

AND WINTER CAME ONE NIGHT AT TEN O'CLOCK

I walk with slow, weary footsteps on the snowy verge. I, who had made myself, who had grown out of nothingness, had forgotten my two maxims: value your successes more than your failures, think more of yourself and less of others. On several occasions, my psychiatrist pointed out that thinking this way could lead me to self-destruction.

For some time now I have been reminded by Borges' short story "Ulrica". Two lonely beings cross each other's lives by chance. The action takes place in an atmosphere of cold and solitude, but the context does not take hold of the characters and, after a brief morning walk, the Norwegian woman, aware that she is about to die, and the old teacher merge their burning bodies together in a small attic in the city of York. They know that pleasure is fleeting, that all that is possessed is lost, if anything can be possessed at all... "It's always a word that human beings are not allowed to use" Ulrica says.

I keep walking along the narrow path next to the railways. I think of my wife and my son. Nobody has ever loved women as much and as contemptuously as I did, when the night covered the "five-star" private salons of Berlin with its majestic mantle. They loved my gifts, I liked them to get their hopes up. It was a game and, as such, it could be won or lost. I knew what they were looking for. It was a different matter with my wife, I've always loved and respected her. She has always been there. I constantly urged my son to take over the family business, but he left home one April night - I assume he was tired of saying "yes"- to work as an aid worker for UNHCR.

I had the power, I felt I was lord and master. If this were a dream, when the black year of the crash came, I wouldn't have invested in the rising price of corn and rice and, to make things worse, the New York pyramid fund collapsed. I can't make out the road, everything is a blur at my feet. I see lights and shadows, shadows and lights. A deafening noise is approaching and a passenger looks at me with wild eyes as I am about to fall.

"Stories without Mufflers"(2006 -)