AN ANALYSIS OF SYMBOLISM FOR DEATH AND FRUSTRATION IN THE DRAMAS OF FEDERICO GARCIA LORCA

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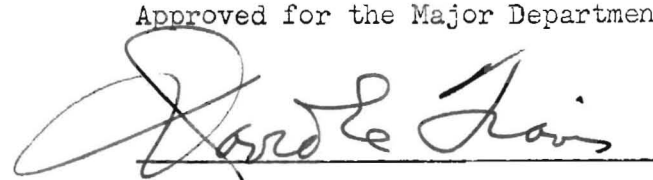

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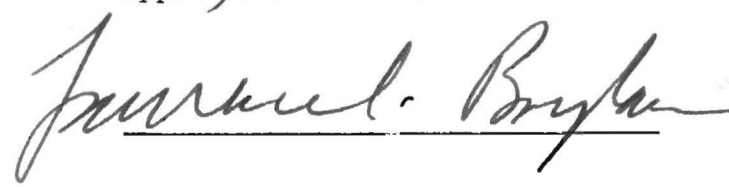

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the works of García Lorca are found the themes of love, honor, and death. Death results from a sense of frustration in life due to a concept of honor which makes love unattainable. The concept of honor entangles the lives of all the principle characters. The decision to follow or not to follow its strict codes of morality and tradition sets up the conflict through which fate takes all down the road of death.

The predominance of death and tragedy in the theatre of García Lorca is the topic under study in this paper. This necesitates analyzing the type of frustration that precipates the action which almost always involves the concept of honor. A section in each chapter is devoted to a study of the internal conflict that developes in each character. The study analyzes the opposing forces that confront each of the principle characters and shows how the concept of frustration becomes the dominant characteristic in his make-up.

The ultimate goal, that of love, sex, or the need to live by the laws of society, is thwarted in each of the principle characters by the role of fate. The result is frustration. Frustration in the dramas of García Lorca inevitably results in death. The grip fate has on each of the actors is aptly described by Robert Lima.[1] Mr. Lima says that Fate

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[1]Robert Lima, The Theatre of Garcia Lorca (New York: Las Americas Publishing Company, 1963), p. 220.

is the master of all the characters in García Lorca's dramas and it uses as its henchmen Honor, Passion, and Death.

The patterns of life in these dramas are based upon tradition and the laws of past generations. The characters are bound to a set form of behavior from which escape is all but impossible. The people exist for the purpose of existence only, without any hope of breaking loose from the ties that bind them to the very earth they must work. Generations live as those that preceded them, governed by the same laws of morality by which their fathers lived.

The result of this type of existence is a strict code of ethics which dooms everyone that attempts to follow its dictates. It is upon this code which García Lorca bases the conflict to be found in his theatre.

A final aspect of this study involves a look at the symbolism García Lorca uses to convey the existence of frustration and death. Through the use of images and symbolism, García Lorca imparts to the reader the existence of frustration and makes the presence of death felt in the places where it is least expected.

García Lorca's background in the fields of music and art enables him to convey the prevalent state that exists in the characters. By the use of music, the chorus, songs, and lullabies García Lorca establishes a mood of sadness. with the emphasis on tragedy. In the use of the appropriate color, García Lorca points out the condition or plight that exists in the drama. For example: White places the emphasis on purity; red or a rose color indicates the

presence of passion; hatred is associated with yellow; death is represented by blue, black, or a silver color.

This final aspect of the study considers the use of color to a limited degree in García Lorca's theatre. The main emphasis is focused on the symbolic references that indicate the presence of frustration and death. The section which precedes leads into this part of the study by considering the conflict that leads to frustration. This section gives due consideration to the struggles that arise when the need of the individual is thwarted by a concept of honor. These laws of behavior and morality are unwritten, but based on very strong and existent laws founded on tradition, and imposed upon the individual by society.

The purpose of this study is to visualize more clearly the importance García Lorca placed upon death in his theatre; to study the cause for frustration and how its presence and that of death are signified symbolically.

An analysis of eight dramas is made. They are: Mariana Pineda, Doña Rosita la soltera o el lenguaje de las flores, Amor de don Perlimplín con Belisa en su jardín, La Zapatera Prodigiosa, Bodas de sangre, Yerma, and La casa de Bernarda Alba.

For each of the above dramas a short summary will be given, followed by a consideration of the cause of the conflict, and a discussion of the symbolism and images as they pertain to frustration and death.

CHAPTER II

MARIANA PINEDA

Mariana Pineda is a romantic historical play based upon the death of a local heroine a century earlier. In the drama she persuades a young man, who loves her, to aid the rebel leader and sweetheart, don Pedro, who has just escaped from jail. Don Pedro and other rebels meet at Mariana's house where they barely manage to escape capture. Mariana is accused of aiding the rebels and of sewing a flag, for which she is jailed. To remain true to her love for don Pedro, who has fled the country, and to preserve the respect of her two children, she dies on the scaffold rather than reveal the name of the consiprators to save her life.

The Spanish Golden Age drama used among its themes the concepts of honor and love. In Mariana Pineda these very qualities are reworked by García Lorca. Her need for love puts her into a state of frustration due to a concept of honor from which the only escape is death.

Mariana's strong constitution enables her to stand and face all of the emotional trials and fatigues that she must undergo. She is a sensitive and passionate woman, but on the other hand is stern if the need arises. This quality is brought out in the third act when Pedrosa pleads with her to give him the name of the conspirators, and she

answers, "¡Cobarde! ¡Aunque en mi corazón clavaran vidrios no hablaría!"[2] Pedrosa, the strong right arm of the king, sent to that region to put down the uprising of the rebels, looks at Mariana, not with the concept that she is a danger, but with the eyes of a man that sees in Mariana a vibrant woman, and he says:

> (Bajando la voz y apasionándose.) Yo te quiero mía, ¿lo estás oyendo? Mía o muerta. Me has despreciado siempre; pero ahora puedo apretar tu cuello con mis manos, este cuello de nardo transparente, y me querrás porque te doy la vida (V. p. 216).

To save her life she need simply to please his desire, but instead, her strength of character enables her to refuse his demands.

> ¡Eso nunca! ¡Primero doy mi sangre!
> Que me cuesta dolor, pero con honra.
> ¡Salga de aquí! (V., p. 217).

Mariana is not an ordinary woman, but yet she is not a saint. The appeal of the drama for the Spanish audience may be found here. Her qualities of character are not possessed by the average Spanish woman. By viewing a woman with such an abundance of strength, the audience, especially the women, are able by use of their imagination to convince themselves that they also possess Mariana's strength. This Mariana the audience admires; as for the other Mariana, the spectators feel sorrow.

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[2]Guillermo de Torre (comp.), Federico Garcia Lorca, Obras completas (Buenos Aires: Ed. Losada, 1952), Vol. V, p. 218. All quotations are from the Obras completas. Henceforth they will be indicated by giving the volume and page number in parenthesis.

Mariana's sorrows arise from a denial of a love that in its frustating aspects makes her unstable emotionally and mentally. She is nervous, restless, and at her "wits end," and she wonders if she is able to continue: "¡Salvame! Que estoy dudando si podré seguir viviendo" (V, p. 164).

Her capacity for wanting love is of such magnitude and honesty that all else is of no consequence. Her love is real, and its depth of sincerity has no bottom. This is Mariana's tragedy; seeking but not finding; giving and being denied; being given hope, but finding only despair and death.

The love she feels for don Pedro, leader of the rebels, is of an intensity that is so deep and gripping that even as it is beautiful and moving it is at the same time terrifying; terrifying due to the dark nubilous cloud of death that keeps bringing closer the fatalistic end that will engulf Mariana.

The action in the drama is not of the cloak and dagger type that existed in the dramas of the Golden Age, but nevertheless there is action. It is evident in those verses said by Mariana when she speaks of her love:

> ¡Pedro de mi vida! . . .
> Y este corazón, ¿adónde me lleva,
> que hasta de mis hijos me estoy olvidando?
> . . . ¡Yo mismo me asombro de quererle tanto! (V, p. 159).

The intensity of her love is so blinding that the world for her is nonexistent. Beauty, movement, and endearment may be found in this definition of love by Mariana:

Cuando estás a mi lado olvido lo que siento
y quiero a todo el mundo:
hasta al rey y a Pedrosa.
Al bueno como al malo. ¡Pedro!, cuando se
quiere
se está fuera del tiempo,
y ya no hay día ni noche, ¡sino tú y yo! (V, p. 188).

Hope that she may attain this end is her nourishment, for without it, life has no meaning:

¿De qué sirve mi sangre, Pedro, si tú murieras?
Un pájaro sin aire ¿puede volar? ¡Entonces! . . .
Yo no podré decirte cómo te quiero nunca;
a tu lado me olvido de todas las palabras (V, p. 164).

The sense of frustration and heartbreak vibrate as Mariana's soul unclothes itself with this speech:

Pues si mi pecho tuviera
vidrieritas de cristal,
te asomaras y lo vieras
gotas de sangre llorar (V, p. 168).

García Lorca masterfully and tragically prevents the reality of her hope from being, by instilling within Mariana the one concept that makes living with one's conscience possible, Honor. The refusal to give in to Pedrosa's desires, the inability to live without love, and the thought of her children will not permit for her a choice other than death:

¡No quiero que mis hijos me desprecien! ¡Mis
hijos
tendrán un nombre claro como la luna llena!
¡Mis hijos llevarán resplandor en el rostro,
que no podrán borrar los años ni los aires! (V, p. 248).

The romance, sung in the light of the moon, that opens and closes the prologue and is again repeated at the end of the drama brings to the surface the fatalistic life Mariana will lead.

Early in the drama Mariana's life is equated with that of the bull in the bull ring, symbol of death: "Cinco toros de azabache, . . . Yo pensaba siempre en ti; . . . cinco toros mató" (V, p. 145). Mariana's friend, who told of the bull fight, did it with the purpose of trying to make Mariana's sadness lesser and she asks:

> Y díme: ¿estás más contenta?;
> porque este cuelo, ¡oh, qué cuello!
> (Le besa el cuello.)
> no se hizo para la pena (V, p. 147).

The reference to the neck, as a part of the body that should not feel pain, is clearly an indication of the manner in which Mariana will meet her end.

The horse that brings the man with the message for Mariana from don Pedro is here, like death, and then gone. The rider is covered up to his eyes and without saying a word he simply hands the message to the maid and flies off into the darkness. The horse enhances the background for the tragedy. As Mariana reads the note, she looks at the clock. The passage of time represented by a clock effectively revolves around the concept of honor, and accentuates the sense of Mariana's frustration by drawing closer the end of her life.

Later, as Fernando reads the letter, the clock strikes eight. Don Pedro states that by nine o'clock she is to send him a paper that she has in her possession. The messenger must be a person in whom she has absolute confidence.

The idea of time in this drama as an important instrument of fate is seen by Mariana's constant glances at the clock, the clock

striking, and in another instance by the rebels, who need more time. That afternoon, as Mariana is waiting for the message, she says with regard to time:

> Si toda la tarde fuera
> como un gran pájaro, ¡cuántas
> duras flechas lanzaría
> para cerrarle las alas!
> Hora redonda y oscura
> que me pesa en las pestañas (V, pp. 148-9).

In the second act, don Pedro and his friends just manage to escape through a window as Pedrosa and two men knock. As Mariana tells her maid to open the door, the idea of the horse symbolizing not simply tragedy, but death itself, is brought in again by Mariana:

> ¡Abre, Clavela! Soy una mujer
> que va atada a la cola de un caballo (V, p. 207).

In the house when Mariana tells Pedrosa that the time is late she means this in a figurative sense, not referring to the time of night but rather that the time she has left to live is short. Pedrosa says, "Sí, muy tarde. El reloj de la Audiencia ya hace rato que dió las once" (V, p. 210). Mariana's response is almost humorous for it indicates, as has been obvious for some time, that her enemy is Time. She responds "No las he sentido" (V, p. 210).

Nature and its elements enhance the forboding atmosphere of the stage. García Lorca does this by having the drama take place in the fall when all of life in nature is dying. The action takes place on a night that is gloomy and rainy.

This drama, like the one that follows, Doña Rosita la soltera, there exists a vast area of similarity. Both women share a common

interest, that of love. They await the return of their lovers, but they find disillusionment, resulting in frustration. Mariana remains true to her ideas, whereas Doña Rosita resigns herself to an empty life. Herein lies the distinguishing factor of the two women. Mariana dies for love, for without it life would be empty. Doña Rosita accepts her condition and even though she dies a spiritual death, it is due more to a fear of society's gossip than to a concept of true love.

CHAPTER III

DOÑA ROSITA LA SOLTERA O EL LENGUAJE DE LAS FLORES

Rosita, as the play opens, is a twenty year old girl. She is promised to a young man, her cousin, who must go abroad. As she waits for her fiancé to return, García Lorca correlates her advancing years through the symbolic use of a rose, Rosa mutabile. This rose lasts only one day. In this period of time it goes from red in the morning to white in the evening; at night it dies. Her life, like the rose, is divided into three periods.

The first act, Rosita's fruitful years, she is full of life, vibrant, and radiant. Her engagement fills her with happiness. She dresses gayly in bright colors. Time does not pass fast enough for her. The maid says of her, "Hoy ya quisiera que fuese pasado mañana." (V, p. 15).[3] She is constantly on the move:

> ¿Cuando la ha visto usted sentada a hacer encaje de lanzadera o puntas de festón o sacar hilos para adornarse una chapona?
> . . . . . .
> Siempre del coro al caño y del caño al coro; del coro al caño y del caño al coro (V, p. 15).

Rosita goes out on walks. On the occasion mentioned in the drama, she goes out with the Manolas. These girls are of about the same age as Rosita. They confide in each other and speak of their suitors. Rosita tells in a romance of rumors she has heard of the Manolas. It is a romance that speaks of the girls' lovers. The romance is denied by them; however, they are not very convincing.

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[3]All quotations are from Obras completas, op. cit., Vol. V.

The role of the Manola girls is to point out the desire for love by the young and also ironically to impose upon Rosita the idea of the passage of time. This is done by having one of the children of the girls speak to Rosita at the end of the drama which by necessity makes her remember the past and of how the pleasures it holds for her are fading away.

Rosita is separated from her fiancé at the end of Act One. Her faith upon his promise to return is what she must now embrace.

In the second act Rosita's anguish is enhanced by time. Fifteen years have passed. The styles have changed but Rosita still wears a dress of the same color as in the first act. She is still patiently waiting, but the passage of time is making itself felt. One means of seeing this growing impatience is in her daily vigil for the mail. In another way the passage of time is perceived keenly by Rosita's attempt to stop its passage. This she does by withdrawing from society, and by a withdrawal from the signs of progress:

> Pero es que en la calle noto cómo pasa el tiempo y no quiero perder las ilusiones. Ya han hecho otra casa nueva en la placera. No quiero enterarme de como pasa el tiempo.
> . . . . . .
> Si no viera a la gente, me creería que hace una semana que se marchó. Yo espero como el primer día. Además, ¿qué es un año, ni dos, ni cinco? (V, p. 63).

The frustration of her condition is worsened in the second act when she is visited by three spinsters and the young Ayola sisters. The conversation that ensues revolves around the topic of marriage. One

of the Ayola girls places great emphasis upon marriage, saying that she will marry "Con quien sea, pero no me quiero quedar soltera" (V, p. 77). The importance that society places on marriage is the point that is being made. The same girl, who is quite outspoken, says:

> ¡Ay! ¡Y si soy amiga de Rosita es porque sé que tiene novio! Las mujeres sin novio están pochas, recocidas y todas ellas . . . (Al ver a las solteronas) bueno, todas no, algunas de ellas . . . En fin, ¡todas están rabiadas! (V, p. 78).

The point this girl makes is that to be a spinster is to be ostracized from society, to be ridiculed, and to be the object of gossip.

All of this conversation hurts Rosita and intensifies her sadness and frustration, so she stops the conversation by asking one of the spinsters to play the piano. While they are singing, the maid appears with the long-awaited letter in which her fiancé proposes marriage by proxy. Rosita is jubilant with joy, along with most of the household. The one notable exception is the maid, who, like the aunt, wants Rosita to be happy, but an over watchful eye on the part of these two women seems to have just the opposite effect. Among all of the commotion that is created by the arrival of the letter, the final act of fate makes itself felt: the uncle without realizing what he was doing cuts the Rosa mutabile.

In the third act, ten years later, the women are alone. The uncle has died and they are now without a means of support. Without h[illegible]the house is too large. They therefore prepare to move. The maid, because she feels a marriage by proxy is not proper, feels

responsible for Rosita's condition. The aunt also feels responsible because of her over-protective attitude. They had known for a number of years that Rosita's fiancé had married another, but kept it to themselves. Rosita's tragedy is now inevitable and it is explained very aptly in this speech by the maid:

> Pero esto de mi Rosita es lo peor. Es querer y no encontrar el cuerpo; es llorar y no saber por quien se llora, es suspirar por alguien que uno sabe que no se merece los suspiros. Es una herida abierta que mana sin parar un hilito de sangre, . . . (V, p. 99).

As Rosita appears in the third act, she has a package of letters with her. She prefers to leave the house by night in order that she not be the object of ridicule:

> Pero yo prefiero salir de aquí con la calle a oscuras. Si me fuera posible apagaría el farol. De todos modos las vecinas estarán acechando. Con la mudanza ha estado todo el día la puerta llena de chiquillos como si en la casa hubiera un muerto (V, p. 113).

When Rosita and her aunt speak, as they prepare to leave, Rosita realizes that they will take very little with them, since her uncle has mortgaged everything for an appropriate wedding. This knowledge makes her even sadder, but when the aunt tries to tell her that she will still use the articles when she gets married, Rosita becomes carried away and makes a confession:

> Sabía que se había casado; ya se encargó un alma caritativa de decírmelo, y he estado recibiendo sus cartas con una ilusión llena de sollozos que aun a mí misma me asombraba. Si la gente no hubiera hablado; si vosotras no lo hubierais sabido; si no lo hubiera sabido nadie más que yo, sus cartas y su mentira hubieran alimentado mi ilusión como el primer año de su ausencia. Pero lo sabían todos y yo me encontraba señalada por un dedo que hacía ridícula mi modestia de prometida y daba un aire gortesco a mi abanico de soltera (V, p. 116).

Everything is now in the open. Rosita for many years had known the truth, but it was her character, her need to maintain self respect, that forced her to keep her feelings within. Hope now vanished, Rosita dons the white dress which announces the decay visibly. She falls in a faint as she starts to walk out, her spirit dead. Before she falls she repeats:

> Y cuando llega la noche
> Se comienza a deshojar (V, p. 129).

In this drama the main effects used to convey the presence of tragedy are the rose and the use of the emotions; joy, fear, sorrow, and love. The rose, being visible, is easily the most traceable factor in observing the workings of fate, but the submerged element, emotion, causes the reader to feel the overabundance of tragedy and frustration present. The rose will be considered first:

> Cuando se abre en la mañana.
> roja como sangre está.
> El rocío no la toca
> porque se teme quemar.
> Abierta en el medio día
> es dura como el coral.
> El sol se asoma a los vidrios
> para verla relumbrar.
> Cuando en las ramas empiezan
> los pájaros a cantar
> y se desmaya la tarde
> en las violetas del mar,
> se pone blanca, con blanco
> de una mejilla de sal.
> Y cuando toca la noche
> blanco cuerno de metal
> y las estrellas avanzan
> mientras los aires se van,
> en la raya de lo oscuro,
> se comienza a deshojar (V, pp. 18-9).

Reference to the description of this rose is continuously used throughout the drama. Rosita's life is symbolized in this rose, so anything pertaining to its existence and well-being must by necessity be interpreted as prognostication. The first omen that is given is when the uncle announces that the flowerpot containing the rose had been overturned. The rose is unharmed, but one is able to see that it will need to be watched carefully. Herein, very probably, lies Rosita's tragedy. The over protectiveness that is given Rosita finds for its reward the death of Rosita's spirit. The aunt, in looking out for Rosita's well-being, contributes to her state by being responsible for and encouraging the fiancé to go abroad. "Tu deber es irte. Que te vayas" (v, p. 25). The maid, who is for all practical purposes a member of the family, does her part by not favoring a wedding by proxy. The significance attached to the cutting of the rose at the end of the second act cannot be mistaken.

The preponderance of emotional display is indicative of the mental state of the family, and through its observance one is able to see the underlying forces of frustration and tragedy.

Joy is found in Rosita in the first act and at the end of the second act when she receives her sweetheart's letter. Love in its truest sense exists within Rosita's heart. However, the ironic workings of fate, perceivable in the background, indicate the presence of tragedy; tragedy in the sense that the aunt is taken in by the fact that she feels Rosita is happy: "Yo estoy segura de que ella es feliz" (V, p. 50). Her comment may not be completely without foundation

because Rosita has learned to accept her situation. Rosita's concern is in maintaining her self respect and to do this her sorrows had to be suppressed. To avoid being overburdened by their weight she often resorts to daydreaming. On the other hand, her sorrows may have been the cause of her living in a world of dreams. Her life, therefore, consists of retaining the past and of avoiding all else. Here is a life of illusions and hope, which when she is forced to face reality, results in despair. The hope with which she clings to life enables her to exist even though it means living within herself. Once this world is shattered by the realization that her sorrows are not her own, she feels ridiculed. The grotesque feeling of rejection drains her very soul. Her fear of being found out, now realized, leaves her in a complete state of emptiness. Completely stripped of any feeling of honor, she is ready to find peace in death. On one occasion she makes reference to the fact that she is already dead:

> Con la mudanza ha estado todo el día la puerta llena de chilquillos como si en la casa hubiera un muerto (V, p. 113).

Another occasion that makes reference to death is brought out when the aunt says they will at least have a bed on which to sleep in their new house. The greater part of the furniture had been mortgaged to provide Rosita with an appropriate wedding. When she hears that they will at least have a bed to sleep on, she answers: "Para morir" (V, p. 114).

Other incidents which serve to provide an insight into the element of tragedy are a thermometer case and barometer which

are gifts for Rosita on her birthday. Of these gifts Robert Lima says:

> Through this Lorca makes another subtle indication of Rosita's likeness to a rose which needs the right warmth and atmospheric conditions to live.[4]

A reference to the theme of timelessness has already been made, but one more incident will emphasize the fleeting swiftness with which it passes. This event takes place when the Ayola girls make a visit to Rosita's house. In this conversation it is brought out that Rosita is not able to recall that her sweetheart used to give brandy to one of the girls when she was very young nor was she able to recall whether he had a scar on his lip, "Una cicatriz? Tía, ¿tenía una cicatriz?" (V, p. 76).

"Language of the Flowers," a song similar to the poem of the Rosa mutabile in theme is sung by Rosita, the maid, the aunt, and other guests on her birthday. Rosita sings:

> Son celos el carambuco;
> desdén esquivo la dalia;
> suspiros de amor el nardo,
> risa la gala de Francia.
> Las amarillas son odio;
> el furor, las encarnadas;
> las blancas son casamiento
> y las azules, mortaja (V, p. 83).

The last line indicates why, earlier in the drama, when looking for her hat she had said to the maid, "Estás loca" (V, p. 15), when the latter suggested she wear the blue one.

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[4]Lima, op. cit., p. 254.

In this drama García Lorca deals with the most intimate part of a person's make up. The irony of Rosita's story is that she knows of her fiancé's marriage to another, but since her dignity is all that she has left, she is not able to admit openly her predicament. The realization that she has lost the only person that ever meant anything to her is frustrating to admit, so she decides to keep her sorrows to herself. The knowledge that everyone knows that her years of waiting were but a pretense results in a withdrawal from society. A gradual withering away of spirit from the loss of hope and the realization that she is doomed to a life of spinsterhood drains all desire to live from her body.

CHAPTER IV

AMOR DE DON PERLIMPLIN CON BELISA EN SU JARDIN

Don Perlimplín, a rather timid elderly gentleman is to marry the young sensual Belisa, after his maid, Marcolfa, has prompted him to do so. On their wedding night two sprites run a curtain of darkness over the stage to prevent the audience from seeing a good man's misfortune.

Belisa's body causes don Perlimplín to imagine a young man able to love Belisa. This young man, whose face is never seen by Belisa until the end, constantly makes his presence known and writes Belisa notes telling her of his desires.

A lack of honor in don Perlimplín enables him and Belisa to discuss this young man. He arranges a meeting between the two. The night of the meeting Belisa sees the young man, but he simply motions to her to wait and then disappears. Don Perlimplín appears and goes after the young man to kill him. He returns wounded and disguised in the red cape the young man always wears. The central conflict of fantasy against reality is here brought to a climax as it is revealed that don Perlimplín is also the young disguised suitor.

Death is the solution for don Perlimplín, for by suicide his imagination becomes triumphant. He has taught Belisa the meaning of love and don Perlimplín knows that now she will live a worthwhile life.

The first insight given of Belisa is that she is passionate and a seductive young creature of unlimited desire. A sensuous song sung

by Belisa when she first appears on the balcony indicates that love is foreign to her, "except in sensual terms; her love being narcissistic, centered on her own body and the pleasures it can give her, Belisa can find satisfaction only in physical love."[5]

> Amor, amor.
> Entre mis muslos cerrados,
> nada como un pez el sol.
> Agua tibia entre los juncos,
> amor.
> ¡Gallo, que se va la noche!
> ¡Que no se vaya, no! (I, p. 143)[6]

The capacity to love or even to feel pain is blotted out by her unsatiable thirst. Every appearance she makes is with the purpose in mind of conveying a need for satisfaction, as the sensuous song is repeated time and again in the prologue with each of her appearances. In scene one, the wedding night, Belisa is very lovely; her hair is down and she wears a nightgown. The feeling conveyed by her is one of restlessness for fulfillment as is evident by this speech:

> ¡Ay! El que me busque con ardor me encontrará.
> Mi sed no se apaga nunca, como nunca se apaga la
> sed de los mascarones que echan el agua en las fuentes.
> (I, p. 152).

The wedding night Belisa's longing for fulfillment is completed, not by her husband, but by, as is indicated in the second seene, "Representantes de las cinco razas de la tierra" (I, p. 166). It is in this scene that Beliss's thoughts begin to take on a different perspective. The simple desire to be satisfied seems to be gradually fading, almost

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[5] Ibid., p. 144.

[6] All quotations are from Obras completas, op. cit., Vol. I.

as though an external force were creating within her the capability to love. Her gradual transformation seems due to a young man in a red cape whose presence she is always able to sense. The first inclination that is given of this mysterious person is when Belisa makes her entrance in scene two:

> Tampoco he consequido verlo. En mi paseo por la alameda venían todos detrás menos él. Debe tener la piel morena y sus besos deben perfumar y escocer al mismo tiempo como el azafrán y el clavo. A veces pasa por debajo de mis balcones y mece su mano lentamente en un saludo que hace temblar mis pechos (I, p. 168).

Belisa tells Perlimplín that the mysterious man writes her letters in which he speaks of her body:

> ¿Para que quiero tu alma?, me dice. El alma es patrimonio de los débiles, de los héroes tullidos y las gentes enfermizas. Las almas hermosas están en los bordes de la muerte, reclinadas sobre cabelleras blanquísimas y manos macilentas. Belisa, no es tu alma lo que yo deseo, ¡sino tu blanco y mórbido cuerpo estremecido! (I, 172-3).

Belisa has no idea who the person is. She has asked all her friends, but it is fruitless. Her great concern about the one in red has turned her attention from other men:

> Las cartas de los otros hombres que he recibido . . . y que no he contestado, porque tenía a mi maridito, me hablaban de países ideales, de sueños y de corazones heridos . . .¡pero estas cartas de él! . . . mira . . . (I, p. 172).

Belisa's interest in the young man is of course sensual. She simply is not interested in those men who speak to her of ideas, countries, or dreams. In the third scene her transformation to a woman with a soul capable of love takes place as she admits:

> El olor de su carne le pasa a través de su ropa. ¡Le quiero! ¡Perlimplín, le quiero! ¡Me parece que soy otra mujer! (I, p. 182).

True love by Belisa for this unknown is demonstrated when she defends him to don Perlimplín. She asks the maid for a sword as she utters:

> ¡Don Perlimplín,
> Marido ruín!
> Como le mates
> te mato a ti (I, p. 184).

A completely new person, Belisa expresses her love for don Perlimplín:

> Sí, sí, Marcolfa, lo quiero, lo quiero con toda la fuerza de mi carne y de mi alma. ¿Pero dónde está el joven de la capa roja?, Dios mío; ¿ dónde está? (I, p. 187).

Don Perlimplín is an old man content with his books and had planned never to marry. However, from a weakness and an inability to stand firm in his views he permits his maid to force him into a marriage. He, like a puppet in the hands of Marcolfa, says exactly as he is told by the latter, and before he knows what has actually taken place, the marriage contract is sealed.

This marriage is something he has never wanted; however, the sight of Belisa in her almost nude state and her sensuous song causes him to look at his situation not despairingly, but with a gleam in his eye. He asks his maid the meaning of the song, to which she only laughs. The one line that indicates something is happening to don Perlimplín is when he says: "¿Y qué es esto que me pasa? ¿Qué es esto?" (I, p. 150).

On the wedding night don Perlimplín, a little nervous, tells Belisa that he loves her, though before the marriage he did not:

> Me casé . . . por lo que fuera, pero no te quería. Yo no había podido imaginarme tu cuerpo hasta que lo vi por

> el ojo de la cerradura cuando te vestías de novia. Y entonces fué cuando sentí el amor. ¡Entonces! Como un hondo corte de lanceta en mi garganta (I, p. 155).

The morning after, don Perlimplín questions Belisa about the open balconies, the five ladders, and the five hats. He accepts her answers and admits that his love for her grows by the minute: "¡Por primera vez en mi vida estoy contento!" (I, p. 163). The happiness don Perlimplín feels cannot be realized instantly especially when it is later revealed that he knew of his wife's unfaithfulness during the wedding night. Perlimplín does, however, understand her nature and because of his love for her he dismisses her unfaithfulness as being unimportant.

A plan is formulizing in Perlimplín's mind for the purpose of teaching Belisa the meaning of love. If he is able to achieve this end, which involves his eventual sacrifice, it will be the greatest achievement of his life. The surrealistic element now comes into play by the power of imagination. Through the use of this power he intends to create a young man that will love Belisa as she desires and thereby eliminate the tension of frustration that has taken him to these extremes:

> Amor, amor
> que está herido.
> Herido de amor huído;
> herido,
> muerto de amor.
> Decid a todos que ha sido
> el ruiseñor.
> Bisturí de cuatro filos,
> garganta rota y olvido,
> cógeme la mano, amor,
> que vengo muy mal herido,

herido de amor huído
¡herido!
¡muerto de amor! (I, p. 165).

Perlimplín's love for Belisa is first of all thwarted by the fact that he is old, thereby giving him a fatherly image.

Perlimplín knows of his wife's unfaithfulness and he asks, "¡que le vamos a hacer! . . ." (I, p. 170). He realizes that Belisa would like to meet the young man in red, so they start to converse about him as a third party, which of course he is to Belisa. He informs Belisa that she should not be fearful of speaking up about the young man because he, Perlimplín, already realizes her love for him. The curtain drops on scene two as don Perlimplín tells Belisa of his willingness to do something about the situation.

Don Perlimplín's plan is to have Belisa fall in love with the young man so his first move is to have a note delivered to Belisa in which a rendezvous is set up. When don Perlimplín is informed by his maid that she has delivered the note, and of how Belisa was overcome with joy and passion upon reading the note, he reacts favorably:

(Vibrante.) ¡Eso es! Yo necesito que ella amo a ese joven más que a su propio cuerpo. Y no hay duda que lo ama (I, p. 177).

This knowledge frightens his maid. How he is able to encourage this meeting is beyond her:

Porque don Perlimplín no tiene honor y quiere divertirse. ¡Ya ves! Esta noche vendrá el nuevo y desconocido amante de mi señora Belisa. ¡Qué he de hacer sino cantar? (I, p. 178).

That night Perlimplín speaks with Belisa and he is overjoyed at her admission of love. The joy for him lies in the triumph of his

imagination. The meaning of this and the words that follow are obscure to Belisa:

> Pues en vista de que le amas tanto, yo no quiero que te abandone. Y para que sea tuyo completamente, se me ha ocurrido que lo mejor es clavarle esta puñal en su corazón galante. ¿Te gusta? (I, p. 183).

Don Perlimplín runs into the bushes and returns with a dagger in his chest. His transformation completed, he now speaks as the young man:

> Perlimplín me mató . . . ¡Ah, don Perlimplín! Viejo verde, monigote sin fuerza, tú no podías gozar el cuerpo de Belisa . . . el cuerpo de Belisa era par músculos más jóvenes y labios de ascuas . . . Yo, en cambio, amaba tu cuerpo nada más . . . ¡tu cuerpo! pero me ha matado . . . Con este ramo ardiente de piedras preciosas (I, p. 185).

Robert Lima comments:

> His is the greatest sacrifice which human love can make. It is an act completely free from selfishness. Devoted to the redemption of a human spirit and apart from any taint as it transcends the normal values of everyday life, it reaches the heights of magnificence. . . . Through his tragic act he gives her real life. But it is more than this renewal that Perlimplín accomplishes, as his dying words attest: "I am my soul and you are your body." His greatest gift to Belisa is a soul--his own.[7]

In this drama the color of white is used rather freely to describe Belisa. The mood conveyed by its use would seem to indicate that something of an unusual nature or of an unnatural need should be associated with its use. Perhaps it is used to magnify the effect of Belisa's need for sensual pleasures.

> Esa es la mujer de mi señor; la blanca Belisa (I, p. 144).

. . . . . .

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[7]Lima, op. cit., p. 155.

¡Pues si la viera por dentro! . . . Como de azúcar . . . (I, p. 147).

. . . . . .

Como de azúcar . . . blanca por dentro. ¿Será capaz de estrangularme? (I, p. 149).

. . . . . .

. . . no es tu alma lo que yo deseo, ¡sino tu blanco y mórbido cuerpo estremecido! (I, p. 173).

The question Perlimplín asks himself about whether Belisa is able to cost him his life gives an indication of what is to come, especially when one of his reasons for not wanting to marry was: "Cuando yo era niño una mujer estranguló a su esposo" (I, p. 143).

The black color of the chairs and the furniture in Perlimplín's house for the prologue add to the effect of sadness and mystery. The atmosphere is mysteriously enhanced by the workings of forces that bring with them fear, such as having black paper birds fly across the stage at the end of the prologue and of the first scene. They appear again in the mother's wig as a form of ornament. By their introduction the tension in the air is increased.

The piano, an enchanting instrument, is heard in the prologue each time Belisa's sensuous song is heard. Music from the guitarra accompanies Belisa's expressions of desire for fulfillment. The sound of five whistles heard on the wedding night and the message setting a rendezvous between Belisa and the man in red bring with them a glimpse of tragedy.

The fish in Belisa's song is a symbol of sex. "Lorca fastened on the fish and shell as sexual symbols."[8] In this same song it may be deduced that if the moon symbolizes tragedy and death, then life must be associated with the sun. Therefore, in Belisa's song the need for sex is her life. ". . . nada como un pez el sol" (I, p. 143). By following this same line of thought, another reference to the sun as a source of life may be found. On this occasion don Perlimplín is given new life by the sun. This is to say that on the morning after wedding, according to his appearance, he is a new man; he is living, and for this reason the sunrise intrigues him:

Nunca había visto la salida del sol . . .

Es un espectáculo que . . . parece mentira . . . ¡me conmueve! . . . ¿A ti no te gusta? (I, p. 164).

Por las orillas del río
se está la noche mojando.
Y en los pechos de Belisa
se mueren de amor los ramos.

La noche canta desnuda
sobre los puentes de marzo.
Belisa lava su cuerpo
con agua salobre y nardos.

La noche de anís y plata
relumbra por los tejados.
Plata de arroyos y espejos.
Y anís de tus muslos blancos (I, pp. 179-80).

Each stanza is concluded by Perlimplín's chant of love: "The branches are dying of love!" Perlimplín is a branch on the tree which is Belisa. While she grows from the generous earth, he draws life from her; but her self-love is killing him, the branch,

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[8]Howard T. Young, The Victorious Expression (Madison 6, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1964), p. 180.

> because its nourishment is withheld for herself. Only in the sharing of the nourishment, love, with another will the tree sustain the branch.[9]

Los duendes, little workers of evil, enhance the forboding atmosphere by being responsible for the curtain that covers the stage on the wedding night. Their insinuations convey more "drama" to the action. Their purpose is to spread gossip and cause tragedy. Their hoods are blue, a color almost always associated with death. In this instance, it indicates the death of don Perlimplín. This is not a physical death but a figurative death because don Perlimplín, on that morning after the wedding night, is no longer the same man.

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[9]Lima, op. cit., p. 152.

CHAPTER V

LA ZAPATERA PRODIGIOSA

In this drama is presented the old theme of an old man married to a young woman. The central conflict is that of frustration from which emerges the theme of reality against fantasy. Reality is portrayed by the old man; the world of imagination, by the young beautiful wife, La Zapatera. She is disillusioned in her marriage; therefore, she resorts to the romantic world of dream. In this state, she recalls imaginary suitors. In the world of reality her demanding ways make her unbearable thereby driving her husband away because of her persistent endeavors to irritate him by causing scandal.

In his absence, by means of her daydreams, she glorifies his memory. She is constantly the object of the young men's affections, but a sense of honor based upon her state of marriage enables her to remain true. The husband returns in disguise, learns of her love and loyalty and reveals himself. She at once falls on him as before.

The conflict in this drama is that of frustration due to a need for sex, and a struggle to follow the strict laws of society. La Zapatera is confronted with this dilemma. She is married to an old man, as in the case of Belisa and don Perlimplín, but unlike Belisa, she, for the sake of honor, remains true.

She resigns herself to a childless life, indicated by her attempt to give a doll to a small neighbor boy. She, as well as the

community, knows that children are impossible but when confronted with this reality she struggles against its acceptance:

> ¿Hijos? Puede que los tenga más hermosos que todas ellas y con más arranque y más honra, . . . (III, p. 112).[10]

La Zapatera continuously rebuffs herself for having been "talked" into this marriage, when she tells herself, in her dream world, she could have had her choice of any number of men. The reason for her grief, sadness, and sorrow is due to the fact that she feels she married below her social level. "Yo me he rebajado" (III, p. 117). The reality of this statement is of course dubious. The true insight to her previous condition is provided by her husband: "Estabas pereciendo, sin camisa, ni hogar" (III, p. 116). This constant confrontal with reality causes her to release her frustration and resentment upon her husband, as well as society.

Her condition is regrettably frustrating in that she is young, beautiful, and full of life. Unlike Belisa, however, she observes the codes of morality, which in turn give her a volcano-like temperament. La Zapatera's violent temper constantly agitates her husband's nerves. She does this and that with the express purpose in mind of making him angry. She is constantly shouting out vigorously so that the neighbors will hear and she is forever flirting with young men which, among other occurrences, she knows will infuriate her husband. She constantly bickers with her husband because in him she faces that reality of which she wants no part.

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[10] All quotations are from Obras completas, op. cit., Vol III.

La Zapatera's need to cause scandal finally drives her husband away. To support herself, she turns the shoe shop into a tavern. Now, she must serve those young men that simply frequent the tavern to view her. They, with their suggestive remarks, attempt to dissuade her from the strong ties she has with morality. The sanctity of her state of marriage, however, gives her the fortitude to remain firm. The mayor offers her a very tempting offer, but she answers: ". . . yo de zapatera no me muevo" (III, p. 158). She puts up with the other young men that enter and sigh at her presence because she needs the money. Their suggestive remarks, at times very bold, only afford her an opportunity to reaffirm her views on the holy state of matrimony:

> . . . que hace cuatro meses que se fué mi marido y no cederé a nadie jamás, como Dios manda (III, p. 148).

La Zapatera's firm commitment toward this concept of honor is so deeply rooted that she would rather die than to relinquish it. She will not simply give up hope or resign herself to being the laughing stock of the town. She is willing to fight for her honor and it is this overt display of aggression, always within her character, that causes her to say: "¡Van a dar lugar a que compre un revólver!" (III, p. 154).

Accepting the consequences of her actions is not part of her nature. She is never at fault, due to her easy recourse to fantacy. An answer, absolving her of any wrong doings, is quickly conjured up. This may again be seen when she seeks the reason for her husband's departure. "Ellos, ellos son los que la tienen y los que me hacen desgracia" (III, p. 151). The idealized concept of her husband is brought to view as she again blames the men and the town for his departure:

> Si no fuera porque tengo que ganarme la vida con estos vinillos y este trapicheo, porque estoy solo desde que se fué por culpa de todos vosotros mi pobrecito marido de mi alma, . . . (III, p. 147).

The idealized image given to her husband is best seen when the husband returns in the disguise of a puppeteer. She has spoken well of her husband ever since he left, but when she speaks with the puppeteer, she idealizes him the most. The romance which he tells is in reality the conflict in their own marriage before he left, and is camouflaged under the title of "la mujer rubicunda y el hombrecito de la paciencia" (III, p. 165). La Zapatera condemns the woman being spoken of and, as it is in progress she breaks out crying, "Es que me da mucha lástima y no puedo contenerme, ¿lo ve usted?, no puedo contenerme" (III, p. 168).

La Zapatera and her husband are left alone when all the spectators rush out into the street to view a disturbance. Each of the two tells the story of how their mate has fled. La Zapatera reveals that the main force that has permitted her to surmount all the ordeals that have confronted her was a firm stand based on honor: "Nunca se rinde la que, como yo, está sostenida por el amor y la honradez" (III, p. 184).

El Zapatero's plight is centered upon a need to avoid scandal at any cost. His concern consists of a need to maintain a proper rapport with society. Nothing other than this concerns him. His emotional stability depends upon controling himself; therefore, he is usually very self-contained.

El Zapatero's tragedy and his reason for demonstrating such self control lies in having an eighteen year old wife, while he is fifty-three.

"Por eso me callo y no me disgusto contigo . . . ¡demasiado sé yo! . . . (III, p. 113). This true concern, however, is with his age:

> Pero, ¡ay, si tuviera cuarenta años o cuarenta y cinco, siquiera! . . . (Golpea furiosamente un zapato con el martillo) (III, p. 114).

El Zapatero's desire to live a life free of scandal is so paramount that the obsession for its realization is the main motivating force that causes him to leave his wife. This dominant action on his part and his cries for peace are the principle elements that move the first act. The number of times El Zapatero expresses his concern over what other people think of his person is indicative of his state of mind:

> Mujer . . . ¡que te van a oír los vecinos! (III, p. 114).
> . . . . . .
>
> Ay, mujer . . . no me dés escándalos, mira que viene la gente! (III, p. 116).
> . . . . . .
>
> ¡Ay, vecina de mi alma, no me dé usted escándalos, . . . (III, p. 118).
> . . . . . .
>
> Mira, hija mía. Toda mi vida ha sido en mí una verdadera preocupación evitar el escándolo (III, p. 120).
> . . . . . .
>
> Yo no te digo más, que he huído de los escándalos, como las salamanquesas del agua fría (III, p. 121).
> . . . . . .
>
> Yo no estoy acostumbrado a estos voceríos y a estar en lenguas de todos (III, p. 127).
> . . . . . .
>
> . . . si en todo el pueblo no se hablará de otra cosa: ¡que si yo, que si ella, que si los mozos! (III, p. 135).

For El Zapatero to leave his family, home, and town would only create to a greater extent the scandal he so vehemently desires to avoid,

but when he finally takes the step, the weight of his burdens rises: "¡O soy otro hombre o no me conosco!" (III, p. 135).

El Zapatero returns in the second act disguised as a puppeteer. His act consists, above all else, "de colocar el bocado a las mujeres parlanchinas y respondonas" (III, p. 164). As he tells the romance of "la mujer rubicunda" a disturbance is heard outside. The young men of the town have started to fight and the blame is placed on La Zapatera. Everyone rushes out to view, but El Zapatero remains in the tavern in order to question his wife. Each of them tells the story already referred to. El Zapatero, in order to convince himself of his wife's love and faithfulness, attempts to seduce her, but she answers:

> Por Dios, ¡quite de ahí! ¿Que se figura? ¡Yo guardo mi corazón entero par el que está por esos mundos, para quien debo, para mi marido! (III, p. 178).

The fighting in the street has caused blood to flow. The neighbor boy comes to warn La Zapatera that they are going to run her out of town. With his exit two women enter. They tell El Zapatero to leave, giving as their reason that, since he is a decent man, he would not want to associate with such a woman as La Zapatera. La Zapatera's strong will to retain her honor has convinced her husband of her love, so he now defends her: "Grandísimas embusteras, mentirosas, mal nacidas. Os voy a arrastrar del pelo"(III, p. 183). As El Zapatero starts to leave, he and La Zapatera converse about the possibility of him running into her husband. When he asks what he should tell El Zapatero, her answer is very idealized:

Zapatero. Entonces, ¿lo recibiría usted bien?
Zapatera. Como si fuera el rey y la reina juntos.
Zapatero. ¿Y si por casualidad llegara ahora mismo?
Zapatera. ¡Me volvería loca de algería!
Zapatero. ¿Le perdonaría su locura?
Zapatera. ¡Cuánto tiempo hace que se la perdoné!
(III, pp. 187-8).

Exclaiming how happy he is, El Zapatero removes his disguise. The dialogue of La Zapatera at this point indicates that the daily routine as it was before his departure will be reestablished.

The use of color to enhance the element of tragedy is seen in the shoe shop and in the dresses. The walls of the shop are white and the dresses are of a violent color. La Zapatera's barrenness is reflected in the walls, while the violent color of the dresses indicates the temperament of the individual.

In the first act La Zapatera wears a dress "de verde rabioso," and in the second act she is in a dress "rojo encendido." In the first act the neighbor and her two daughters are dressed in red. This woman is simply characterized as "La Vecina roja." The practice of referring to the minor characters as: the Red, Purple, Green, Black or Yellow neighbor, puts the emphasis upon the bitter feelings that move the play.

The more important minor characters are El Alcalde, don Mirlo, Mozo de la faja, and El Mozo del sombrero. They convey by their dress not only bitterness and violence, but also a deep sense of tragedy. El Alcalde dresses in blue, a color used by García Lorca symbolically to indicate the presence of death. With El Alcalde are associated the four deaths, of his four wives. Don Mirlo dresses in black. His appearance, speech, and movements portray him as a very "odd" type

person, almost as though he were the town clown, while El Mozo de la faja is more of the sad type. The anger portrayed in the drama is visibly noticeable in El Mozo del sombrero, who, frustrated in his advances toward La Zapatera is ready to face García Lorca's bull of death:

> Tengo tanto coraje que agarraría un toro de los cuernos, le haría hincar la cerviz en las arenas y después me comería sus sesos crudos con estos dientes míos, en la seguridad de no hartarme de morder (III, pp. 148-9).

In the paragraphs that follow the views of La Zapatera are examined. First of all as she looks at the world as it is, and then from her dream world. García Lorca, through images and symbols, indicates how she seeks happiness in her world of fantasy from the frustration she finds in the real world. Early in the first act when La Zapatera argues with her husband she brings to light how she used to be courted by Emiliano:

> Pero el que más me gustaba a mí de todos era Emiliano . . . tú lo conociste . . . Emiliano, que venía montado en una jaca negra, llena de borlas y espejitos, con una varialla de mimbre en su mano y las espuelas de cobre reluciente. ¡Y qué capa traía por el invierno! ¡Qué vueltas de pana azul y qué agremanes de seda! (III, p. 115).

The black mare and the other symbols used are associated with tragedy and death; the exact opposite of the atmosphere in the dream she has later about Emiliano. Death and its association with the horse is also to be found in those objects in which a reflection is seen: a mirror, the river, the eyes, and objects of silver. In order to round out this picture of tragedy, the boy's cape need only to be blue, which it

is. This description of Emiliano could only surge forth when La Zapatera is in the world of reality, with the emphasis upon death.

Later in the first act La Zapatera's dream world is brought to view graphically. This dream is about Emiliano and takes place right after she tells her husband to leave. The dream itself depicts an intimate relationship with Emiliano; the white horse with its sexual connotation is also present. Notice how the color of the horse has changed from black to white. The pleasantness of this dream for La Zapatera so completely captivates her that, while she is in its grasp, she dances and sings to a tune that is heard from outside. The interesting part about this dream is that when earlier she had made a reference to Emiliano the circumstances were entirely different.

The confusion of reality with fantasy is very apparent later in the play when La Zapatera speaks to the boy of how she and her husband met. This version of her husband is idealized; however, even in this state, tragedy is the predominant note. "Yo me miraba en sus ojos. Cuando le veía venir montado en su jaca blanca . . ." (III, p. 151). The sexual need sought by her, and represented by the white horse, is counteracted by the tragic element represented by the reflection. ". . . cuando lo conocí estaba yo lavando en el arroyo del pueblo" (III, p. 152). Tragedy and the river are "brothers":

> Todavía me parece sentir en la cara aquel aire tan fresquito que venía por los árboles. Él paró su caballo y la cola del caballo era blanca y tan larga que llegaba al agua del arroyo (III, p. 152).

The fresh breeze La Zapatera felt is the lover she desires:

> The wind as a violator of women is a part of folk legend in Australia and among the North American Indians. We need only recall that Hiawatha's father was the West Wind. In the Spanish province of Austurias, unmarried girls still avoid a brisk breeze.[11]

In this description that La Zapatera gives the neighbor boy, she tells of how the white horse's tail touches the water. Sex is associated with the white horse, so her longing, there represented, is counteracted by its contact with the river, death.

The world of reality presents interesting bits of symbolism that heighten the state of La Zapatera's frustration by being exposed to them, or by being responsible for them. The life that is to be found in the sun, and the object of La Zapatera's longing, are represented by the sunflower, rings of gold, and the watch with its "silver" chain. The seeds of the sunflower represent La Zapatera, expressing the number of times El Mozo de la faja sighs per minute, for she would be able to give him the life he desires. The rings of gold, worn by El Zapatero at their first meeting, indicate the life La Zapatera hopefully sees in him. The watch, also a possession of El Novio in Bodas de sangre, is an object to reassure the owner of his "manliness."

The pleasure La Zapatera obtains from standing in the breeze is again mentioned on another occasion: "Ay, qué fresquito hace!" (III, p. 136). La Zapatera's longing for children may be observed in her kind treatment of the neighbor boy and in another instance through the symbolic use of a lamb. In La casa de Bernarda Alba the lamb

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[11]Young, op. cit., p. 173.

represents the child that the widowed "crazy" mother longed for. The same symbolism is found in this play when La Zapatera shows her concern for a young lamb that is being trampled by a big ugly one.

Superstition adds to the tragic element of frustration. The event concerning the chairs demonstrates the grip it has on people such as El Zapatero. Curses and spells, like in Doña Rosita, when the aunt and maid curse el Primo, also take place in this play to contribute to setting a stage of mystery. El Zapatero curses his sister and La Zapatera curses Manuel, for talking each into getting married.

Early in the drama when La Zapatera tells her husband to go out and look for his meal, his answer gives a glimpse of what is to come, "Mañana (sonriendo) quizá la tengas que buscar tú también" (III, p. 123). In La Zapatera's dream, when she was speaking to the boy about her husband, she tells how, because she was so flustered, she lost two tiny handkerchiefs to the current. This event may prognosticate that later in the play, because of the violence and blood, there would not be any white handkerchiefs left.

CHAPTER VI

BODAS DE SANGRE

In this drama, the rather simple story of a man running off with another's wife on their wedding night unfolds. The central character, the Mother of the Bridegroom, "embodies that unyielding morality which holds sway over the lives of all."[12] The Mother has one son left, having lost her husband and another son in a feud with the Félix family. Sorrow is forseen when her son announces he is going to marry a girl who had broken an earlier engagement with a member of the Félix family, Leonardo.

Leonardo is now married but he still loves the Bride. On the wedding night, he and the Bride yield to their passions and run away together. Leonardo is pursued by the Bridegroom and both men are killed in hand-to-hand combat.

The character of the Mother and the forces that motivate her are very important in this drama; therefore, she will be studied first. The Bridegroom will then be studied, followed by: The Father and the Bride; Leonardo and the Wife. Robert Lima says of the Mother:

> This pivotal character is a strong-willed woman, and in her may be seen the qualities embodied in Bernarda. She holds the tragedy together; it is her sense of love and hatred, honor and vengeance that directs the physical action of the play.[13]

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[12] "Blood Wedding," The Catholic World, 169:65, April, 1949.

[13] Lima, op. cit., p. 190.

The Mother's capacity for love is perhaps the one most noticeable trait that distinguishes her from Bernarda Alba. From the characteristic of love arises her bitterness and hatred, seen in the yellow room, through the realization that those responsible for the death of her husband and son are still living. With the death of the Mother's husband and son hatred of those responsible has become an obsession with her. The mention of her husband or his killers causes her to go into a discourse on the goodness of her husband. This element of frustration in her character enables one to see an individual that is secretly seeking revenge; however, because of the stress she places upon the honor of her good name, the action may not be precipitated by her against the Félix.

The Mother's remaining son, the Bridegroom, is all she has left; his well-being and safety are now her main concern. The thought that he may be killed seems to point out the fatalistic grip that fate has upon their lives. It is through the Bridegroom and his sons that their name will live, even so, the hold that fear has upon her, causes her to wish that he were a woman. He would then not need to go out and run the risk of being killed.

The Mother is happy that her boy is getting married, but not having known the girl's mother, she is hesitant to give her consent. However, she says that she will ask for the girl Sunday. In a country where behavior is based upon the laws of tradition and an acquaintance with the parents of a boy or girl, a premonition of tragedy is to be felt in the atmosphere because of this lack of knowledge.

The Bride's mother, now deceased, is characterized by a neighbor as an individual that was not always conducting herself properly. If the workings of fate are an indication of how an individual's son or daughter is to act, then here may be seen how fate will later make its presence felt in the Bride. From this neighbor the Mother also learns that the Bride had been engaged to Leonardo Félix. The mention of the name Félix causes her to see "Blue," even though Leonardo had nothing to do with the killing of her husband and son:

> Es verdad . . . Pero oigo eso de Félix y es lo mismo (entre dientes) Félix que llenárseme de cieno la boca (escupe) y tengo que escupir, tengo que escupir por no matar.[14] (I, p. 36)

The bitter feud that has engulfed the two families is perhaps the basic cause for the Mother's state of frustration. The simple mention of the name and how it causes such violent action is almost unnatural, but with a knowledge of what the Spanish temperament is like, her actions may easily be understood.

The action that leads to the double death at the end of the play is a result of a "spot" being placed upon the honor of the Bridegroom's and the Mother's good name. The Mother, earlier when she was speaking with the Bride's Father, points out that her son is from a good home that is free of scandal. The forces that motivate the Mother may then be stated as: the honor of a good name and hate of the Félix family. (These two concepts collide in the Mother when

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[14]All quotations are from Obras completas, op. cit., Vol. I.

Leonardo provokes the clash by running away with the Bride.) When it is found out that the two lovers have fled, the Mother shouts to her son, "Anda! ¡Detrás! . . . No. No vayas. Esa gente mata pronto y bien . . .; ¡pero sí, corre, y yo detrás! (I, p. 105). A slight hesitation on the Mother's part, indicates her consciousness of the possible results, but they had been wronged, so she asks for blood.

At first sight, it would appear that the Bridegroom is completely under the control of his mother, but because of her love for him, and the boy's own ability, he many times acts on his own. He is kindly toward her, tall and fair, with a good head on his shoulders. His obedience would have led him to kill those responsible for his Mother's sorrow, if she had so willed it.

His faith in the one he loves is unshakable. He knows his love is true and not based upon monetary gains. The loving son he is, he invites his mother to live with him and his wife, after the marriage, in order that she not be alone.

The Bridegroom has everything in the way of material needs. In addition, he is intelligent, with an eye on the future. He knows how to manage money and does not drink.

His popularity is great. The number of people who seldom go out of the house, but were at the wedding, will attest to this point. His good nature permits him to associate easily. His good sense of humor is brought out when he, at the wedding, says to the servant: "Las viejas frescas como tú bailan mejor que las jóvenes" (I, p. 94).

The mischievousness and daring part of him is made known when the Bride says that she is going to stretch out on the bed for a moment and rest, he answers: "Yo te haré compañía" (I, p. 100).

The Bridegroom's personality is well rounded material for a husband. His mother is dominating,but he is able to think for himself and, has his own sense of pride. This point is made clear when it is discovered that the Bride and Leonardo have run off. By instinct, he immediately seeks a horse and is in pursuit before his mother acts or says anything.

The need for revenge on his part is to save face, and a feeling for family pride, as this means a spot on its good name. The Bridegroom's tragedy may be found in loving too deeply. Frustration becomes paramount by Leonardo's and the Bride's act, so he takes the only road left to him, as dictated by the laws of the society in which he lives.

The Father is a very old man with shining white hair. When he speaks, the efforts of his hard work reflect with pride, as he tells how the wasteland around his home is now productive. Work does not frighten him, for he has been blessed with a strong back and a willing heart.

The Father has few words to say, even of his daughter, but what he does say, lets it be known she has been raised right and, he is proud of her:

> Qué te digo de la mía. Hace las migas a las tres, cuando el lucero. No habla nunca; suave como la lana, borda toda clase de bordados y puede cortar una maroma con los dientes (I, 54).

The Father is an honorable man and would not stand for any misbehavior. It is this knowledge that leads one to believe that if he knew of any unproper conduct in his house he would soon put a stop to it. It is the opinion of this writer that the Father has a hand in his wife's disappearance. His code of morality is the same as the Mother's and for this reason when he is told that his daughter has run off with Leonardo, it strikes him as being impossible. He says: "No es verdad! ¡Mi hija, no!" (I, 104).

A certain amount of knowledge is known about the Bride before she ever makes an appearance. It is known that at fifteen she was engaged to Leonardo, but did not marry him, as is later brought out, because he was poor. The Father, once again, is probably the one who in reality is responsible for not permitting the marriage.

The Bride, upon first meeting the Mother is solemn. Her responses to questions put to her by the Mother indicate in a very subtle manner that all is not right. The temperament of the Bride is indicated as being somewhat violent, as a râle breaks out between her and the maid, over the presents that were brought by the Mother of the Bridegroom. The Bride does not want to open them, whereas the maid does. This act seems to indicate a disinterest on the part of the Bride toward the marriage.

Act One draws to a close as the maid reveals that Leonardo, on horseback, had stopped at the Bride's window the night before at three in the morning. The strong tone of voice and language used by

the Bride to rebuff this accusation is alarming, "¡Mentira! ¡mentira! ¿A qué viene aquí?" (I, p. 61). "¡Cállate! ¡Maldita sea tu lengua!" (I, p. 62).

The violence and nervousness portrayed by the Bride in the first act points out a restlessness in her character that seems to indicate an uneasiness about her approaching marriage. It must be remembered that her first love was Leonardo and, that it was stopped because of her father. The tragedy that is to develop later is able to be seen in the uncertain actions of the Bride.

Act Two, the wedding day, opens with the Bride speaking of how her mother had wasted away there and how they are all wasting away. As the maid ties on the sprigs of blossom, the Bride looks at herself in the mirror and then takes the wreath and hurls it away.

The first guest to arrive is Leonardo. They speak of whose fault it was that they did not marry and, it is brought out that the reason is because he had nothing. The Bride says in the following speech that she is going to marry the Bridegroom and be faithful to him because of her pride:

> Un hombre con su caballo sabe mucho y puede mucho para poder estrujar a una muchacha metida en un desierto. Pero yo tengo orgullo. Por eso me caso. Y me encerraré con mi marido, a quien tengo que querer por encima de todo (I, p. 72).

The interesting point brought out here is that the Bride also feels a concept of honor about right and wrong. The element of suspense that comes to light now is whether she actually feels what she says, or if it is simply said because society so demands.

After the wedding, the Bride takes on a more nervous and moody manner. Her conversation with everyone is short and brisk, always with a tone of irritation. In her bedroom, as she removes her pins, the Bridegroom enters quietly and embraces her. The fact that she becomes frightened indicates that she was perhaps waiting for someone other than the Bridegroom. The Bride puts down her husband by saying that the time is not appropriate. The Bride tells her husband she is going to rest and thereby retires.

In the next sequence of events, in the woods, the Bride confesses to Leonardo that she walked out of the house first, put a bridle on the horse and strapped spurs to his boots, but now she is uncertain of her desires. On the one hand, the hold that passion has on her seems to impel her to go on. The feeling of honor, though seemingly to be submerged, is still a force with which subconsciously she is struggling. She wants to go on, but yet she does not. She wants his love, but still is not able to sacrifice her honor.

The result of this enter struggle is able to be seen in the last scene when the Bride confronts the Mother and after the killings have taken place. It is because of the Bride that these two persons are dead, yet,she feels it was not necessary. The Bridegroom's honor had not been soiled because she had remained true and she had retained her honor by not allowing herself to be loved. This is her peace of mind, her purity and, the knowledge that the Bridegroom's honor "was not sullied except by the lesser act of her escape."[15]

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[15]Lima, op. cit., p. 215.

With Leonardo, as with the Bride, his daring and passion are made known before he ever makes an appearance. The fact that he is a Félix, a family with a long line of bad blood, fixes his destiny, from which there is no escape.

Leonardo's rejection by the Bride has never been overcome. Secretly he rides to her house and attempts to renew the romance they once had. His actions are not based upon love, but rather desire. The boldness of his actions label him a troublemaker. His own marriage is not a happy one, but his character will not permit him to worry about this. His purpose in life is based upon passion and fulfillment. His early arrival on the wedding day was for the express purpose of arriving before the other guests, in order that he might speak with the bride, so that he could tell her of his feelings:

> Callar y quemarse es el castigo más grande que nos podemos echar encima. ¿De qué me sirvió a mí el orgullo y el no mirarte y el dejarte despierta noches y noches? ¡De nada! (I, p. 72).

The dominant note of passion is the main motivating force behind Leonardo's character. Attempting to hide his drive has resulted in an acute case of frustration, who, like the other characters of the drama seeks desperately a means to escape the workings of fate, but like they, he is engulfed in the swift current that takes him to his destiny. The struggle he puts up to escape the current may be seen in one of the speeches he makes to the Bride as they are in the woods:

> ¡Que vidrios se me clavan en la lengua!
> Porque yo quise olvidar
> y puse un muro de piedra
> entre tu casa y la mía.

Es verdad. ¿No lo recuerdas?
Y cuando te vi de lejos
me eché en los ojos arena (I, p. 120).

As Leonardo continues this speech he tries to make the Bride understand that the passion he feels is not his fault, but that of the land:

Pero montaba a caballo
y el caballo iba a tu puerta.
Con alfileres de plata
mi sangre se puso negra,
y el sueño me fué llenando
las carnes de mala hierba.
Que yo no tengo la culpa,
que la culpa es de la tierra
y de ese olor que te sale
de los pechos y las trenzas (I, p. 120).

Leonardo, the only individual in the drama with a name, is the only person that has a choice as to what his destiny will be. However, the force of passion is so great that his fate is established.

The Wife enters the drama in scene two of Act One by singing a very sad lullaby that conveys her state of existence. Her marriage to Leonardo has caused her great grief, and has also ostracized her from society. Her life is tragic in that she knows she has been cast off by Leonardo; However, this is her fate, as it was with her mother, and now she realizes that to break free is impossible, so she has become resigned to her state. The Wife's final fate is isolation:

Tú, a tu casa.
Valiente y sola en tu casa.
A envejecer y a llorar.
Pero la puerta cerrada.
Nunca. Ni muerto ni vivo.
Clavaremos las ventanas.
Y vengan lluvias y noches
sobre las hierbas amargas (I, p. 128).

In Act One there are three settings: scene one, the Mother's home; scene two, Leonardo's house; scene three, the Bride's house. Each scene carries with it its own indicators of tragedy and how the inhabitants of the house will bend to the will of fate.

In scene one the dominant note is that of hatred for the Félix name: "Félix que llenárseme de cieno la boca" (I, p. 36). Hatred for knives, pistols, and guns: "Todo lo que puede cortar el cuerpo de un hombre" (I, p. 26). The atmosphere is that of pain, and suffering. "Hace dos días trajeron al hijo de mi vecina con los dos brazos cortados por la máquina" (I, p. 33). The Mother's obsession about the knife and the things that kill will not give her a moments rest. They caused the death of her husband and son:

> ¿Y es juste y puede ser que una cosa pequeña como una pistola o una navaja pueda acabar con un hombre, que es un toro? (I, p. 27).

The Mother's equation of death and man is why she wishes that her son were a woman. When he marries, the Mother's hope is for granddaughters, then she may find peace: "Sí, pero que haya niñas. Que yo quiero bordar y hacer encaje y estar tranquila (I, p. 32).

The workings of fate establishes its presence in another direction in this very scene. The uncertainty about the Bride's background causes great concern on the Mother's part. Knowledge of the Bride's mother is vague and, what is revealed is enough to establish the Bride's destiny.

In this scene, the forces that are to take the Bridegroom to his destiny have been set in motion. The basic force, that of the

Bridegroom's love for the Bride is established. The force with which he will need to contend has been established to some extent, namely that of honor.

The principle force in the second scene is that of passion. Leonardo's passion for the Bride is represented throughout the scene by the horse. The use of color in the house is symbolic of the Félix name:

> It now becomes obvious that the various gradations of red in the house--the rose of the walls, the reds in the flowers, the tinted glow reflected in the copperware--are symbolic of the Felix name. The blood in the lullaby completes the tonality representing the household.[16]

The lullaby that opens the scene is sad and bloody and sets a background of tragedy. It is interesting to note that the big horse in the lullaby may be equated to Leonardo's horse which in turn is symbolic of his sexual frustration.

> . . . que el caballo no quiere beber (I, p. 38).

In this line may be seen Leonardo's conflict. Leonardo wants to drink, or in other words, he wants fulfillment. Reference to a drink of water being symbolic for satisfaction is seen throughout García Lorca's theatre, but here the meaning is clearer than in other instances. This same symbolism will be seen just as clearly in La casa de Bernarda Alba. The river is poisonous; therefore, to drink is to die.

Leonardo, as is later revealed, does not want to drink, just as is indicated in the lullaby. In the lullaby a silver dagger is

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[16] Ibid., p. 195.

stuck in the horse's eyes. (Leonardo dies by an instrument that is also silver, a knife.) Blood flows in the lullaby from the horse's hooves, just as would appear to be the case with Leonardo's horse:

> Llevo más de dos meses poniendo herraduras nuevas al caballo y siempre se le caen. Por lo visto se las arranca con las piedras (I, p. 42).

The magnitude of Leonardo's passion and frustration is the only conclusion that may be reached in observing the actions of the horse. The condition of the horse is indicative of the force that is within Leonardo:

> Pero el caballo estaba reventando de sudar (I, p. 42).
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Pero, ¿quién de esas carreras al caballo? Esta abajo tendido con los ojos desorbitados como si llegara del fin del mundo (I, p. 44).

The force behind the horse is so powerful that if Leonardo were to give it it's head, as he explains later in the woods to the Bride, it would lead him to her door: "Pero montaba a caballo/y el caballo iba a tu puerta" (I, p. 120).

The Bride's house in the third scene is symbolic of: passion, rose colored flowers; purity, white walls; death, blue jars and little mirrors. The land surrounding the house is wasteland, which adds to the idea of death. To all of this the Mother and Bridegroom enter the scene dressed in black. The Bridegroom has a watch which García Lorca places on those men that are simply "un poquito de agua" (I, p. 134).

With the end of Act One the forces of fate: love, honor, passion, and hate have been established. These forces in conjunction with time will eventually lead all of the characters to their destiny.

The first scene of the second act serves to indicate a continuous rise of tension in the atmosphere. The growth of passion in the Bride toward Leonardo is the principle force that fate is employing now. The premonition that passion will overwhelm the Bride is noticeable throughout her conversation with Leonardo the morning of the wedding:

> Y sé que estoy loca y sé que tengo el pecho podrido de aguantar, y aquí estoy quieta por oírlo, por verlo menear los brazos (I, p. 73).

The Bride's displeasure at her marriage is pointed out when she takes the wreath of orange blossoms that must be worn at the wedding and throws it to the floor. The rest of this scene is given over to song.

The last scene of Act Two, the scene in which the lovers run away, is set at the exterior of the Bride's home. The colors are white gray and "Blue". The curtain rises on the maid who is singing. The song repeats four times these lines:

> Giraba,
> giraba la rueda
> y el agua pasaba,
> porque llega la boda, . . .
> . . . . . .
> . . . y espera el campo el rumor
> de la sangre derramada (I, pp. 85-6).

The repeated mention of water flowing and wedding in the above song, when added to the country waits for blood would appear to indicate that blood, like water, will flow at the wedding. There is no doubt that the mood of the drama takes its final and most tragic step at this point.

The forest scene in the third act introduces death and the moon in personified form. The woodcutters comment on the possibility of the lovers escape. They aid the Bridegroom in his search by cutting branches, thereby making it easier for the moon to illuminate the land. Death itself makes an appearance in the form of an old woman. Leonardo and the Bridegroom are brought together and their destiny is reached when they kill each other with knives.

CHAPTER VII

YERMA

Yerma, the name of the drama, is also the name of the protagonist. She is married to Juan, but the marriage has been barren of children. The need for children is frankly admitted by Yerma, who, when her husband does not give her one, attempts to find the cause.

This dilemma in which Yerma finds herself developes to the extent that her frustrated need for motherhood makes her seek its realization by drifting into the world of dream.

Yerma attempts to find the cause of her barrenness in a sorceress, Dolores, and travels to a shrine on a mountain where other women in her condition go to pray for children. On this mountain, it is revealed by her husband that he does not want a family, only her. With the realization that her state will be permanent, she strangles her husband.

The central conflict, that of maternal frustration, is the tragedy that drives Yerma to commit the final act of murder. This need is the main motivating force upon which Yerma bases her reason for existing. This need is her obsession and that which drives her to seek out the reason for her barrenness.

In the first act, a continuous rise in her unfortunate condition is observed, in that every person she speaks to, in some manner or the other, reminds her of her state. Her husband does not want children, but she is not certain of this. Because of her condition, life without children, she considers herself a useless woman.

Yerma's mental state is worsened when a neighbor, María, informs her that she is going to have a child. The uncertainty and fear María sees in childbirth are eased by Yerma's "motherly" advise. Her understanding of children, childbirth, and other things pertaining to their well being, makes it ironical that a child should be given to María who is completely ignorant about the subject. Yerma even consents to sew some clothes for the child. As she does this, Víctor, a friend of the family, comes in and is very elated to see her sewing baby clothes; he feels the time has arrived. The consequences of such an error on Víctor's part indicates how García Lorca desires to demonstrate Yerma's sorrows by having her encounter frustration with every move.

In the next scene, the above conclusion is applied again. It seems as though a knife is sinking deeper into Yerma's heart and draining her of life as she runs into the Old Woman who has nine children living and five dead. The Old Woman has been very fruitful and, even though she has lost five children, she feels no sadness. In this woman García Lorca has intensified Yerma's tragedy.

In the second scene of Act One, Yerma encounters two sisters: one is hurrying home because she has left her baby alone. Yerma's rebuke of the Girl for doing this, points out how those seemingly least fit for motherhood are the ones with children. Yerma asks the other girl if Delores is her mother, and then Yerma leaves.

Yerma's desire for children has caused Juan concern because he feels that Yerma may seek satisfaction elsewhere. To guard the honor of his good name and house he brings in his two spinster sisters.

Juan fails to consider Yerma's own concept of honor. It is because of this concept that Yerma's frustration arises. The struggle within Yerma would appear to be based not so much upon morality, but rather upon doubt in herself due to uncertainty in her own ability to have children. "¿Es estéril o fecunda 'Yerma'?"[17]

The accusations about her character and morality are unfounded, in so far as attempting to seek satisfaction out of marriage, because society has instilled within her a belief in the righteousness of its laws. Those people that have made Yerma the object of their laughter and gossip have based their assumptions on imagination:

> Figuraciones. De gente que no tiene la conciencia tranquila. Creen que me puede gustar otro hombre y no saben que aunque me gustara, lo primero de mi casta es la honradez (III, p. 66).[18]

This strict adherence to the rules of society and tradition give to Yerma a "saintly" outlook. This saintliness disappears, however, when it is brought out that she does not love her husband. She but married him simply for the fact that in him she could see the object of her obsession fulfilled, children. Juan is her one hope, her salvation, even though love does not exist:

> No lo quiero, no lo quiero y sin embargo es mi única salvación. Por honra y por casta. Mi única salvación (III, p. 79).

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[17]José Gonzáles Carbalho, Vida, obra y muerte de Frederico García Lorca (Santiago de Chili: Editorial Ercilla, 1938), p. 63.

[18]All quotations are from Obras completas, op. cit., Vol. III.

The action of the drama reaches a high point when Juan catches Yerma leaving the house of a sorceress one morning. For Yerma, this was the only recourse left, that of seeking help in the supernatural. Juan does not believe that she has not been misbehaving so Yerma makes it plain to him that his people are not the only ones that have a sense of honor:

> Te figuras tú y tu gente que sois vosotros los únicos que guardais honra, y no sabes que mi casta no ha tenido nunca nada que ocultar. Anda. Acércate a mí y huele mis vestidos; ¡acércate! A ver dónde encuentras un olor que no sea tuyo, que no sea de tu cuerpo (III, p. 83).

The final scene of the third act takes place at the shrine in the mountains. There women go to pray for children, and are aided in their prayers by the number of single men that are always present. The Old Woman that appeared in the first act approaches Yerma, who is there without knowing why, to tell Yerma that the fault of her barrenness lies with her husband. The Old Woman attempts to entice Yerma to leave her husband and go with her son. Yerma's honor is again put to the test, but her strong belief in the righteousness of her ways causes her to answer:

> ¿Te figuras que puedo conocer otro hombre? ¡Dónde pones mi honra? El agua no se puede volver atrás ni la luna llena sale al mediodía. Véte. Por el camino que voy, seguiré. ¿Has pensado en serio que yo me pueda doblar a otro hombre? ¿Que yo vaya a pedirle lo que es mío como una esclava? Conóceme, para que nunca me hables más. Yo no busco (III, p. 98)

Shortly, Juan approaches, and confesses that he never wanted children. Yerma makes him repeat in order that she may be certain of what she heard. The realization that he has only wanted her body

causes all of her frustration to be released by the act of strangling him. Yerma now finds a certain amount of peace in knowing that her hope for children has been killed.

Juan's drive is centered upon a need to have an honorable name and house. His reluctance to permit Yerma even to speak with anyone is based upon the fear that scandal may develop. His fear of what may develop from an innocent conversation is well founded, especially with Yerma, since the town feels that she is the evil one in the family. The town's opinion is expressed through the laundresses. The main point to be noticed is how an innocent act may be blown completely out of proportion and interpreted in the most outlandish way possible:

> Hay una cosa en el mundo que es la mirada. Mi madre lo decía. No es lo mismo una mujer mirando unas rosas que una mujer mirando los muslos de un hombre. Ella lo mira (III, p. 47).

The fact that Juan is a good worker seems to absolve him of any blame. Juan's preoccupation with honor and his views toward Yerma's behavior are well expressed in the following speech as he speaks to his sisters:

> Una de vosotras debía salir con ella, porque para eso estáis aquí comiendo en mi mantel y bebiendo mi vino. Mi vida está en el campo, pero mi honra está aquí. Y mi honra es también la vuestra (III, p. 56).

A premonition of the tragedy that befalls Yerma is felt to some extent in the atmosphere: the stage setting, the use of color, songs, music, and darkness, but the true feeling of despair comes through Yerma's speeches. The combination of these different factors add up to death.

The longing for children on Yerma's part is present as soon as the curtain goes up on Act One. The stage takes on the strange light of a dream and a shepherd appears leading a child dressed in white. Yerma is asleep and from off stage a soft lullaby is heard.

In the first sequence of events a reference to Juan's lifelessness is brought out: "Ahora tienes la cara blanca como si no te diera en ella el sol" (III, p. 12). On another occasion Yerma refers to Juan in a similar manner: "Tiene un carácter seco" (III, p. 39). Still later, a reference to his uselessness as a husband is indicated by Yerma as she speaks with Dolores: "Cuando me cubre . . . yo le noto la cintura fría. . . . el cuerpo muerto" (III, p. 78).

Yerma justifies her barrenness by placing the fault with Juan, though she is not certain of this until the very end. The desire for children on Yerma's part is permanently fixed in the first scene, in addition to the premonition of death as a result if they do not come:

> Cada mujer tiene sangre para cuatro o cinco hijos y cuando no los tienen se les vuelve veneno, come me va a pasar a mí (III, p. 22).

From the above speech it would appear that Yerma is speaking of her death, rather than Juan's death. However, on examining the speech a second time, it also applies to her. The death of Juan has made the statement come true.

In the second scene, the reflection spoken of in La zapatera prodigiosa makes its entrance when Yerma attempts to obtain advice from the Old Woman. Yerma tells the Old Woman that in Juan she was

able to see herself in his eyes. "Y me miraba en sus ojos" (III, p. 30). The presence of her reflection is an indication of her destiny.

Act One comes to a close as Yerma and Víctor speak. From other sequences that precede and follow, it is established that when they get together, an inner struggle seems to engulf them. The idea conveyed is that Víctor would have made a more appropriate husband. They are very restrained in their actions; there is no overt display of affection, nor is there anything they have done or do that shames them. The idea that in Víctor Yerma would have been given children is clearly seen by Yerma's concern over a mark on his face that resembles a burn. Víctor's answer is that it must be the sun. "Debe ser el sol . . ." (III, p. 39). Life and the sun are synonymous. Life in Víctor gives vent to the cry of a child, as Yerma says,"Me había parecido que lloraba un niño" (III, p. 40). Víctor is not able to hear anything, and again Yerma says, "Muy cerca. Y lloraba como ahogado" (III, p. 40). The cry is only in Yerma's imagination, but to her, it was coming from Víctor. Earlier, García Lorca portrays the breeze as the life Yerma is seeking. "(Yerma . . . acude al sitio donde ha estado Víctor y respira fuertemente como si aspira aire de montaña . . ." (III, p. 25).

The first scene of the second act is given over to the laundresses. The scene is a mountain stream and they are doing their laundry. They act as commentators and set a gloomy atmosphere by singing the song about "la casada seca." "Equivale a un coro que entona la rapsodia del deseo

y de la maternidad."[19] The views held by the laundresses are those of society and they make of Yerma a very unsavory personage. This view, a poisonous one, could be none other than this because they are standing in the stream from which only death and evil come.

The laundresses gossip about how Yerma has taken up with Víctor, although none have seen Yerma with him. They increase with their talk of the sullen atmosphere in Yerma's house, by giving very vivid and true statements about the sinister appearance of Juan's sisters: "Son como esas hojas grandes que nacen de pronto sobre los sepulcros" (III, p. 44). The laundresses become silent; the silence of a graveyard overtakes the scene when they see the spinster sisters, dressed in black, arrive to do their laundry. The scene ends with the same song that opened it, "la casada seca."

The graveness of Yerma's tragedy is illuminated in all of its ugliness when the uselessness of her existence is pounded into her mind by the fruitfulness she sees all around. Life and new life is constantly coming forth. Her friends as well as all of nature is reproducing:

> Que estoy ofendida, ofendida y rebajada hasta lo último, viendo que los trigos apuntan, que las fuentes no cesan de dar agua y que paren las ovejas cientos de corderos, y las perras, y que parace que todo el campo puesto de pie me enseña sus crías tiernas, adormiladas, mientras yo siento dos golpes de martillo aquí en lugar de la boca de mi niño (III, pp. 64-65).

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[19] Fernando Vazquez Ocaña, García Lorca, vida, cantico y muerte (México, D. F.: Biografías Gandesa, 1957), p. 321.

In the last act, the presence of the supernatural makes itself felt. The atmosphere makes the unreal real and alive. Yerma visits the sorceress, Dolores. In the darkness prayers are said at the cemetery. The dialogue references enhance the dreary dealings that seem to transpire between the living and the dead.

In the last scene, the shrine in the mountains, women have formed a procession and pray that they may be made fruitful. The dialogue portrays the place as the site of terrible happenings. A "river" of single men have converged on the site. Girls are running right and left. Shouts and bells are heard until all of the uproar fades away with the appearance of two figures. One is Male and the other is Female. García Lorca says they are of great beauty. The children comment that it is the Devil and his wife.

The dance and song of these two figures dies away as the fatal moment of Juan's confession draws near. After the act of the strangulation, the chorus of the pilgrimage is heard.

CHAPTER VIII

LA CASA DE BERNARDA ALBA

The action of this drama revolves around the mother, Bernarda. Her husband has just died, leaving only women in the house. As the curtain goes up Poncia, Bernarda's maid, and another servant set the stage by openly speaking of their hatred for Bernarda.

An eight year period of mourning enforced by Bernarda after her husband's death causes in her five daughters frustration from the realization that marriage will never come. Only the eldest daughter, Angustias, has any hope. She is the eldest of Bernarda's daughters by another father, and has some money left to her by him. She has hopes of marrying a man younger than herself, Pepe el Romano, but he is in love with the youngest sister, Adela. Martirio, another sister, also loves Pepe and spies on Adela, who is secretly meeting with Pepe and having relations with him. The other two girls, Magadalena and Amelia, have no hope at all. Martirio betrays Adela to her mother. When Adela is falsely informed of Pepe's death, she hangs herself.

Sexual frustration may easily be considered the overall theme. This is certainly found to be true in all of the girls. The conflict of the drama arises when this need is thwarted. This desire of theirs is not openly admitted, but it is reflected in those speeches given by María Josefa, the "crazy" eighty year old mother of Bernarda. Her agonies are those of the girls. She, as the Rosa mutabile, symbolizes

Rosita's life, symbolizes the confinement of the girls. Her cries are the suppressed expressions of the girls.

After the sentence to eight years of mourning one is able to hear the suppressed cries of the girls as María Josefa echoes their longing for freedom. "¡Bernarda! ¡Déjame salir!" (VIII, p. 26).[20] The desire for love, marriage, and fulfillment constantly makes itself known with every appearance of María Josefa, ". . . yo quiero un varón para casarme y para tener alegría" (VIII, p. 47). Bernarda's response is always "Encerradla!"

The dictates of Bernarda, based upon tradition and the strict code of morality, ring out through her "domain" with the authority of the leopard to which she is compared by María Josefa, and the "snap" of the broad-snouted alligator to which she is compared by a neighbor.

> En ocho años que dure el luto no ha de entrar en esta casa el viento de la calle. Hacemos cuenta que hemos tapiado con ladrillos puertas y ventanas. Así pasó en casa de mi padre y en casa de mi abuelo (VIII, p. 25).

Bernarda's concern is not for her family but for a good front to keep the neighbors from having something to gossip about. Bernarda keeps her mother out of their view to prevent any possible misunderstanding they might infer.

Bernarda's position in society is above that of all the "peons" in the town. This feeling has ostracized her from society; nevertheless, she will not permit herself to associate with the common people.

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[20]All quotations are from Obras completas, op. cit., Vol. VIII.

No one in the town is good enough for her daughters. This stand accentuates the feeling of frustration in her daughters because by doing this she admits no hope for their marriage: "Los hombres de aquí no son de su classe" (VIII, p. 32). The code that will not permit one to marry beneath his social or economic level is the reason she did not permit Henrique Humanas to visit Martirio. ". . . Mi sangre no se junta con la de los Humanas mientras yo viva! Su padre fué gañán (VIII, p. 81).

Angustias is, on two occasions in the first act, the object of Bernarda's sharp disciplinary action for having broken the mother's pattern of behavior set for her daughters. On the first occasion Angustias is scolded and struck by her mother for trying to catch a glimpse of Pepe among the men at the house after the funeral. The second occurrence takes place when Angustias powders her face to meet Pepe:

> ¿Salir? Después que te haya quitado esos polvos de la cara. ¡Suavona! ¡Yeyo! ¡Espejo de tus tías! (Le quita violentamente con un pañuelo los polvos.) ¡Ahora, vete! (VIII, p. 45).

Toward the end of Act Two the feeling of discontentment and frustration among the girls causes Bernarda to repeat her demands for harmony and the silence of discord. So that, "Si las gentes del pueblo quieren levantar falsos testimonios se encontrarán con mi pedernal" (VIII, p. 86).

In the last act, Bernarda, while speaking with Prudencia, inquires of her husband. And when informed of her husband's quarrel with his brothers over the inheritance, and his bold actions, like

Bernada's own actions, Bernarda promptly agrees with him. Prudencia goes on to say that her husband has never forgiven their daughter. This action in the eyes of Bernarda is very justified as she says, "una hija que desobedece deja de ser hija para convertirse en un enemiga" (VIII, p. 92). The ironic part of this conversation is that these very acts are to happen to Bernarda.

Bernarda's pleas for harmony and peace are repeated time and again. The need is an obsession, ". . . quiero buena fachada y armonía familiar" (VIII, p. 99).

Even in the face of death, after her constant "nagging" and "preaching" she does not forsake her code. Adela's suicide brings from her lips this final plea for the sake of honor:

> ¡Descolgarla! ¡Mi hija ha muerto virgen! Llevadla a su cuarto y vertirla como una doncella. ¡Nadie diga nada! Ella ha muerto virgen. Avisad que al amanecer den dos clamores las campanas (VIII, p. 123).

The concept of honor usually affects those persons in the high and middle-class only. García Lorca, in this drama, gives Poncia a role usually not relegated to that of a maid. He has, by pointing out a similarity in her character to that of Bernarda, given to her the need to live decently. ". . . quiero vivir en casa decente. ¡No quiero mancharme de vieja! (VIII, p. 61).

The purity of the house is seen in the white walls. For the three acts their color is the same, except that in the last act the color of blue blends in with the white. The sanitary condition of the house demonstrates the irony of the girls frustration:

> Against the background of intensely white and whitewashed house and walls, we see the sterile existence of five unwilling virgins beneath the tyrannical rule of a fanatically and hypocritically honor-oriented mother. Alba, whose name also signifies white, . . . The daughters' names, too (Angustias, Martirio), are symbols of their state.[21]

In Act Three the color white is seen in the stallion. In him the symbolic desire for sexual fulfillment violently exerts itself as he throws himself against the walls of his stall. The irony connected with this event is that the horse will find release in the morning.

The stallion is turned loose in the corral and there he is seen by the most appropriate girl of all, Adela. The sight of the stallion causes her to say:

> El caballo garañón estaba en el centro del corral ¡blanco! Doble de grande, llenando todo lo oscuro (VIII, p. 101).

The girl's purity, there represented, looms large against the background of black. The white horse was seen in La zapatera prodigiosa as a symbolic meaning for sex. With Adela, the meaning behind the horse cannot be misunderstood.

The real and the desired are revealed, on the white walls through the use of pictures. There hang pictures of legendary kings, Bernarda, and pictures of landscapes full of nymphs.

Angustias' engagement ring of pearls brings to light the plight the girls are being forced to undergo that will take them to tears.

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[21]Richard E. Chandler and Kessel Schwartz, A New History of Spanish Literature (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1961), p. 138.

When Angustias shows the ring to Prudencia, the latter comments "En mi tiempo las perlas significaban lágrimas" (VIII, p. 96).

The inclusion of a ring with three pearls that carries this meaning was not done unintentionally by García Lorca. The fact that this is the meaning he meant for it to convey may be verified by the tears, as symbolized by María Josefa's necklace, lamenting her state.

With the unbearable heat of the summer García Lorca seems to intensify the burning frustration of the girls: "Hace años no he conocido calor igual" (VIII, p. 19). At night when the oppresive heat should abate, just the opposite takes place: "Era la una de la madrugada y subía fuego de la tierra" (VIII, p. 51). The restlessness that keeps the girls from sleep is found in this line: "A Pepe le gusta andar con la luna" (VIII, p. 72). Notice the reference to the moon, symbolic of death.

Adela's final act of suicide, coupled with the fear of her mother's wrath, in addition to the signals pointing out the inevitability of her actions, falls into a very definite pattern demonstrating the working of fate. One other incident, preceded by two others of the same nature before Adela's final deed, serve to indicate how her destiny was pretold.

The incident refers to Librada's daughter. This girl, ashamed of having had a child out of wedlock, killed the baby at birth and hid it under some rocks. Bernarda's cries for the girl's blood seem

seem to point out that had Adela, as she was with child, not taken her own life, Bernarda would have.

Early in the second act the girls' frustrated state is intensified when Poncia tells of a woman who offered to meet with fifteen recently arrived reapers at the olive grove, and of how she, Poncia, acted as a go-between for her son and a woman of the same type years ago:

> Hace años vino otra de éstas y yo misma di dinero
> a mi hijo mayor para que fuera. Los hombres necesitan
> estas cosas (VIII, p. 66).

This story was brought on by the song the chorus sings which ". . . enciende la imaginación de las solteronas."[22]

> Ya salen los segadores
> en busca de las espigas;
> se llevan los corazones
> de las muchachas que miran (VIII, p. 67).

In Act One Poncia tells Bernarda of Paca la Roseta who willingly permitted herself to be seduced at the olive grove.

There remains only one factor that has not been discussed. This factor has nothing to do with death but because of its repetition throughout the drama it deserves comment. María Josefa makes reference constantly to the sea as though it were a place of retreat or of contentment. Robert Lima says:

> . . . the sea is an important, if seldom reflected, influence on Lorca. The most generous evidence of this is in this occasion where María Josefa attempts to reach the sea. Both in the reality of Lorca's life, the, and in the kaleidoscopic world of La casa de Bernarda Alba, the sea becomes a source of life, of symbolic

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[22] Ocaña, op. cit., p. 358.

> rebirth, and the passage-way to a freedom from the encumbrances of society. Such are the implications in the old woman's desire to journey to the sea.[23]

Adela's sexual thirst was expressed, symbolically several times throughout the drama. On the first occasion, at the dinner table, she gets up, but before she is able to take a step Bernarda asks where she is going, to which Adela answers: "A beber agua" (VIII, p. 94). She is quickly told to sit down and Bernarda tells Poncia to bring some. On the second occasion, the fatal night that she goes out to meet Pepe, she is met by Poncia, who has not gone to bed yet, and when asked where she is going, again Adela answers: "Voy a beber agua" (VIII, p. 110).

> . . . pueblo de pozos, donde siempre se bebe al agua con el miedo de que esté envenenada (VIII, p. 24).

The fact that Adela has her drink and it is fatal for her would indicate Bernarda's suspicion about the well water is well founded.

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[23]Lima, op. cit., p. 284-5.

CHAPTER IX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Symbolism in the theatre of García Lorca is employed to convey the presence of either frustration or death. Through the use of color the initial state or desire of the character may be observed. Often the color remains constant, but at other times, as the condition in the character changes, so does the color.

A white and sanitary condition prevails when the emphasis is to be on purity. La casa de Bernarda Alba, and Yerma are excellent examples of homes that are constantly cleaned to stress the plight of Yerma and the girls. La Zapatera's tragedy is exemplified by the completely white room, and the same meaning prevails in the white walls of Mariana Pineda's house and the white walls of the Bride's house.

A rose or red colored atmosphere portrays an inclination toward the presence of passion. Doña Rosita dresses in a rose colored dress until she changes into the white. La Zapatera uses a red dress, while a red cape is the symbol of passion in Don Perlimplín. The presence of passion, as indicative of Leonardo's nature, is observed in the furnishings of his home. The Bride, like La Zapatera, has a violent temper and in her home a cross of large rose colored flowers is found.

The use of color, in addition to that of music, songs, dances, the chorus, the great diversity in musical instruments, are an integral part of García Lorca's theatre. A true evaluation of this part of

García Lorca's theatre must be done in depth. A simple scraping of the surface was attempted in this paper concerning color, and, because of the writer's limited understanding of music, no attempt at all was made to consider the musical effects.

The symbolic presentation of frustration is, in addition to color, often pointed out by the horse, by daydreaming, and by a rejection of society. The horse as a symbol of sexual frustration is most forcibly presented in Bodas de sangre. The white horse spellbinds Adela, in La casa de Bernarda Alba, and is the dream of La Zapatera. The simple desire for sex is also symbolically presented by the need for water. The lullaby in Bodas de sangre and Adela's and Yerma's references to water are desire for sex without the need of love being present.

Daydreaming and imagination as a result of frustration is the recourse resorted to by Rosita, La Zapatera, Don Perlimplín, Yerma, and Bernarda's girls. The degree of frustration is often of such intensity that the individual apparently chooses to reject society, or more often, society forces the individual into seclusion. A retreat from society is seemingly Rosita's choice, but the real instigator of her action lies with society. Almost without exception, the characters in García Lorca's theatre are the victims of fate. This is true whether they break the laws of honor, as for example, with Belisa, Leonardo, Adela, or if they follow its strict dictates as with Rosita, La Zapatera, the Mother, the Father, the Bridegroom, the Wife, Yerma, and Bernarda.

The last means by which frustration makes its presence felt is through the working of dark and mysterious forces. The evidence of its presence is observed in those persons that become so tense and angered that they resort to hexes, curses, and a superstitious view toward life. Frustration draws Yerma to believe that she will find a child by invocating the aid of the supernatural through a sorceress. Hexes and curses are heaped upon the _fiancé_ by the Aunt and the maid in _Doña Rosita_. Don Perlimplín, El Zapatero, and his wife curse those people responsible for the marriage. El Zapatero is given over to superstition. The watch worn by El Zapatero and the Bridegroom may be a superstition based upon the belief that it will make them more masculine.

García Lorca, by making the supernatural live, seeimingly makes of it a part of reality; the personified form of Death in _Bodas de sangre_; the dance and song of the Masked figures in _Yerma_.

The symbolism that García Lorca uses in his dramas to convey the presence of death are the colors blue and black, the bull, the river, and the moon. He also uses objects of reflection such as a mirror, the eyes, and silver. To these may be added, _los duendes_. These are portrayed by little people, generally by children, whose comments spread the element of tragedy and hint at the inevitability of impending doom. In _Don Perlimplín_, _los duendes_ are referred to as such; however, in _Mariana Pineda_ and in _Bodas de sangre_ they are merely referred to as young girls. Their traditional attire is blue, which in turn appropriately exemplifies the nature of their purpose.

García Lorca diverts somewhat in Yerma from his traditional approach in the use of children to portray los duendes by employing the laundresses instead. The laundresses, like the woodcutters in Bodas de sangre, fortell the role that fate is to have in the drama.

García Lorca constantly intertwines the forces that constitute death with those of the sun and life. The clash of the two opposing forces sets up the conflict in the drama. Frustration, symbolically illustrated, leads the characters to their final destiny of fate.

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"Blood Wedding," Forum, 111:164, March, 1949.
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