

Journal 7 Song of the Water Saints

I really enjoyed the way that Rosario suddenly changed the structure of her writing in the second half of the novel. All of a sudden we go from Graciela's life story to her daughter's. The difference is that it goes by a lot quicker; in short slurps that give you enough to see how different Mercedita is from her mother. It sort of mirrors those differences as well; for example we see how Mercedita fell in love with her Andres and her security with him. This highly contrasts Graciela's lust for Silvio and conformity with Casimiro. Also, we are clearly told that Mercedes believes in her inner world and privacy; unlike Graciela who wanted to go out and explore her world and had the nerve to leave her family to do it. Once she dies, the story of Mercedes as she grew older was so much quicker, reflecting her acceptance and prosperity of her world.

The way that Leila's story was told was just as quick, but this effect resulted in something different. The quick glances at her life showed us the similarities between her and her great-grandmother instead, but with a knack at education as well, which I found appealing of her character. Although it was disturbing to see how she disrespected herself when it came to Miguel, the turnout and her lesson was a good one, sort of. I feel that it was too all of a sudden and unrealistic, unlike the rest of the novel. It mirrors the way that Mercedes "learned" her lesson after having left her family, so I felt that something similar would happen to Leila.

Seeing how the turnout was different from what I expected, I question Rosario's motives for writing it that way. Is it the different setting? You'd expect that because they were in New York and because she lived with her old grandparents, Leila would turn out more of a rebellious girl. Is it the aptitude for knowledge? You'd think that a nerd wouldn't do the type of things that Leila did, especially with older men. A difference is also the influence of friends; but it seemed that she influenced her friends more than they did her. One thing is for sure, her sexuality can be strongly compared to her great-grandmother's, so would it be because of inheritance?

Rosario plays against the stereotype and I really like how she did that throughout the whole novel. She challenged the stereotype of infidelity, teen turnout due to their environment, and patriarchy. Still, I feel as though she didn't purposely try to challenge them or make a statement about them more than just including them because they were true. I still love Dominican people. 😊

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