

# The living martyr

[Literature](#), [Novel](#)



The Living Martyr DedÄ—'s life was always affected by the dictatorship of Trujillo. Even though she was not part of the regime, she still suffered. DedÄ—'s martyrdom was to be alive without her sisters. All the things she has sacrificed has made her a heroine today. In the beginning of the novel DedÄ— is discussing the life of the butterflies with the interviewer because she says, " tell me all of it. " (Alvarez 5). She starts off by describing the three girls, Minerva, Maria Teresa, and Patria. " Yes, so different. Minerva was always into her wrongs and rights. " Dede3 realizes she is speaking to the picture of Minerva, as if she were assigning her a part, pinning her down with a handful of adjectives, the beautiful, intelligent, high-minded Minerva. " And Maria Teresa, ay, Dios, " DedÄ— sighs, emotion in her voice in spite of herself. " Still a girl when she died, probecita, just turned twenty-five. " DedÄ— moves on to the last picture and rights the frame, " Sweet Patria, always her religion was so important. " (Alvarez 6). Within that passage, it is unquestionable that DedÄ— is sad and deeply misses her sisters and has an appreciation of their memory, as any sibling should. " DedÄ— took the chimney off the lamp, and with a trembling had, fed the letter to the flame. The paper lit up. Ashes, fluttered like moths and DedÄ— ground them to dust on the floor. She had taken care of the problem, and that was that. Looking up at the mirror, she was surprised by the wild look on her face. The ring on her finger flashed a feverish reminder. She brushed her hair up into a tight ponytail and put on her nightgown. Having blown out the light, she slept fitfully, holding her pillow like a man in her arms. " (Alvarez 83). This is very important to the story because it not only affects DedÄ— but Minerva as well. When she burned the letter she did it just to protect Minerva. If Minerva

had read the letter she, in all likelihood, would have ran off with Lio to follow his revolution. If she were to have ever gone with Lio she could have been killed, for Trujillo was killing anyone who was in the regime or even suspected to be in the regime. DedÄ— is the only surviving Mirable sister and then her mom soon passes. " Maybe these aren't losses. Maybe that is a wrong way to think of them. The men, the children, me. We went our ways, we became ourselves. Just that. And maybe that is what it means to be a free people, and I should be glad. " (Alvarez 317). It is obvious that she is not in regret of what she did or for what her family did as well. She takes pride of it. At the end of the novel it becomes apparent that DedÄ— is a martyr. She goes through tough love with her husband, loss of, basically, her whole entire family, and she still pushes through. She went through a great deal of pain and suffering because of Trujillo, protecting her family, not joining the regime, and then loosing her family, all because of one man. Throughout the novel, she did little things to protect her family, and it is evident that she did. Without her joining the regime, she was able to live and tell the story of " La Mariposas, " The Butterflies.