

...nothing retains its original shape, or purpose, among broken parts and rusted remains of useful objects, unidentifiable now, indistinguishable from other fragments of the past, shapes and sharp angles of curious design and unique intention, wasting without flame under the litter of news no longer news, pages of words torn by the wind, sodden with rain, words retaining separation, strung to the tear, without apparent purpose...the accumulation of time in walls, the toppled gateways, mosaics in monochrome exposure brought to colors of Roman life when a pail of water was dashed over them, the broken faces of cathedrals where time had not gone by but been amassed, and they stood not as witnesses to its destructions but held it preserved...he was pursued by the cries of peddlers, men buying bottles, selling brooms, their cries the sounds of men in agony. He was pursued down the streets by the desperate hope of happiness in the broken tunes of barrel organs and he stopped to watch children's games on the pavements, seeking there, as he sought in the cast of roofs, the delineations of stair passages, bedrooms, and kitchens left on walls still erect where the attached building had fallen, or the shadow of a chair-back on the repetitious tiling of a floor, indications of persistent pattern, and significant form, that *sentido de inevitabilidad* in the past, left where it happened. There's a permanence of disaster here, left where we can refer to it...put out there in the afternoon for the sun, to look and cough, with his piece of bread, waiting. And the sun, which had kept so close all the day, sought before leaving it to fill the sky with color, a soft luster of pink, and then purple, against the pure blue, color that refined the clouds to their own shapes and then failed, discovering in them for minutes the whole material of beauty, then leaving them without light to mock the sky, losing form, losing edges and shape and definition, until soon enough with darkness, they disappear entirely.