

## Old bruises and new beginnings

Abril Cecilia Boragno\*

As he wandered through the dense forest, the freezing breeze made his skin bristle. He knew he would probably end up with a snuffle or a cough the next day, but it did not matter. He preferred anything to going back home that night. Every step forward felt like a choice of freedom, even if it came at a high price.

Suddenly the silence became deafening every step he took, every leaf that crackled, every twig that cracked made him flinch.

“How is that possible?” He wondered. The little boy was used to loud arguments and shattering glassware but the fear of being found was greater than the terror of staying at home. The forest was supposed to be frightening, yet it felt safer than the four walls he had escaped from.

As he lay down on the tall grass to rest for the night, something put him on guard. An intense flickering blue light shone from a distance through the trees. He could not believe that his cruel parents had called the police.

He could have run away. The boy was better acquainted with the forest than he recalled the memory of a hug. But the bruises, shifting from purple to sickly yellow, were a silent testimony of his struggles.

Perhaps the police car would be his pumpkin turned into a carriage, one that would finally take him to a new beginning. For the first time he dared believe that freedom might be awaiting him behind those trees.

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\* Mención por Originalidad – Concurso Literario USAL en Lengua Inglesa – Categoría cuento (20265).