





Sebastià Serra

THE STORY THAT NEVER ENDS

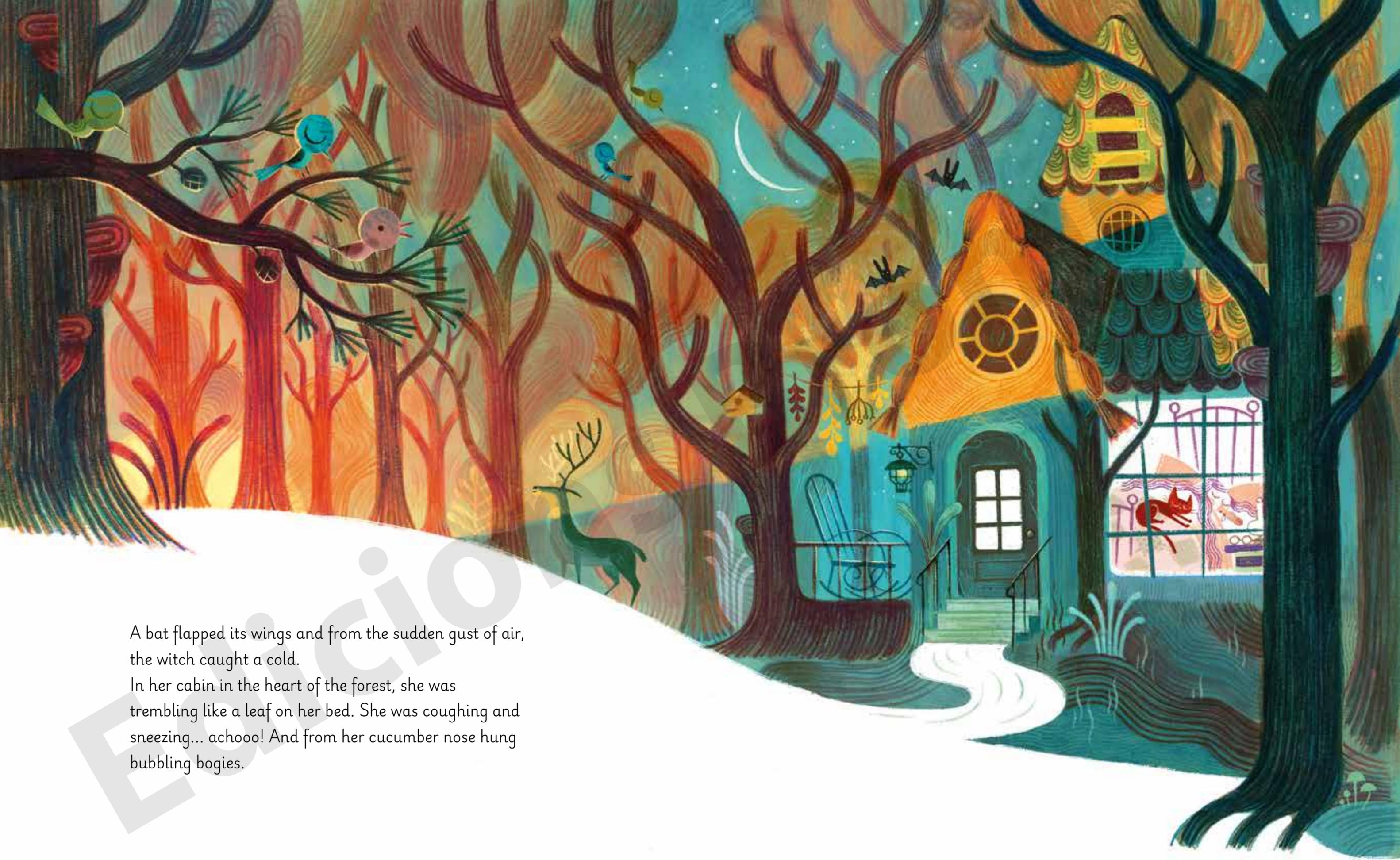


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Original title: *El conte que no s'acaba mai*
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Av. Areners, 25 (Pol. El Pla) - 46600 Alzira
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A bat flapped its wings and from the sudden gust of air, the witch caught a cold.

In her cabin in the heart of the forest, she was trembling like a leaf on her bed. She was coughing and sneezing... achooo! And from her cucumber nose hung bubbling bogies.



The day was dawning, but she didn't feel like getting up. Gradually, she dragged her arm out from under the mountain of blankets covering it and, from her bedside table, took a piece of paper. 'What does it say here?' And she read with her eyes half-shut from the fever: *Urgent, for Monday! Prepare a magic potion for the king's daughter, suffers badly from migraines and they can't find a cure.* Then, when she stopped to think about it, her heart sunk: 'Monday? Monday! Oh dearie me... but that's...today!'

She jumped out of bed like a spring, wrapped herself up with seven scarves and threw herself over her book of enchantments.



'Neck pain, knee pain...' she murmured, running her finger over the yellowed pages, 'ear ache, eyebrow pain... Aha!'

MIGRAINES AND HEADACHES

To cure a nasty headache
The remedy is clear indeed:
Mix coriander and aniseed,
Half a toad and eye of hake.



Jolting into action, she put a pot of water to boil over the fire and dashed madly off to the pantry while rolling up the sleeves of her large sweater. Her long fingers moved like spiders among the shelves lined with jars and bottles of every shape and colour.



Once the water was boiling, she stood in front of the fire and, with a sinister expression, raised her hands amidst the clouds of steam. She tipped all the recipe's components into the pot while reciting in a nasal voice:

*'Migraine be gone
from the royal head'*

But, without realising it, she added another ingredient to the formula: a mucous drop ran from her nose and fell into the stinky brew.



She still wasn't done filling a small flask with the remedy for the princess when she heard a loud knocking on her door. Sat upon a majestic horse, a servant of the king took the bottle, tossed three gold coins into the air, and turned away without even a thank you.



Galloping towards the palace, he made his way down the long, narrow path which split the forest like a parting.

The witch, exhausted from her efforts, went back to bed dreaming that a snowy silence muffled the birdsong in every corner of that dense forest.