

"chronicle of a death foretold" review

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Sarah Winter Silver 1 World Literature 4/27/09 Angela Vicario is responsible for the murder of Santiago Nasar. Although it was her twin brothers that committed the actual crime, the reasons behind their murder come directly from their beautiful sister Angela. While it wasn't Angela who directly murdered Santiago, she is just as guilty as the rest. Angela is complacent and also participated in the solicitation of the murder of Santiago Nasar. The marriage between Bayardo San Roman and Angela Vicario set a strong foundation for the murder. If the marriage between Bayardo and Angela had never occurred, Santiago Nasar would still be alive.

Ever since Angela was a child, she faced a strong pressure to get married. "The girls had been reared to get married." (Page 31) It is notable that Angela was the prettiest of her three sisters and several men desired her. Many men were interested in marrying her, especially Bayardo San Roman, but Angela was not interested in marrying unless she was in love. "Angela Vicario never forgot the horror of the night on which her parents and her older sisters with their husbands gathered together in the parlor, imposed on her the obligation to marry a man whom she had barely seen. (Page 24) Bayardo, on the other hand, was determined to marry her and in a hurry to do so. Their engagement lasted only six months, and their marriage lasted not even one night. "No one would have thought, nor did anyone say, that Angela Vicario wasn't a virgin." (Page 37) Her family was incredibly protective of her and "She'd grown up along with her sisters under the rigor of a mother of iron." (Page 37) Angela Vicario was terribly naive for going into this marriage without her virginity. She had been distressed but eventually listened to her two confidantes. They assured her that almost all women lost

their virginity in childhood accidents and that even the most difficult of husbands resigned themselves to anything as long as nobody knew about it. " (Page 38) Apparently Bayardo San Roman was an exception. Only four hours after the extravagant wedding and dancing festivities, Pura Vicario (Angela's mother) was woken by three very slow knocks. " Her [Angela Vicario] satin dress was in shreds and she was wrapped in a towel up to the waist. " (Page 46) Bayardo San Roman was there to return his wife because she was not a virgin. Pura Vicario beat her daughter mercilessly and urgently summoned her twin sons home. " They found Angela Vicario lying face down on the dining room couch, her face all bruised...Pedro Vicario, the more forceful of the brothers picked her up by the waist and sat her on the dining room table. ' All right, girls,' he said to her, trembling with rage, ' tell us who it was. ' She only took the time necessary to say the name. She looked for it in the shadows, she found it at first sight among the many, many easily confused names from this world and the other, and she nailed it to the wall with her well-aimed dart, like a butterfly with no will whose sentence had always been written. Santiago Nasar. ' she said. " (Page 47) Angela Vicario named Santiago Nasar as the perpetrator and whether he did it or not, Angela gave him a death sentence the moment his name escaped her lips. When Angela's brothers asked who took her virginity, she could have named any man in town. It is never confirmed nor denied whether Santiago Nasar had sex with Angela Vicario or not. However, if he was not the man to take her virginity, then why would Angela Vicario give his name? This raises many new questions, for instance, did they have consensual sex? Did Santiago rape her?

Were they in love but never had sex, and was Angela only trying to protect Santiago? Or was the entire sexual encounter made up? Marquez never answers these questions, and the reader has to make several inferences. The image of a butterfly pinned to a wall is symbolic of both Angela Vicario and Santiago Nasar's situation. Once she had stated that Santiago is the one who took her virginity, both of their fates became pinned. If Angela did not give her brothers a name, they would have become furious at her for protecting the man who had dishonored her.

She "pins" Santiago with her words, but she is also pinning herself by the sexism of the culture. The description of Angela's thought process when she spoke Santiago's name suggests that Angela is not only thinking of people who are alive but also those who are dead ("many easily confused names from this world and the other.") This is not a proven fact, but this strongly implies that Angela chose his name at random, which would mean Angela Vicario sanctioned the murder of an innocent man.

Like almost all of the townspeople, Angela Vicario is complacent. "There had never been a death more foretold." (Page 50) Everybody knew of the Vicario twin's intentions, "The Vicario brothers had told their plans to more than a dozen people who had gone to buy milk, and these had spread the news everywhere before six o'clock." (Page 58) Yet the only person out of the whole town to attempt stopping the Vicario twins was Colonel Aponte. The murder of Santiago Nasar never would have happened if Angela had done several things differently.

If Angela had kept her virginity, the disaster never would have surfaced. Angela could have simply given a different name, and Santiago would still be alive. It also would have been fairly easy for her to stop her brothers from murdering Santiago. Not only is she complacent in the murder, but she also gave the solicitation of murder. Pablo and Pedro Vicario are innocent; they were murdering simply to protect their sister, something any brother would have done without a question. Angela Vicario is clearly responsible for the gruesome murder of Santiago Nasar.