

In the time of  
butterflies



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Amanda Jeffries In The Time Of The Butterflies From 1930 until 1961, General Leonidas Trujillo held absolute control of the Dominican Republic. His alliance and support from the army, church, and wealthy families and also the press were the foundation of his dictatorship. His formula to remain in power was simple: murder anyone who opposed him. Therefore anyone who wanted a fair government was declared an enemy of the state. General Trujillo wanted everyone to reproduce based on color. More than 30, 000 thousand people were executed and many of them were black during his regime of terror. From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia ([www. http://en. wikipedia. org](http://en.wikipedia.org)) “ The Roles Of Women In The Dominican Republic” from the National Endowment For the Arts states, Traditionally the Dominican Republic the father is the head of the household, responsible for his wife and children, who has the family’s final authority. In the period in which “ In The Time Of The Butterflies” is set, social expectations for men were very different from women, just as Senora Mirabal chose to ignore her husband’s infidelity. Men were praised for their exaggerated masculinity, while women were expected to be pretty, obedient, and discreet.

Minerva and her three sisters Patria, Dede and Maria Teresa (“ Mate”) live on a farm in Ojo De Agua. Minerva, the outspoken sister, convinces her father to send her, Patria and Mate away to attend school. When school is over, Minerva wishes to study to become a lawyer, but women are not allowed in law school. So the sisters return to the farm, and Minerva meets and falls in love with Lio, a member of the resistance, who gives her the nickname “ Butterfly”. In my opinion Lio influenced Minerva’s involvement in the underground movement to over throw Trujillo and his government.

Lio was forced in hiding because of his actions against the government.

Minerva, along with her family, was invited to a formal ball at the President's palace, where she dances with Trujillo. During their dance, Minerva asks for permission to attend law school, but Trujillo declines. He touches Minerva inappropriately, and she slapped him in the face. Trujillo allows them to leave. The next day the police arrive at the family farm and take Minerva's father away. Minerva goes to the palace and Trujillo rolls a dice to determine if Minerva and her family go free.

Minerva accepts, but asks if she wins, then she goes free and also gets to attend law school. She rolls the dice and wins, and Trujillo lets her leave. Her father is released from prison, but was tortured and soon dies. While attending his funeral, the police chief delivers Minerva a letter permitting her to attend law school. Minerva's hatred of Trujillo is strong, but she accepts his "gift" to attend law school because she sees it as her only way to oppose Trujillo. In law school, Minerva discovers that Lio has been killed.

She meets Manolo, another member of the resistance, who knows her as "Butterfly". She becomes a member of the resistance, and later Patria and Mate learn of her activities and become involved too. She falls in love with Manolo, and they get married. She completes law school but her license is withheld by Trujillo as revenge. After law school, Minerva has children, but continues her involvement in the resistance. Her, Mate, and many resistance members are arrested and sent to jail. Minerva becomes a symbol, and many prisoners, guards, and outsiders secretly voice their support for "the Butterflies".

Eventually Minerva and Mate are released from jail, but their husbands are still held captive. Trujillo stops by to visit Minerva at her home, and she asks for his help to get their husbands released. Trujillo vows to help Minerva “end her troubles”. While returning from a trip to visit their husbands, Minerva, Patria and Mate are stopped on the road by a large group of Trujillo’s men. They are taken some distance off the main road, and the men surround them and beat them to death. Minerva with her revolutionary fever and contagious spirit seems unstoppable for a time in her fight against Trujillo’s regime.

Despite warnings to watch out for her safety and well being, Minerva continued to push boundaries and dared to go where all other Dominicans feared to go. Patria was the religious, faithful sister, who showed her hidden boldness starting a Christian revolutionary group and joined with Minerva. Maria Theresa was the happiest, the most upbeat, Mirabal sister. In the beginning, she was only along for the ride, but as she continued to work towards the change for her country, she became more and more inspired and touched by her own goals. Lastly, Dede was always the most cautious and careful sister.

She was one who remained uninvolved with her sisters’ revolution. Dede had warned the others that were danger and that should not go up to the secluded prison. She and although her sisters tried more than once to include her in their cause, she refused. –From Smith In The Time Of The Butterflies (<http://www.blogger.com>) The Death Of The Mirabal Sisters was the final blow to the regime of Leonidas Trujillo, who was assassinated six

months later. Several of the children of the Mirabal sisters held important posts in the later democratic governments of the Dominican Republic.

The day of the sisters' death, November 25, is observed in many Latin American countries as the "International Day Against Violence Towards Women". – From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia ([www. http://en. wikipedia. org](http://en.wikipedia.org)) Although I didn't expect "In The Time Of The Butterflies" to have a happy ending, I was still both shocked and saddened by the ending of the sister's lives and that their children had to grow up without their parents. It all seems unjust considering all they had been through and accomplished.