, WOULD YOU?
LET'S WATCH SOMETHING ELSE. I'M SICK OF YOU AND
YOUR SCI-FI FILMS! AND YOU'VE WATCHED THAT MOVIE
LIKE A ZILLION TIMES!

OH, COME ON!!
JUST A FEW MORE MINUTES!
LOOK... THOSE ROBOTS ARE
SUPER COOL...



**XIMENA,
JUANCHO...**
YOUR BURRITOS
ARE READY! COME
HAVE DINNER NOW!

COME ON, JUANCHO! LET'S
NOT KEEP HER WAITING. SHE
NEEDS TO GO TO SLEEP NOW.

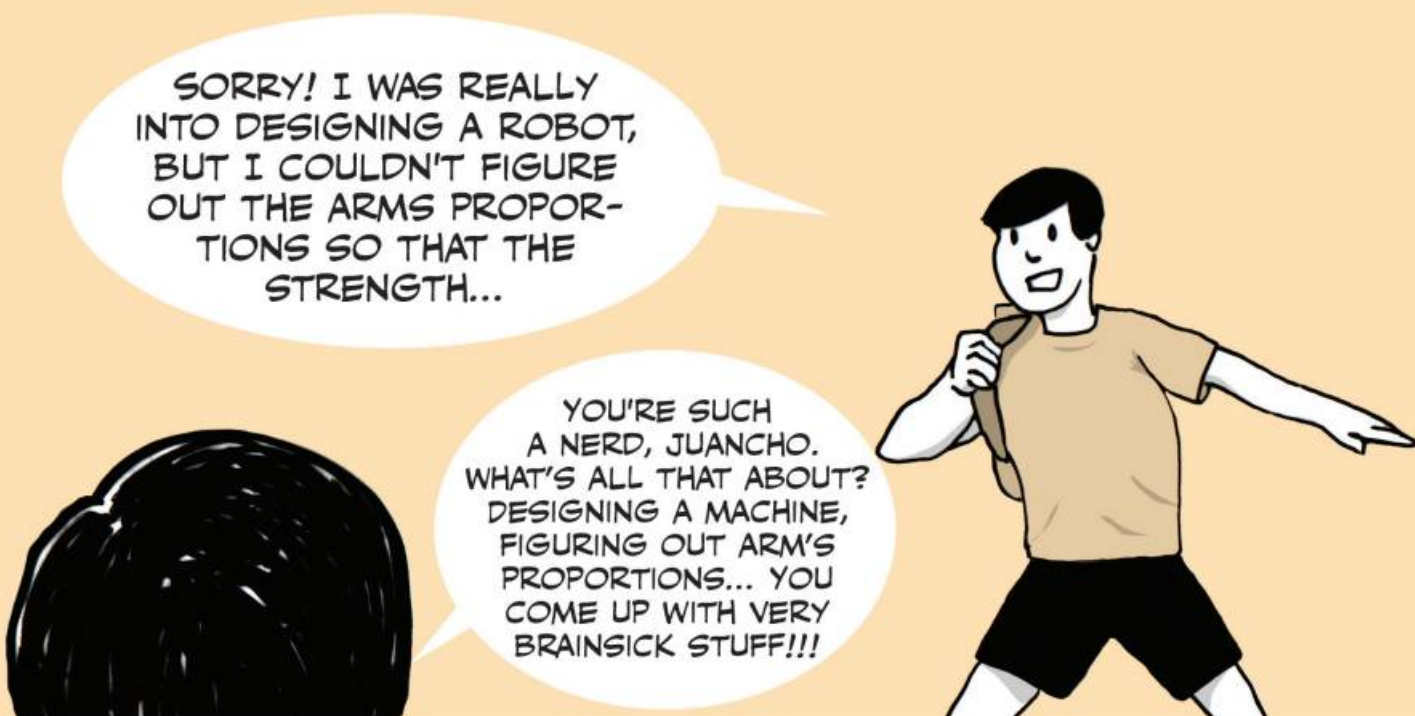
SHE LOOKS
SO UNUSUALLY
TIRED LATELY...

THAT'S HOW JUANCHO WOULD GO THE WHOLE WEEK... WELL, NOT QUITE THE WHOLE WEEK; SATURDAYS WERE DIFFERENT. IT WAS SOCCER MATCH DAY. NOT THAT HE WAS THAT SPORTY, BUT HE LIKED HANGING OUT WITH HIS FRIENDS, ESPECIALLY WITH GORILLA AND PRETTY BOY.



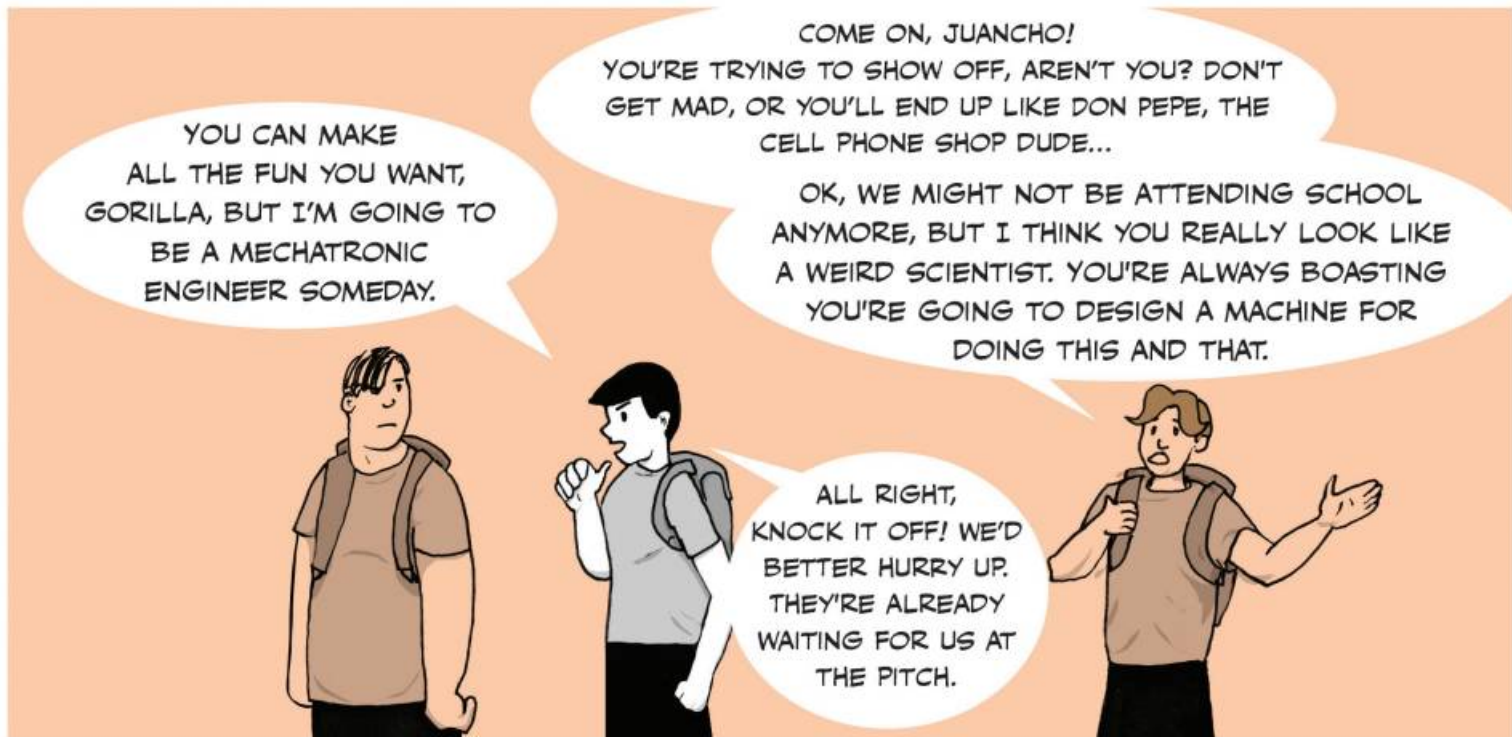
COME ON,
JUANCHO!
LET'S GO!

WHAT NOW? WHY
ISN'T HE OUT ALREADY?



SORRY! I WAS REALLY
INTO DESIGNING A ROBOT,
BUT I COULDN'T FIGURE
OUT THE ARMS PROPOR-
TIONS SO THAT THE
STRENGTH...

YOU'RE SUCH
A NERD, JUANCHO.
WHAT'S ALL THAT ABOUT?
DESIGNING A MACHINE,
FIGURING OUT ARM'S
PROPORTIONS... YOU
COME UP WITH VERY
BRAINSICK STUFF!!!



THE MEMBERS OF "LOS JEFES DE LA VILLITA", THE SOCCER TEAM, WERE FAMOUSLY TOUGH AND A LITTLE BRAWLY.

THEY WERE THICK AS THIEVES, LIKE THAT TIME THEY PLAYED AGAINST THAT TEAM FROM THE RAVINE AREA, AND THEY WERE AWARDED WHAT SEEMED AN UNFAIR PENALTY. AND AS THE OTHERS MADE FUN OF THEM, THEY GOT INTO A FIGHT...



THEY WERE ALWAYS HANGING AROUND AS A GANG... SOMETIMES THEY PLAYED PRACTICAL JOKES ON THE SHOPKEEPERS AROUND THERE... AT FIRST, THEY PLAYED LITTLE, CHILDISH PRANKS... ESPECIALLY GORILLA AND PRETTY BOY.



I DON'T WANT TO STEAL CANDY; I DON'T LIKE THAT!! I THINK THAT'S JUST WRONG. DUDE,



I DON'T WANT TO HARM OTHER PEOPLE. THAT'S DOWNRIGHT STEALING.

THERE YOU GO AGAIN WITH YOUR SILLY STUFF!! THIS IS JUST A GAME. TAKING A FEW DOUGHNUTS OR A CHOCOLATE BAR DOESN'T HURT ANYONE.



ALTHOUGH BOTH GORILLA AND PRETTY BOY WERE A LITTLE YOUNGER THAN JUANCHO, THEY WOULD THRILL HIM WITH DARING ADVENTURES BUT, AT THE SAME TIME, THEY TRULY GOT ON HIS NERVES. IN THE END, JUANCHO WOULD END UP PLAYING ALONG WITH HIS FRIENDS. THE TRULY BAD SIDE OF IT IS THAT THOSE PRANKS WERE ALREADY TURNING DARKER... AND THEY WERE NO LONGER CHILDREN: PANCHO A.K.A. "GORILLA" WAS 17; BETO A.K.A. "PRETTY BOY" WAS AROUND 16.

THAT SATURDAY MORNING, ON THE WAY BACK FROM THE PITCH, JUANCHO DIDN'T FEEL LIKE GOING TO EAT QUESADILLAS WITH THEM, AS THEY USUALLY DID.

TIME TO SPLIT!! I HAVE TO HURRY HOME. MY GRANDMA IS NOT FEELING WELL.

I THOUGHT SHE WAS GETTING BETTER.



YESTERDAY SHE WAS FEELING BAD. AND XIMENA HAS TO GO TO WORK AT THE BEAUTY SALON AND WE DON'T WANT TO LEAVE GRANNY ON HER OWN.

YOU'RE SUCH A DOWNER!! IT WON'T TAKE LONG. YOU CAN EAT YOUR QUESADILLAS AND THEN GO HOME, AND THEY SAY THEY HAVE POZOLES TODAY.

DAMN! DON'T TEMPT ME GORILLA, YOU KNOW MY MOUTH IS WATERING. I'D BETTER BEAT IT!

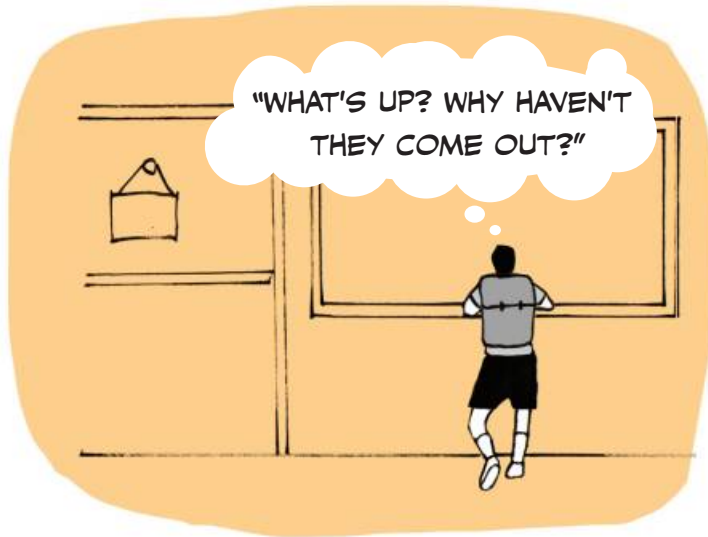


OK FINE. BUT CALL BETO, NOT ME. REMEMBER I DROPPED MY CELL PHONE AND IT'S DEAD.

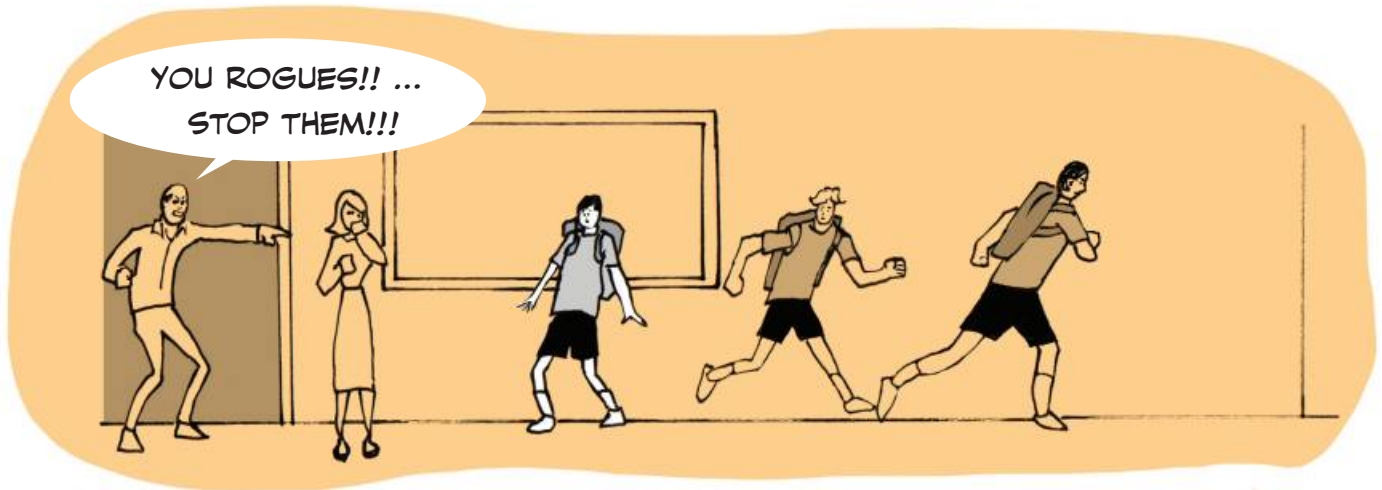


"WHY DIDN'T THEY GO TO THE "QUESADILLA" STAND?"

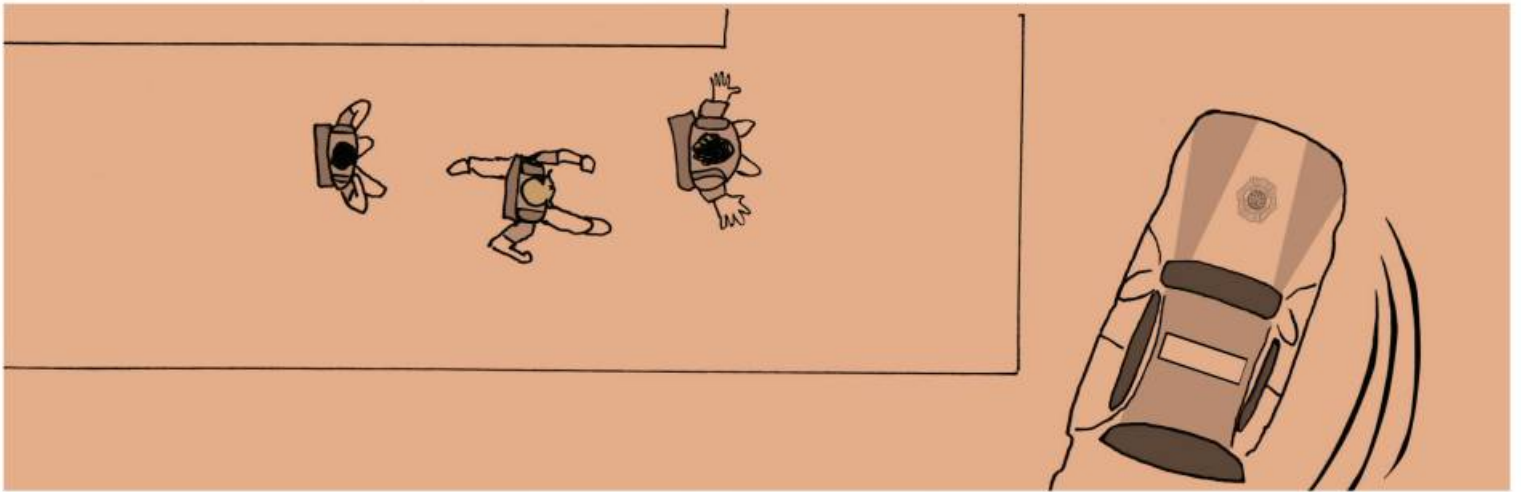




EVERYTHING HAPPENED SO QUICKLY. JUAN SAW HIS FRIENDS RUNNING AWAY AND RAN AFTER THEM; BUT THEY DIDN'T GET TOO FAR.



ANOTHER LADY, WHO WAS WAITING TO BE ATTENDED, WITNESSED EVERYTHING... THE STALL ATTENDANT FROM ACROSS THE STREET SAW EVERYTHING TOO.



SOMEONE CALLED THE POLICE.



A POLICE CAR, WHICH WAS PROBABLY IN THE AREA, ARRIVED ALMOST IMMEDIATELY.





LATER, PANCHO AND BETO CONFESS WHAT HAD HAPPENED:

THEY SAW DON PEPE GOING TO THE BACK OF THE SHOP TO LOOK FOR SOMETHING A CLIENT WAS ASKING FOR;



THE BOYS SEIZED THE OPPORTUNITY AND PACKED EVERYTHING THEY COULD IN THEIR BACKPACKS.



JUANCHO'S BACKPACK WAS EMPTY, BUT THAT DIDN'T HELP, BECAUSE HIS FRIENDS' BACKPACKS WERE FULL OF MERCHANDISE; HE WAS THERE, AND HE HAD ESCAPED WITH THEM... THAT'S WHAT THE WITNESSES SAID.



IN HIS DISTRACTION, HE DIDN'T LOCK THE DISPLAY CASE.



I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! THIS TIME THEY'VE GONE TOO FAR! WHAT THE HELL'S WRONG WITH THEM!!



BUT I'M INNOCENT! I JUST GOT CONFUSED AND DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.



EVERYTHING THAT ENSUED WAS LIKE A NIGHTMARE: THE THREE OF THEM WERE DEEMED EQUALLY GUILTY OF SHOPLIFTING; THE SUM OF WHAT THEY INTENDED TO STEAL WAS CONSIDERABLE (THERE WERE MANY ACCESSORIES AS WELL AS LATEST-GENERATION CELL PHONES): EVEN IF THEY HAD RETURNED THE MERCHANDISE, THAT WOULDN'T HAVE SPARED THEM FROM BEING CHARGED WITH THEFT.

WELL... THERE'S
THE STUFF.



THE BAIL THAT
WAS SET FOR
THEM WAS JUST
UNAFFORDABLE...

HEY! HOW MUCH IS
THE BAIL?



BUT THAT'S A
HELL OF A LOT!



THAT MUCH? BUT,
HOW COME!!



THEY WERE ASSIGNED A PUBLIC ATTORNEY...



IF YOU CAN'T AFFORD THE BAIL, YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO WAIT FOR YOUR SENTENCE IN PRISON. YOU TWO ARE GOING TO A REFORMATORY. YOU, JUANCHO, WILL BE SENT TO THE PENITENTIARY.

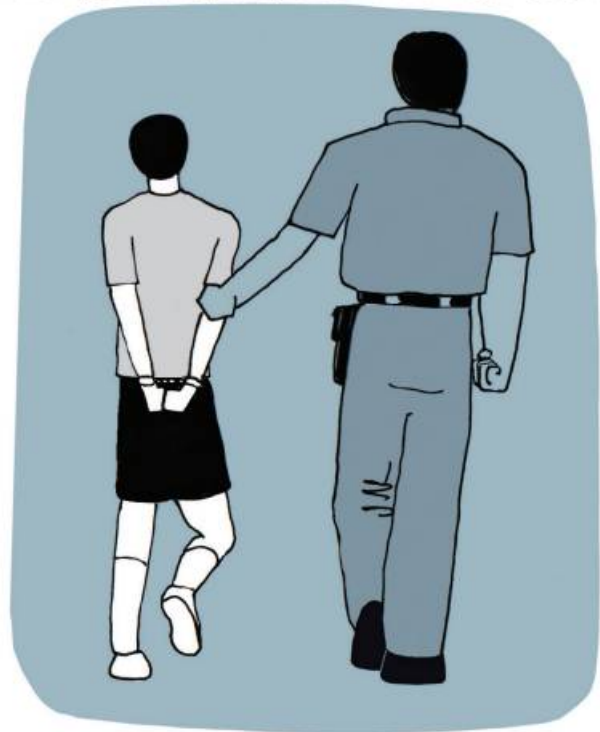
PLEASE TELL MY SISTER XIMENA, HERE'S THE ADDRESS.
I DON'T EVEN WANT TO THINK HOW SHOCKING THIS IS
GOING TO BE FOR MY POOR GRANDMA LUPITA...
AND HER CURRENT STATE
IS FRAIL... DAMMIT...



AFTER ALL THE PAPERWORK, PANCHO
AND BETO WERE TRANSFERRED TO A
JUVENILE REHABILITATION CENTER.



JUANCHO IS GUIDED BY A GUARD ON A CORRIDOR
OF A CORRECTIONAL FACILITY FOR ADULTS.



LITTLE BY LITTLE, JUANCHO GETS USED TO THE ROUTINES, ALTHOUGH THE FEAR AND SADNESS JUST WOULDN'T GO AWAY. HE SPEAKS TO VIRTUALLY NO ONE. HE HASN'T EVEN DARED TO ENTER THE LIBRARY, NOT EVEN TO HAVE SOME RELIEF BY READING A BOOK ON ROBOTICS OR SO... BUT ONE DAY, A SLIGHTLY OLDER INMATE APPROACHES HIM... HE'S HEADING RIGHT TO THE LIBRARY.

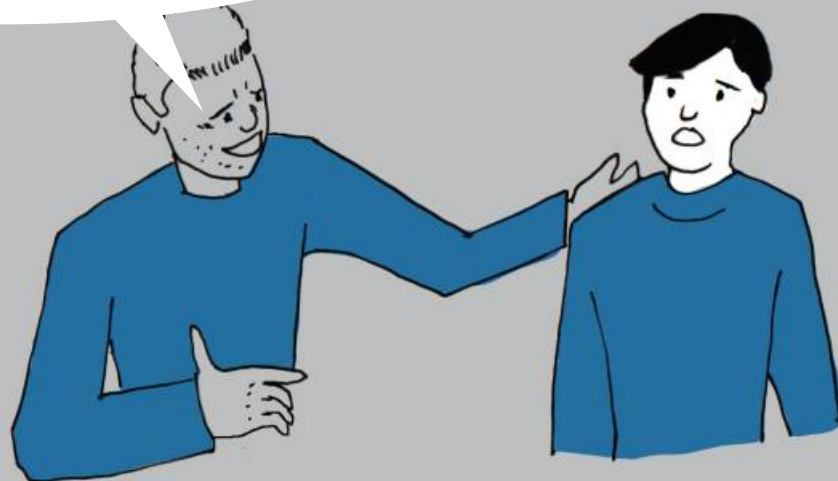


MY NAME IS JUSTINO... I'VE SEEN YOU QUITE ISOLATED, AS IF YOU WERE SCARED... THAT'S NO SURPRISE, THAT'S JUST HOW I FELT WHEN I FIRST ARRIVED. I'VE BEEN HERE FOR A WHILE NOW... I MADE A MISTAKE, A BIG ONE, AND THEY PUT ME IN THE NICK. NOW I STILL HAVE EIGHT YEARS LEFT.

MY NAME IS JUAN


I'VE MUCKED IT UP, TOO...

COME HERE WITH ME! THE CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP TEACHER WILL BE HERE SOON... (THEY WALK TOWARDS THE LIBRARY) COME ON IN, BOY. YOU'LL LIKE IT. HERE YOU CAN TALK IN CONFIDENCE, LET OFF SOME STEAM AND WRITE DOWN WHAT YOU FEEL. THAT'S WHAT WORDS ARE FOR, ISN'T IT SO?




HAVE A SEAT, PLEASE. THE TEACHER WILL BE HERE SOON. YOU'LL ENJOY IT.





I LIKE WRITING BECAUSE I IMAGINE OTHER LIVES AND THINK ABOUT WHAT I'M GOING TO DO WHEN I'M OUT. THERE USED TO BE MORE PEOPLE IN THIS LITERARY WORKSHOP, BUT THEY PREFERRED TO TAKE THE HANDICRAFTS WORKSHOP INSTEAD.



HELLO, TEACHER! LOOK, THIS IS JUAN, I'M TRYING TO PERSUADE HIM TO STAY IN THE WORKSHOP. I THINK HE'LL ENJOY IT.

WELL... I DON'T KNOW. I'VE NEVER WRITTEN ANY STORIES.

HELLO, JUAN!
WELCOME TO THE WORKSHOP. DON'T WORRY. LITTLE BY LITTLE, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO WRITE ANY STORIES YOU WANT TO SHARE...

AND FROM THAT DAY ON, JUANCHO BECAME A REGULAR AT THE WORKSHOP. HE SOON REALIZED THAT HE LIKED WRITING SCI-FI STORIES, WITH ROBOTS THAT DO EVERYTHING HERE ON EARTH, EVEN FALLING IN LOVE...



WHEN HE GOES OUT AND WALKS THROUGH THE COURTYARD, HE SUDDENLY SEES A FLOCK, JUST LIKE THOSE THAT USUALLY PASS BY AT THAT TIME OF THE AFTERNOON.



THEN HE THINKS OF HIS GRANDMOTHER, LUPITA:



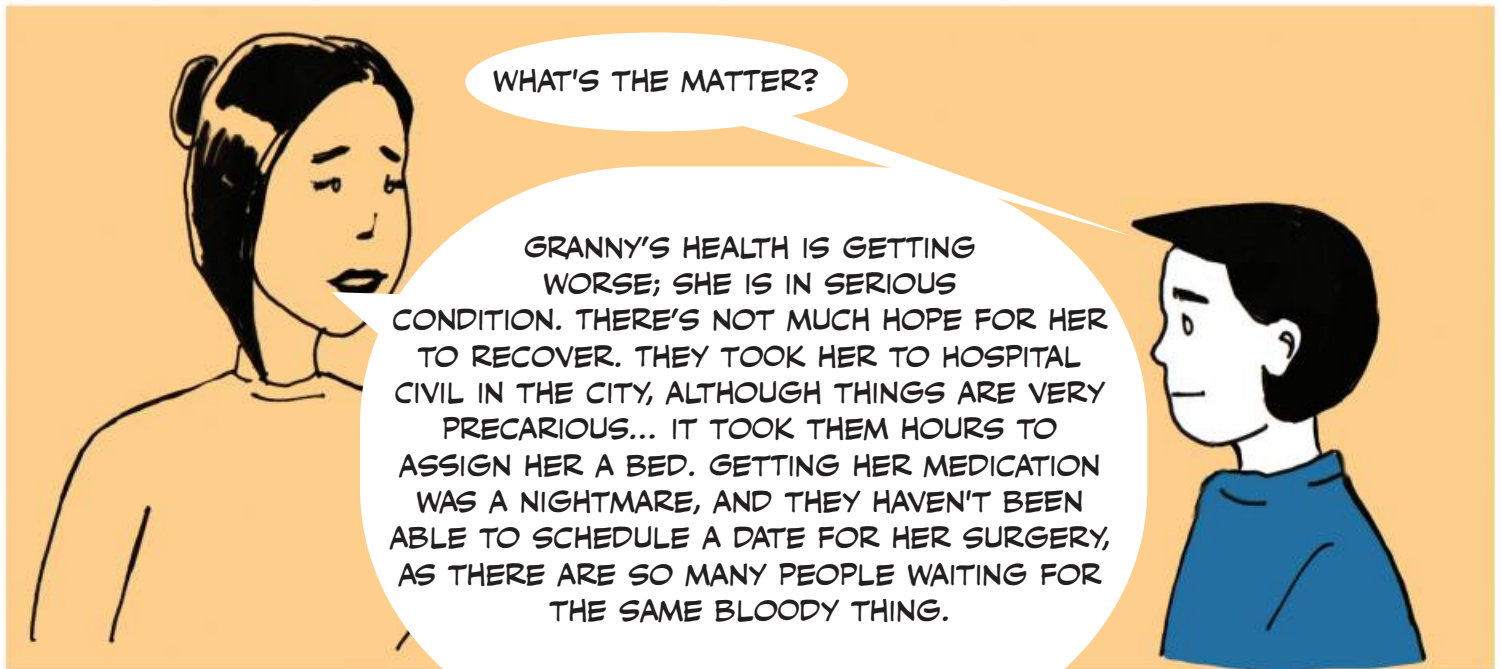
YOU MUST ALWAYS HAVE YOUR WINGS READY TO FLY WHEREVER YOU WANT TO GO, YOU MUST BE FREE AND FLY VERY, VERY HIGH, AND ACHIEVE ANYTHING YOU SET YOUR MIND TO, NO MATTER HOW FAR OR DIFFICULT THAT MAY SEEM...



THE PUBLIC DEFENDER AND JUANCHO'S SISTER



XIMENA'S FACE ISN'T HIDING WHAT SHE FEELS. SHE FEELS SPLIT, SHE ADORES HER BROTHER, BUT THE SITUATION MAKES HER FEEL ANGRY, SAD, AND ANGUISHED, ALL AT ONCE.



THAT'S THE SITUATION FOR MANY PEOPLE. FAMILIES OUTSIDE SPEND HOURS WAITING FOR NEWS, DOING EVERYTHING POSSIBLE SO THAT THEIR SICK RELATIVES HAVE WHAT IS NEEDED AND ARE CARED FOR IN THE BEST POSSIBLE WAY.

AND HERE... I'M POWERLESS, UNABLE TO DO ANYTHING...



XIMENA TELLS HIM THAT SOME OF HIS FRIENDS AT THE SOCCER TEAM HAVE GONE TO VISIT GORILLA AND PRETTY BOY. IT SEEMS THEY'RE VERY SORRY AND REGRETFUL, AND THEY ONLY WANT TO GO HOME.

THE PUBLIC ATTORNEY, WHO'S ALWAYS IMPECCABLE, FORMALLY DRESSED, WITH SLICKED BACK HAIR, AND GOOD-NATURED, TRIES TO CHEER JUAN UP.

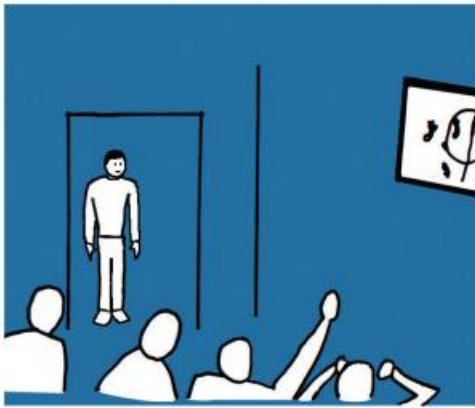
DON'T GIVE UP, JUAN. BE PATIENT. YOU DON'T HAVE A HEARING DATE YET. THEY'VE ALREADY CANCELLED IT TWICE AND THEY STILL HAVEN'T ASSIGNED US A NEW ONE.



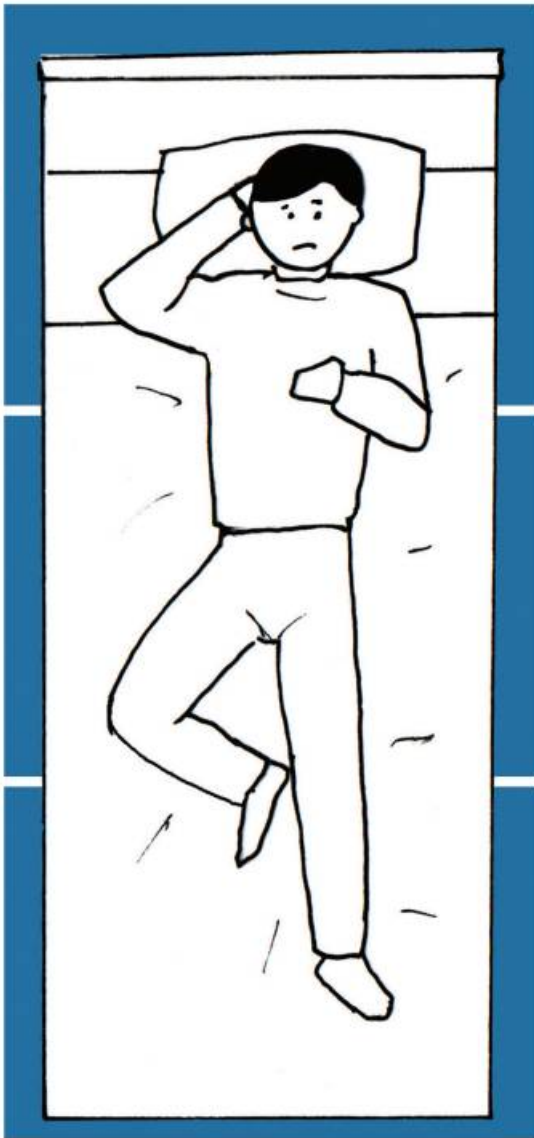
JUANCHO IS VERY DISTRESSED. HE OFTEN HAS NIGHTMARES. FEAR AND INSOMNIA ARE HIS ONLY COMPANY AT NIGHT.



HE THINKS OF HIS GRANDMOTHER, AND WEEPS SILENTLY IN HIS BED, WHILE THE MOON-LIGHT ENTERS THROUGH THE WINDOW OF HIS CELL.



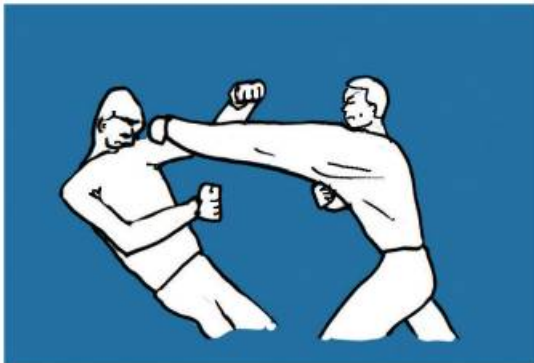
THE DAYS FEEL LIKE
40-HOURS LONG TO ME.



WHEN IS THIS FREAKING
NIGHTMARE
GOING TO END?



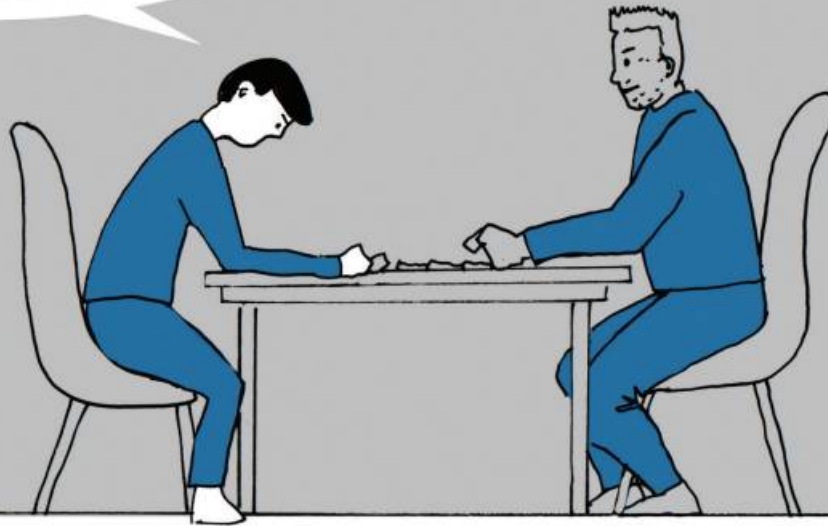
OH, DEAR,
WHAT WILL BECOME
OF ME?



JUSTINO AND JUANCHO ARE GOOD PALS BY NOW. THEY TALK, SHARE JOKES, LAUGH.

THIS LITTLE GAME OF DOMINOES IS REALLY COOL! HONESTLY, I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW IT EXISTED, BUT NOW I'M LOVING IT.

JUSTINO ALWAYS BEATS HIM AT DOMINOES. BUT JUANCHO TAKES IT EASY AND STAYS COOL.



DON'T GET OVERCONFIDENT. YOU'RE BEATING ME NOW BECAUSE YOU'RE OLDER THAN ME, AND YOU CERTAINLY ARE MORE EXPERIENCED. BUT ONE DAY YOUR LUCK WILL RUN OUT. I'M GOING TO CREATE A ROBOT THAT WILL BEAT YOU AT EVERY GAME. HE'LL UTTERLY DEFEAT YOU. HE'LL BEAR MY NAME AND, I SWEAR, I SHALL SOMEHOW BE THE CHAMPION.

JUANCHO DREAMS OF A WORLD WHERE ROBOTS HELP REDUCE THE WORKLOAD FOR THE LABORERS, SO THEY HAVE MORE TIME TO SPEND WITH THEIR FAMILIES.



OH HOW I WOULD'VE LIKED THAT! MY DAD HAVING MORE FREE TIME FOR TAKING MY MUM OUT.

ONE DAY, JUANCHO STOPS BY THE TV ROOM AFTER DINNER. HE DIDN'T GET TO WATCH THE SOCCER MATCH, BUT HE COULD WATCH THE LOCAL NEWS. THERE ARE CAMPAIGNS TO ELECT THE STATE GOVERNOR (THERE'S ONE FEMALE CANDIDATE). ONE OF THEM CATCHES HIS ATTENTION IN PARTICULAR: PEDRO GÓMEZ, HE IS TALKING ON TV...



IT IS ESSENTIAL TO REFURBISH HOSPITAL CIVIL AND PROVIDE IT WITH BETTER RESOURCES... IT IS FOR THE HEALTH OF ALL THE CITIZENS IN THE STATE.

HE'S REMEMBERING HIS GRANDMOTHER...



JUANCHO'S HEART IS POUNDING FRAUGHT WITH FRUSTRATION, HE CLENCHES HIS FISTS.

IF I WERE A FREE MAN, AT LEAST I COULD DO SOMETHING TO MAKE THINGS BETTER...

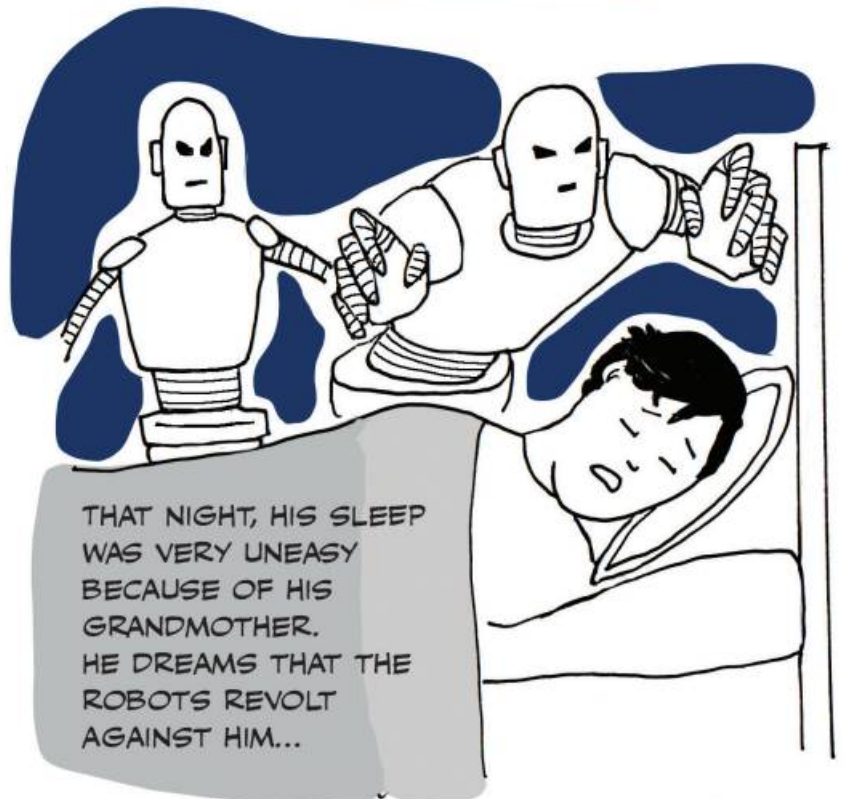
WEEKS HAVE PASSED... THE PUBLIC DEFENDER RETURNS TO VISIT JUANCHO.



THEY'VE FINALLY OPERATED ON YOUR GRANDMOTHER, AND XIMENA STAYED WITH HER. SHE'S STABLE; FRAIL BUT STABLE.

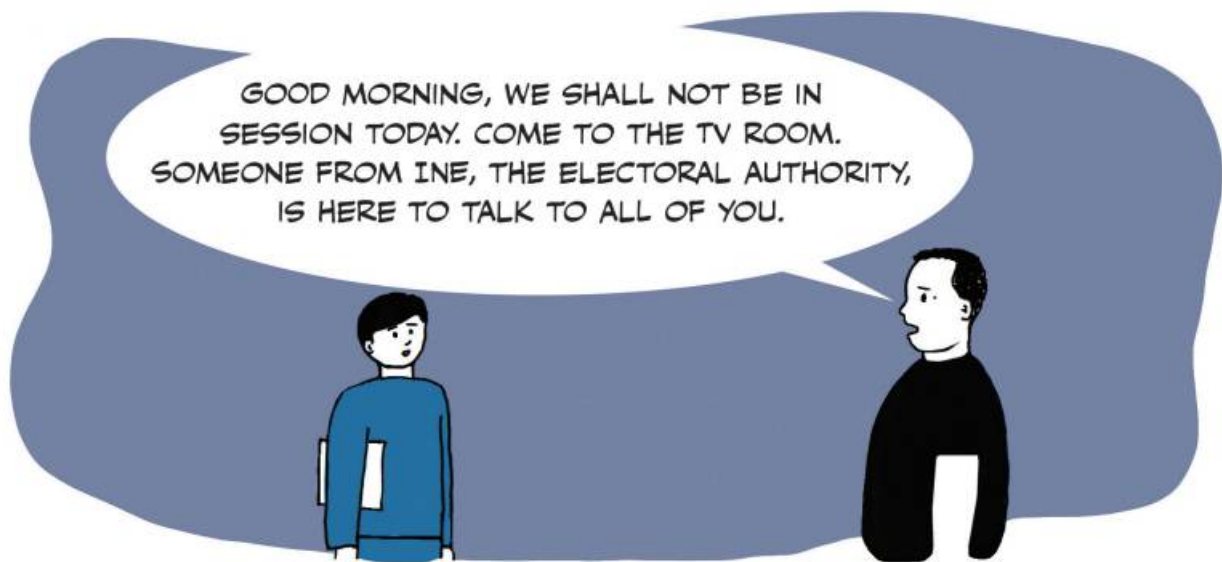


... AS FOR PANCHE AND BETO, THEY WILL HAVE TO SERVE EIGHT MONTHS IN THE JUVENILE REHABILITATION CENTER. THEY'VE DONE FINE SO FAR, AND IT HASN'T BEEN TOO TOUGH ON THEM SINCE IT'S THE FIRST TIME THEY'VE BEEN DETAINED. AND THEY'VE BOTH DECLARED THAT YOU'VE GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH THE ROBBERY.



THAT NIGHT, HIS SLEEP WAS VERY UNEASY BECAUSE OF HIS GRANDMOTHER. HE DREAMS THAT THE ROBOTS REVOLT AGAINST HIM...

THE NEXT DAY, HE ATTENDS THE CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP.



GOOD MORNING, WE SHALL NOT BE IN SESSION TODAY. COME TO THE TV ROOM. SOMEONE FROM INE, THE ELECTORAL AUTHORITY, IS HERE TO TALK TO ALL OF YOU.

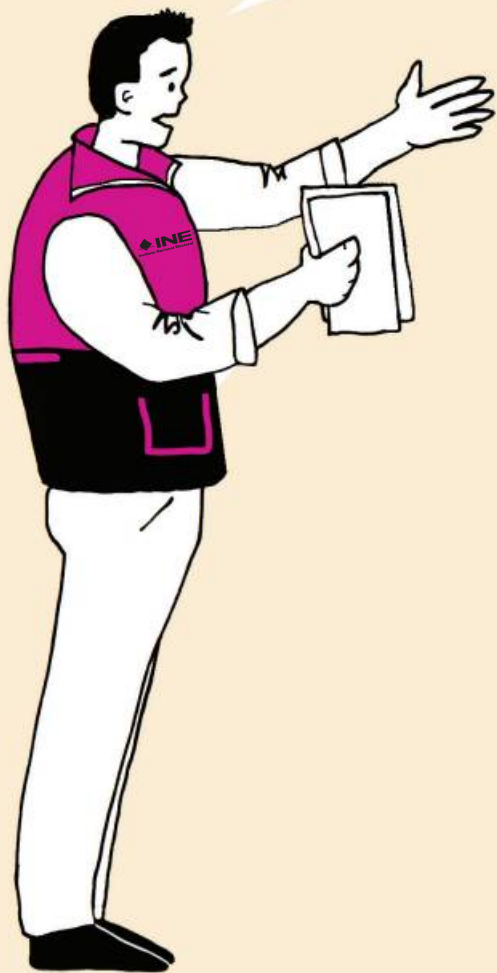
IN A MONTH'S TIME, A POLLING STATION WILL BE SET UP HERE AND YOU WILL BE ABLE TO VOTE. YOUR VOTER'S CREDENTIALS WERE SAFEGUARDED WHEN YOU CAME IN, SO THEY'RE STILL HERE AND YOU'LL BE ABLE TO VOTE.



AND WHY SHOULD WE CARE TO VOTE?

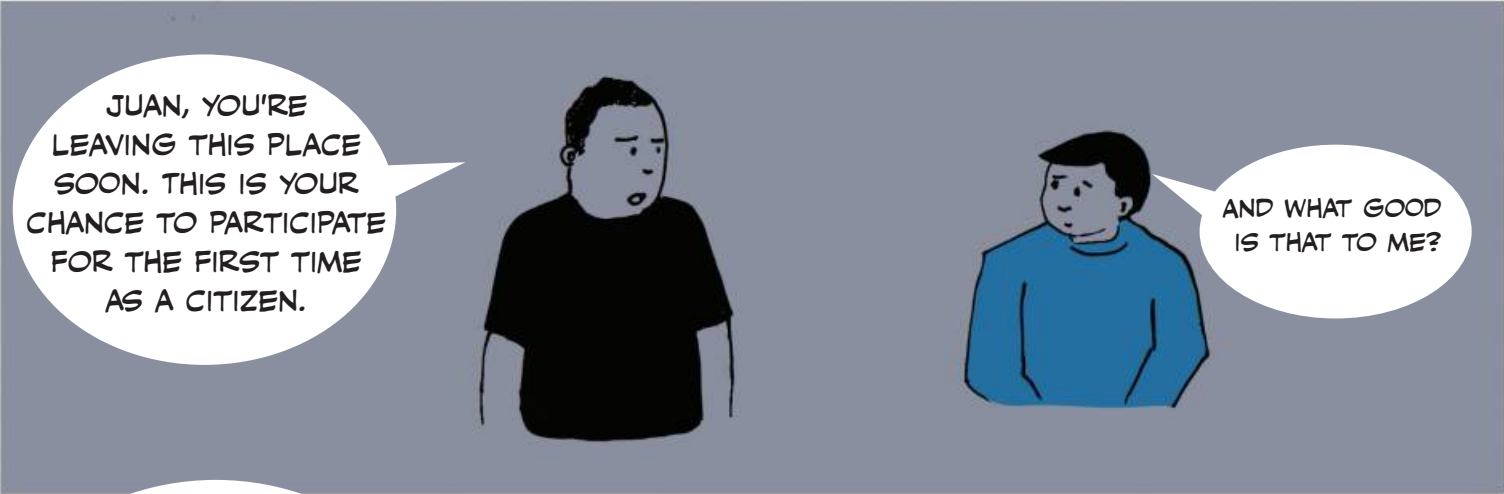


IT IS YOUR RIGHT AS MEXICAN CITIZENS
TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS PROCESS AND TO
BE ABLE TO INFLUENCE WHO YOU WANT
TO GOVERN YOUR STATE, BECAUSE IT
AFFECTS YOU DIRECTLY.



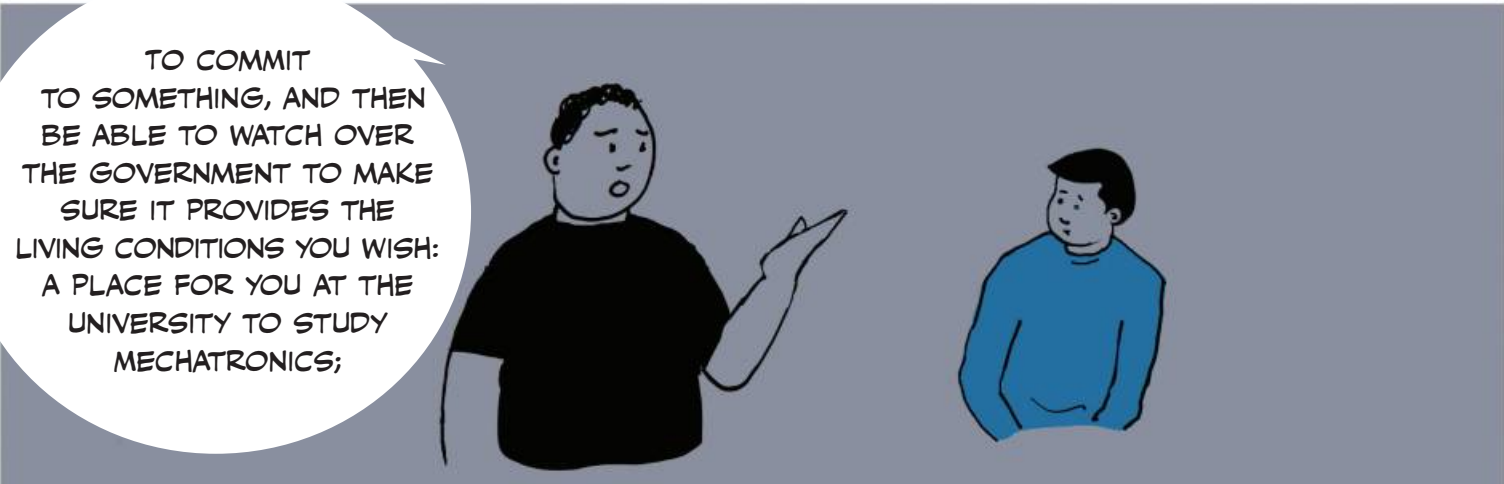
YOU CAN VOTE FOR WHOEVER YOU
THINK WILL WORK BEST FOR THE
PEOPLE OF THIS REGION.






JUAN, YOU'RE LEAVING THIS PLACE SOON. THIS IS YOUR CHANCE TO PARTICIPATE FOR THE FIRST TIME AS A CITIZEN.

AND WHAT GOOD IS THAT TO ME?



TO COMMIT TO SOMETHING, AND THEN BE ABLE TO WATCH OVER THE GOVERNMENT TO MAKE SURE IT PROVIDES THE LIVING CONDITIONS YOU WISH: A PLACE FOR YOU AT THE UNIVERSITY TO STUDY MECHATRONICS;



A COMFORTABLE LIFE FOR YOUR GRANDMOTHER, WHO HAS WORKED SO HARD; JOB OPPORTUNITIES; AND DEVELOPMENT FOR YOU AND YOUR SISTER...

AND BETTER HEALTH SERVICES.

ON ELECTION DAY, JUANCHO WAS VISITED BY HIS PUBLIC ATTORNEY.

JUANCHO, AT LAST WE HAVE NEWS! WE'VE BEEN GIVEN A DATE FOR THE HEARING!



HOPEFUL AND IN GOOD SPIRITS, JUANCHO LINED UP AT THE POLLING STATION TO VOTE FOR THE CANDIDATE WHO PROMISED TO IMPROVE HOSPITAL CIVIL.



THE NIGHT BEFORE THE HEARING, HE COULDN'T SLEEP AT ALL.



WHAT IF THEY FIND ME GUILTY? WHAT IF THEY LEAVE ME IN HERE FOR A ZILLION YEARS? I'D BETTER BE ABDUCTED BY SOME ALIEN TO TAKE ME TO ANOTHER GALAXY.

ON THE DAY OF THE HEARING, THE PUBLIC DEFENDER ARRIVED FIRST AND GAVE JUANCHO NEWS FROM HIS GRANDMOTHER. NOTHING HAD CHANGED MUCH...



HER STATE IS FRAIL, BUT STABLE... SHE'LL HAVE TO STAY IN HOSPITAL FOR A LITTLE LONGER. YOUR SISTER, XIMENA, SAYS WE MUST BE OPTIMISTIC. SHE'S SUCH A STRONG WOMAN, AS EVERY GOOD NORTHERN WOMAN SHOULD BE...



THE HEARING WENT QUICKLY... DOCUMENTS AND TESTIMONIES WERE READ...



THE JUDGE CONCLUDED WITH AN EXPLANATION THAT JUANCHO DID NOT UNDERSTAND VERY WELL. BUT SHE MEANT THAT HE WAS NOW FREE!

JUANCHO LEFT THE HEARING FEELING THE GREATEST JOY HE HAD EVER FELT. IT SEEMED TO HIM THAT IT WAS THE BRIGHTEST DAY OF HIS LIFE AND, AS HE LOOKED UP TO THE SUN,



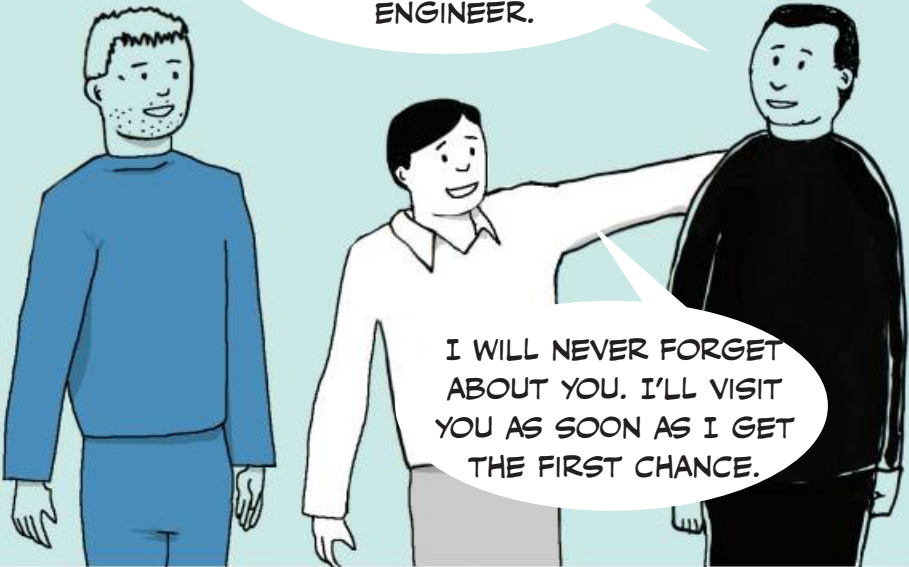
HE SAW A HUGE FLOCK FLYING AWAY...

THE FAREWELL HUGS TO BOTH JUSTINO AND THE TEACHER WERE SO EMOTIONAL...

TAKE CARE.

A man in a blue sweater is hugging a man in a white shirt. A third man in a black sweater stands to the right, watching them.

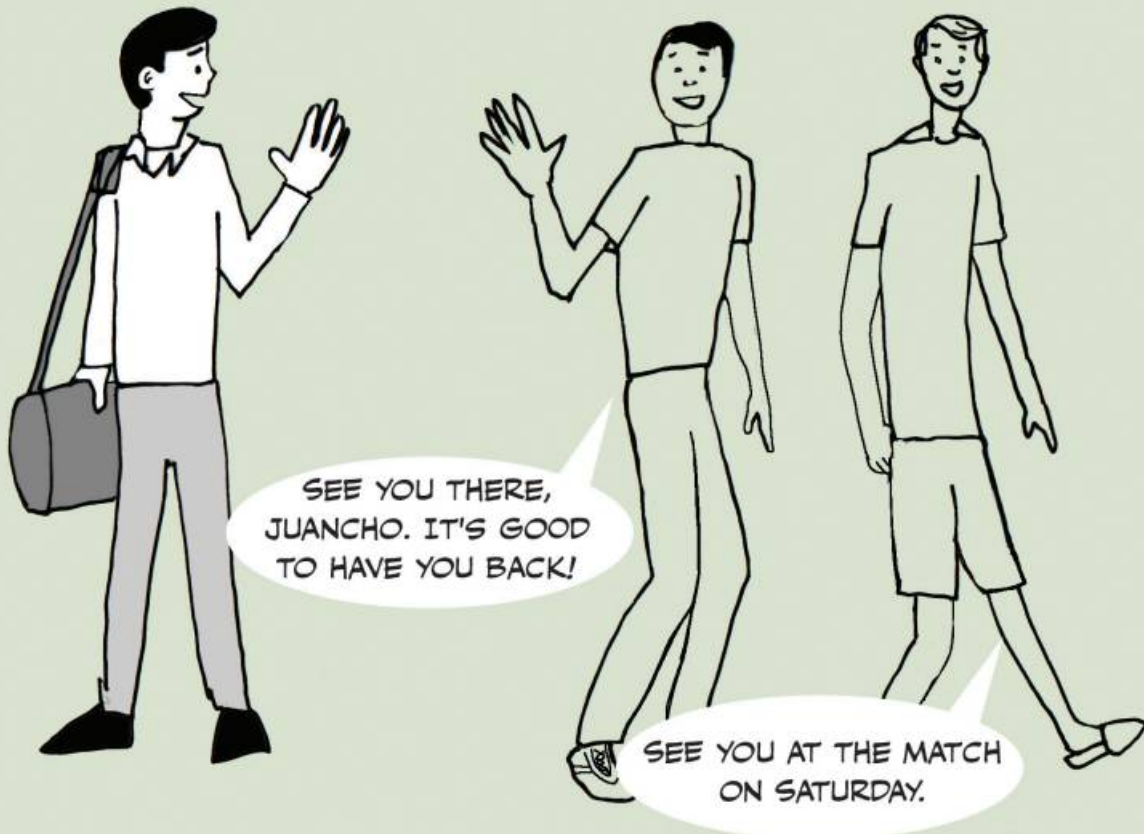
AND WE SHALL KEEP AN EYE ON YOU... WE KNOW YOU'LL BE A GREAT ENGINEER.

A man in a white shirt is hugging a man in a black sweater. A man in a blue sweater stands to the left, watching them.

I WILL NEVER FORGET ABOUT YOU. I'LL VISIT YOU AS SOON AS I GET THE FIRST CHANCE.



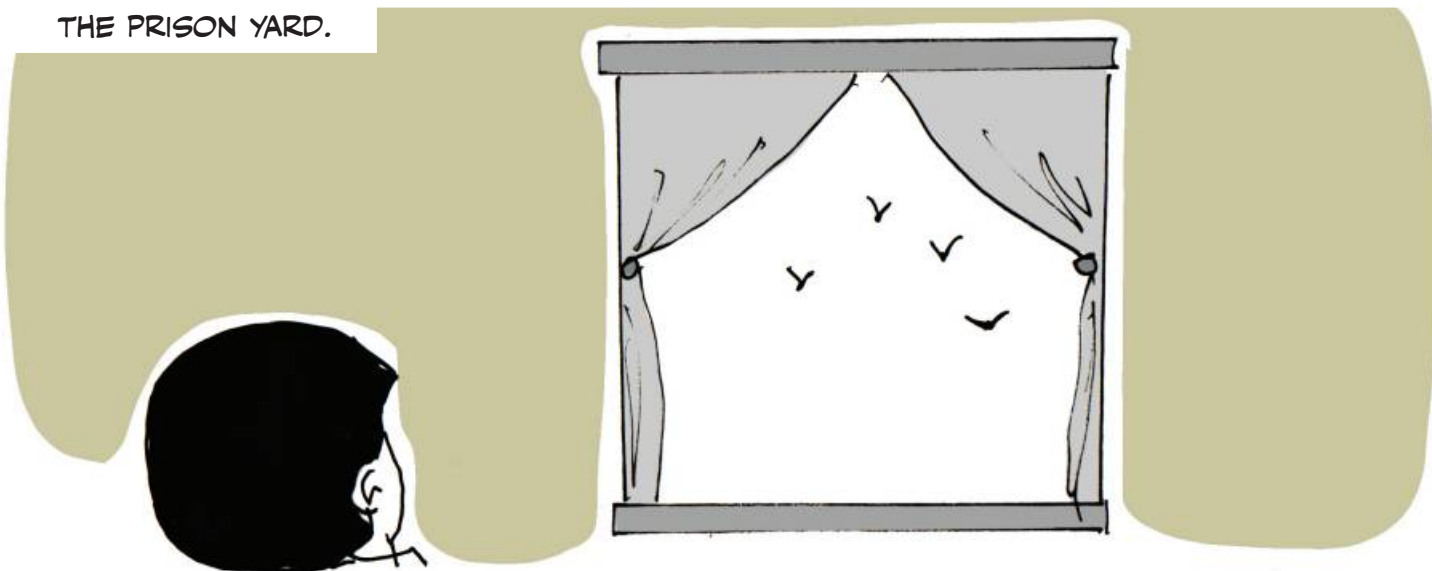
JUANCHO'S FRIENDS FROM "LOS JEFES DE LA VILLITA", ORGANIZED TO GO PICK HIM UP AND TOOK HIM HOME. THEY TOLD HIM BOTH GORILLA AND PRETTY BOY WOULD ALSO BE OUT IN A FEW MONTHS. AND THERE THEY WERE WITH HIM, CELEBRATING, UPDATING HIM ON THE NEWS FROM THE NEIGHBORHOOD. LATER IN THE AFTERNOON, XIMENA ARRIVED.



IT TOOK ME A WHILE TO GET HERE,
BECAUSE I'M BRINGING YOU FABULOUS NEWS:
GRANNY WILL BE OUT TOMORROW! SHE WILL NEED
A LOT OF ATTENTION, CARE, AND AFFECTION, BUT
SHE'S OUT OF DANGER AND,
LITTLE BY LITTLE, SHE WILL
FULLY RECOVER.




JUANCHO SEES THE PIGEONS FLYING FREE. THEY LOOK JUST LIKE THE ONES FROM THE PRISON YARD.



HE PREPARES TO GO TO BED.





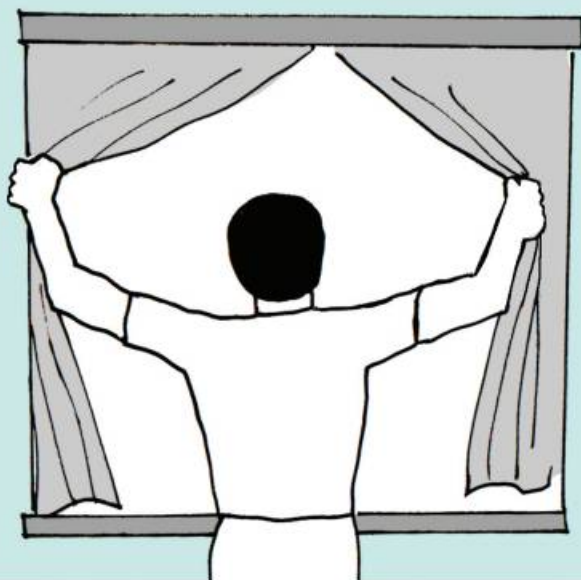
PERHAPS THEY'D
LIKE TO LEARN HOW TO PLAY DOMINOES...
I'M GOING TO PROPOSE THEM TO FORM A
SUPPORT GROUP TO HELP THE PATIENTS FROM
HOSPITAL CIVIL AND THEIR FAMILIES... I ALSO HOPE
THEY STOP BUMMING AROUND, BECAUSE WE ALL
HAVE ALREADY LIVED THE CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR
MISDEMEANORS, AND THEY WERE A NIGHTMARE... I
HOPE THEY GET THE MESSAGE, BECAUSE IF THEY
DON'T... WELL, WE SHALL STAY FRIENDS, BUT I'LL
NO LONGER HANG OUT WITH THEM. OH, AND YES,
AS SOON AS THERE IS A NEW GOVERNOR,
WHOEVER THEY ARE, WE WILL BE
DEMANDING TO IMPROVE THAT
AWFUL HEALTH SERVICE.

FOR NOW, THE FIRST THING
I'VE GOT TO DO IS GOING TO HIGH SCHOOL
TO SEE ABOUT MY ENROLMENT; I'LL HAVE TO
REPEAT THE LAST GRADE... AND THEN...
PREPARE FOR THE TECHNOLOGY COLLEGE
OR UNIVERSITY ENTRANCE EXAM.

THAT NIGHT, JUANCHO ENJOYED THE MOST PEACEFUL SLEEP EVER. HE DREAMT HE HAD ALREADY MANAGED TO FIGURE OUT THE CONNECTIONS TO BUILD THE ROBOT FOR HIS GRANDMOTHER, AND THAT IT WAS ALREADY OUT DOING CHORES AROUND THE HOUSE.



AS SOON AS HE GOT UP, HE OPENED THE CURTAIN TO LOOK OUT OF THE WINDOW...



TO REFLECT AND DIALOGUE



VOTE IN PREVENTIVE DETENTION

Starting in 2019, in a progressive manner, the Instituto Nacional Electoral has implemented mechanisms to ensure the right to participate in the electoral processes of those who are in pretrial detention, so that they can actively exercise their right to vote, which for years had been violated. Now, the focus is guaranteeing their political rights in these circumstances.

Although deprived of their liberty, persons in pretrial detention have not been found guilty of a criminal act and, therefore, should not be prevented from participating in the political debate or in the exercise of suffrage based on the principle of presumption of innocence. If there is no enforceable sentence that convicts them, the Mexican State must provide equal opportunities for them to vote. In the determination to implement the corresponding mechanisms, the electoral authorities of our country considered the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the American Convention on Human Rights, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as the provisions of our Magna Carta.

Birds are coming tells a fragment of the life of Juancho, an 18-year-old young man who finds himself in preventive prison, as he is unwittingly involved in a crime he did not commit.

One Saturday, after a soccer match with his team, Juancho decides not to accompany his friends to eat quesadillas because he is worried



about his sick grandmother. However, something about their behavior strikes him and he follows them.

Everything happened so quickly. Juan saw his friends running away and ran after them; but they didn't get too far. Another lady, who was waiting to be attended, witnessed everything... The stall attendant from across the street saw everything too. Called the police.

A police car, which was probably in the area, arrived almost immediately.

Later, Pancho and Beto confess what had happened: they saw Don Pepe going to the back of the shop to look for something a client was asking for; in his distraction, he didn't lock the display case. The boys seized the opportunity and packed everything they could in their backpacks.

Everything that ensued was like a nightmare: the three of them were deemed equally guilty of shoplifting; the sum of what they intended to steal was considerable (there were many accessories as well as latest-generation cell phones): even if they had returned the merchandise, that wouldn't have spared them from being charged with theft.

The principle of presumption of innocence is provided for in Article 20 of the Political Constitution of the United Mexican States, which implies that any person charged with a crime is presumed innocent until his or her responsibility is declared through a sentence issued by the judge in the case.

Juancho is assigned a public defender and must go through the corresponding process to prove his



innocence. During this time, he befriends an elderly person who invites him to participate in a literary workshop. Meanwhile, out there, unfortunately, his grandmother's illness worsens, and she has to be admitted to the civil hospital, a public health institution with many deficiencies.

One day, Juancho stops by the TV room after dinner. He didn't get to watch the soccer match, but he could watch the local news. There are campaigns to elect the state governor (there's one female candidate). One of them catches his attention in particular: Pedro Gómez, he is talking on TV... "It is essential to refurbish Hospital Civil and provide it with better resources... It is for the health of all the citizens in the state."

Juancho's heart is pounding.

He's remembering his grandmother...

Fraught with frustration, he clenches his fists.



On November 3, 2023, through agreement INE/CG602/2023, the guidelines, the operating model, and the electoral documentation for the organization of the vote of remand prisoners were approved. Thus, at present, they can participate in the election of the Presidency of the Republic and in the local elections of several states for governor or head of government, deputies, and city councils or mayoralties.

To this effect and based on the agreements that INE has made with the respective institutions, in advance the staff of the district boards installs a partition in the place assigned by the prison authorities, to ensure that citizens exercising their right to vote,

have privacy to mark the ballot, which is kept in an anonymous envelope. Subsequently, the closed and sealed envelopes are kept in the facilities of the corresponding district board until June 2, when they are opened to compute the votes.

It is important to mention that prisoners also have the right to be informed about the electoral proposals of the different candidates, as well as the results of the elections.

In our story, Juancho is about to participate in his usual literary workshop session, but it is interrupted by the presence of an INE official, who informs him that:

In a month's time, a polling station will be set up here and you will be able to vote. Your voter's credentials were safeguarded when you came in, so they're still here and you'll be able to vote.

One of the inmates asks:

And why should we care to vote?

The INE official replies:

It is your right as Mexican citizens to participate in this process and to be able to influence who you want to govern your state, because it affects you directly.



You can vote for whoever you think will work best for the people of this region.

It is not clear to Juancho either what the benefit of voting is, but the teacher of the literary workshop makes him think about it:

Juan, you're leaving this place soon. This is your chance to participate for the first time as a citizen.

The boy questions, hesitantly:

And what good is that to me?

To commit yourself to something, and then be able to watch over the government to make sure it provides the living conditions you wish: a place for you at the university to study Mechatronics; a comfortable life for your grandmother, who has worked so hard; job opportunities; and development for you and your sister...



He insists on his concern:

And better health services.

The main objective of the right to vote of those who are in pretrial detention is to avoid disincorporation and alienation from their





membership in the community, and, in addition, in the obligation to effectively guarantee that every person who is a holder of political rights has the real opportunity to exercise them.

INE personnel oversee the preparation and delivery of the invitations, attending to the requests, integrating the election envelopes-packets, and collecting the early voting. The scrutiny and computation are conducted by the tables approved by the district councils and each Local Public Electoral Body incorporates the results into the electoral systems of each election.



On election day, Juancho receives a visit from his lawyer, who informs him that he has already been given a date for a hearing.

Hopeful and in good spirits, Juancho lined up at the polling station to vote for the candidate who promised to improve Hospital Civil.

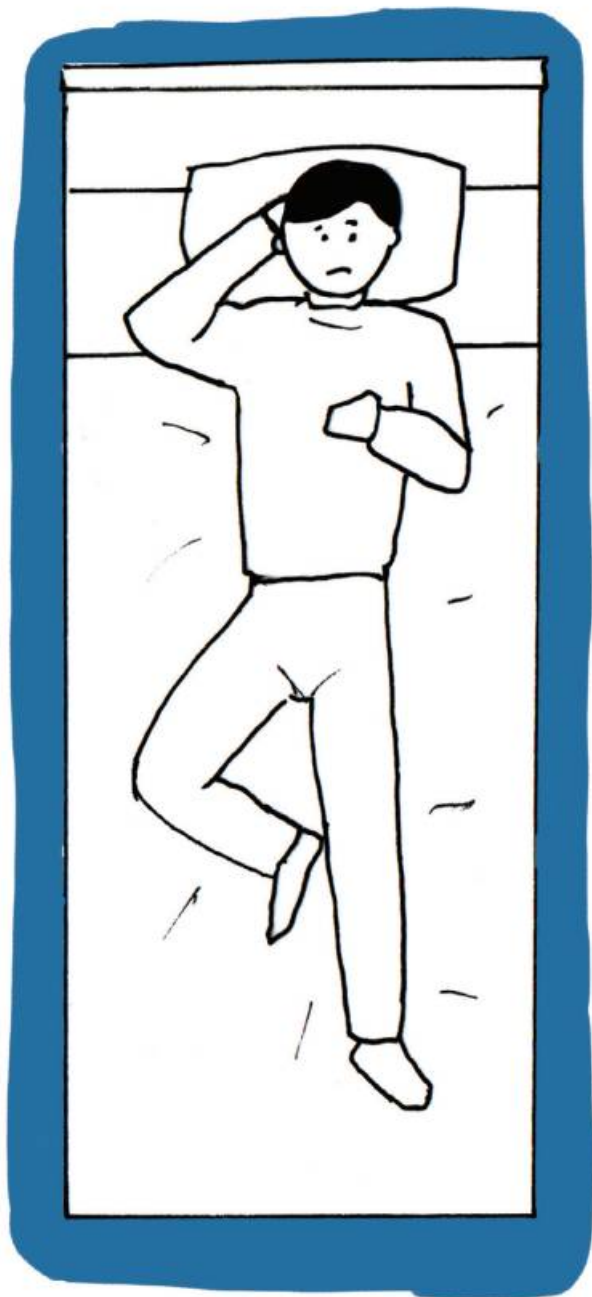
Soon after his hearing takes place.

The judge concluded with an explanation that Juancho did not understand very well, but she meant that he was now free!

Shortly after, Juancho is released from jail. Then his grandmother is discharged from the hospital, and he decides to make changes in his relationship with his friends, as well as to become more active in his community.

As soon as Pancho and Beto get out, I'll convince them to chill out... Perhaps they'd like to learn how to play dominoes... I'm going to propose them to form a support group to help the patients from Hospital Civil and their families... I also hope they stop bumming around, because we all have already lived the consequences of their misdemeanors, and





they were a nightmare... I hope they get the message, because if they don't... well, we shall stay friends, but I'll no longer hang out with them. Oh, and yes, as soon as there is a new governor, whoever they are, we will be demanding them to improve that awful health service.

By allowing people in pretrial detention to vote, Article 35 of our Constitution is fully complied with, since their citizenship is recognized with equal rights and their participation in an integral democracy is allowed. In addition, it constitutes the effective evidence of their belonging to a political community.

Thus, Juancho, back home and in his neighborhood, will be able to establish a new stage of coexistence with his family and friends, as well as new initiatives of community commitment. In this sense, the exercise of the suffrage favored his proactive link with the closest events and his sense of belonging; therefore, his actions will undoubtedly contribute to the democratic strengthening of his environment. And, in a special way, Juancho was able to sustain a hopeful outlook for his future.



Birds are coming

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Dirección Ejecutiva de Capacitación
Electoral y Educación Cívica del
Instituto Nacional Electoral



Juancho is 18 years old; he lives with his sister and grandmother, he dreams of becoming a mechatronics engineer, he plays soccer with his friends and gets involved, unwittingly, in a situation for which he is arrested and remanded in custody. This story is his concerns, dreams, fears, and family needs, as well as his reasons for participating in a nearby electoral process that can directly benefit his family and his neighborhood.

This volume is part of the colección **Árbol**, which seeks to contribute to the civic culture of children and young adults through attractive stories that encourage reflection and active participation in society.