

his immense power began
to lose direction bothered the people
imagined
they gave the nemy
who greeted
mistrust
of that eternal war
of the chalk circle

them do. Lost in the solitude of his immense power, he began to lose direction. He was bothered by the people who cheered him in neighboring villages, and he imagined that they were the same cheers they gave the enemy. Everywhere he met adolescents who looked at him with his own eyes, who spoke to him with his own voice, who greeted him with the same mistrust with which he greeted them, and who said they were his sons. He felt scattered about, multiplied, and more solitary than ever. He was convinced that his own officers were lying to him. He fought with the Duke of Marlborough. "The best friend a person has," he would say at that time, "is one who has just died." He was weary of the uncertainty, of the vicious circle of that eternal war that always found him in the same place, but always older, wearier, even more in the position of not knowing why, or how, or even when. There was always someone outside of the chalk circle. Someone who needed money, someone who had a son with whooping cough, or someone who wanted to go off and sleep forever because he could not stand the shit taste of the war in his mouth and who, nevertheless, stood at attention to inform him: "Everything normal, colonel." And normality was precisely the most fearful part of that infinite war: nothing ever happened. Alone, abandoned by his premonitions, fleeing the chill that was to accompany him until death, he sought a last refuge in Macondo in the warmth of his oldest memories. His indolence was so serious that when they announced the arrival of a commission from his party that was authorized to discuss the stalemate of the war, he rolled over in his hammock without completely waking up.

"Take them to the whores," he said.

They were six lawyers in frock coats and top hats who endured the violent November sun with stiff stoicism. Úrsula put them up in her house. They spent the greater part of the day closeted in the bedroom in hermetic conferences and at dusk they asked for an escort and some accordion players and

irrevocably sinking into the darkness, to a point where she never had a clear notion of the invention of the electric light, for when they put in the first bulbs she was only able to perceive the glow. She did not tell anyone about it because it would have been a public recognition of her uselessness. She concentrated on a silent schooling in the distances of things and people's voices, so that she would still be able to see with her memory what the shadows of her cataracts no longer allowed her to. Later on she was to discover the unforeseen help of odors, which were defined in the shadows with a strength that was much more convincing than that of bulk and color, and which saved her finally from the shame of admitting defeat. In the darkness of the room she was able to thread a needle and sew a buttonhole and she knew when the milk was about to boil. She knew with so much certainty the location of everything that she herself forgot that she was blind at times. On one occasion Fernanda had the whole house upset because she had lost her wedding ring, and Ursula found it on a shelf in the children's bedroom. Quite simply, while the others were going carelessly all about, she watched them with her four senses so that they never took her by surprise, and after some time she discovered that every member of the family, without realizing it, repeated the same path every day, the same actions, and almost repeated the same words at the same hour. Only when they deviated from meticulous routine did they run the risk of losing something. So when she heard Fernanda all upset because she had lost her ring, Ursula remembered that the only thing different that she had done that day was to put the mattresses out in the sun because Meme had found a bedbug the night before. Since the children had been present at the fumigation, Ursula figured that Fernanda had put the ring in the only place where they could not reach it: the shelf. Fernanda, on the other hand, looked for it in vain along the paths of her everyday itinerary without knowing that the search for lost

sinking into the darkness
perceive the glow

her memory
unforeseen
shadows with
strength bulk
and color

darkness
thread needle
 She
 forgot

troubles and
confusion
shitting on every-
thing
been forced to swallow

fragrance of
nervousness

many troubles and vexatiousness, and asking over and over
she was stirring up her own confusion and she felt irrepressi-
ble desire to let herself go and scamper about like a
fighter and allow herself at an instant of rebellion, that
instant yearned for so many times and so many times port-
ended, putting her resignation with shitting on every-
thing of and for all the best part of her being of her being of
satisfaction of her work that she had been forced to swallow
a century of conformity.

"Shit!" she shouted.

Amerento, who was starting to panic, she looked into the
dark, thought that she had been bitten by a scorpion.

"Where is it?" she asked in alarm.

"Where?"

"There!" Amerento said.

Amerento put his finger on her chest.

"Here!" she said.

On Thursday, at two in the afternoon, Jose Arellano left
for the seminary. Inella would remember him always as she
said goodbye to him, languid and serious, without shedding
a tear, as she had taught him, swallowing in the hearing the
greatest condor suit with copper buttons and fastened how
around his neck. He left the dining room impregnated with
the pleasant fragrance of rose water that she had sprinkled
on his head so that she could follow his tracks through the
house. While the farewell lunch was going on, the family
celebrated its nervousness with festive expressions and they
celebrated with exaggerated enthusiasm the news that Fel-
ipe Amador Isabel would be back. But when they took out the trunk
bound in velvet and with silver corners, it was as if they had
taken a coffin out of the house. The only one who refused to
take part in the farewell was Colonel Aureliano Buendía.

"That's all we need," he muttered. "A Royal!"

Three months later Aureliano Segundo and Fernanda took
Meme to school and came back with a diamond necklace

Segundo barely ate at home and the only appearances he put in, such as to sleep with his wife, were not enough to convince anyone. One night, out of carelessness, morning found him in Petra Cortez's bed. Fernanda, contrary to expectations, did not reproach him in the least or give the slightest sign of resentment; but on the same day she sent two trunks with his clothes to the house of his concubine. She sent them in broad daylight and with instructions that they be carried through the middle of the street so that everyone could see them, thinking that her straying husband would be unable to bear the shame and would return to the fold with his head hung low. But that her own desires was just one more proof of how poorly Fernanda knew not only the character of her husband but the character of a community that had nothing to do with that of her parents, for everyone who saw the trunks pass by said that it was the natural culmination of a story whose intimacies were known to everyone, and Aureliano Sombrino celebrated the freedom he had received with a party that lasted for three days. To the greater disadvantage of his wife, as she was entering into a sad maturity with her somber long dresses, her old-fashioned medals, and her out-of-place pride, the concubine seemed to be bursting with a second youth, clothed in simple dresses of natural silk and with her eyes tiger-striped with a glow of vindication. Aureliano Segundo gave himself over to her again with the fire of adolescence, as before, when Petra Cortez had not loved him for himself but because she had him mixed up with his twin brother and as she slept with both of them at the same time she thought that God had given her the good fortune of having a man who could make love like two. The returned passion was so pressing that on more than one occasion they would look each other in the eyes as they were getting ready to eat and without saying anything they would cover their plates and go into the bedroom, dying of hunger and of love. Inspired by the things he had seen on his furtive visits to the

contrary
resentment
with
straying
shame

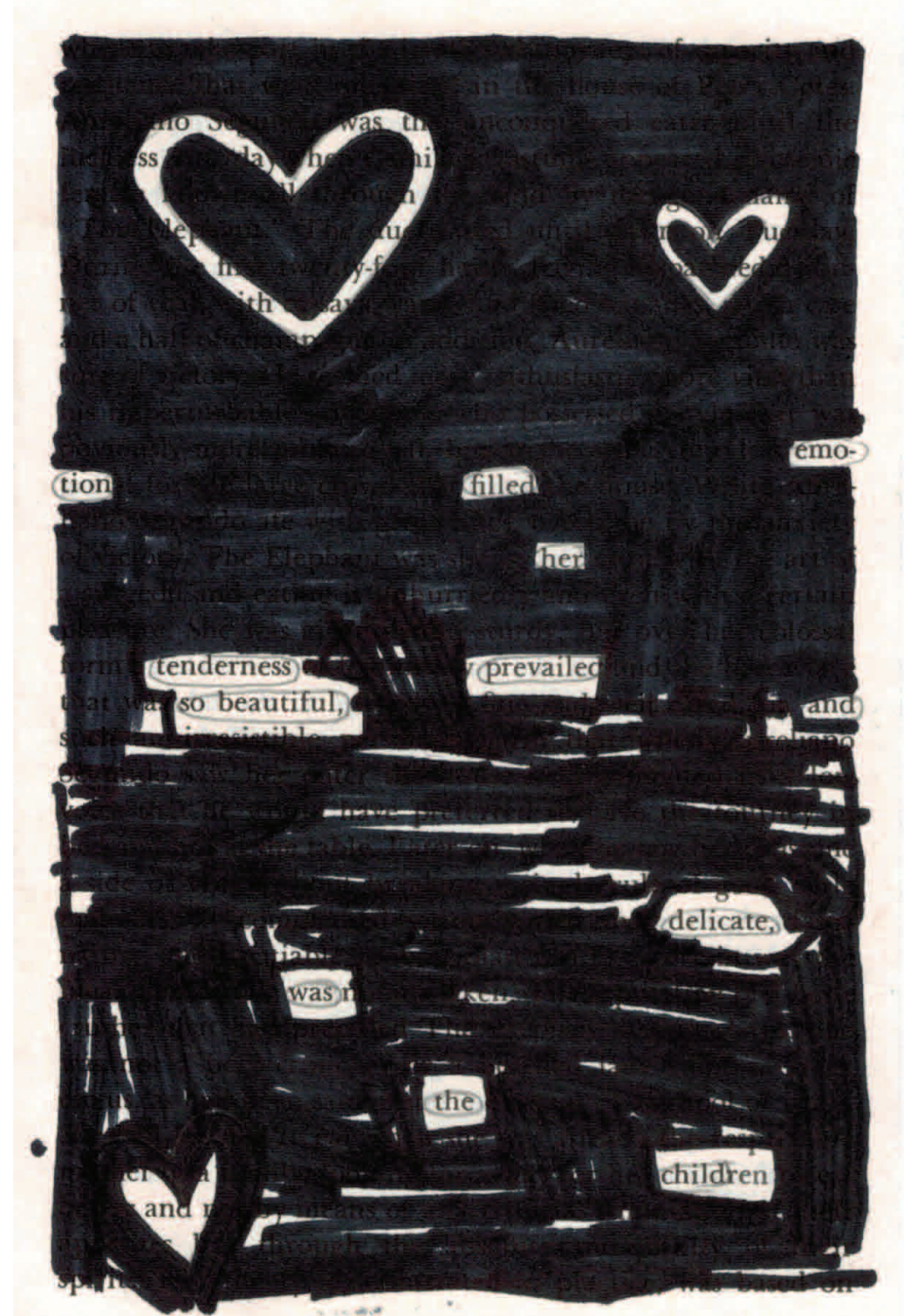
somber
pride
clothes with
her glow of vindication

love
was more

emo -
tion filled
her

tenderness prevailed

so beautiful and
delicate
was
the
children



he could not forget
many women
had sworn to love

There were seventeen of them he
decided not to sell any
thinking about himself
Only when he finished

he
ate the piece of meat

was and he could not forget the date because she had asked him an hour before what day it was. In spite of the memory he did not have an awareness this time either of to what degree his omens had abandoned him and while the coffee was boiling he kept on thinking out of pure curiosity but without the slightest risk of nostalgia about the woman whose name he had never known and whose face he had not seen because she had stumbled to his hammock in the dark. Nevertheless, in the emptiness of so many women who came into his life in the same way, he did not remember that she was the one who in the delirium of that first meeting was on the point of foundering in her own tears and scarcely an hour before her death had sworn to love him until she died. He did not think about her again or about any of the others after he went into the workshop with the steaming cup, and he lighted the lamp in order to count the little gold fishes, which he kept in a tin pail. There were seventeen of them. Since he had decided not to sell any he kept on making two fishes a day and when he finished twenty-five he would melt them down and start all over again. He worked all morning, absorbed, without thinking about anything, without realizing that at ten o'clock the rain had grown stronger and someone ran past the workshop shouting to close the doors before the house was flooded, and without thinking ever about himself until Úrsula came in with his lunch and turned out the light.

"What a rain!" Úrsula said.

"October," he said.

When he said it he did not raise his eyes from the first little fish of the day because he was putting in the rubies for the eyes. Only when he finished it and put it with the others in the pail did he begin to drink the soup. Then, very slowly he ate the piece of meat roasted with onions, the white rice, and the slices of fried bananas all on the same plate together. His appetite did not change under either the best or the harshest

Tuesday ~~the day of the~~ Segundo ~~had~~
remembered ~~Colonel~~ ~~himself~~
a white star
he had never spoken about
coldly inescapable
feeling.
a hook
creaked
with
realization ~~and~~
heard ~~the shouting~~ of the children,
the shouting children

“It’s the circus,” she shouted.

need of going to the chestnut tree, Colonel Aureliano
Buendía also went to the street door and mingled with the
wanderers who were watching the parade. He saw a woman
dressed in gold sitting on the head of an elephant. He saw a
dromedary. He saw a bear dressed like a Dutch girl keep-
ing time to the music with a soup spoon and a pan. He saw
the clowns doing cartwheels at the end of the parade and

Tuesday Segundo
remembered
a white star
he had never spoken about

coldly inescapable
feeling

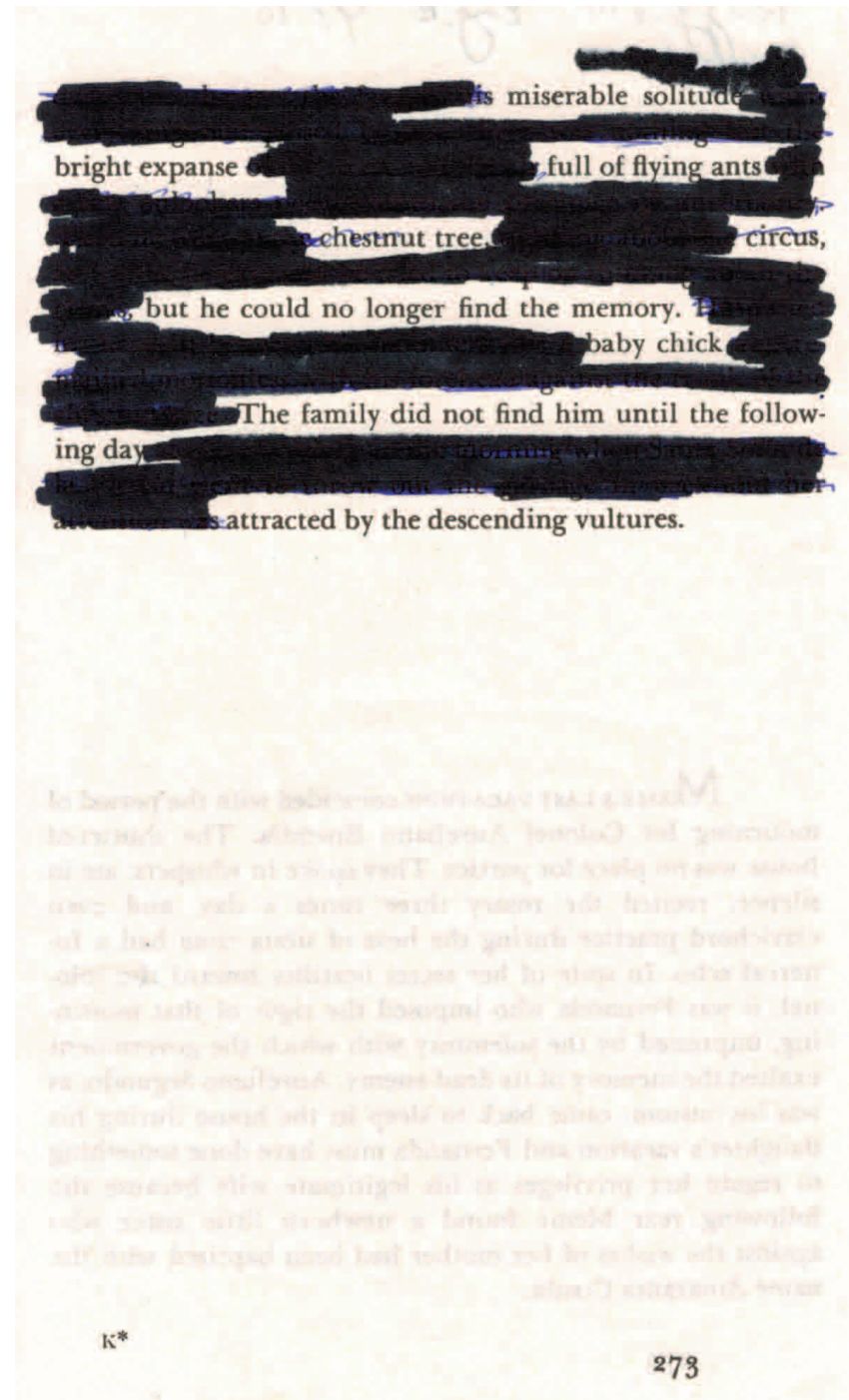
a hook
creaked
with
realization and
heard
the shouting children

“It’s the circus,” she shouted.

miserable solitude
bright expanse full of flying ants

chestnut tree circus,
but he could no longer find the memory.

baby chick
The family did not find him until the fol-
low-
ing day
attracted by the descending vultures.



finding out whose fault
it had been

was the price of her freedom.

Her happiness lay

in

chewing licorice lozenges,

the rare feeling of bravery

resurrection,

She had to make a
great effort

in order to keep up appearances,

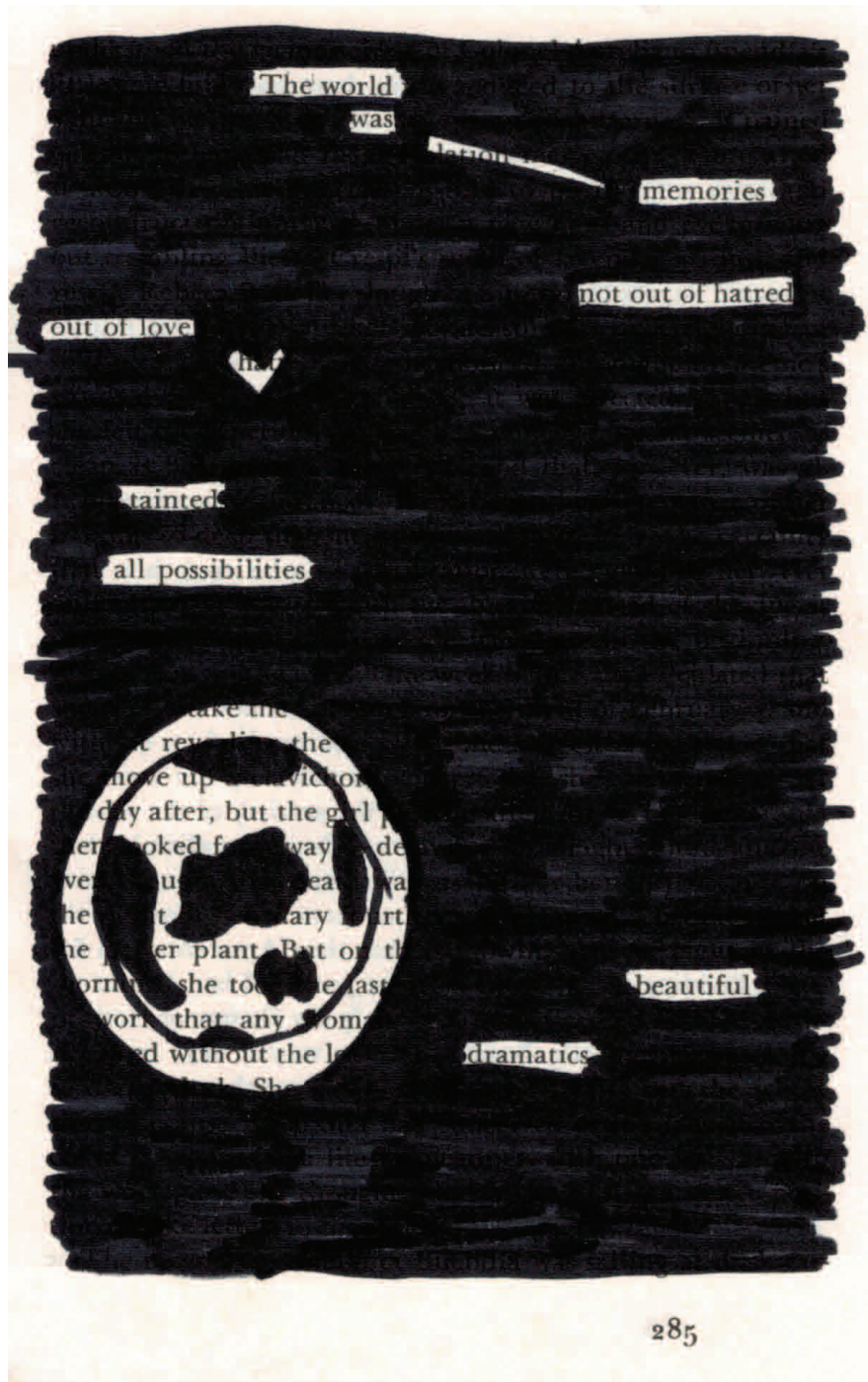
finding out whose fault
it had been
was the price of her freedom.

Her happiness lay
in
chewing licorice lozenges,
the rare feeling of bravery
like an elixir of
resurrection,

She had to make a
great effort
in order to keep up appearances

meaningless
tormented
violent
desire-
s
giving reason
less and less
comradeship

... because it was meaningless. And because she
... as she moved with the comradeship between her
... his daughter that she did not want anything to do
... was tormented by an unknown fear, as if in-
... were telling her that money, by just wanting it, could
succeed in what Fernanda had been unable to do: deprive
her of a love that by then she considered assured until death.
For the first time Aureliano Segundo had to tolerate the harsh
expressions and the violent tirades of his cunning wife, and he
was even afraid that his wandering trunks would make the
return journey to his wife's home. That did not happen. No
one knew a man better than Petra Gotes knew her father and
she knew that the trunks would remain where they had been
sent because if Aureliano Segundo detested anything it was
complicating his life with modifications and changes. So the
trunks stayed where they were and Petra Gotes set about re-
conquering the husband by sharpening the only weapon
that his daughter could not use on him. It too was an in-
necessary effort because Fernandinha had no desire to interfere in
her father's affairs and if she had, it would certainly have
been in favor of the concubine. She had no time to bother
anybody. She herself swept her room and made her bed, as
the girls had taught her. In the morning she took care of her
clothes, sewing on the porch on using Amarama's old tread-
machine. While the others were taking their siestas she would
practice the clavichord for two hours, knowing that the daily
s' trine would keep Fernando, and for the same reason she
continued giving concerts at church fairs and school parties,
even though the requests were less and less frequent. At
night she would fix herself up, put on one of her simple
dresses and her stiff high shoes, and if she had nothing to do
with her father she would go to the homes of her girl friends,
where she would stay until dinner time. It was rare that Aure-
liano Segundo would not call for her then to take her to the
movies.



The world was
memories
not out of hatred
out of love
tainted
all possibilities

beautiful
dramatics

alive
serene
mocking farewells
at five o'clock
When he saw her
appear her hair loose
over her shoulders
He thought
that he would
help

her conscience was clean

what horrible sin committed
an impious death shame of
illusions she shouted

hear her leaving this
world

She did not get up again
her long hair her ears
a mirror in more
she saw her face

she resembled
herself.

funeral. If anyone seemed alive at that moment it was the serene Amaranta, who had even had enough time to cut her corns. Aureliano Segundo and Memé took leave of her with mocking farewells and promised her that on the following Saturday they would have a big resurrection party. Drawn by the public talk that Amaranta Buendía was receiving letters for the dead, Father Antonio Isabel arrived at five o'clock for the last rites and he had to wait for more than fifteen minutes for the recipient to come out of her bath. When he saw her appear in a madapolam nightshirt and with her hair loose over her shoulders, the decrepit parish priest thought that it was a trick and sent the altar boy away. He thought, however, that he would take advantage of the occasion to have Amaranta confess after twenty years of reticence. Amaranta answered simply that she did not need spiritual help of any kind because her conscience was clean. Fernanda was scandalized. Without caring that people could hear her she asked herself aloud what horrible sin Amaranta had committed to make her prefer an impious death to the shame of a confession. Thereupon Amaranta lay down and made Úrsula give public testimony as to her virginity.

"Let no one have any illusions," she shouted so that Fernanda would hear her. "Amaranta Buendía is leaving this world just as she came into it."

She did not get up again. Lying on cushions, as if she really were ill, she braided her long hair and rolled it about her ears as death had told her it should be on her bier. Then she asked Úrsula for a mirror and for the first time in more than forty years she saw her face, devastated by age and martyrdom, and she was surprised at how much she resembled the mental image that she had of herself. Úrsula understood by the silence in the bedroom that it had begun to grow dark.

"Say good-bye to Fernanda," she begged her. "One minute of reconciliation is worth more than a whole life of friendship."

"It's of no use now," Amaranta replied.

considered improper for a lady to drive a car. So she was satisfied with the technical information and she did not see Mauricio Babilonia again for several months. Later on she would remember that during the drive her attention had been called to his masculine beauty, except for the coarseness of his hands, but that afterward she had mentioned to Patricia Brown that she had been bothered by his rather proud sense of security. The first Saturday that she went to the movies with her father she saw Mauricio Babilonia again, with his linen suit, sitting a few seats away from them, and she noticed that he was not paying much attention to the film in order to turn around and look at her. Meme was bothered by the vulgarity of that. Afterward Mauricio Babilonia came over to say hello to Aureliano Segundo and only then did Meme find out that they knew each other because he had worked in Aureliano Triste's early power plant and he treated her father with the air of an employee. That fact relieved the dislike that his pride had caused in her. They had never been alone together nor had they spoken except in way of greeting, the night when she dreamed that he was saving her from a shipwreck and she did not feel gratitude but rage. It was as if she had given him the opportunity he was waiting for, since Meme yearned for just the opposite, not only with Mauricio Babilonia but with any other man who was interested in her. Therefore she was so indignant after the dream that instead of hating him, she felt an irresistible urge to see him. The anxiety became more intense during the course of the week and on Saturday it was so pressing that she had to make a great effort for Mauricio Babilonia not to notice that when he greeted her in the movies her heart was in her mouth. Dazed by a confused feeling of pleasure and rage, she gave him her hand for the first time and only then did Mauricio Babilonia let himself shake hers. Meme managed to repent her impulse in a fraction of a second, but the repentance changed immediately into a cruel satisfaction on

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rage

anxiety became more intense
in the movies

confused

repentance into cruel satisfaction

the butterflies
felt the impulse
from the spot where she was
s if they had suddenly been born
from
her hands The
months
had
a very strange
aftershock
that had a
reach of curiosity

there, because the butterflies were always there. Once Aureliano Segundo became so impatient with the suffocating fluttering that she felt the impulse to confide her secret to him, as she had promised, but instinct told her that he would laugh as usual and say: "What would your mother say if she found out?" One morning, while she was pruning the roses, Fernanda let out a cry of fright and had Meme taken away from the spot where she was, which was the same place in the garden where Remedios the Beauty had gone up to heaven. She had thought for an instant that the miracle was going to be repeated with her daughter, because she had been bothered by a sudden flapping of wings. It was the butterflies. Meme saw them as if they had suddenly been born out of the light and her heart gave a turn. At that moment Mauricio Babilonia came in with a package that, according to what he said, was a present from Patricia Brown. Meme swallowed her blush, absorbed her tribulation, and even managed a natural smile as she asked him the favor of leaving it on the railing because her hands were dirty from the garden. The only thing that Fernanda noted in the man whom a few months later she was to expel from the house without remembering where she had seen him was the bilious texture of his skin.

"He's a very strange man," Fernanda said. "You can see in his face that he's going to die."

Meme thought that her mother had been impressed by the butterflies. When they finished pruning the rose bushes she washed her hands and took the package to her bedroom to open it. It was a kind of Chinese toy, made up of five concentric boxes, and in the last one there was a card laboriously inscribed by someone who could barely write: *We'll get together Saturday at the movies.* Meme felt with an aftershock that the box had been on the railing for a long time within reach of Fernanda's curiosity, and although she was flattered by the audacity and ingenuity of Mauricio Babilonia, she was

the... had planned and it was good. A short time later the
... the... at the... the shouting and...
the...
...
... in time to a galley drum
... starting off...
dragon...
...
suntanned...
...
... a few squads search
... sons of the
... the same solidity they all bore the
... their packs and canteens, the shame of their rifles
... bayonets, and the chancre of blind obedience and
... of honor. Úrsula heard them pass from her bed in the
... and she made a cross with her fingers. Santa Sofía de
... existed for an instant, leaning over the embroi-
... tablecloth that she had just ironed, and the thought of
... her son, José Arcadio Segundo, who without changing ex-
... expression watched the last soldiers pass by the door of the
Hotel Jacob.

Martial law enabled the army to assume the functions of
arbitrator in the controversy, but no effort at conciliation was
made. As soon as they appeared in Macondo, the soldiers put
aside their rifles and cut and loaded the bananas and started
the trains running. The workers, who had been content to
wait until then, went into the woods with no other weapons
but their working machetes and they began to sabotage the
sabotage. They burned plantations and commissaries, tore up
tracks to impede the passage of the trains that began to open
their path with machine-gun fire, and they cut telegraph and

the
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and loaded the bananas
into the woods

stained with
blood
his family
yellow countrymen
bloody and unequal civil war
to gather
protected by artillery pieces.

pressing into the neighboring streets,
closed off with rows of machine guns

waiting and the scorching
sun rumour spread
of dissapointment

telephone wires, the dugout ditches were stained with
blood. Brown, who was alive in the epicanned chicken
box, was taken out of Mazondo with his family and those of
his fellow countrymen and brought to a safe place under the
protection of the army. The situation was threatening to lead
to a bloody and unequal civil war when the authorities called
upon the workers to gather at Mazondo. The summons an-
nounced that the civil and military leader of the trouble
would arrive on the following Friday ready to intercede in
the conflict.

They were the beginning of the crowd that had gathered
at the station on Friday since early in the morning. He had
seen many of the leading officials and had been com-
missioned, along with Colonel GAZDAR, to manage the
crowd and direct the things that were going on. He did not
feel well and his only taste was beginning to collect on his
plate when he noticed that the army had set up machine gun
emplacements around the station and that the workers
of the banana company was protected by artillery pieces.

They were twelve or more wearing a uniform that was not army
uniform. They were shouting, people, workers, women, and
children, had spilled out of the open spaces front of the
station and were pressing into the neighboring streets, which
the army had closed off with rows of machine guns. At that
time it all seemed more like a jubilant fair than a waiting
row. They had brought over the fringes and drink stands
from the Street of the Parks and the people were in good
spirits as they bore the tedium of waiting and the scorching
sun. A short time before that, however, rumor spread that
the official transport had been cancelled for the following day.
The crowd was a mass of disappointment. The
tenant then climbed up on the roof of the station and
they were for a while the gun emplacements. Among the
crowd and the men of the station, the machine guns
there was a barefooted woman, a woman of the station.

child saw a woman kneeling in
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted] blood, before the colossal
[redacted] space, the kneeling woman, the light of
[redacted] struck on [redacted]
[redacted] Igararás had [redacted]
When José Arcadio [redacted]
[redacted] darkness. He realized that he was [redacted]
[redacted] silent train and that his head was [redacted] blood
[redacted] desire to
[redacted] prepared to sleep for many hours. [redacted]
[redacted] the horror, he made himself comfortable on the [redacted]
[redacted] pained him and [redacted] then did he discover [redacted]
[redacted] lying against [redacted] There was no free space [redacted]
[redacted] except for an aisle in the middle. Several hours [redacted]
[redacted] passed since the massacre because the corpses had the same
[redacted] temperature as plaster in autumn and the same consistency of
[redacted] petrified foam that it had, and those who had put them in the
[redacted] car had had time to pile them up in the same way in which
[redacted] they transported bunches of bananas. Trying to flee [redacted] the
[redacted] nightmare, José Arcadio Segundo dragged himself from one
[redacted] car to another in the direction in which the train was head-
[redacted] ing, and in the flashes of light that broke through the wooden
[redacted] slats as they [redacted] through sleeping towns he saw [redacted] man
[redacted] corpses, woman corpses, child corpses who would be thrown
[redacted] into the sea like rejected bananas. He recognized only a
[redacted] woman whose [redacted] in the [redacted] and Colonel Gaviria,
[redacted] who still held wrapped in his hand the belt with a buckle of
[redacted] Morúa silver with which he had tried to open his way
[redacted] through the panic. When he got to the first car he jumped
[redacted] into the darkness and lay beside the tracks until the train had
[redacted] passed. It was the longest one he had ever seen, with almost
[redacted] two hundred [redacted] cars and [redacted] at either end and
[redacted] a third one in the middle. It had no lights, not even the red

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corpses, woman corpses, child corpses

darkness
passed

“Hello,”

woman
dirty, shadowy figure

death
recognised him.

a blanket wrap himself up
by fire

and green running lights, and it slipped off with a nocturnal and stealthy velocity. On top of the cars there could be seen the dark shapes of the soldiers with their emplaced machine guns.

After midnight a torrential cloudburst came up. José Arcadio Segundo did not know where it was that he had jumped off, but he knew that by going in the opposite direction to that of the train he would reach Macondo. After walking for more than three hours, soaked to the skin, with a terrible headache, he was able to make out the first houses in the light of dawn. Attracted by the smell of coffee, he went into a kitchen where a woman with a child in her arms was leaning over the stove.

“Hello,” he said, exhausted. “I’m José Arcadio Segundo Buendía.”

He pronounced his whole name, letter by letter, in order to convince her that he was alive. He was wise in doing so, because the woman had thought that he was an apparition as she saw the dirty, shadowy figure with his head and clothing dirty with blood and touched with the solemnity of death come through the door. She recognized him. She brought him a blanket so that he could wrap himself up while his clothes dried by the fire, she warmed some water to wash his wound, which was only a flesh wound, and she gave him a clean diaper to bandage his head. Then she gave him a mug of coffee without sugar as she had been told the Buendías drank it, and she spread his clothing out near the fire.

José Arcadio Segundo did not speak until he had finished drinking his coffee.

“There must have been three thousand of them,” he murmured.

“What?”

“The dead,” he clarified. “It must have been all of the people who were at the station.”

The woman measured him with a pitying look. “There

ful groups. The proclamation also stated that the union leaders, with great patriotic spirit, had reduced their demands to two points: a reform of medical services and the building of latrines in the living quarters. It was stated later that when the military authorities obtained the agreement with the workers, they hastened to tell Mr. Brown and he not only accepted the new conditions but offered to pay for three days of public festivities to celebrate the end of the conflict. Except that when the military asked him on what date they could announce the signing of the agreement, he looked out the window at the sky crossed with lightning flashes and made a profound gesture of doubt.

"When the rain stops," he said. "As long as the rain lasts we're suspending all activities."

It had not rained for three months and there had been a drought. But when Mr. Brown announced his decision a torrential downpour spread over the whole banana region. It was the one that caught José Arcadio Segundo on his way to Macondo. A week later it was still raining. The official version, repeated a thousand times and mangled out all over the country by every means of communication the government found at hand, was finally accepted: there were no dead, the satisfied workers had gone back to their families, and the banana company was suspending all activity until the rains stopped. Martial law continued with an eye to the necessity of taking emergency measures for the public disaster of the endless downpour, but the troops were confined to quarters. During the day the soldiers walked through the torrents in the streets with their pant legs rolled up, playing with boats with the children. At night, after taps, they knocked doors down with their rifle butts, hauled suspects out of their beds, and took them off on trips from which there was no return. The search for and extermination of the hoodlums, murderers, arsonists, and rebels of Decree No. 4 was still going on, but the military denied it even to the relatives of the

The proclamation
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arsonists
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looking
without seeing

He had believed but
could not understand

Some of the dead were still seeing José Arcadio Segundo, and
that the soldiers were looking
without seeing
When he turned his head and closed
the door and spoke to the soldiers, there was a genuine
proof that the young officer had seen the room with the
blind eyes of Colonel Aureliano Buendía.
"It's obvious that no one has been in that room for at least
a hundred years," the officer said to the soldiers. "There must
even be snakes in there."
When the door closed, José Arcadio Segundo was sure that
the war was over. Years before Colonel Aureliano Buendía
had spoken to him about the fascination of fear and had tried
to show it to him with courage, even drawn from his
own experience. He had believed. But when
the soldiers looked at him, he felt a tension. He
thought about the tension of the past few months, the misera-
ble of all the people at the station, and the train loaded with
dead people. José Arcadio Segundo reached the conclusion
that Colonel Aureliano Buendía was nothing but a king of
an imbecile. He could not understand why he had needed so
many words to explain what he felt or why because one was
enough. José Arcadio Segundo, on the other hand, pro-
tected by the supernatural light, by the sound of the rain, by
the feeling of being invisible, he found the repose that he had
not had for one single instant during his previous life, and
the only fear that remained was that they would bury him
alive. He told Santa Sofía de la Piedad about it when she
brought him his daily meals and she promised to struggle to
stay alive even beyond her natural forces in order to make
sure that they would bury him dead. Free from all fear, José
Arcadio Segundo dedicated himself then to peruse the manu-
scripts of Melquiades many times, and with so much more
pleasure when he could not understand them. He became
accustomed to the sound of the rain, which after two months
had become another form of silence, and the only thing that

drizzled
ear-s grew
storms
scattered

It RAINED for four years, eleven months, and two days. There were periods of drizzle during which everyone put on his full dress and a convalescent look to celebrate the clearing, but people soon grew accustomed to interpret the pauses as a sign of redoubted rain. The sky crumbled into a set of destructive storms and out of the north came hurricanes that scattered roofs about and knocked down walls and uprooted every last plant of the banana groves. Just as during the insomnia plague, as Ursula came to remember during those days, the calamity itself inspired defenses against boredom. Aureliano Segundo was one of those who worked hardest not to be conquered by idleness. He had gone home for some minor matter on the night that Mr. Brown unleashed the storm, and Fernanda tried to help him with a half-

one
premature
problem
lasted a year.

to
deep
during
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temptation

It came

crushing them with a firebrand before they bled her to death. It was necessary to dig canals to get the water out of the house and rid it of the frogs and snails so that they could dry the floors and take the bricks from under the bedposts and walk in shoes once more. Occupied with the many small details that called for his attention, Aureliano Segundo did not realize that he was getting old until one afternoon when he found himself contemplating the premature dusk from a rocking chair and thinking about Petra Gotes without quivering. There would have been no problem in going back to Fernanda's insipid love, because her beauty had become solemn with age, but the rain had spared him from all emergencies of passion and had filled him with the spongy serenity of a lack of appetite. He amused himself thinking about the things that he could have done in other times with that rain which had already lasted a year. He had been one of the first to bring zinc sheets to Macondo, much earlier than their popularization by the banana company, simply to roof Petra Gotes's bedroom with them and to take pleasure in the feeling of deep intimacy that the sprinkling of the rain produced at that time. But even times with memories of his mad youth left him unloved, just as during his last debauch he had exhausted his quota of sales and all he had left was the marvelous gift of being able to remember it without bitterness or repentance. It might have been thought that the deluge had given him the opportunity to sit and reflect and that the business of the pliers and the oilcan had awakened in him the tardy yearning of so many useful trades that he might have followed in his life and did not; but neither case was true, because the temptation of a sedentary domesticity that was besieging him was not the result of any rediscovery or moral lesson. It came from much farther off, unearthed by the rain's pitchfork from the days when in Melquiades' room he would read the prodigious fables about flying carpets and whales that fed on entire ships and their crews. It was during

those days that in a moment of carelessness little Aureliano appeared on the porch and his grandfather recognized the secret of his identity. He cut his hair, dressed him, taught him not to be afraid of people, and very soon it was evident that he was a legitimate Aureliano Buendía, with his high cheekbones, his startled look, and his solitary air. It was a relief for Fernanda. For some time she had measured the extent of her pridefulness, but she could not find any way to remedy it because the more she thought of solutions the less rational they seemed to her. If she had known that Aureliano Segundo was going to take things the way he did, with the fine pleasure of a grandfather, she would not have taken so many turns or got so mixed up, but would have freed herself from mortification the year before. Amaranta Úrsula, who already had her second teeth, thought of her nephew as a scurrying toy who was a consolation for the tedium of the rain. Aureliano Segundo remembered then the English encyclopedia that no one had since touched in Meme's old room. He began to show the children the pictures, especially those of animals, and later on the maps and photographs of remote countries and famous people. Since he did not know any English and could identify only the most famous cities and people, he would invent names and legends to satisfy the children's insatiable curiosity.

Fernanda really believed that her husband was waiting for it to clear to return to his concubine. During the first months of the rain she was afraid that he would try to slip into her bedroom and that she would have to undergo the shame of revealing to him that she was incapable of reconciliation since the birth of Amaranta Úrsula. That was the reason for her anxious correspondence with the invisible doctors, interrupted by frequent disasters of the mail. During the first months when it was learned that the trains were jumping their tracks in the rain, a letter from the invisible doctors told her that hers were not arriving. Later on, when contact

that
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Behind
an unreal vision
of
my son

but since long before that, because she felt that doors had been invented to stay closed and that curiosity for what was going on in the street was a matter for harlots. Yet she was the first one to look out when they were told that the funeral procession for Colonel Gerineldo Márquez was passing by, and even though she only watched it through the half-opened window it left her in such a state of affliction that for a long time she repented of her weakness.

She could not have conceived of a more desolate cortege. They had put the coffin in an oxcart over which they built a canopy of banana leaves, but the pressure of the rain was so intense and the streets so muddy that with every step the wheels got stuck and the covering was on the verge of falling apart. The streams of sad water that fell on the coffin were soaking the flag that had been placed on top, which was actually the flag stained with blood and gunpowder that had been rejected by more honorable veterans. On the coffin they had also placed the saber with tassels of silver and copper, the same one that Colonel Gerineldo Márquez used to hang on the coat rack in order to go into Amaranta's sewing room unarmed. Behind the cart, some barefoot and all of them with their pants rolled up, splashing in the mud were the last survivors of the surrender at Neerlandia, carrying a drover's staff in one hand and in the other a wreath of paper flowers that had become discolored in the rain. They appeared like an unreal vision along the street which still bore the name of Colonel Aureliano Buendía, and they all looked at the house as they passed and turned the corner at the square, where they had to ask for help to move the cart, which was stuck. Úrsula had herself carried to the door by Santa Sofía de la Piedad. She followed the difficulties of the procession with such attention that no one doubted that she was seeing it, especially because her raised hand of an archangelic messenger was moving with the swaying of the cart.

"Good-bye, Gerineldo, my son," she shouted. "Say hello

making love in a pool of muriatic acid. Aureliano not only could not sleep for a single second, but he spent the next day with a fever, sobbing with rage. The first night that he waited for Nigromanta to come to the shadows of the almond trees it seemed like an eternity, pricked as he was by the needles of uncertainty and clutching in his fist the peso and fifty cents that he had asked Amaranta Úrsula for not so much because he needed it as to involve her, debase her, prostitute her in his adventure in some way. Nigromanta took him to her room, which was lighted with false candlesticks, to her folding cot with the bedding stained from bad loves, and to her body of a wild dog, hardened and without a soul, which prepared itself to dismiss him as if he were a frightened child, and suddenly it found a man whose tremendous power demanded a movement of seismic readjustment from her insides.

They became lovers. Aureliano would spend his mornings deciphering parchments and at siesta time he would go to the bedroom where Nigromanta was waiting for him, to teach him first how to do it like earthworms, then like snails, and finally like crabs, until she had to leave him and lie in wait for vagabond loves. Several weeks passed before Aureliano discovered that around her waist she wore a small belt that seemed to be made out of a cello string, but which was hard as steel and had no end, as if it had been born and grown with her. Almost always, between loves, they would eat naked in the bed, in the hallucinating heat and under the daytime stars that the rust had caused to shine on the zinc ceiling. It was the first time that Nigromanta had had a steady man, a bone crusher from head to toe, as she herself said, dying with laughter, and she had even begun to get romantic illusions when Aureliano confided in her about his repressed passion for Amaranta Úrsula, which he had not been able to cure with the substitution but which was twisting him inside all the more as experience broadened the horizons of love. After

uncertainty
asked for
it
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romantic illusions

man's fear
of
the sun
like
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dawn
of the banana
neighborhood

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because of **man's** congenital **fear** of the dark, but on the other hand they became susceptible to the glow **of** noon, so that by the Middle Ages already, and in present times, and *per omnia secula seculorum*, the only effective method for killing cockroaches was the glare of **the sun**

That encyclopedic coincidence was the beginning of a great friendship. Aureliano continued getting together in the afternoon with the four arguers, whose names were Alvaro, Germán, Alfonso, and Gabriel, the first and last friends that he ever had in his life. For a man **like** him, holed up in written reality, **th-e storm** sessions that began in the bookstore and ended at **dawn** in the brothels were a revelation. It had never occurred to him until then to think that literature was the best plaything that had ever been invented to make fun of people, as Alvaro demonstrated during one night of revels. Some time would have to pass before Aureliano realized that such arbitrary attitudes had their origins in the example of the wise Catalonian, for whom wisdom was worth nothing if it could not be used to invent a new way of preparing chick peas.

The afternoon on which Aureliano gave his lecture on cockroaches, the argument ended up in the house of the girls who went to bed because of hunger, a brothel of lies on the outskirts of Macondo. The proprietress was a smiling *mama-santa*, tormented by a mania for opening and closing doors. Her eternal smile seemed to have been brought on by the credulity of her customers, who accepted as something certain an establishment that did not exist except in the imagination, because even the tangible things there were unreal: the furniture that fell apart when one sat on it, the disemboweled phonograph with a nesting hen inside, the garden of paper flowers, the calendars going back to the years before the arrival **of the banana** company, the frames with prints cut out of magazines that had never been published. Even the timid little whores who came from the **neighborhood** when the

proprietress informed them that customers had arrived they were nothing but an invention. They would appear without any greeting in their little flowered dresses left over from days when they were five years younger, and they took them off with the same innocence with which they had put them on, and in the paroxysms of love they would exclaim good heavens, look how that roof is falling in, and as soon as they got their peso and fifty cents they would spend it on a roll with cheese that the proprietress sold them, smiling more than ever, because only she knew that that meal was not true either. Aureliano, whose world at that time began with Melquíades' parchments and ended in Nigromanta's bed, found a stupid cure for timidity in the small imaginary brothel. At first he could get nowhere, in rooms where the proprietress would enter during the best moments of love and make all sorts of comments about the intimate charms of the protagonists. But with time he began to get so familiar with those misfortunes of the world that on one night that was more unbalanced than the others he got undressed in the small reception room and ran through the house balancing a bottle of beer on his inconceivable maleness. He was the one who made fashionable the extravagances that the proprietress celebrated with her eternal smile, without protesting, without believing in them, just as when Germás tried to burn the house down to show that it did not exist, and as when Alfonso wrung the neck of the parrot and threw it into the pot where the chicken stew was beginning to boil.

Although Aureliano felt himself linked to the four friends by a common affection and a common solidarity even to the point where he thought of them as if they were one person, he was closer to Gabriel than to the others. The link was born on the night when he casually mentioned Colonel Aureliano Buendía and Gabriel was the only one who did not think that he was making fun of somebody. Even the proprietress, who normally did not take part in the conversa-

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to having decided
that one cannibal,”
was irresistible
of the long shad-vertebra neck

discover [redacted] by the [redacted] of a
[redacted] which had been forbidden to him by Fernanda's
[redacted]. Aureliano abandoned the [redacted] of the par-
[redacted] precisely when they were beginning to reveal
[redacted] predictions in coded lines of poetry. But the
[redacted] proof that there was time enough for everything
[redacted] without having to give up the brothels gave him the drive to
[redacted] return to Melquiades' room, having decided not to flag in
[redacted] efforts until he had discovered the last key. [redacted] That was during
[redacted] the time that Gaston began [redacted] wait for [redacted] plane and
[redacted] Mariana Gracia was so lonely that one morning she ap-
[redacted] peared in the room.

"Hello, cannibal," she said to him. "Back in your cave
again."

[redacted] was irresistible [redacted] with a dress she had designed and one
[redacted] of the long shad-vertebra neck [redacted] she herself had made.
[redacted] She had stopped using the leash, convinced of her husband's
[redacted] faithfulness, and for the first time since her return she seemed
[redacted] to have a moment of ease. Aureliano did not need to see her
[redacted] to know that she had arrived. She put her elbows on the
[redacted] table, so close and so helpless that Aureliano heard the deep
[redacted] sound of her bones, and she became interested in the parch-
[redacted] ments. Trying to overcome his disturbance, he grasped at the
[redacted] voice that he was losing: the life that was leaving him, the
[redacted] memory that was turning into a petrified polyp, and he spoke
[redacted] to her about the priestly destiny of Sanskrit, the scientific
[redacted] possibility of seeing the future showing through in time as
[redacted] one sees what is written on the back of a sheet of paper
[redacted] through the light, the necessity of deciphering the predic-
[redacted] tions so that they would not defeat themselves, and the *Cen-*
[redacted] *turies* of Nostradamus and the destruction of Cantabria pre-
[redacted] dicted by Saint Milanus. Suddenly, without interrupting the
[redacted] chat, moved by an impulse that had been sleeping in him
[redacted] since his origins, Aureliano put his hand on hers, thinking
[redacted] that that final decision would put an end to his doubts. She

gaston gaston in his ear, and with how much astuteness he had ransacked her vials of perfume so that he could smell it on the necks of the little girls who went to bed because of hunger. Frightened by the passion of that outburst, Amaranta Ursula was closing her fingers, contracting them like a shellfish until her wounded hand, free of all pain and any vestige of pity, was converted into a knot of emeralds and topazes and stony and unfeeling bones.

"Fool!" she said as if she were spitting. "I'm sailing on the first ship leaving for Belgium."

Alvaro had come to the wise Catalan's bookstore one of those afternoons proclaiming at the top of his lungs his latest discovery: a zoological brothel. It was called The Golden Child and it was a huge open air salon through which no less than two hundred bitterns who told the time with a deafening cackling strolled at will. In wire pens that surrounded the dance floor and among large Amazonian camellias there were herons of different colors, crocodiles as fat as pigs, snakes with twelve rattles, and a turtle with a gilded shell who dove in a small artificial ocean. There was a big white dog, meek and a pederast, who would give stud services nevertheless in order to be fed. The atmosphere had an innocent denseness, as if it had just been created, and the beautiful mulatto girls who waited hopelessly among the blood-red petals and the outmoded phonograph records knew ways of love that man had left behind forgotten in the earthly paradise. The first night that the group visited that greenhouse of illusions the splendid and taciturn old woman who guarded the entrance in a wicker rocking chair felt that time was turning back to its earliest origins when among the five who were arriving she saw a bony, jaundiced man with Tartar cheekbones, marked forever and from the beginning of the world with the pox of solitude.

"Lord, Lord," she sighed, "Aureliano!"

She was seeing Colonel Aureliano Buendía once more as

passion
It was called
among
innocent dense
love

she had seen him in
glory
Sitting in her
past
the
girl who
had caught him
so close to perfect

she had seen him in the light of a lamp long before the wars, long before the desolation of glory and the exile of disillusionment, that remote dawn when he went to her bedroom to give the first command of his life: the command to give him love. It was Pilar Ternera. Years before, when she had reached one hundred forty-five years of age, she had given up the pernicious custom of keeping track of her age and she went on living in the static and marginal time of memories, in a future perfectly revealed and established, beyond the futures disturbed by the insidious snares and suppositions of her cards.

From that night on Aureliano took refuge in the compassionate tenderness and understanding of his unknown great-great-grandmother. Sitting in her wicker rocking chair, she would recall the past, reconstruct the grandeur and misfortunes of the family and the splendor of Macondo, which was now erased, while Alvaro frightened the crocodiles with his noisy laughter and Alfonso invented outlandish stories about the bitterns who had pecked out the eyes of four customers who misbehaved the week before, and Gabriel was in the room of the pensive mulatto girl who did not collect in money but in letters to a smuggler boyfriend who was in prison on the other side of the Orinoco because the border guards had caught him and had made him sit on a chamberpot that filled up with a mixture of shit and diamonds. That true brothel, with that maternal proprietress, was the world of which Aureliano had dreamed during his prolonged captivity. He felt so well, so close to perfect companionship, that he thought of no other refuge on the afternoon on which Amaranta Úrsula had made his illusions crumble. He was ready to unburden himself with words so that someone could break the knots that bound his chest, but he only managed to let out a fluid, warm, and restorative weeping in Pilar Ternera's lap. She let him finish, scratching his head with the tips of her fingers, and without his having revealed that he was

cated a special paragraph to each one. Nevertheless, and although he himself did not seem to notice it, those letters of recuperation and stimulation were slowly changing into pastoral letters of disenchantment. One winter night while the soup was boiling in the fireplace, he missed the heat of the back of his store, the buzzing of the sun on the dusty almond trees, the whistle of the train during the lethargy of siesta time, just as in Macondo he had missed the winter soup in the fireplace, the cries of the coffee vendor, and the fleeting larks of springtime. Upset by two nostalgias facing each other like two mirrors, he lost his marvelous sense of unreality and he ended up recommending to all of them that they leave Macondo, that they forget everything he had taught them about the world and the human heart, that they shit on Horace, and that wherever they might be they always remember that the past was a lie, that memory has no return, that every spring gone by could never be recovered, and that the wildest and most tenacious love was an ephemeral truth in the end.

Alvaro was the first to take the advice to abandon Macondo. He sold everything, even the tame jaguar that teased passersby from the courtyard of his house, and he bought an eternal ticket on a train that never stopped traveling. In the postcards that he sent from the way stations he would describe with shouts the instantaneous images that he had seen from the window of his coach, and it was as if he were tearing up and throwing into oblivion some long, evanescent poem: the chimerical Negroes in the cotton fields of Louisiana, the winged horses in the bluegrass of Kentucky, the Greek lovers in the infernal sunsets of Arizona, the girl in the red sweater painting watercolors by a lake in Michigan who waved at him with her brushes, not to say farewell but out of hope, because she did not know that she was watching a train with no return passing by. Then Alfonso and Germán left one Saturday with the idea of coming back on Monday, but nothing more

One
fireplace
buzzing
during
the winter

happy beings
always
made Fernanda's
passion
fight
Beauty
and
reality

red ants, Aureliano and Amaranta Úrsula were the only happy beings, and the most happy on the face of the earth.

Gaston had returned to Brussels. Tired of waiting for the airplane, one day he put his indispensable things into a small suitcase, took his file of correspondence, and left with the idea of returning by air before his concession was turned over to a group of German pilots who had presented the provincial authorities with a more ambitious project than his. Since the afternoon of their first love, Aureliano and Amaranta Úrsula had continued taking advantage of her husband's rare unguarded moments, making love with gagged ardor in chance meetings and almost always interrupted by unexpected returns. But when they saw themselves alone in the house they succumbed to the delirium of lovers who were making up for lost time. It was a mad passion, unhinging, which made Fernanda's bones tremble with horror in her grave and which kept them in a state of perpetual excitement. Amaranta Úrsula's shrieks, her songs of agony would break out the same at two in the afternoon on the dining-room table as at two in the morning in the pantry. "What hurts me most," she would say, laughing, "is all the time that we wasted." In the bewilderment of passion she watched the ants devastating the garden, sating their prehistoric hunger with the beams of the house, and she watched the torrents of living lava take over the porch again, but she bothered to fight them only when she found them in her bedroom. Aureliano abandoned the parchments, did not leave the house again, and carelessly answered the letters from the wise Catalanian. They lost their sense of reality, the notion of time, the rhythm of daily habits. They closed the doors and windows again so as not to waste time getting undressed and they walked about the house as Remedios the Beauty had wanted to do and they would roll around naked in the mud of the courtyard, and one afternoon they almost drowned as they made love in the