<http://www.hadideeb.com/journal/2008/6/16/continuidad-de-los-parques.html>

**Continuity of the parks**

He had started reading the novel a few days before.  Urgent business made him abandon it for a time; but he returned to its pages while on his way back to the farmland estate.  He gradually let himself become interested in the plot, in the characters.  That evening, after writing a letter to his representative and discussing a matter of sharecropping, he took up the book again in the tranquility of his study which gazed out upon the park of oak trees.  As he lounged in his favorite chair with his back to the door that would have bothered him with the irritating potential for intrusions, he let his left hand stroke the green velvet once then again, and he began to read the final chapters.

His memory retained with no effort the names and appearances of the main characters, and so the novelistic illusion came upon him almost immediately.  He took an almost perverse pleasure in letting himself tear through line after line of what surrounded him.  All at once he felt his head relaxing comfortably in the velvet of the old recliner, cigarettes persisting within reach of his hands, and, beyond the large windows, the evening air dancing below the oaks.  Word for word, absorbed by the heroes’ sordid dilemma, he cast himself adrift towards the images which concerted and acquired color and movement, evidence of the last meeting in the mountain cabin.  First the woman came in, mistrustful.  Then her lover arrived, his face hurt from the whiplash of a branch.  Admirably she clotted the blood with her kisses, but her caresses were rejected: he had not come to repeat the rituals of a secret passion protected by a world of dry leaves and furtive paths.  The dagger grew warm against his chest, and below beat cowering liberty.  A breathy dialog ran through the pages like a stream of serpents, which felt as if it had always been so.  Even as these caresses swirled around the lover’s body as if trying to hold him and dissuade him, they drew at the same time the abominable shape of another body which had to be destroyed.  Nothing had been forgotten: alibis, mishaps, possible mistakes.  From this hour forth, each moment would have its use, minutely detailed.  The merciless re−inspection was hardly interrupted for a hand to caress a cheek.  It began to get dark.

No longer looking, bound rigidly to the task which was awaiting them, they separated at the door of the cabin.  She had to follow the trail that led north.  From the opposite trail, he turned for a moment to watch her run with her hair flowing loosely.  He then ran in turn, taking shelter beneath the trees and hedges until, in the mallow mist of twilight, he was able to make out the avenue that led to the house.  The dogs were not supposed to bark; and they didn’t.  The majordomo would not be in at this hour; and he wasn’t.  He climbed the three stairs of the porch and went in.  In the blood swishing between his ears rang the words of the woman: first a blue room, then a gallery, then a carpeted staircase.  Upstairs, two doors.  No one would be in the first room, no one in the second.  The door of the living room, and then the dagger in his hand, the light of those large windows, the old recliner with green velvet seat, the head of a man reading a novel.