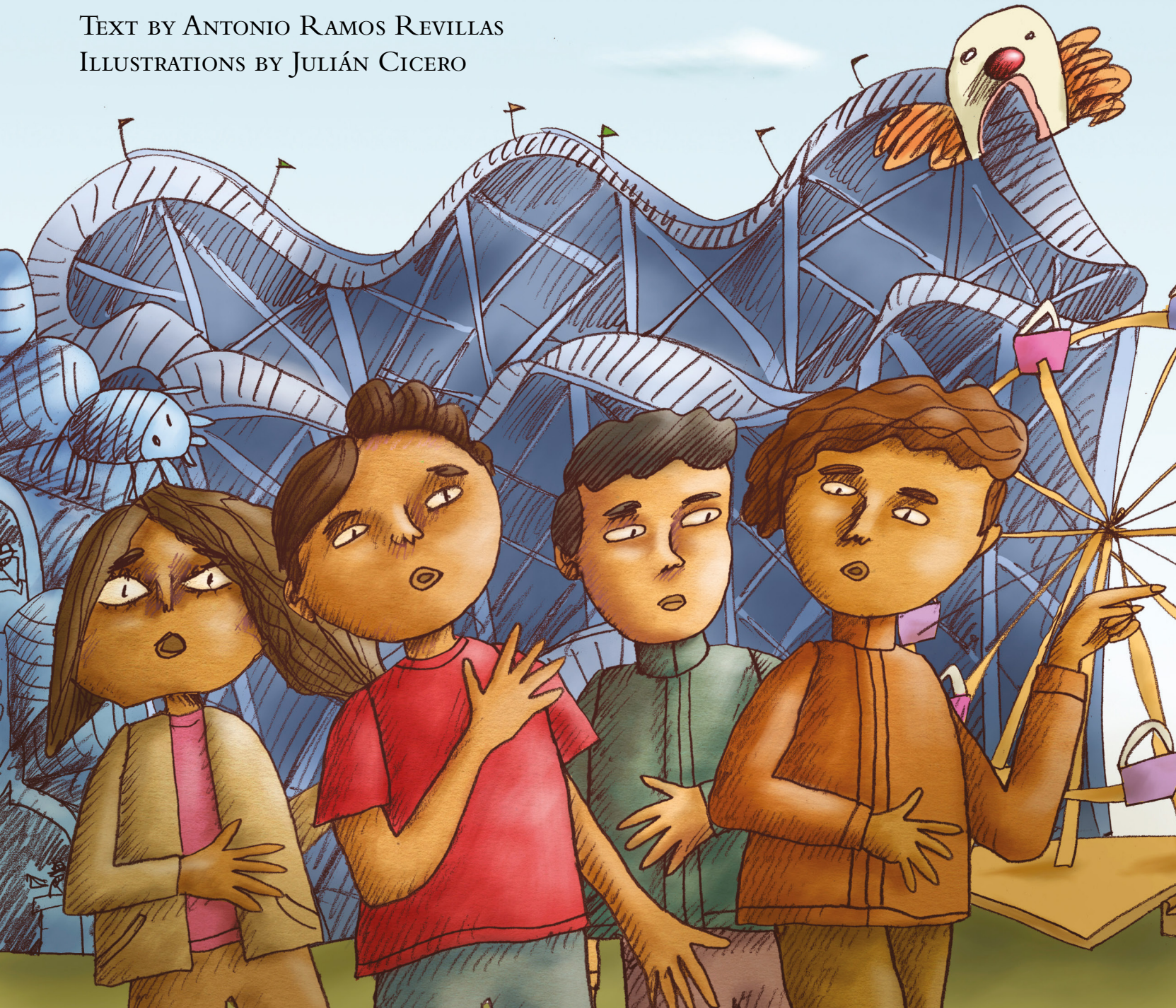


TERRIFYING Co.

 **INE**
Instituto Nacional Electoral

TEXT BY ANTONIO RAMOS REVILLAS

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Photography by Daniel Mordinzki

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TERRIFYING Co.

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PRESENTATION

Terrifying Co. is a literary proposal that forms part of the **Árbol** collection that the Instituto Nacional Electoral (INE, National Electoral Institute) has made available to children and teenagers with the intention of disseminating topics concerning civic education and democratic values in a simple and entertaining way by promoting reading.

This publication is part of the framework of the Estrategia Nacional de Cultura Cívica 2017-2023 (National Civic Culture Strategy 2017-2023), whose thematic pillars establish the democratic principles that govern the Institute. In turn, the Civic Culture Strategy seeks to enhance the quality of our lives in society as citizens with rights and duties. In this context, it seeks to encourage the active participation of young people in events of public interest with a view to them becoming actors in the political life of our country.

In the following pages, the reader will join a group of friends from a school, which could be any educational institution in the country, who are planning an excursion to an amusement park towards the end of the summer as the major crowning event of their vacations before they go back to school. To this end, they all make a great effort to get the money they need to make it happen. However, something in their behavior and attitudes is destined to go wrong and this prevents them from seeing their wish fulfilled.

The story will appeal to people of any age but mainly targets high school students. This story will give readers the opportunity to reflect on the harmful, recurrent practice that raises its head in all social spheres and hurts our country so much: corruption. Our attitude towards these lamentable circumstances and how we react to instances of corruption are the questions underlying the narrative.

This short story is an invitation to enjoy reading and an opportunity to do so with family or friends. In addition, there is a section at the end entitled “To Reflect and Discuss”, which targets teenagers, alone or with the support of adults, parents, or teachers, and makes them reflect on the importance of being honest even if the matter at hand seems insignificant and consequently the importance of always remaining within the framework of the law.

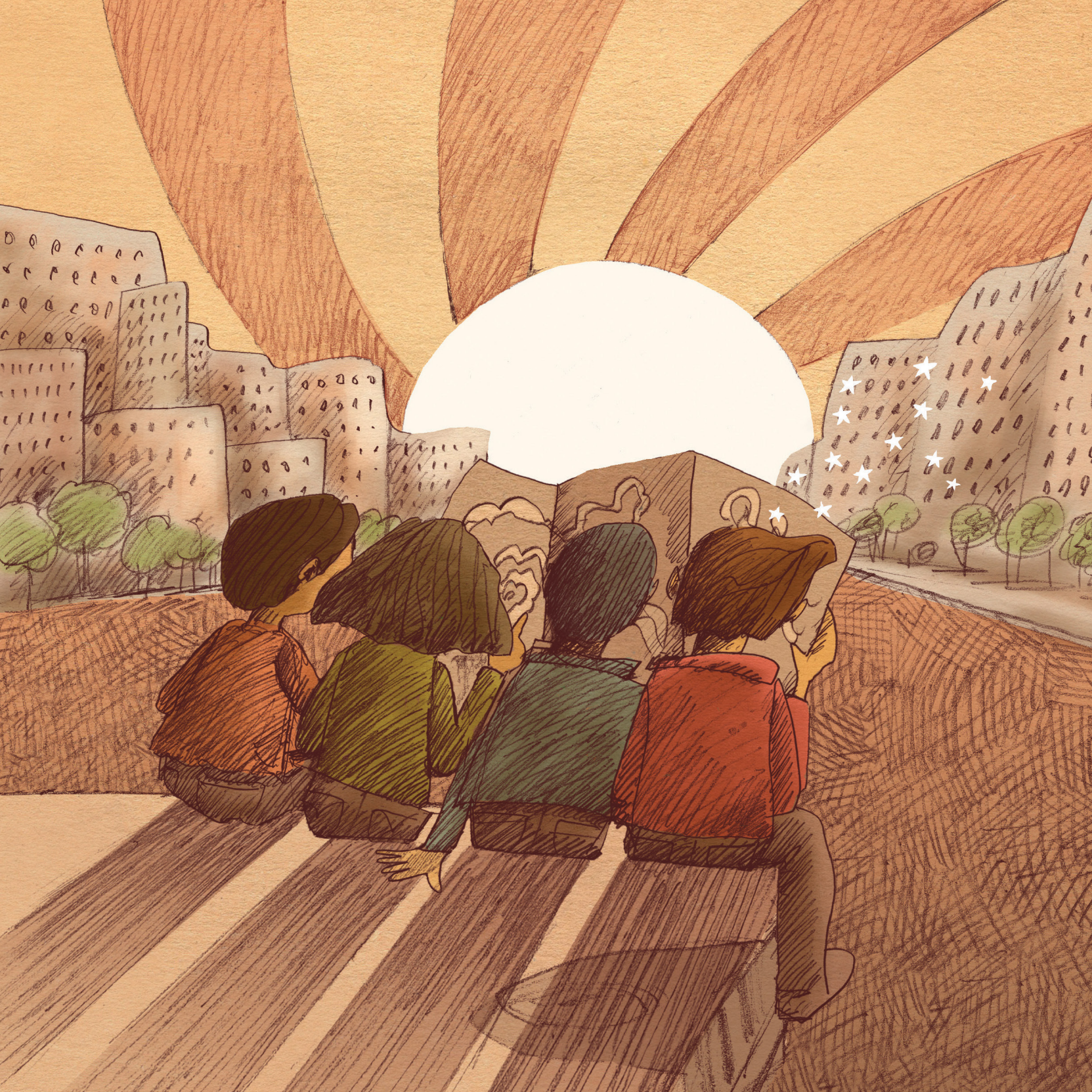
On the other hand, and equally relevant, readers are invited to be on their guard and watch out for the actions of people in authority acting on behalf of the Mexican government. We want those generations of citizens who will soon come of age to use their moral compass when exercising their rights and responsibilities to demand accountability from civil servants, especially when it comes to the honest administration of public resources. Only by training honest people willing to stand up for what is right, we will be able to build orderly, generous, and respectful relationships in the civil service and in the most vulnerable social sectors.

Terrifying Co.

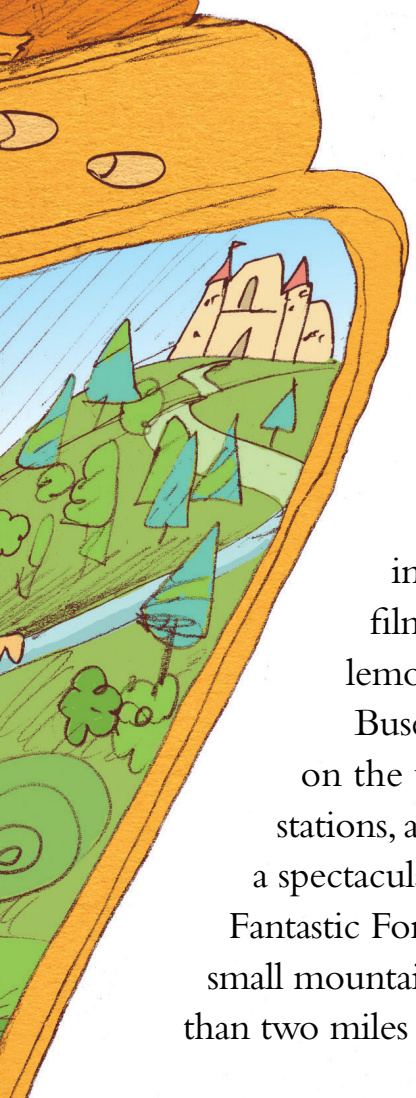
They had spent the whole summer raising money for the excursion. Accompanied by her little sister, whom she took care of some afternoons, Mildreth had gone door to door selling candy, chamoy popsicles, and the biscuits she had learned to make last year when she was a girl scout. Felipe and a neighbor had delivered newspapers, getting up at the crack of dawn every day and picking them up directly at the printer. Then they would set off on their paper round. Marcelo, for his part, had tidied up many of his neighbors' roofs by removing dry leaves, deflated balls, bicycles without handlebars and old cans full of stagnant rainwater. He even fed the dogs that sometimes lived up there.

For his part, Félix had saved the Sunday allowance his grandfather gave him and, to feel part of the collective effort, he helped the others whenever he could without being paid. Sometimes he even used the money given to him by his Aunt Tere, his father's sister and the owner of the house they lived in, to buy candies to share with others at the end of the afternoon on the last day of the week. That was when time lost all meaning and crumbled into a dozy stillness that lingered and left them tired and drowsy, sitting on a high curbstone watching the cars go by and feeling the evening breeze getting colder as night approaches.

Just then, as had always happened on the previous six Sundays of the summer, Marcelo, the oldest of the gang, went home to fetch the flyer advertising the Fantastic Forest: the biggest amusement park in the country with the best roller coaster in Latin America, the Meteoro Fire, which hurtled down the runway at over 60 miles per hour.







The track itself dove underground to give the impression of a tremendous impending collision; this, in addition to other rides and roller coasters, a fun house, and a go-kart track over half a mile long with bridges, tunnels and many slopes.

The four of them looked at the flyer and turned it over to check out the map: to get to the park, they had to get bus tickets at the Fantastic Forest window at the central bus station as seen on the TV ads. And once on the bus, the fun would start. There were TV screens instead of windows, where you could watch as many as five different films or play video games. And they gave you as much popcorn and lemonade as you liked.

Buses departed every two hours and took forty minutes to leave the city on the west-bound highway, first through a landscape of dwarf scrubs, gas stations, and cattle feed shops, and then on to the park, passing a junction with a spectacular parade of roller-coaster cars. The most exciting thing about the Fantastic Forest was that it was almost hidden away in a secret place, built behind a small mountain, and could only be accessed in small gondolas through a tunnel more than two miles long: the Tunnel of Terror, which was, in fact, the park's first attraction.



It was a fantastic idea to have a haunted tunnel at both the entrance and exit! Guaranteed excitement right from the beginning! The best of all was that the Fantastic Forest was exclusively for teenagers and adults aged twelve and older. Paradise!

Mildreth, Felipe, Marcelo, and Félix looked at the amusement park flyer again as Sunday faded into night, the second-to-last Sunday before going back to school. They were excited because they had finally managed to scrape enough money together for the tickets, which were not cheap.



“So, what are you going to do first?” asked Marcelo, still clutching the flyer.

“First things first, we have to go through the Tunnel of Terror. They say it’s worse on the way out because it catches you when you’re tired,” said Mildreth.

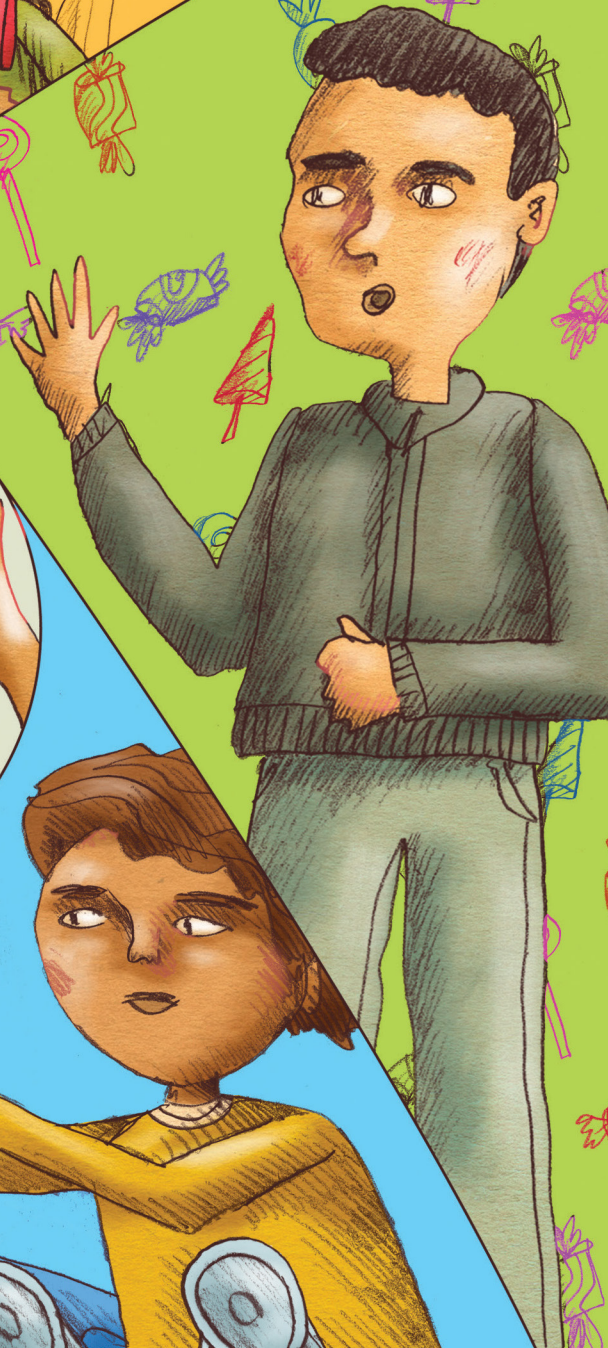
“I want to go on the go-karts. The other day, I saw some videos on YouTube, and the carts look exactly like Formula 1 cars!” added Felipe.

“I’m going to try the rotor. They say that the floor drops away while it’s spinning, but you don’t fall because you’re going so fast! Then right at the end, they gradually slow it down and you feel like you’re sliding down the wall,” said Marcelo.

“And what about you, Félix?”

“Well... first, I want to get there, and then I’ll see. Maybe it’s not as cool as it seems, but we have to make the effort. But you’d better give me the money now so that I can get the tickets in plenty of time tomorrow. My dad’s taking me downtown anyway, so that’s where I’ll buy them.”





They looked at each other and gestured that Félix should wait for them. They stood up and headed home. After a while, they returned one by one wearing smiles that made it look as if they were hiding something.

“Here’s my money, Félix,” said Mildreth.

“And mine,” added Felipe.

“It’s all yours,” declared Marcelo with a more conspiratorial smile than the others.

“Don’t you dare lose it. We worked hard to get it,” said Mildreth, who had a vision of ice popsicles floating in front of her.

“Do you promise,” added Felipe.

“I promise,” Félix said hesitantly, holding out his hand for everyone to stack their hands on top. “Now, bring on the money!”

“Wait a minute, aren’t we going to spit and shake on it?” Marcelo laughed.

“That’s disgusting!” cried the others and even Mildreth, who wasn’t easily grossed out, made a yucky face and declared, “His word is enough!”

And they all started holding out crumpled bills and coins that, dull though they were, seemed to shine in the darkness. Who knew how many hours they had put in selling newspapers or popsicles? Who knew how many roofs they had tidied up or how many long hours they had stood out in the hot sun to get that money? They began to count slowly.

“One hundred... two hundred... three hundred... four hundred... six hundred fifty-two, eight hundred, nine hundred ninety-nine, one thousand two hundred, one thousand four hundred eighty, one thousand five hundred.”

The bills looked tired of being counted and the coins jingled as the kids handled them eagerly until they were counted again and put into piles. It was a lot of money, altogether more than they had ever seen in their lives! They set aside the cost of the tickets and then the amount they would need to buy souvenirs and food, which were said to be as fabulous as the rides themselves. At other fairs, they served stale popcorn and hot dogs with buns that would break apart as soon as you spread on mayonnaise or mustard, but those in the Fantastic Forest! Those were the stuff of legend.

“That’s it, we’ll leave it up to you,” said Felipe, the first to say goodbye because night had fallen, and he had to get up really early the next day for his paper round.

Mildreth said, “I’m looking forward to Sunday! See you!” And she walked away with Felipe.

Félix felt the money lying heavily in the pockets of his pants. It was a lot: more than he had ever seen in his life. When he stood up, he gazed at the horizon, towards the Fantastic Forest. If it had been a movie, thunder would have rumbled way over there, a crow would have cawed in that direction, or a column of fire would have shot upwards between the mountains as a harbinger of the adventure to come; but it was all in his imagination and he simply shrugged and asked Marcelo to walk home with him.





From a distance, Felipe and Mildreth saw their two friends exchange a few words, perhaps a surprise for the day of the trip. They were always so imaginative.

And so, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday came and went; on Thursday, they played soccer all afternoon and caught crickets and beetles in a nearby vacant field; on Friday, Marcelo's mom, who was aware of the excitement and effort that kids had put in, invited them all round for a meal and prepared her specialty: some delicious crispy chicken tacos that flowed down until the stomach with hibiscus water. On Saturday night, they were so excited about the following day's momentous trip that they couldn't sleep. They had arranged to meet up to catch a bus to the central bus station outside a store that sold snow cones on the avenue that ran past their neighborhood.

The next day, Marcelo, Mildreth, and Felipe were there right on time. They looked anxious. She looked awake, but everyone was a bit sleep deprived as they wanted to catch the first bus that left at ten in the morning and got to the Fantastic Forest at half past eleven. At about five past ten, they started checking the time on their cell phones. Marcelo was first at exactly five past ten; then Mildreth, at about eight past ten; and finally, Felipe, at the equally nerve-wracking time of eleven past ten. Felipe looked down the street that came out of their neighborhood, but there was no sign of Félix. Marcelo did the same on the avenue but didn't have any better luck. For her part, Mildreth stayed at the meeting place in case he turned up. They had started calling him on his cell phone—because everyone had one by now—when Félix walked out from behind a nearby gas station as calmly as if the bus, the trip, the popcorn, the Tunnel of Terror, and the Meteoro Fire were already there, within reach.

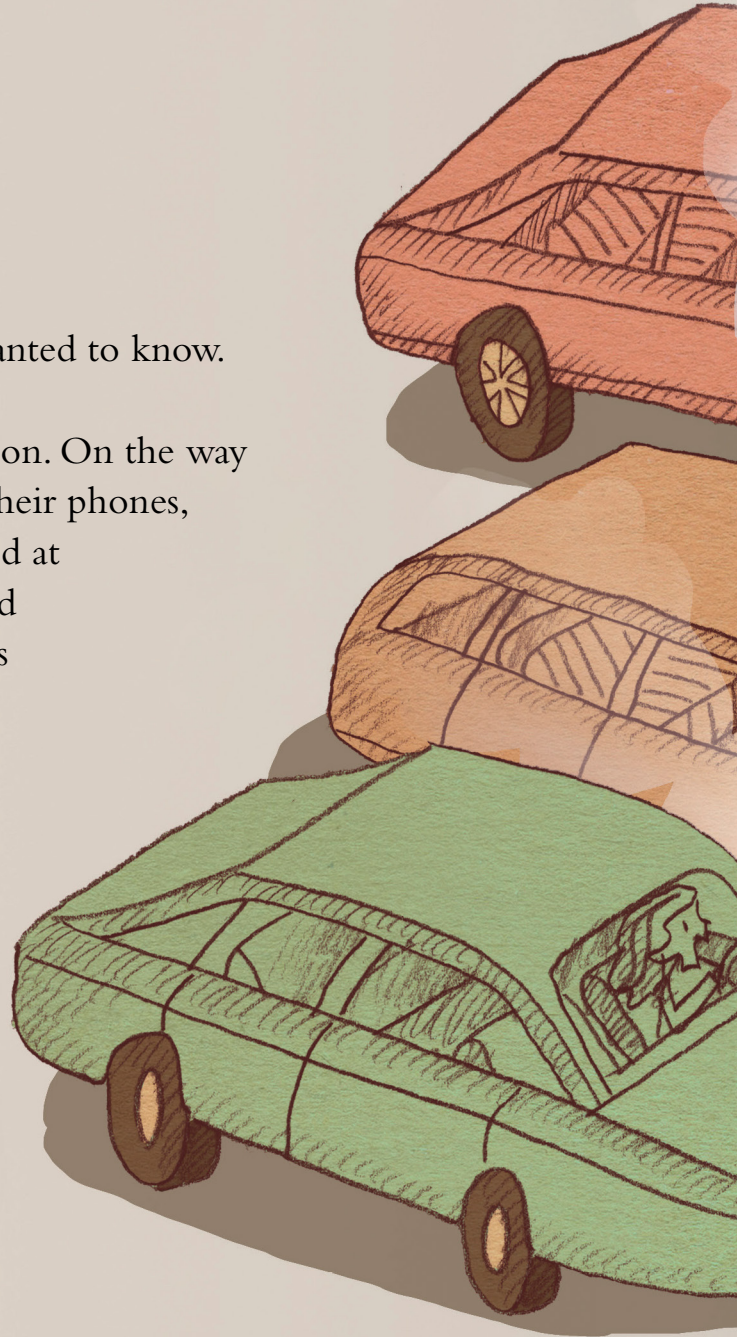
“Where have you been?” Marcelo asked, “We're going to miss the bus.”

“Nah, we still have time,” Félix replied.

“Have you been somewhere else?” Mildreth wanted to know. Félix shook his head.

They waited for the next city bus and climbed on. On the way to the central station, all four kept their eyes on their phones, checking the time. Every red light the bus stopped at triggered an anxiety attack. When the light turned green and the bus didn't move because passengers were getting on, they started whistling at the driver, who looked at them angrily in the rearview mirror.

Finally, they arrived downtown, but several blocks before they got to the bus stop, they already felt like jumping off and running to catch the bus. And when the clock struck 9:50, they were dashing through the streets, free, loose, desperate, laughing, their lungs on the verge of collapsing until they ran into the central bus station.







AUTOBUSES
MIRAVALLE

Bosque
Fantastico

LA SIERRA

“What about the tickets?” asked Marcelo.

“Eh, I don’t know,” Felix replied.

“What do you mean you don’t know?” Mildreth tugged his arm. “You were supposed to buy them!”

“I couldn’t get them, but I’ll go find the ticket booth now.”

Felix left them waiting at the entrance and when he returned fifteen minutes later, he had a disappointed look on his face.

“I’m really sorry,” he said. “The bus has left and the next one is in an hour and forty minutes.”

“Oh, Félix, you messed up!” Mildreth cried.

“Alright, alright, what’s next?” Marcelo quickly intervened.

“So, there’s another bus that goes that way. It’s not the Fantastic Forest bus with popcorn, but we can buy some sandwiches and play on our cell phones. It leaves in five minutes. We might even get there earlier because I seem to remember the Fantastic Forest bus still has to stop on the way to pick people up.”

“Well, it may not be the same bus, but let’s go!” said Felipe, who was the most impatient and the most eager to ride the Meteoro Fire.

Evidently, it was not the Fantastic Forest bus. They sat right at the back, where the seats stank of an ancient mixture of sweat, taco grease, and urine; they were so worn out that their headrests, once soft and spongy, were now lumps of smooth leather. They ate potato chips and chicken salad sandwiches. They played a game to see who could burp the most, and Felix won, with Mildreth as the judge.

They quickly left the city behind. The mid-morning sun wasn't too bright, so its light shone directly on their foreheads without bothering them. They saw the buildings fade away, then the houses, and later the distant shrubs, and gas stations, and when they reached the junction with the spectacular roller coaster cars, they felt that



their excursion was finally about to begin. The bus turned where it was supposed to and began to climb the mountain to make its way through canyons and ridges towards the amazing Fantastic Forest. However, at a fork in the road, the kids noticed that instead of turning right, it turned left. Now, not everything bad in the world happens on the left, but they got alarmed anyway.

“Hey, Félix, where are we going?” Mildreth asked.

“I don’t know, let me ask,” replied Félix.

Felipe, Marcelo, and Mildreth watched as he stood up and made his way to the front where the driver was sitting. He spoke with him for a while and Félix nodded. Then



he was thrown slightly off balance when the bus turned right, and again when the bus turned left. Finally, he came back with a pale face.

“He told me we’re going to the park.”

“But the park is somewhere else,” Felipe complained.

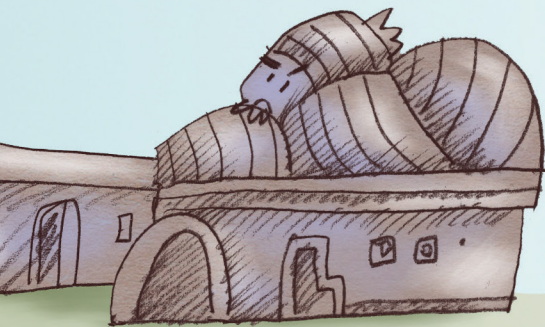
“Well, that’s what he said.”

The boys didn’t know what to expect and the girl went tense, her eyes wide open in shock that something was going wrong. The landscape was covered in pine and ash trees and the bare green mountainside made them dizzy. Felipe thought that at any moment, like in the movies, a guy with a chainsaw would jump out of nowhere and cut them into pieces, or the monster from an old movie with blades for fingers would cut them into tiny bits. But instead of that, the bus stopped, and the driver whistled and announced that they had arrived at the park.

As soon as they heard those words, the four jumped with joy and got off the bus, making sure they hadn’t forgotten anything. When the bus left, they discovered they actually were at a park entrance, which was worn out and in need of a good paint job. There was a ticket booth with a metal gate and strange-looking letters, as if from another historical era, which read: TERRIFYING ATTRACTIONS COMPANY.







The boys looked at each other. Félix stepped forward and asked something at the ticket booth. When he returned, he was holding four tickets carelessly ripped out of a book.

“What is this?” complained Felipe.

“Where did you bring us, Félix?” Mildreth echoed.

“Why did you buy the tickets? How much did they cost?”

“Well... the same as the Fantastic Forest.”

“Hey, but this is wrong,” Felipe didn’t know whether to laugh or cry. “You should have asked us first.”

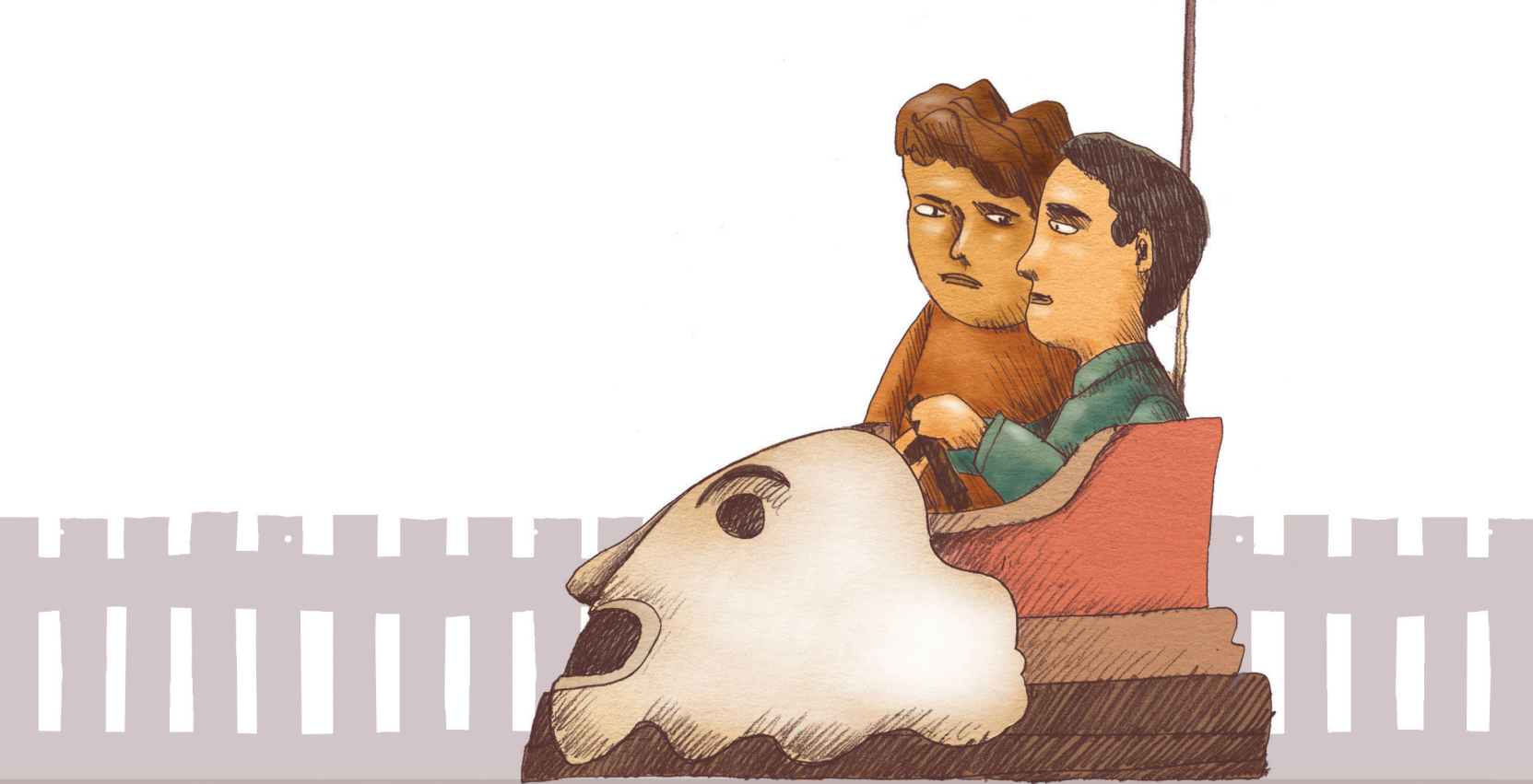
“Well, we were already here, and I’m sure it’ll be awesome.”

“Isn’t this the place that closed because the water had things floating in it?” Felipe insisted.

“Nah, it’s all lies. It looks really cool.”

In an instant, all the doors Mildreth had knocked on selling ice pops flashed before her eyes. Felipe saw all the newspapers he had delivered disappear into the night forever.

Félix was the only one who was upbeat and kept insisting that going inside was all they had left. Disheartened and angry too, the friends resisted, but Félix kept on insisting; he wasn’t the leader of the group for nothing.



“Well, what can we do about it now anyway?” Marcelo added.

“Hey, but it’s not fair,” Felipe complained.

“You’re right it isn’t,” Mildreth insisted.

Marcelo and Félix looked at each other and it was Marcelo who responded.

“Well, that may be is true, but we’re already here, and I’m not going to walk back down that road under this sun. We’ll get all sweaty and we don’t even have any water. Besides, I find the name Terrifying interesting. I’m angry too, but what makes me even angrier is having to waste the whole day walking who knows where.”



“Let’s wait and see. We’ll have a great time,” Felix declared. “Besides, there’s no way we’re walking back. The driver told me he goes up into the mountains and comes back down and stops outside the park at six in the afternoon.”

“But there’s no one here.”

Indeed, Terrifying Attractions Co. looked deserted.

Reluctantly, they ventured into the park, where almost all the amusement rides had names of ghosts or monsters. There was a tornado ride called Mr. Hide that promised the wildest, most fun ride of your life, but it wasn’t working. Instead of a one-half-mile go-kart track, there was a bumper car ride called “Ghostly Grand Prix”,



so-called because its eight cars were shaped like ghosts. However, only three of the cars were working and even so, they had to be shared with a few more odd-looking visitors.

“It’s like going to an abandoned amusement park,” Felipe overheard a passerby complain.

And indeed, that’s what it seemed like. Instead of a vibrant amusement park, it felt as if all the fun had died in that place replete with fake catacombs and a functioning haunted castle that, upon closer inspection, made you realize the monsters were made of plastic and newspaper.

And better not to mention the roller coaster: the four went up and down, terrified, because on the final turn when the car reached its highest speed of about fifty miles an hour, the whole structure seemed to creak and teeter as if it were about to collapse. And being afraid on a ride with proper safety measures was absolutely nothing like being afraid of dying with no safety measures in place.

“I hope at least there’s something good to eat here,” Felipe mumbled, but when they went to the food court, they discovered that only one of the six establishments was open and it only sold sandwiches like the ones they had bought at the bus terminal.

“I feel like crying, and I know exactly why,” Mildreth complained as she took a bite of her mortadella and pork cheese sandwich, which clumped into a little ball inside her mouth that she had to spit out.



“Come on, there must be something cool here!” Marcelo insisted.

And it actually did, if you tried really hard to ignore the fact that the world had places like the Fantastic Forest and you pretended that a fiery meteorite had fallen on Earth, almost wiping out a civilization that was only now beginning to recover with Terrifying Attractions Co. as its first attempt to recreate those magical summers of amusement parks, endless popcorn, and a good dose of adrenaline.

They spent the rest of the afternoon wandering around the closed attractions; some were open but were either too simple or boring. When the bus stopped at the main entrance at six in the afternoon, they all got on in silence and didn't speak to each other as they took their seats, especially when they reached that wretched fork in the road.

In late evening, in the distance, against the same clean green mountainside, they silently caught a glimpse of the twinkling diamond lights of not-so-distant amusement rides.



Monday and Tuesday came and went. On Wednesday, Felipe sent Marcelo a WhatsApp message in their group chat asking if he had already bought his backpack for the new school year. Everyone saw the message, but no one replied. It wasn't until Sunday that they mustered the courage to sit on the same sidewalk again, but there was nothing that could raise their spirits because the summer had gone in vain and no one could claim it back.

Perhaps that's why they were so surprised when, on Monday, Félix arrived to start second grade of middle school, very happy with a mega-fantastic backpack that even had inside the bags, speakers on the sides to listen songs from a built-in radio. Marcelo had another very similar one, but with a battery to charge the cell phone, with a very nice little cable that when you stopped using it you pulled it a little and it rolled up by itself. Also, they both had new cases for their cell phones. Mildreth looked at her backpack, which wasn't even a backpack, but a man's briefcase that her father no longer used to



go to the office and that made her feel very embarrassed. For his part, Felipe carried all his books under his arm, barely tied together with a ribbon as he hadn't even managed to get a backpack that even had inside. They weren't the only ones who went to school like this on the first day, but it was an embarrassing experience that nobody enjoyed. They didn't say anything else, but Felipe sent a personal WhatsApp message to Mildreth:

Mildreth, Mildreth, something smells very fishy here.

I agree, there's something that doesn't add up.

That afternoon, they got together at Felipe's house and searched the internet. They first looked up backpacks and found out that together they would cost around a thousand pesos. They checked phone case models and noticed that each was worth about two hundred pesos. They typed in the name of Terrifying Attractions Co. and discovered that it was actually an abandoned park that was taken care of by a cooperative society that fixed up the rides as best as they could. Once upon a time, the place had been a great amusement park, but it had fallen on hard times when the Fantastic Forest came along over ten years before.

But what surprised them the most was what Mildreth's cousin told them: Terrifying Attractions tickets cost one tenth of Fantastic Forest tickets.

They messaged all the details to each other. They had been scammed and had to do something about it.





The next day, they waited outside the school. As soon as Félix and Marcelo saw the expression on their faces, they knew they were in trouble.

“You did wrong by us,” Felipe said. “We know that Terrifying Attractions is a semi-abandoned park and that the tickets are very, very cheap.”

“Yeah, you went too far. We trusted you, and you weren’t honest with us. You didn’t tell us what you were actually going to do,” she added.

“Yes, you promised us something, and then you hid information from us for your own benefit and didn’t use what we gave you for what you promised.”

“We trusted you. We’re not going to fight or stop talking to you, but we need you to clear this up,” Mildreth said.

Félix and Marcelo swallowed hard. They had come up with the idea of switching amusement parks just a few days before when they realized they wouldn’t get new backpacks for the next school year because their families simply couldn’t afford them and now, the charade was over. They hung their heads because seeing their friends in front of them demanding the truth filled them with a shame they had never felt before. Marcelo pretended to get angry, but at that moment Félix gripped his arm and answered:

“I’m sorry, it’s true. My dad lost his job, and... well, I know it’s not an excuse. Even with the money my grandfather and Aunt Tere gave me, I didn’t have enough for a backpack like this, and I really wanted one.”

“And so what?” said Felipe, red with anger. “Since my dad went north as an undocumented immigrant, my mom has worked hard all day every day to provide for my brothers and sisters and me. When my neighbor told me about the paper round, I jumped at the opportunity without a second thought. It seemed like a good way to make the best of my vacations and earn enough by myself to pay for my trip to the amusement park.”

“You’re right,” Mildreth agreed. “Even though my parents both work and we have what we need at home, there are things they can’t buy for my brothers and sisters and me. That’s why I asked my mom for permission to sell popsicles outside our house to people we know in the neighborhood while I was looking after my little sister. She thought it was fun and I saved up for our trip.”

“That’s not cool, Félix. You know the blood, sweat, and tears it cost us to save up. We just want you to be clear about the money,” added Felipe. “You can’t take someone in like that or steal from them, especially not your friends. The money belonged to the four of us and we should have made a decision together. Maybe if you had told us the truth, we would have gone to Terrifying Attractions with that in mind and enjoyed the trip better. You know, I read about this on the internet, and not keeping your



promise for personal gain was deception, betrayal, theft, and a form of corruption. We would never have considered taking your money like that.”

“Yeah. That’s why we’re friends, right? Full disclosure,” Mildreth said.

Marcelo finally looked up and, shortly, Félix did too.

“We’re sorry. I wanted to deny it all and pretend it wasn’t true, but when you demanded accountability without fighting, you made it difficult for us.” “Yeah, we messed up,” Félix added.

“Well, I don’t know why you did it. What’s up with you, Marcelo?”


“Well, Félix didn’t want to do it alone and I wanted a new backpack too. You know, mine was in a terrible state after last year. It seemed easy. It was like an extra summer adventure. We’re sorry.”

Félix finally offered his apologies too, and asked, “Now what do we do?”

“Well, I think the best thing is to rebuild trust and know that we can believe in you again,” Felipe said firmly.

“We’ll sell the new backpacks and keep the money so that we can go to the Fantastic Forest for real this time.” Marcelo made a gesture and said, “No, honestly, we crossed the line. Mildreth and you can keep the backpacks. We’ll find a way to get the money back.”





Mildreth thought for a second and replied, “Alright! I’m cool with that, and we’ll look for a job after school or on Saturdays to help you guys recover the money for the tickets and become friends again. But you must give us back what’s rightfully ours.”

That being said, Félix and Marcelo slowly took their books out of the backpacks.

“If you want us to remain friends, you should invite us to the Fantastic Forest for Christmas, during the December holidays. It will be very cold, but whatever,” Mildreth finally added, still very angry, but trying to regain control of the situation.

The boys nodded. The backpacks looked strange without their books, as if they had taken their last breath.

“Deal!” The four clasped their hands together.

And if this were an imaginary tale, they would all have gazed up at the sky, at a shimmering point above the horizon: a small comet about to crash into Earth in a fiery blaze of light. But it was just a shooting star that streaked thinly across the sky and then disappeared in a wondrous way.



TO REFLECT AND DISCUSS



Transparency, Accountability and Fighting Corruption

Articles 109, 110, and 113 of the Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos (Political Constitution of the United Mexican States), the highest law of the land, establish various provisions that regulate the national legal framework and guarantee the honesty of public servants.

We seek to provide some analytical elements in this section that will encourage and facilitate reflection and dialogue on such an important topic that impacts our lives as citizens. Literature is our chosen medium to make a small-scale comparison of what it means for a society to elect a government to direct its social organization.



- Just as the children placed their trust in Félix to manage their money and buy bus and amusement park tickets, when citizens elect their leaders, they grant them the responsibility to lead the harmonious development of an entire society in accordance with established laws. However, as this story teaches us, if some do not act honestly, or if we are not vigilant and demand fairness and the plain fulfillment of agreements, we will find ourselves immersed in adverse and unjust situations that disrupt the way citizens organize themselves for coexistence.
- The Ley General de Transparencia y Acceso a la Información (General Law of Transparency and



Access to Public Information), as well as the Ley de Fiscalización y Rendición de Cuentas de la Federación (Federation's Oversight and Accountability Law), among others, were created to promote, foster, and disseminate a culture of transparency in the exercise of public function. It establishes the right of citizens to have access to information that is timely, verifiable, understandable, up-to-date, and complete.

In this story, Mildreth and Felipe were justifiably upset when they realized that Félix, whom they had chosen to manage their money for a common purpose, was not providing them with clear information about what he had done with the money they had given him. They were right to demand clear and complete information about what had happened.

Look up the meaning of the following words in the dictionary: timely, verifiable, understandable, up-to-date, and complete.

Do you consider important that information on public affairs should have these five characteristics? Why?

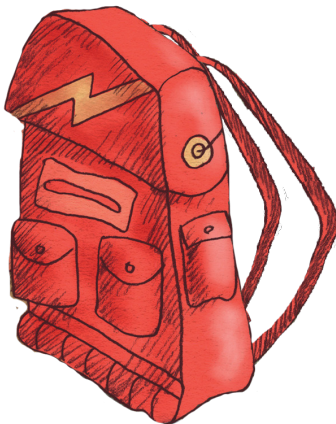




- The Ley General del Sistema Nacional Anticorrupción (General Law of the National Anti-corruption System) establishes the guiding principles for public officials to act in accordance with legality, professionalism, efficiency, fairness, economy, and integrity. It also proposes the formation of committees in which citizens can participate to ensure that these characteristics of public service are upheld.

While it is true that the injured parties, Felipe and Mildreth, did not properly establish a formal committee to demand honesty, fairness, and integrity, they did the right thing by coming together to make Félix rectify the consequences of the abuse he committed in complicity with Marcelo. It was crucial for them to form a united front; together, they managed to convince their friends to make amends for the harm caused.

What does *corruption* mean?



- In our country, laws impose punishment on those who act dishonestly, especially if they are public officials. This is evident in the Ley General de Responsabilidades Administrativas (General Law of Administrative Responsibilities), which, in conjunction with the Penal Code, can deprive corrupt officials of their freedom and sentence them to prison.

If someone fails to act honestly by engaging in acts of corruption, they must repair the damage caused and



be punished. This is the sense of justice that Mildreth and Felipe exercised. Consequently, in reparation for damages caused, they required Félix and Marcelo to sell their backpacks to recover the money entrusted to them so that they could all go to the Fantastic Forest in winter as initially planned. They had let the group down and could no longer be part of it. They had to face the consequences so, until reparation was made, things would not go back to how they were before.



- The Estrategia Nacional de Cultura Cívica 2017-2023 (National Civic Culture Strategy 2017-2023) is a program designed by the Instituto Nacional Electoral to guide public education initiatives that will help strengthen our democratic life. In this program, on the topic of requirement, Strategy III stipulates the following line of action:

“Empower citizens to participate in combatting corruption... so that citizens have access to new mechanisms fit for monitoring and improving the public responsibility of civil servants.”

What initiatives do you consider could be implemented in your community to participate in the fight against corruption?





TERRIFYING CO.

The Bembo Std font family was used.



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Since 1997, he has dedicated himself to illustrating children's and textbooks, magazines, and almost anything that welcomes his characters. Among all of this, what he enjoys the most is illustrating children's publications, as it allows him to unleash his imagination.



Terrifying Co. tells the story of four friends with a common goal: to visit an exciting amusement park. Each one does their best to achieve it. However, their dream is shattered when one of them fails to live up to the trust and responsibility placed upon them.

The title of this book reflects how acts of corruption often occur in anonymity or are covered up. That's why this volume of the *Árbol* collection aims to promote reflection, especially among teenagers, about the importance of transparency, truthful information, the demand for respect for our rights, and, when necessary, the reparation of damages caused when someone acts inappropriately and violates the law.

As in previous titles, in order to contribute to civic culture, the final pages of the book revisit the central concepts explored in the fiction, with the dual purpose of providing an enjoyable work for readers and contributing to the construction of more just and equitable social relationships.