

“The Past Does Not Sleep”

– *in the style of Gabriel Garcia Marquez*

Captain Jose Martínez shivered and peered through the rain into the dank shadows of the jungle. His remaining uniform buttons shone under the tired light bulbs hanging for the celebrations. Muddy water flowed over his cracked boots. His toes shrunk from the cold, but there was no escape.

There was never any escape.

They had lost. Unlike his arrival all those years ago with Colonel Aureliano Buendía, he was just a supernumerary now, a relic of the past that faded slowly in memory, no longer existing in this present.

He gently patted the tree where, afterwards, *they* had hung his friend, Eduardo Rojas. The rough bark matched his scarred heart.

His mouth rebelliously watered at the smells of the new Mayor’s gifts of chocolate Marsbars and fresh coffee that came from behind him.

Turning and straightening his frayed cuffs, he called out towards the Arab’s store: “Good evening, Mayor.”

“You look wet, Captain,” the Mayor replied.

“I see you returned with some gifts for the village.”

“Yes, but I am afraid the chocolate is all gone.” The Mayor shrugged with indifference.

“It was always the case,” the Captain said, turning back to face the gloomy shimmer of the falling rain.

Lee Russell, 26/1/14

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