

MISMATCHES

We youngsters in the village called him “el estirao” (the stretcher). His pride had been battered that day when, on one of our forays into the bush in the autumn of ‘46, I met him wounded in the leg, lying on the leaves.

A flash of hatred filled my mind. From the wound, I deduced that a cartridge from a hunting companion had reached him. “Don’t do it. For my children’s sake, don’t do it” –he, who, during the war, had never made a gesture of humanity, sniffled and bawled like a child. With my teeth clenched, I disarmed him and went back to my comrades. “Someone had taken a nap in the bush and in his haste forgot the shotgun and ammunition. Irrelevant hunters, they know no more –I commented in a mocking tone.

Thirty years had passed since then. I hadn’t seen him again. As he passed me, I noticed a wicked smile at the corner of his lips. Instinctively, I lost myself in the crowd. In the distance, I could see a police van and two burly armed bodyguards standing guard around the place.

Collection of micro-stories: “Maybe or Perhaps”