

Author: Gabriel Rufián for "El Periódico"

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"Giant", the article that Gabriel Rufián wrote after visiting Junqueras in jail

"The shape turns and it's Junqueras. After 100 days, it's difficult to recognize him. It's a shock."

One roundabout, 600 km behind. "A **coup d'état** doesn't come for free", written in a hurry on the road. Red and yellow on the sign. Red and yellow on the shoulder. Three hours of land and nothing around. Barbed wire, sentry box, watchtower and cement on one hill. From afar it seems an airport without planes. Ronny and Vievo, always 10.12.17. Eva, Aranchy and Víctor, never again. 6.09.12, Karabanchel goes away. Pollo and Chulato, you are my life. Chicho, Antonio, Ramiro, they stay. Camaroti and Chulo, we'll be back, on a red wall. Prison of Estremera. The seventh prison in Madrid.

The last time was when, with six hours of delay in order to get dark and pretend that there weren't many people waiting, **Mundó, Rull, Romeva** and **Turull** were released. A lobby with 20 posters banning mobile phones. Mothers, fathers, brothers, girlfriends, women and children, queuing. Bags with blankets and clothes. An ID card, a photography and a fingerprint. Apathetic efficiency from the civil servant.

It's cold. And this cold walks with you until you leave. Opaque screens with people inside staring at cameras without people. Control and scanner. Without jacket, without belt, without metal, without any pen, without any paper. Civil servants with plastic gloves checking pockets. Rows of wooden chairs. Now it seems an outpatient clinic. People looking at the ground, people looking at the yard, people looking at the ceiling. "Spain always united", written on the T-shirt of one guy who doesn't recognise us. A walkway made of rusty iron and glass. A gravel yard bordered by wire and concertina wire that sparkles as if it were new. If there are birds, you can't see them. Another room and another door. At the front, a hallway of booths.

On PA, a voice recites surnames to assign to each booth. "**Junqueras at 2**". A shape wearing a black parka laughs and talks with somebody at the door. One square metre glazed iron with three wooden chairs. There's four of us. We will take turns to get close to the microphone. **The shape turns and it's Junqueras. After 100 days, it's difficult to recognize him. It's shocking.** After six hours by car convincing yourself that you have to be the one who looks good and has the best mood, in just one second you realise that you

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will not be that person. Darker, thinner and stronger. He smiles and he won't stop doing it in 40 minutes.

We put our hands on the dirty glass. I remember our hugs. Politics, sport, reading and 20 "take care of the family". His light is so intense that you stop seeing the darkness of that place. **A giant** that doesn't fit on seven prisons. 100 days without his children and he reproaches nothing to anyone. Living history.

You know the end has arrived because you can no longer hear him. They hung up. Hands on the dirty glass. Kisses and hugs in the air. We go outside.

It's colder inside than outside. Some people deserve so much that deserve a whole country. There are some things that I wish I had never written. That those defeated of today go to Estremera and come back as the Achilles of tomorrow.