

## Journal 5 Dreaming in Cuban

Women empowerment was something profoundly explored throughout the entire book. Many times you would see how the women belittled and controlled men and how they prided in taking over predominantly male duties. One of the prime examples of this was Celia. From the very beginning we see how she is fulfilled with her duty as night watcher and how she never turns her back on the revolution despite her husband's opposing views. The setting of the story was during the time when women were seeking freedom and recognition, and here we have Celia who is both empowered but submissive to her "Lider" and her lover Gustavo. But, it was this submission that led her to her feelings of security and confidence. Likewise, Lourdes patrolled nights in her city, a job that was primarily a male's job, but which increased her self-assurance.

It seemed extremely awkward that instead of the usual dominating role of men stepping on women, it was the other way around for most of the story. Constantly, we notice how the empowerment I speak of before is gained through downgrading males. For example, Lourdes controls her husband in bed, Felicia burns her husband's face and kills her last husband. Then there were the constant scenes of masturbation that indicated the unreliability of males, at least physically, or I could just be interpreting those incorrectly. The Tia Alicia never even married. Even Pilar constantly talks about women in history, and her rebellious attitude can be attributed to her feminist interpretation of these women; how female artists were never given attention and how no one should decide what she should do, say or think.

I still don't understand how all this can exist in such a lunatic family. They all seemed to suffer from obsessive behavior and it does not make sense to me how so many psychological issues would not interfere with these females' empowering tendencies. The only exception would be Pilar, who did not go delirious over her boyfriend's infidelity but instead found comfort in another activity.

I felt that Pilar was the most sane in the family, and I wonder if the author placed her in the family on purpose. Although she did not get along with her mother as she was younger, eventually she came to join her as she did not tell her grandmother that she did find Ivanito. It's weird that her character did not at any point go delirious. I can guess that the writer put her in to give the family some balance (that was really needed).

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