{rokbox title=|Old banana zone house. Photo: Alberto Salcedo|}images/stories/turistainternacional/Quehacer/gabo/garciamarquez9.jpg{/rokbox}

Old banana zone house. Photo: Alberto Salcedo

The country house where we are now is located in *Sevilla*, a municipality in the department of *Magdalena*
, at 87 kilometers from
Santa Marta
. On December 6, 1928, it was the only cement construction in the wired citadel of the United Fruit Company. The rest were made of wood. The organization's bosses took refuge in this house because they believed it to be safer in the face of the workers' incendiary threats.

While the company staff remained entrenched in the large main house, the army made *Urbano Real* - the grandfather of our histrionic character who is telling me the story - ignite the railroad's coal engines to suffocate the workers' strike by force. At this point,
Jorge
makes it clear that, although he was only born in 1949, he has spent his life listening to the narration by his elders. That is why he can assert that the windows in every wagon had been outfitted as machine gun nests in such a way that when the train advanced through the Banana Zone, it left a trail of dead on both sides of the tracks.

Alberto Salcedo Ramos, *El olor del plátano verde, La Palabra, Cali*, 2007 [The smell of green bananas].

"(…) *Meme* barely realized she was traveling through this ancient enchanted region. She did not see the shady, endless banana plantations on either side of the lines. She did not see the white houses of the *gringos*, nor the gardens turned arid by the dust and the heat, nor the women who played cards on their porches in their shorts and striped blue T-shirts. She did not see the ox cartsi carrying banana bunches on dusty roads. She did not see the maidens who jumped like shad on the transparent rivers to leave the train's passengers with the bitterness of their splendid breasts, or the workers' mottled, miserable barracks where *Mauricio Babilonia*
's yellow butterflies fluttered (…)."

Gabriel García Márquez,
Cien años de soledad
, 1967 [One Hundred Years of Solitude].

Consult the complete texts on *Sevilla* in *Las rutas de García Márquez* guide, available at the following bookshops: *Librería Nacional* in *Cartagena* and *Barranquilla* and *Librería Ábaco* in *Cartagena* .