

It must have been in the late eighties of the last century or early nineties. It was then that I came across an astonishing, unique, unrepeatable novel titled Kubelik, like the surname of Fran Kubelik, the heroine of *The Apartment*, by Billy Wilder, portrayed on screen by the marvelous Shirley MacLaine. Its author, Nicolás Martínez Cerezo, would have been in his thirties. I had the opportunity to meet him personally in illo tempore, more than thirty years ago, and my first encounter with him left a vivid impression that remains intact today. He seemed like a creature from another planet. Someone from outer space visiting us. Like E.T., he exuded nostalgia, tenderness, and vulnerability in equal parts. I immediately gathered that he had teleported to Earth casually and fortuitously, as in his native planet, everything happened without prior notice. Already among us, he fell in love with the work of the comic artists from the Bruguera School. He was fascinated by the adventures of the Gilda sisters, Carpanta, Doña Urraca, Reporter Tribulete, Doctor Cataplasma, and Carioco. Since in his world there was no difference between what was drawn and what was real, he met all those characters in situ and, in passing, contributed to expanding their cast by conjuring up another mythological figure from the house: the unforgettable Gorda de las Galaxias.

He lived with his mother, a remarkable woman named Felisa, in the northern area of Madrid, near where the Deutsche Schule where my son Álvaro studied was located. I liked that Wilderian-titled novel (Billy's, not Thornton's) so much that I felt the intellectual and moral urgency to see it in print. With that goal in mind, I passed it on to my friend Jacobo Siruela, who was also dazzled by Nicolás's writing, but after many doubts, he didn't dare to publish it. Decades passed, and it had to be a psychologist in love with pulp novels, the Sevillian José Luis Sánchez de Cueto, who placed Martínez Cerezo's literary production in the privileged place it deserves within Spanish literature of the last third of the 20th century and the first half of the 21st. And even though Kubelik remains unpublished, although, knowing Pepe Cueto, it won't be long before it appears in bookstores.

Nicolás began his creative journey very young, as a cartoonist and scriptwriter of the aforementioned Gorda de las Galaxias, a regular in Bruguera magazines. And he collaborated, still a teenager, in the final stage of *La Codorniz*, in the late seventies. Because in Nicolás, what is avant-garde, which is a lot, converges with both Generations of '27, both the one of García Lorca and company and the other '27, formed by humorists like Jardiel, Mihura, Tono, and the rest of the family. The literary and illustrative work of the extraterrestrial Cerezo is inscribed in that tradition of fresh, fertile, and fierce avant-garde. Nicolás himself has referred to his Gorda de las Galaxias as follows: "Someone from another world landing in this one to sow it with magic and sweetness, with love and justice, with celestial subversion [adding a sub-rebel to Larrea's Celestial Version]. The fist and the lips."