

55 places the sun won't shine on

by Alvaro Lacouture

1

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. The peaceful workers had gone out into the fields. Shut up in her room, Úrsula would recall unpleasant memories of the Saturday revelry and of the nauseating Wednesday before the elections when José Arcadio Buendía appeared carrying in his hammock, his trousers undone, with the complete disregard for the laws of the jungle. When Úrsula realized that she had been deceived she told her father about it and in order to avoid confusion he sent two trunks with his clothing to the house of José Arcadio. One of the trunks was identical to the one that he had brought during the hard time of the banana company, and the other one, strange and clean and with a gold chip on the inside, was the same as the one that she had brought when she was free. They seemed so alike, and they seemed to carry with them a seed of understanding that was rare in the outsider. José Arcadio Buendía did not understand why people were upset over the omen of his unfinished education.

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2

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. In the past few years there had been a noticeable revival of interest in the old Petra Cotes house. Since the time of its founding, the old family of Pilar Ternera had maintained an establishment known as the Misericordia Hospital, which had been expanded with a gallery of wooden rooms on the upper floor, to the same spacious and comfortable rooms that she had built with her husband's consent, and at the same time a large tasting room on the terrace of the patio. But three years ago, when the patio was opened for public viewing, the Italian establishment that had been the family home for over a century and where the Pius Viceroys had their grand parties only at night, succumbed to the temptation of opening a street door to bring in beggars.

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3

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. On December first, when the mail arrived, the old inhabitants bowed down their doors to the lake and put on their Sunday clothes and roofs, and in accordance with the custom of the day, they took off their Sunday

shoes and hung them in the doorway, not suspecting that the old mansion was an abomination out of the past. The guests, on the other hand, shuddered when they heard the disappointing sounds of wooden lathings on the stone planks, and they prayed with all their might not they ever again visit that moth-eaten mansion in whose icy depths they could never reach the bottom.

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4

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. The marble houses were on fire. In an instant panic spread through the places where gringos were hiding, dragging their feet and bent over by their neighbors, and the panic became a dragon's tail as one compact wave ran against another which was spinning in the opposite direction to the direction of the others. At nightfall the survivors were lying face down on the ground, covered with a compact universe of tiny yellow flowers, and the only animal that could think of after all was a maneater. They slept in rectangular arrangements, facing each other in silence. On Friday the same men slept in identical arrangements under the same palm roof, but one night they slept in the same place, under the same bed, and on Saturday they were on the point of perishing under the lash of death. By dawn they had killed two birds. They had killed a mule and a calf. They each had killed a mule and a calf. It seemed impossible to imagine the number of possible consequences.

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5

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. A long time passed before they found the cemetery, cleared out completely and without flowers, and the air turned cold and damp. Fernanda wanted to find some way of killing time with the pruning of the roses, but the day that Colonel Aureliano Buendía died they simply told her it was a cholera outbreak. Colonel Gerineldo Márquez was the one who took care of it. He passed it on to his sons, who inherited it from his mother as well as other bric-a-brac from his great-great-grandfather. Although he always tried to remember his origins and everything he did, Colonel Aureliano Buendía did not remember his having seen the white rose of Junín Street in the first light of dawn. "That was the most fearful time of my life," he said. "We'll see what the doctor says." He did not get up again.

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6

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. On Thursday the Archbishop sent a special messenger to Úrsula with a very young medical student who was developing himself for solar warfare. He brought a mechanical bear that walked on its hind legs on an enormous, plush mat that had a print of the Virgin's rosy skin painted on the front and a

scherzo-cross collar with an artist's bow on the back. The student, who was an expert in the gaiters of children, described the motion as an extraordinary faculty that would give him the elliptical appearance he would need in order to navigate through the house. The impulsive and confident student tried to overcome the embarrassment of his first notation, but he could not allow it to be repeated. The next day, however, when Úrsula came into the house, she accompanied him to the tent where the holy mat had been kept, in accordance with the latest Teaching as established by the Academy of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin.

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7

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. Then there were scattered so many yellow flowers that the birds broke through the clouds and made a pathetic noise of confusion in the neighboring villages, and a squalid mule carrying a sack of all kinds of useless cabinets fell into a nearby ravine with the frightened shriek of a cat. At nightfall, when the first birds began to break out, the population was at its highest ever, and the ruins remained uncultivated for a half a century. The only human note was the rocking of the almond trees, which during those years was considered the oldest in the province. Since that time Macondo had enjoyed a peaceful, if at times at least, relationship with the world, and it was a perpetual disaster when not even the most evil families might try to encourage their sons to persevere in the hazardous work.

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8

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. On the following day the mayor sent out invitations to five-in-line Saturday dances to be held in the Park of the Evangsels, and he did not have a single answer to the questions asked by the prosperous and educated students who came to his offices. "No," he said, "trampling them is bad for attracting young people." Nevertheless, when the invitation was announced the schoolgirl shook hands with the Director of the General Section, and he, with good humor, explained in all seriousness that the lamplighter was the most beautiful woman in the entire province. He was so eager to bring the party to an end that he told the Director of the School, who gave strict rest to the first violation and sent the decoration with a white camellia in a corner of Fermina Daza's lapel. "It is a fine flower," the Director said, "but not for flower."

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9

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. A few months after Mr. Herbert's visit, when the railroad was already having trouble reaching the port for the first time,

Petra Cotes and she went to see him. Her fears were mistaken because the image of the man she had seen on the train with so much nostalgia during the first days was a pile of stones under the tracks, not the large image that her mother had painted on the walls with a stick daubed in the petals of the train. She saw him turning the corner of the station with his arms out, as if he were a murderer with blood on his hands, and she realized that the woman was not frightened by his shouts of terror but by his own brutal determination to drive the monster out of her house. At first she thought that he was waiting to finish off the town. But when she opened the door she could see that the house was filled with yellow butterflies. Then she understood. The streets were deserted under the persistent rain and the houses locked up with no trace of life inside.

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10

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. DAZZLED BY SO MANY and such marvelous inventions, the inhabitants of Macondo did not know where their amazement began. They stayed up all night looking at the pale electric bulbs fed by the plant that Aureliano had brought back when the train made its second trip, and it took time and effort for them to grow accustomed to its obsessive toom-toom. They not only grew accustomed to the yellowish bulbs, but they also looked the more absurd with their eyes as they watched the train made its way through the labyrinth of solitary cages. They even dreamed that when the bulbs went out they would find a box placed in the corridor where little Remedios had her nightgown cleaned, so that they could place it in her bed with the instruments she needed for daily care.

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11

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. In the house, with the begonias still smoking, the children stayed up all night and spent the day dreaming about the houses they had never seen, and their grandmothers and great-grandmothers reciting melancholy hymns in the family park, and the wandering trunks made by the dogs and the chicken sellers all night long, and the dead hung from the eaves so as not to drag their feet. At five o'clock no decisions had been made regarding lunch because the house was converted into a Sunday school, which Santa Sofía de la Piedad had organized in accordance with Catholic teaching, and the girl accepted the assignment of taking care of José Arcadio Segundo. She did not deny the accusations of her father, who was a teacher at that time and who was impatient with children, but he was so concerned with the established order of the house that he did not attend any religious ceremonies.

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12

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. The Street of the Turks was again full of mud and swamp, and it seemed as if Macondo, under the persistent drizzle, had turned into a swamp. At night it was threatened by an invisible attack of rabies, but the authorities promised to sew a special dam in front of the market pier so that the supply of coffee would continue balancing and the hoses would not run out. The only animal that José Arcadio Buendía was sure of after having seen him for many years in the market was the giant lucky charm tortoise. Aureliano, Buendía had to swallow his pride and actually tried to thank God for the miracle of the dampness of the swamp, much in the way that gullies caw with their incessant cries during the waking hours. God, who was silent in the silence, finally accepted the miracle and in a single phrase he serenely accepted the yellow canvas belt with its noble opal setting.

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13

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. The raffles were closed on Monday. At eight o'clock, when the day arrived, the winners, whose names were Carlos Argentino and Gabriel, were announced on the main stage in the town with a patched black ribbon around their neck. The raffles had been going just as well because of that luck as they had hoped for, for both cooks of Macondo had received a tremendous amount of letters and telegrams during the last days, and both of them seemed to be receiving very warm and thoughtful letters, with the exception of the very popular one from the previous week, when Don Sancho was forced to improvise a poem about the corpse of Colonel Aureliano Buendía in order to be read in the encyclopedia. Both of them sent a note explaining the reason for the unexpected draw and asking that people leave early so that the prizes could be discovered.

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14

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. The old woman who was going to bed alternately with her stiff, pale adolescent and a smiling old woman with an old-fashioned vest and a hat that she never accepted received any kind of pleasure from, was probably the most beautiful woman that José Arcadio had ever seen in his memory. She had been in his bedroom for five years, although she had begun to take it off when she was already old and placid. The old woman, whose skin was becoming covered with moths' claws, had arrived in Macondo during the banana company and had arrived without any warning and without any agreement to anyone, like an unwanted child. She mingled with everyone, painting in the window with a palette of natural paints, combing long hairs behind her ears, using a hair-shirt, braided long hair for her eyes, combing long hairs at the arms and leaving them in the same place on her head. The only thing that she never allowed herself was one of the following: a mustache of banana leaves,, bad lips, bad- breath.

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15

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. Then he saw Colonel Gerineldo Márquez, in the crowd that gathered at the station to express his solidarity, only now he saw him again, shaken by a visceral shudder that left his mind blank, as during the war. He feared that his own officers were preparing to use their influence in order to liquidate the three Liberals. They were none other than Colonel Gavilán Obeso, murdered in an ambush near the border with the forces of General Gaitán, with a rifle but no bullet in his heart. The last Liberals were in hiding. They had left their trails in the mountains and were driven off with rifle powder that left their wives and children in pieces. The only one who knew about it immediately was Don Apolinar Moscote, but he was taken out of the house as a reprisal.

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16

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. At dusk on Monday Dr. Juvenal Urbino and his wife heard the twelve-o'clock waltz on the parlor dock, and they decided to drive home when the driver, who was a very big man with good sense, pulled the automobile off the road. Without realizing it, he distracted the woman with the gold letter on her lapel so that he could come closer to the crash. Then he took off his wife's nightgown, hung it on the back of the chair, and began to tie it around their ankles in the knot of the tie. The Doctor stared at him in bewilderment, with sure anger and rage, at the irrepressible efforts of his wife, who was clutching the doorknobs in the other car.

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17

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. At the beginning of the rainy season, when no single object that would let him be remembered was left in the house, the friends who painted and hung the hammocks hung a hammock in the courtyard and on the next day they sold it as art for five reales. It was the first time that the walls had been painted blue in order to keep the house from being a clutter of meaningless symmetries and almost white innovation. The street greeted the new hammocks with a chorus of carillons and hoots of the sort that would characterize them during the opening bars of The Dagger of the Fox, and there were even tombstones with their initials in gold, but it was not so much a lament that a slight glance at the street and the bench where Dr. Juvenal Urbino had waited for the last time convinced him that this was not the right house.

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The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. Then the band was told to play its program of balloon rides on a windy afternoon. The pilot, who was Nikal Seyn (Nicholson) had dreamed about flying the first balloon, and with a very small balloon he could reach the town of Pentreath. The pilot, who was Don Sancho de Olivella, explained to Don Nicolás Paredes de Olivella that the balloon had the same fate of the balloon it had taken on from the first balloon flight and that would carry back another balloon with another warplane. The official message to the pilot from the Commercial Club was still saying that the balloon was behaving with abnormal circumstances, with or without wings that were abnormal, and with or without the tail cap. He did not get up again. When he went into the tent, with the begonias overstuffed and ceremonious farewells of farewells, a little before four in the morning the band burst into a wild fiesta and there were fireworks and a fireworks parade.

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The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. In winter time the stench of the market was so strong that dogs began to wander through the streets, muddling in the mud, and they were frightened by the uproar of the animals to whom the deer had been bought. On Saturdays the market was overflowing, and the carts loaded with dead animals made from Saturdays dragged through the mud, just as during the deluge of the great Caracolí, when so many carts arrived for the funeral procession. Nevertheless, the dead animals were not put to the huts but put to the disposal of the poor. Fermina Daza did not care to eat because she had heard that the crows, who in former times had throated through the mud to find a niche in the bargain hunting bazaars, had been exterminated because of the rats and the dogs had been complicit in the slaughtering of so many cows, so many pigs, and so many chickens, in such an honorable slaughtering they became indestructible in so little time.

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The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. In spite of the fact that they had set about this impossible undertaking with so much planning and such splendid initiative, Dr. Urbino Daza wanted to do it the right way. The Administrative Section of the Parish Café permitted only honorable mention to the family of Dr. Juvenal Urbino, who had been a good companion and confidant of his endeavors. She felt a deep affection for him, for his learning and devotion, his dedication to his cause, and even respect for the hierarchies of his family. But she did not feel she had done him a favor because of his notable lack of maturity, her insane demented sense of civic duty, which had drawn him closer to her than to any other member of the family. Dr. Urbino Daza knew that she was alone in the world, and he had made no

propositions to her in public three or four months before the elections, and he had conceived no positions of any kind that would allow him to hope for a comfortable life.

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21

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. The house was full of children. Remedios the Beauty had taken in Santa Sofía de la Piedad with her older daughter and a pair of twins, who had been born five months after Arcadio had been shot. Contrary to what the family supposed, the twins were twins of the mother who had raised them. Úrsula thought that they had been conceived and baptized as the offspring of the mother who had died on the ranch with Remedios the Beauty. Contrary to what the doctors said, the twins were the natural children of the mother who had been baptized with her husband. The only difference was that the mother who had been born with her was Remedios the Beauty, and the mother who had never got to school with Aureliano Segundo was named Aureliano Segundo. All of them went to school in the house. Although Aureliano Segundo and Remedios the Beauty did not marvel at anything, they both went to the seminary at the same time.

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22

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. On the following day, however, the inhabitants of Macondo woke up in a kind of angelic stupor that had them ringed by earrings, bracelets, and rings made of bone in order to guess distances and render aid in the building of the church. The inhabitants of Macondo who stayed in the Community until the end of the year 1894 were on the verge of forgetting their sense of social well-being because they could not sleep and felt tormented by the notion of a parchments rotting with the irremediable plague of insomnia. José Arcadio Buendía, without giving up his science, continued his work as if it were the only thing left in the whole town, the decisive in that respect owing not to the natural forces but to the supernatural proliferation of the village.

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23

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. At dusk on Thursday they invited a family of German refugees to sit on the terrace, in the shade of the almond trees that strung along the cobbled streets, to watch over the terrace. Aureliano Segundo and Gerineldo Márquez, with their wives and children, set up the placement of the cabin and watched over it from different heights so as not to increase the disorder. It was a moment of uncertainty. At first Fernanda interpreted it as an omen. She thought that Amaranta Úrsula, prepared to open the first masons' mugs, maddened by Meme's misfortune, would win the favor of the Conservative

landowners. She herself did not even think about putting up any protests, out of she had already begun negotiations for the favor of the landowners, who had not let her through her entire life. Nevertheless, on Thursday she received an envelope containing a slip of paper that said only: "Dear Lord".

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24

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. When Úrsula succeeded in imposing its will on Colonel Aureliano Buendía, it was in accordance with his instructions that they be carried to the capital of the province so that they might be rechristened "The Last Sigh." The instructions were not followed, not only because it was not practical for them to be carried out, but because in the end they were not. They would be carried out in Macondo, they would be thrown into the river, where it would never clear, and they would be brought upriver again. But it was in those days the Colonel Aureliano, Buendía decided to come downriver in order to die of old age. So he built a sepearal road in the middle of the swamp and he went down to the last swamp in a fruitful time.

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25

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. It was Thursday. In spite of the fact that Wednesday was the week for the return of the Liberal candidates, the voting was absolutely free and there was no one standing in front of the main ticket: the winner of the Golden Orchid. Whoever won the seat would receive a letter from the Liberals explaining how the letter was to be handed, in which Dr. Juvenal Urbino himself confessed the reason for the unexpected draw. The only one who was not named in the list was Lucrecia del Real del Obispo. The letter was written by Dr. Juvenal Urbino to his father-in-law Lácides Olivella, with the request that he study it and then show it to him if he thought it appropriate. It was a calm, almost paternal letter in spirit, and his eyes were on his dog, as he had done in the days that followed.

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26

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. Aureliano Segundo and Fernanda took care of José Arcadio Segundo as if he were their own daughter. Úrsula put small wooden chairs in the living room and established a nursery with other children from neighboring families. With the perverse proclamations of Úrsula, who did not care for the sick as much as the most respectable ones, she had set up a school which she hoped would be for adults only. When José Arcadio Segundo was about twelve years old, his mother admitted him to the

Academy and put him in a special place in the heart of the revolutionary headquarters so that he could understand what the government was going to do. Through a complicated series of events, it did not take very long for him to show up in Catarino's store at any hour of the day or night, and to receive military instruction, but it was in those days that Colonel Aureliano Buendía began to receive military instruction.

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27

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. The cholera was much more serious and widespread than the cholera itself. It consisted of an alarmingly prolonged and insidious attack, which, according to the latest reports, was wreaking havoc in more than half the city and of the colonial district. According to the latest statistics, the remaining victims were identical to the victims who had died in the previous epidemic. But Dr. Juvenal Urbino, in his most recent book, *The Deafening of the City*, dealt with the virulent form of cholera, and he proclaimed the alarming threat of an attack on public health. The fact was that the Director of the health Department had only just arrived in Macondo, and he seemed so well informed as he was aware of the public situation in which he was setting up that alarm. That was true.

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28

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. In spite of his almost maniacal love for the town, Colonel Aureliano Buendía was opposed to the surrender of historic lands in exchange for a pale return to the lands devastated by the deluge. "It is a pity that the Conservative regime is not in power now," he would say, "but at least it is in former times." He was so opposed to the impediments of surrendering, from a military point of view, to the historic right of all to bury their dead in towns so that their owners would not have to pay for them. "If we go on with the war, as you are, we are fighting for the right of all people to be buried in this town," he would say. "And I would say that we are fighting to protect the right of all of you to do whatever you want to do, wherever you want to do it, as long as you have at least a year of civil and military license in the country."

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29

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. The house was on the Grand Plaza, next to the Belgian's store, and it seemed more like the main house on a hacienda because of its large, somber rooms, its gallery with lace candelabra, its rooms open to the sun during the hot time of day, and from the front window it could be seen to the right of the street, with its golden domes, its row of two or three patios. It was the colonial mansion that had been

razed to the ground in order to make way for the railroad and was on the point of being converted to a more extensive house by the River Company of the Caribbean, with a counter exposed gallery in the front where you could still see the gunpowder castle of Potosí, La Chasse, and its legendary gunpowder castle.

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30

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. In the morning the parade overflowed with people waiting for the train to arrive. During the day, gangs of ragged gypsies and desperadoes plunged into the area to set up their tents near the railroad station, and gangs of all sorts took over the streets with their carnival transformed into chicken coops. At nightfall, gangs of all breeders broke through the electrified chicken yard and took over the town. By dawn they were all amazed by the wildflowers and the accordion party that had been improvised by the party clowns. At nightfall, when nothing was heard on the streets, gangs of all types made their way through the party, carrying bags of bills, musical instruments, and bottles of poison that had fallen onto the passengers' shoulders. It was not only the most abject and bloody parties, but it was the last time that the gypsies were seen in Macondo.

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31

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. In spite of his almost maniacal love for music, José Arcadio Segundo could not resist the temptation to listen to Pietro Crespi's songs in order to learn their meaning. And so it was that he learned them. The most surprising thing, even though it in no way disturbed his sleep, was that the guitarist who had prospered during the time before dared to play the organ in the choir of the Cathedral was once again playing the organ in the choir of the town where he had been born. Watching him with quiet serenity for several hours as the serenade ended, José Arcadio Segundo could not resign himself to his recollection of the serenade. He had never before heard anyone singing in the choir, for he did not know who had been the serenade guest, nor had he ever heard anyone singing in the choir of the town.

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32

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. And it was only when they built it that they became aware that they were first victims of the war. Colonel Aureliano Buendía had been in the country for more than twenty years, making contact with the people he knew like a son, learning to feed the donkey, and not yet a man. At first he was engendered with the rebel general Ricardo Gaitán, who fought for the capture of prisoners condemned to death, but he was never recognized by the government as a hero. The general did not receive any visits

except that of visits from family members, and he was reluctant to sign condolence letters unless it was to go to war. When the Liberals emerged in power, he assumed the position of civil and military leader of Macondo, but he was opposed to its being recognized as a legitimate province.

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33

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. In spite of his triumphal return, Colonel Aureliano Buendía was not enthusiastic over the looks of things. He was so enthusiastic over the Liberal attitude with respect to the rights of natural children in the public sphere that he accused the Conservatives of wanting to wipe him out with the stroke of a pen. The only natural consequence of his opposition was that his Liberal paradise must have been wiped out by the nauseating vapors of Colonel Aureliano Buendía, not by his own ruling classes but by those he himself repudiated as illegitimate children. He plunged into the pitiless extermination of the unarmed policemen with their carbines and their amorous cannons during the height of the disturbances in the brothels, exterminating them whole along the coast with their trunks, defying the laws of creation to such an extent that no social scientist could possibly have reasoned with him how a shotgun was defined and defined in any section of the body.

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34

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. On Pentecost Sunday the Christian congregation was singing hymns and fireworks and had been silent after the hymns, and the singers had routed fireworks on the bells along with the latest news. A pyrotechnical castle with Roman numbers and clocks was being assembled. "We mustn't lose our way," said the mayor with good humor. "Long live the Liberal party!" No one had been invited to the celebration yet, and the preparations had been slow because the army had not yet been given the resources to defend the town. A pyrotechnical castle was being assembled. The mayor placed a highly esteemed military man inside the gate of the Convent of the Salesians, who were protecting the town from the burning of fuel. The man made a solemn plea before the altar in front of the door, with the begonias on his indifferent head and with the black cape and suspenders of a military officer.

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35

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. On December first, a patrol of twenty men entered the house, without any announcement, and without leaving any trace or backing anyone up, searched the inside, the bedrooms, the pantry, the dining room, and among

the articles of clothing were the remnants of capsicum and the glass vases. They seemed to be everywhere at the same time, in the same corners, under the same roof, and on the same walls. Menial tasks were done in the kitchen, in the bathroom, in the kitchen, and on the floor. Some wore frock coats, but they did not move from their places because there were so many menace scratches, sores, and ulcers in the sores that they did not feel any more urgency to fight them off than if they had just stepped out of a pool. The woman who cleaned the house said there were three shifts at the office because an unknown reason had given the warning signals, and that she was seeing it because she noticed the weariness of the men.

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36

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. Then he went to the house of Petra Cotes, where he had just turned forty-two. He was doing rather well, not only doing very well, but what was best, in fact, for him was wasting his time. Since his father's death he had distributed to the children the expenses of his rentals, which he did not mention which were his only real ones, so that they could all think of business as soon as they met each other. His daughter, like so many sons of his own youth, had been accustomed to going to the school at her own expense and doing well, and the results were encouraging, for she had a remarkable telegraphic talent for handling complicated telegrams, as if she had been a mistress of the little birds, and her sense of social well-being was the same as that of her father.

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37

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. And so the very hours of mourning that had been expected of them during those days were postponed, because Fermina Daza received a letter from the Bishop of Riohacha in which he explained that although he considered the request unjust, he thought it was one of the many that could be met with grave regret. The letter was brief and interesting, and did not have the tone that he had hoped for, but it had the tone and rhetorical air of a determination letter, and said in substance that he was not prepared to interpret it as a love letter. But it was: he was, despite the vulgarity of the words, who was prepared to disregard it, in order to understand it as a categorical no.

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38

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. In the heat of that calamitous dawn, José Arcadio Segundo had the old carpenter's tools brought back to his house with the hope of opening a gallery in the courtyard so that the embroidery could be painted blue. The laboratory had been dismantled in order to keep the unfinished game of pool from getting stuck.

He really thought about putting it up for sale once and for as long as he could while the proprietress put away supplies so that someone could play it until the rains were over. But when she saw him arrive at five o'clock the proprietress noticed that he was dressed just like Colonel Aureliano Buendía, even though he said nothing more than that she could not understand why the government was interested in seeing his weapons. "They're for everything," she said. Colonel Aureliano Buendía was not interested in that. He only happened to have one pistol with him on the afternoon that the war was over, and he did not show any sign of sending it back.

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39

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. Then they came to the final solution. Colonel Aureliano Buendía opened the coffin in a somber cloud and with the horn he signaled to the buried three officers to move forward. The horn was the only one that was not broken. In the crowd that had gathered again to mourn the death of General José Raquel Moncada, with many faces covered by mourning, the last officers looked at one another with icy cold sores, and General Moncada raised his hands with all five senses so as not to bear the voice of the commander of the cadavers. "It's good luck," he said. "We'll be better off tonight." The dead also sang the sad aria that General Moncada had prepared for him, and the officers turned to look at them. General Moncada had drunk a flask of laudanum in one of his glasses during the drive and had to ask Colonel Aureliano Buendía to withdraw with a heavy heart.

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40

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. A short time before five in the morning someone ran screaming down the main street, and followed on that same run down the main street, shouting all kinds of insults at the troubled and confused government. The army had to shoot without any orders, with no uniform, because two soldiers had opened up and blocked the door. The untired and poorly armed colonel tried to open it again with his rifle but it was all too late. "My men!" he shouted. "Take them to the jail!" Two soldiers had opened up with heavy firing upon the crowd. "My men!" one of them shouted. "They're shooting!" One of the soldiers opened fire with his rifle, and the tense situation stopped just as the horn wailed like a horse thief. A wave of panic blew out the places where the soldiers had been. "My men!" one of the soldiers shouted.

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41

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. Since the first rebuilding, repairs had been made to the rocky foundations, and the walls and brick walls had been painted red, so that the building itself seemed enormous and invincible. A wooden canopy was just what

the artist had dreamed of in his paintings of queens and even in the prehistoric crocodiles that could be seen on the walls of Paris as it was rediscovered after three years of abandonment. But that was not the case. In any case, the building had the appearance of a clutter of cobwebs and termites, and the simple stone strewn about its courtyards seemed more like a declaration of love than a dedication to life. The house had no bathroom. The old cement pool was a good space for the two toiletries, but it was separated from the port by an enormous, elaborate glass door window, much like the window of a palace in its day.

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42

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. The servant girls had been recalled. This was the last that was true of the seventeen who lived in Macondo at that time, with one exception: a young mulatto girl we recounted in the family once said: "When they come back from the party they'll be better than new." This was true, but the girl we saw the first was not yet twenty. Besides, her father had made no effort to understand her, and he seemed very confused at the idea that a person of such privileged status could have so many troubles of the past and so many troubles of the present that none of them seemed to be passing at all. It was for this reason that she was the only one who dared raise her eyes to look at the Captain during the first half hour of the war, as he spoke to her during the first days of peacekeeping.

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43

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. In the morning the streets were carpeted with a compact cushion and the last houses were closed over by a blanket. The old inhabitants, who felt that something irreparable had occurred in their lives, stood in the doorways and took advantage of the time to take photographs. One of them, a woman who was rather proud of her appearance in a tuxedo and who was almost a lady on the upper floors, took the initiative and went to see the abandoned body of her husband. He was surprised that she was there, alone with her upset husband, whose pale petticoats fluttered in the breeze. He took the photograph and sent it to her in a jubilant proclamation. When the person who had delivered it to her from the post said that it was his ruling vocation to refuse recognition of the dead man's last name, José Arcadio Buendía paid court to Úrsula for several days so that she would not have to bring it up in her son's honor.

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44

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. The Street of the Turks, barely paved with houses, fell into a chaos of uproarious and drastic destruction. In a quarter of the

city-state that had resisted the deluge, the banana company and the railroad had abandoned their positions of privilege and were building kilns along the edge of the city where, under the patronage of the same landowners, the same families could still make and eat Virginia ham and milk. Shut up in his workshop, José Arcadio Buendía could barely concentrate on his work as he stared at the pale, foamy, dirty sea, which at one time had fluttered about his head like a fish out of water. He had stopped dreaming about himself ever since the night he awoke, because he could no longer bear the heat and the mosquitoes and the countless, desperate hours of anguish that the town had endured without him. He had stopped firing. When he returned to the workshop, preceded by the three men of his class, he discovered that his head was heavy with blood.

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45 The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. It was still dark when they brought Dr. Marco Aurelio Urbino to his carriage and led him to an execution room guarded by Butcher's knives. The room had been designed so that a practical and practical test of Strauss waltzes would be undertaken in only a few hours, the same method used to determine the most serious drunkenness. But the Doctor knew that many more serious drunkards were on the loose here than in other nations of the Caribbean, and that the only solution was abstinence from knives. The impulsive Dr. Juvenal Urbino studied the cubicle wall and noted with alarm the veins that could be drawn out by the lacer of a knife. He said: "The problem with knives is that one draws them out with the tips of two, but one draws them out with the tips of an arc and one draws them out with the tips of a pen."

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46

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. At dusk on Monday they brought a boat from Puerto Padre, with a cargo of cattle for Europe and enough bananas for the rest of the year. It was the first vessel that had ever arrived in Macondo, and they expressed its gratitude with a mournful wave of their fingers. Florentino Ariza was overwhelmed by the joyful reply that Father Antonio Isabel made to the boat, and he thanked the person who had organized the trip with the most charitable feelings for him during the difficult trip. When it anchored in the bay, the passengers were glad to have it back, because they felt as if they had carried with them a solid omen of death, and they said goodbye with a handshake that was more resigned than cordial. In the town of Magangué, where Mercedes was born, they bought a wooden shim for their corpse and sent it to them in a coffin that bore neither name nor dates, with the coffin sealed with pitch and with the waxed tips and corners cut out of a circle.

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47

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. The old woman who guarded the door with such care that the two of them alone took the precaution of greeting each other with a smile, did not show the slightest sign of worry after greeting Fermina Daza, who was just beginning to do so. She just closed the door without opening it, without caring if anyone was there, and with the feigned tranquility that Dr. Urbino had wanted for her so that she could say no more. He began to leaf through the albums of the Popular Library as if he had never had the first opportunity to, and once again he felt as if he had been visited by a ghost from his lost youth. He saw her typing at her desk, without the slightest trace of malice, with her fingers petrified by the certainty that someone had been with her for a long time and had seen her countless times without knowing anything about her.

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48

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. The old Street of the Turks was on the point of being abandoned, its streets deserted for the turkey trade and its ruined colonial district. The old inhabitants were in a uproar to the death because of the perceived dangers of vaccines, and many felt that their life depended on their being given the medicine they had never known. The only ones who were able to dissuade were the well-known physicians, whose houses had been abandoned in the prehistory of the city, and the well-known physicians of the old city. The only ones who accepted were the well-known physicians from Misericordia, who had practice in the old garden of Turbaco, where they learned to smoke and write, and the well-known lawyers who fought for the rights of their patients. The only ones who were immune were the very well-known lawyers who had founded the Medical Society, which had made vaccines much more difficult to obtain.

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49

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. Amaranta had put on some worn denim overalls and a pair of cotton stockings that her son had given her, and she set about on a new restoration of the house. The patio, covered with a mirror and some kind of artificial glint, was covered with a game of dice and cards. A gypsy woman who was rather proud of the fact that her beauty was slowly losing all the splendor of her laugh was going about her household tasks as if she had put away some rambling. When she finished the game, one of the gypsies returned who had been with her for a long time and informed her that their profession was in the woodcutters. She was surprised because the man who was making the announcements in the dining room did not believe that there had been any union. There had been no one in the business since the previous century, and he had only found out about it when it was learned that Rosalba and her father had been removed from the house

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The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. A stain of light on the horizon took the shape of a corrugated tin roof. The wooden courtyard, white and cool, was separated from the large drawing room by a plaster wall of brandy, the kind used by novice anglers to drown their deer in the river. Behind it, like all the rest of the granary, there was an ancient fountain with marble fruit trees and a bookcase that held more than five hundred little rock-crystal disks that were sometimes ten years old. The room had the climate and the kind of climate to resist the least eastern winds and the least northern ones, and the window had the sad climate of December in October and the topazes of even the highest, so that from December through March there seemed to be a perpetual rain.

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The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. It was Wednesday. On Thursday, June 8, the men of the "Jaguarita" descended. This was the day that Grateful Collins had died after having resisted death three times, and for the rest of his life he was content to rest in peace. In the small circle of the colonial church that held at the foot of the church, the Marquis de Casaldueiro had seen himself, in gaudy colors, counting his fingers with a thumb and mocking at the abominable Ursus. He was carrying a letter from the Marquis de Casaldueiro to the municipal clerk of Riohacha, in which it was explained how much his mother had loved him and threatened to file it with the government if the assignment of his lands did not favorable. The clerk gave him the letter, which she had torn down with all the pieces of paper he could find, and she opened it.

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The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. The cemetery opened with the firing squad. At dusk Colonel Aureliano Buendía appeared in the kitchen, without paying any attention to the waiting. "How many people are going around?" he asked. "Five," he answered. Two of them were Colonel Gerineldo Márquez and a young woman, named Aureliano Segundo. They had been with him for a long time. The girl had a point and age that were obvious from an adult, but all she had was a round and perfect square head. They looked exactly like the colonel. He kept his eyes on hers, without blinking, without saying a word.

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The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. "It's raining in Macondo," the Captain said. "At least three thousand workers are fighting in the streets in a town that has been transformed into a swamp." The summons announced that the fighting was taking place on Saturday later, and that for three desperate hours the streets were filled with blackouts and the labyrinths of death. Captain Samaritano had needed to take the lives of several people who had been taken prisoner by the bandits because they were unarmed, and with them he took down the Captain's weapons, the buckles, and the medical bag that contained the detectors and the riotous pills that Captain Samaritano had found in one of the luggage sacks. "It's all right," he said. "But bear in mind that I am the one destined to die."

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54

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. At that time there was talk of the possibility of a major earthquake. Don Apolinar Moscote discovered it at the beginning of December. He ordered an underwater exploration to be carried out in a port along the river, which would be the site of the first inland boat to dock under the protection of the Macondo River Company. His wife was alarmed at the tension of the people, who wanted nothing more from them to express their anger at the arbitrary acts and methods of the guests. Father Antonio Isabel started from the pulpit: "The Church must be resisted until the death of Christ." His wife wanted to draw up to two hundred letters from the previous century in order to convince the faithful that the drastic new methods were not proper in the public domain.

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55

The sun had not shone on that part of the town for many years. At nightfall, when the first birds began to chirp, the patio was carpeted with a compact cushion and the patio was carpeted with a sweet cushion. From the interior terrace, which faced the dining room, one could hear the clamor of crows and the uproar of startled canes as the almond trees were broken up in an interminable and silent explosion. Throughout the house one could see the walls as tangles of leaves strung together in an iridescent fashion across the patio. Across the street, in the same place, a very fat man sat behind the desk, as he had in his long, somber beard and with the beard of a young Pasteur. He had his head covered with curls, which gave one much to think about: he was a king. Florentino Ariza was happy in the midst of the cataclysm, scarcely answering the proposals of the emissaries.