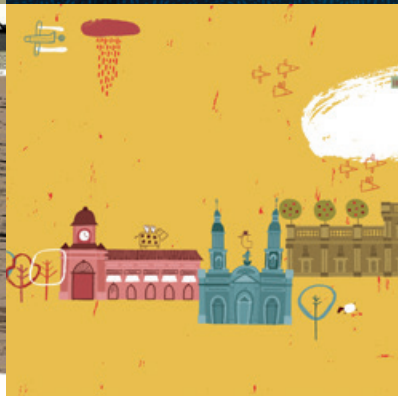
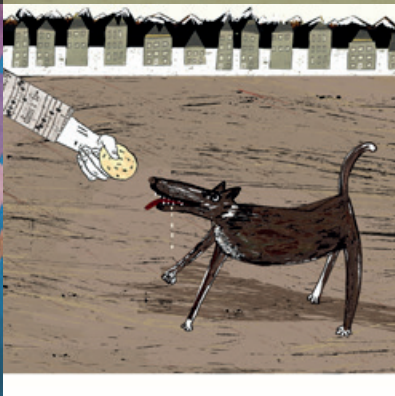
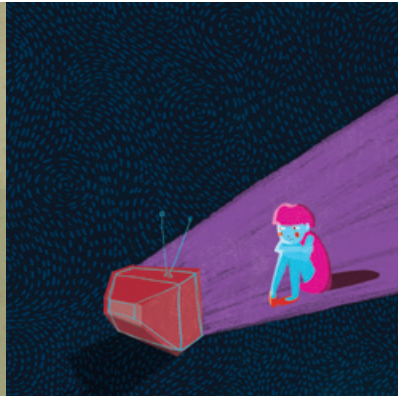


# santiago en 100 palabras

THE WINNING STORIES OF  
SANTIAGO IN 100 WORDS



Santiago in 100 Words —Santiago en 100 Palabras— is an annual short story contest that has been held since 2001 in Santiago, Chile. The contest is presented by Plagio, in alliance with BHP Billiton and Metro (Santiago's subway). The contest invites participants to submit works of a maximum of 100 words about contemporary urban life. A jury made up of distinguished writers chooses the winners and honourable mentions in each category. These stories are then illustrated, and exhibited in various formats throughout the city. The underlying theme of the contest is that everyone has something to say. It is a participative, democratic invitation, open to the entire population. Year after year, the thousands of stories received constitute an X-ray of the city, and of the historical moment its inhabitants are living through. The contest, in this way, has explored the identities of citizens through their individual fragments of history.

Each of the stories is part, as well, of a generalised portrait: a collective project that explores the identities of contemporary cities through the everyday, creative, personal, and intimate perspectives of their inhabitants. Over its 17 years of existence, the project has become an emblem of citizen participation in culture: With more than a half million stories received in all, and nearly 50 thousand original stories participating each year in Santiago. Currently, the project is held in Chile in Santiago, Antofagasta, Iquique, Concepcion, Valparaiso and Magallanes; and abroad in Puebla, Budapest, Medellin, Bogota, Warsaw, Prague and Bratislava.

These stories are the winners of Santiago in 100 Words between 2001 and 2017.





Illustration: Loreto Corvalán

## The park

WINNER I VERSION

When I was about eight, my dad and I were walking to the park. I was very excited, because he didn't use to take me out. While crossing the street, a car driven by a man with a mustache stopped. To his side, sat a blonde princess. She smiled at me and they drove away. My dad said, „what are you looking at?’ Forget it. They aren't our kind. He grabbed me by the arm and hurried me up. We went into the first bar we encountered. He asked a beer for him and a soda for me. He then drank another and another. We never got to the park.

*Alex Peraita, Quilicura.*





Illustration: Paloma Valdivia



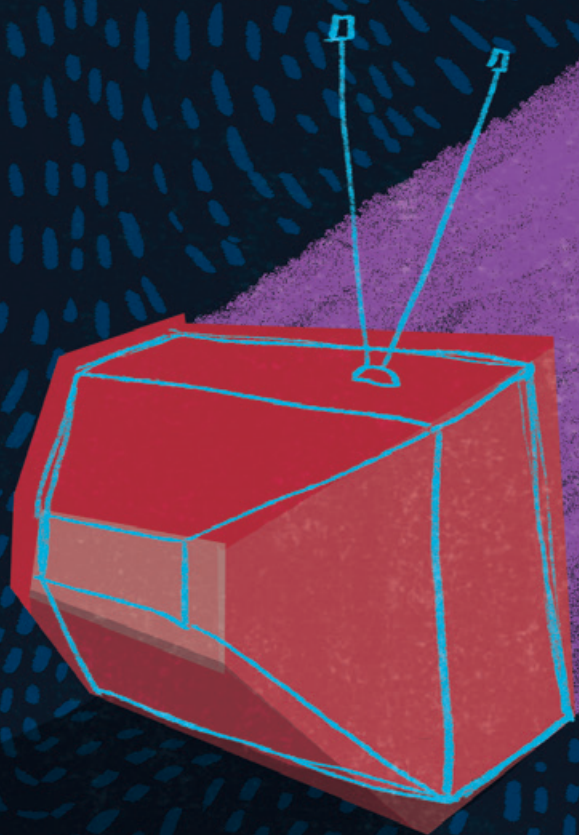
## A close shave

WINNER II VERSION

A woman looked at me through the window of a shopping center. And so, in her eyes I saw myself with three children, a dog in the yard, the fear of losing my job, the endless loans, and the eternal gloomy Sunday evenings at her parents' house. I felt the burden of all the same mornings, the same afternoons, the repeated nights, the same wiggling. I quickly looked elsewhere and rushed out to the street. I had survived one of those deadly seconds in which this city uses to seal the fate of men.

*Pedro Vallette, Macul.*





## That day

WINNER III VERSION

Blasts outside. Flashes enter through the closed curtains. Windows rattle. The walls are shaken by the weight of the swirling dust. First, cries. Cries and moans. Then the wails, the scratches, the crawling sound of bodies. At last, silence. Through the cracks there's only darkness. She locks the door, sits alone and turns on the TV.

*Beatriz García-Huidobro, Las Condes.*





Illustration: Alberto Montt

## Dark jungle

WINNER IV VERSION

The condo is huge. 28th floor. The cake was homemade. Raul blew out the candles and my wife and I clapped. The place was crowded, there was alcohol. The present was appreciated. Alejandro was making fun of people and we didn't know anyone but we still laughed. He is gay but it didn't matter. We had fun. When leaving, Alejandro hugged us. In the condo's garden, between the buildings, there was a glass cage. The birds, all different, were sleeping frozen stiff. They would soon sing, happily convinced that their cage is an immense dark jungle, which feels the sunlight like the real ones.

*René Vergara, Providencia.*





## Parole

WINNER V VERSION

Submerged in the noise of the neighborhood, when turning 8 among balloons and cheerful music, Margarita got devastated in her mother's partner's hug who then whispered to her his affection: he would her very much if she remained silent; a little, if she struggled; not at all, if she reported him.

*Patricia Middleton, Linares.*



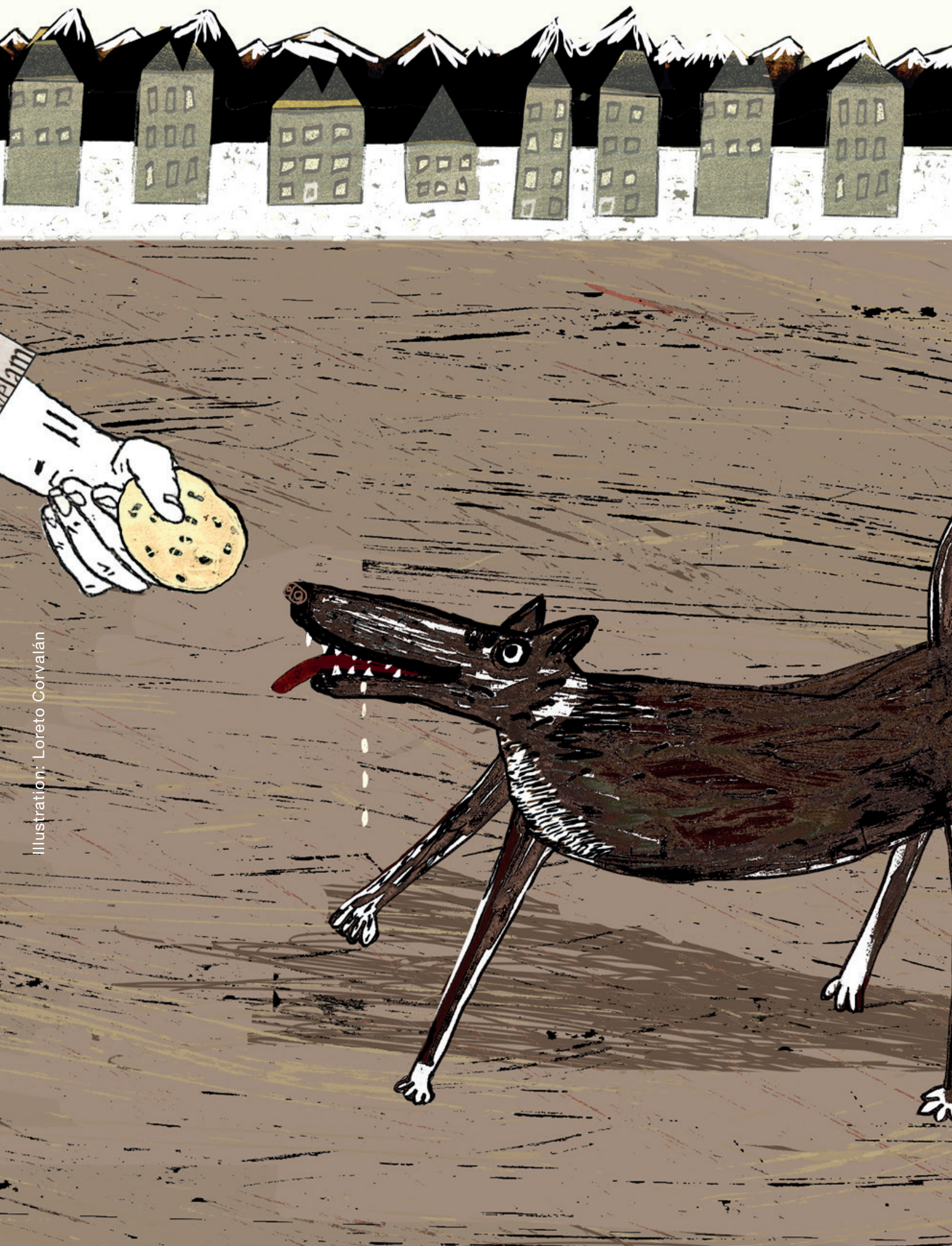


Illustration: Loreto Corvalán

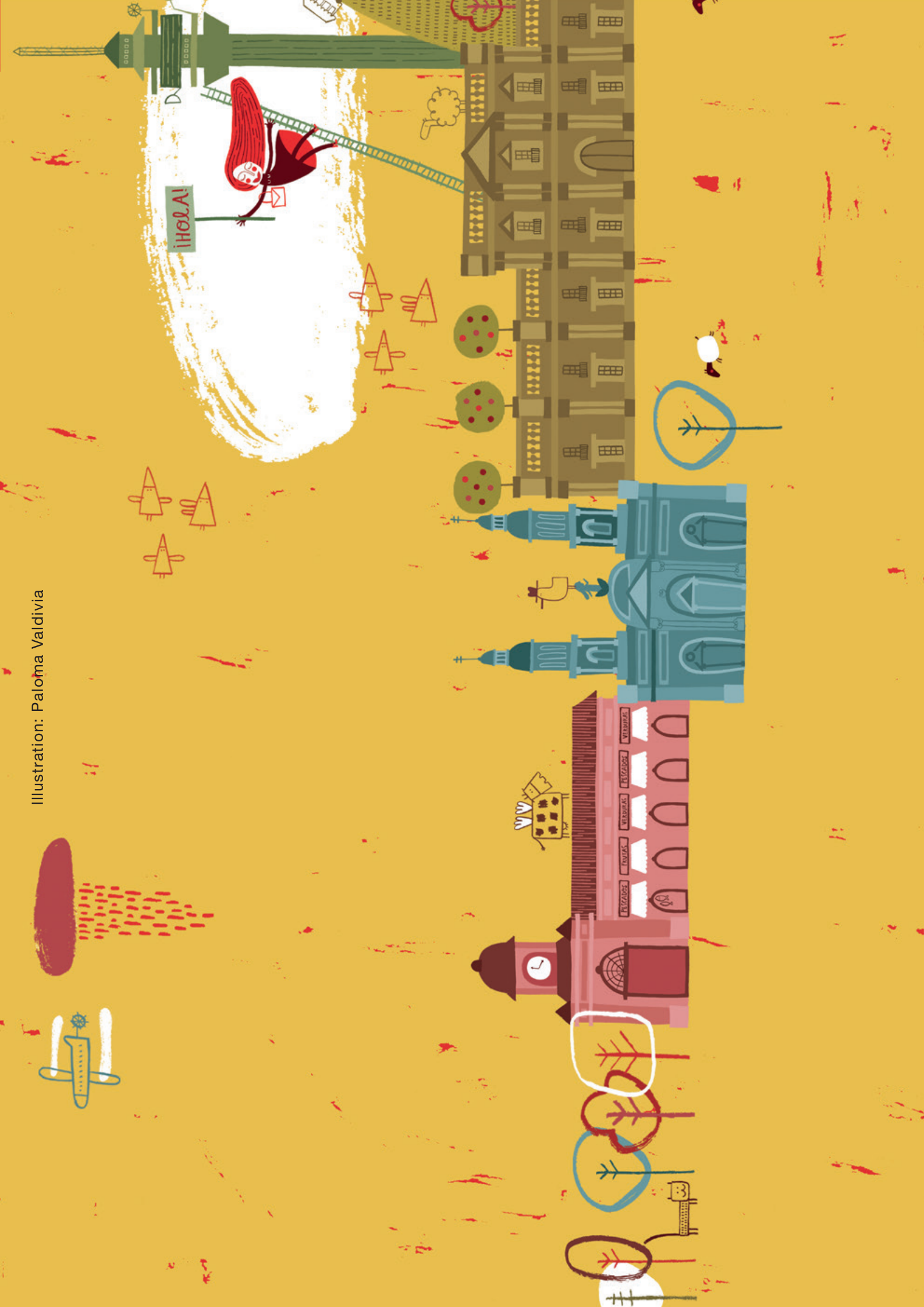
## Dostoievski

WINNER VI VERSION

He would've carefully looked at people rushing out from the subway entrance. He would've gone near the government palace under the rain in absolute amazement. Thoughtfully, he would've bought fast food to a hungry dog near a park. He would've cheerfully crossed the flooded streets with children running around him. He would've showed his fist to the aggressive and invading cars. He would've tasted the best wine in a bar with some friends. He would've laughed and cried, sat down on a bench, looking at people, waiting for the bus, paralyzed by cold. And he would've hopelessly hoped for the snow to fall. Fedor Dostoievski would've loved Santiago in winter.

*Ernesto Guzmán, La Florida.*





# The woman who greets

WINNER VII VERSION

Yolanda is a woman who greets everyone. She greets her former classmates when she meets them at the supermarket. She greets the man begging outside her office, and she greets everyone who takes the elevator. Yolanda feels no shame in greeting and asking for your e-mail or your telephone number in a heartfelt effort. One day, she greeted a television actor that she bumped into the street and greeted someone just because he had a familiar face. Yolanda comes to greet me every day. I tell her that her small-town origin is well too evident.

*Elisa de Padua, Ñuñoa.*





## Adrián and I

WINNER VIII VERSION

Adrian and I live downtown. He makes me laugh a lot and is absolutely convinced he is a serial killer. “I’m a soul snatcher,” he says while restlessly swimming from side to side in the fishbowl I bought him. He has been very quiet lately. I tried to pet him, but immediately he started to make frisky acrobatic leaps, attempting to bite one of my fingers. He thinks he is a piranha. One Sunday, he looked devastated, so I dissolved a quarter of an antidepressant into his water and I had another. We spent all afternoon looking through the window, humming English songs. We just feel so lonely sometimes.

*Paloma Amaya, La Reina.*





Illustration: Bernardita Ojeda

## Messy lady

WINNER IX VERSION

You can find Clara on a busy corner downtown Santiago. She spends time knitting little animals with colorful horsehair strands which she dyed herself. Over a piece of rag spread out in the sidewalk, she places her delicate zoo, the one she refuses to fasten with pins, even when she knows they can be blown away. That's why, every other day, a blue dragonfly hits the window of a taxi driver or a little orange frog bumps into a classy woman's eye. Clara doesn't even attempt to get them back. She only laughs at the people's reactions.

*Nathalie Moreno, La Reina.*





Illustration: Raquel Echeñique

## They just swim

WINNER X VERSION

They meet every Monday. They never say hello on the surface. They have a blurry picture of each other because water clouds their goggles. Initially, they swim rapidly and eagerly. Then they do it at the same time, slowly, as if they were drowning and laughing all together. She gets out of the pool first. She covers her body with a towel as soon as she climbs up the metallic steps. He waits a few minutes, floating face up and looking at the clouds through the glass roof. In their dressing rooms they sing while they take a shower to remove the smell of chlorine covering their skin.

*Begoña Ugalde, Providencia.*





## The terracotta warrior

WINNER XI VERSION

Li Piang Hua, a terracotta warrior of the Emperor Qin Shi Huang, escaped from the government palace museum. He walked northwards and spent the night drinking cold ones with some Peruvian immigrants. He met a woman from a small town who came here looking for an ophthalmologist appointment through a healthcare program. Now, they live in the slums and have a Chinese food stall. At night, in a small yard next to a tricycle and two gas cylinders, Li performs a noiseless dance. He wields his crossbow pointing to the moon, while in his ears, the sound of bamboo is caressed by wind.

*Luis Alberto Tamayo, Peñalolén.*





Illustration: Carola Josefa

## Jony, Dámaris and Taís

WINNER XII VERSION

Jony is a professional pickpocket and grew up under a bridge. Dámaris is in love with him, because she thinks he is well spoken. Both are Taís' friends, who works by showing her legs while serving coffee. Sometimes, they meet on Sunday and eat out. Jony doesn't drink alcohol and Dámaris loves how Jony asks the waiter for a Fanta. Jony knows about everything, from the Greenwich Meridian to the apocalypse. He says that at the end we all are skulls. Dámaris looks at him with a glow in her eyes.

*Pablo Barrientos, Santiago.*





Illustration: Karina Cocq

## Scaphandre

WINNER XIII VERSION

Moreno likes the word scaphandre. One day he heard it flitting in the hot air of the subway and he saved it in somewhere near his stomach. He doesn't know what it means, but imagines that, if he looks it up in an encyclopedia, he will find the image of a fairy animal, maybe similar to a dragonfly (for a word like that, it surely must have wings). Like a reflection, when Moreno hears the beep of closing doors, the scaphandre flaps in the pit of his stomach and escapes hovering through the subway car, waiting to see if another passenger catches it.

*Laura Soto, Providencia.*





## The sad woman

WINNER XIV VERSION

The sad woman goes out with pearls around her neck and a heartburn. The sad woman threatens to jump into the void. The sad woman enters a salon and asks for a French manicure. The woman sad spends all day being the sad woman and welcomes her husband with a smile of a plastic doll. The sad woman feels like a plastic doll. The sad woman looks for a needle and finds it. Then pricks her body to see if it bursts, to see if something happens, like blood.

*Ana María Moraga, Ñuñoa.*





Illustration: Felipe Lira

## Lionel

WINNER XV VERSION

Lionel learned to swim by himself, diving his body into rivers in the south of the country. He studied in a boarding school and got a degree as an accountant in a village where the only company was a small supermarket. He migrated to Santiago to join the army. In the end, he became a safety guard and works from Monday to Saturday in a pharmacy of a shopping center. He rents a room close to downtown Santiago. Some nights he smokes on the side of a nearby bridge, throwing the butts into the river flow.

*Arelis Uribe, Providencia.*





Illustration: Igneo

## The vampires

WINNER XVI VERSION

They were called the vampires. They walked through scorching pavement, leisurely and dressed in all black. They went out at night to take their dog for a walk, which was black and was named Fassbinder. She studied to become a Spanish language teacher, and he worked in a pet shop. They talked to no one. Never smiled. There was nobody like them in the neighborhood. I always wanted to talk to them, but I never dared to. They disappeared from one day to the other. Years later, when I worked in a money exchange office, they appeared. They wanted to buy euros. They were still together and still wore black.

*Macarena Araya, Ñuñoa.*



*Translation: Mirla Correa y Javiera Ramírez*

**[www.santiagoen100palabras.cl](http://www.santiagoen100palabras.cl)**

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