El temido enemigo

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Jorge Bucay was born and raised in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He has written over 20 books, and many of them have been translated into more than 20 different languages.

Gusti was born in Argentina. In 1985 he travelled to Europe and took up residence in Barcelona. He has illustrated many books and received numerous awards.

This is a story about love, hate, jealousy and humility.

Once upon a time there was a king who wanted to be the most powerful person of his kingdom. However, he was overshadowed by a magician who, people said, could tell the future. The king sent his solders to check if this was true and to his surprise, he was told that not only could the magician predict the future, but he was also loved and admired by all the people of his kingdom.

Full of jealousy, the king devised a plan to put an end to the person he considered to be his worst enemy. He organized a big dinner and invited the magician. His plan was to ask the magician after dinner and in front of all the guests, if he could predict the future. If the answer was yes, he would ask the magician to predict the day he was going to die. No matter what the answer was, the king was planning to kill him right there to prove that the magician had no real power and that he was still the most powerful person in the kingdom.

The night of the dinner the palace was full of people. After dinner, as planned, he asked the magician if he knew the exact day he was going to die. The magician at first was reluctant to answer the king's question but under pressure and in front of all the guests, he finally said: “I can’t tell the exact day, but I do know that I will die the same day as the king.”

The king did not believe that the magician could truly predict the future. However, he did not want to take any chances just in case the magician was right. Therefore, he decided not to kill him and instead invited the magician to move into his castle so that he could keep an eye on him and make sure that he was always safe.

With time, the king reached out to the magician for advice on matters related to the kingdom. They became good friends and spent a lot of time together talking about how to improve the lives of the people of the kingdom.

One day the king confessed to his dear friend that he had lied to him in order to trick him. The magician, in turn, confessed to the king that he also had not been honest. They forgave each other and continued to live in peace and harmony in the palace, until one day, at a very old age, the magician died. The king felt a tremendous pain for the loss of his dear friend and teacher.

On the 10th anniversary of the death of the magician, the king felt that the end was near for him. That night, before he died, he wrote a letter to his son, the future king.

Dear Son:

Tomorrow, in a month or maybe a year, you may come across someone who will fill your soul with anxiety and fear. It could be someone from outside or it could actually come from within you, but when you become aware of his power, you will know fear. Then you will want to destroy him, to remove him completely from your life. Now, that the end is near for me, I want to give you my last piece of advice: ¡Don’t do it! If you are capable of inviting him into your home, to open your heart to him, to enjoy his presence next to yours, you will soon realize that the person you thought was your worst enemy could become your most powerful friend and ally.

With my love, your father, and until today, the king,

There are several versions of this popular tale but Jorge Bucay has done a wonderful adaptation, adding this beautiful message from the king to his son.

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