

## Passion in the Desert



The exhausted, thirsty traveler, lost in the desert, saw the beautiful woman from the oasis coming toward him carrying an amphora, the water dancing to the rhythm of her hips. “By Allah!” he cried, “Tell me that this is not a mirage!” “No,” said the woman, smiling, “You are the mirage.” And in a blink of her eye, the man disappeared.

José de la Colina  
“Una pasión en el desierto,” *Tren de historias*  
(Mexico City: Aldus, 1998), 28 pp.

## Absentminded

They were taking a long time to open the door. She made sure she had the right apartment number. She had so often stood in front of the wrong house, or gone to an appointment a day late that she thought it better to be sure. She smiled remembering the fumbblings of her mind. As a little girl, she used to forget her sweater on the school bench; as a young woman, her glasses, the teachers’ names and her boyfriends’ birthdays. Her absentmindedness had increased with age. One day she went home on the bus and her husband, surprised by her lateness, asked her where the car was. She had left it parked outside her work. On many an occasion she had tried to get into someone else’s car, struggling with the lock until the rightful owner found her. Nobody opened the door. She peered into the windows. The Venetian blinds were closed, leaving only a glimpse of dust on the paint. Night fell. The church bells in the distance reminded her. She had forgotten her own death.

Mónica Lavín  
“Despistada,” *Retazos*  
(Mexico City: Tava Editorial, 1996).

