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Spanish Civil War refugees in the town of Puigcerdà, Spain, crossing the border into Pyrénées-Orientales, France, in 1936.

“Con el despuntar del día la multitud desesperada se puso en movimiento como una inmensa mancha oscura y lenta. El rumor de que habían cerrado la frontera y más y más gente se aglomeraba frente a los puestos de paso corrió de boca en boca, aumentando el pánico. Llevaban muchas horas sin comer y los niños, los ancianos y los heridos estaban cada vez más debilitados. Cientos de vehículos, desde carretas hasta camiones, yacían abandonados a ambos lados del camino, porque los animales de tiro no podían continuar o por falta de combustible.”

– Isabel Allende, *Largo pétalo del mar*, p. 61.

“With the new day, the desperate mass began to spread out slowly like a huge stain. The rumor that the border had been closed and that more and more people were crowding at the crossings went from mouth to mouth, only increasing the panic. No one had eaten for hours, and the children, old folks, and wounded were growing weaker and weaker. Hundreds of vehicles, from carts to trucks, had been abandoned by the roadside, either because the draft animals couldn’t go on or for lack of fuel.”

– Isabel Allende, *A Long Petal of the Sea*, p. 54.



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Spanish refugees, mostly Republicans and members of the International Brigades, at the concentration camp in Argelès-sur-Mer, France, 1939.

“A las treinta y ocho horas sin comer ni dormir, tratando de darle agua de beber a un chico adolescente que se estaba muriendo en sus brazos, algo se le reventó a Victor en el pecho. «Se me rompió el corazón», musitó. En ese momento entendió el significado profundo de esa frase, creyó escuchar un sonido de cristal quebrado y sintió que la esencia de su ser se derramaba e iba quedando vacío, sin memoria del pasado, sin consciencia del presente, sin esperanza para el futuro.”

– *Largo pétalo del mar*, p. 72.

“After thirty-eight hours without eating or sleeping, trying to give water to an adolescent dying in his arms, something gave way in Victor’s chest. *My heart is broken*, he told himself. It was at that moment he understood the profound meaning of that common phrase: he thought he heard the sound of glass breaking and felt that the essence of his being was pouring out until he was empty, with no memory of the past, no awareness of the present, no hope for the future.”

– *A Long Petal of the Sea*, p. 65.