

Chronicle of a death foretold by gabriel garcia

[Literature](#), [Books](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

" It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife" (Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen)

This essay will look at Gabriel Garcia's Chronicle of a Death Foretold and Mariama Ba's So Long a letter in relation to the topic 'Social and Economic Status as a bane of women Empowerment'. Gabriel Garcia and Mariama Ba in their works have depicted women's eagerness for social and economic status to empower themselves. Women were shown to have gone as far as destroying their children's happiness for their own desires and satisfactions. For example a number of them have used their daughters by marrying them off to men in possession of a good fortune, regardless of what their daughters felt about the men. The women in the forefront who were in the lookout for social and economic status to empower themselves were Pura Vicario from Chronicle of a Death Foretold, Binetou's and Ramatoulaye's mothers and Aunty Nabou, from So Long a Letter. However there are a number of women which were portrayed differently, namely, Ramatoulaye and Aissatou in So Long a Letter, and Alberta Simonds in Chronicle of a Death Foretold.

Women especially from especially lower class used their daughters as a mean of gaining social and economic status by marrying them off to wealthy men. Their views on their daughters' marriage entailed their own self-centeredness only. Pura Vicario for example in Chronicle of a Death Foretold forced her daughter, Angela Vicario, into marriage with San Bayardo, a very wealthy man; because she believed it would pull her out of poverty towards a more respectable upper class distinction. Angela was not only forced by her mother but also her sisters and when Angela told them that she does not

<https://assignbuster.com/chronicle-of-a-death-foretold-by-gabriel-garcia/>

love Bayardo, her mother silenced her by telling her that love can be learned too.

"... 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." (Marquez 34)

The twins stayed out of it saying that it looked to them like woman problems. That proves that it were the women in the family who were really concerned about Angela's marriage with Bayardo so that they could be empowered through gaining socio-economic status. However, their dreams of escaping from lower class and gaining socio-economic status came to an ultimate end when Bayardo returned her daughter after he found out that she was not a virgin. Pura saw her daughter's marriage with Bayardo as a golden chance to see herself better off socially and economically, which Pura lamented as they had missed it, all because of Angela who had premarital sex.

Similarly, Binetou's mother in *So Long a Letter* also took advantage of her daughter Binetou. She quickly withdrew her daughter from studies to marry her off to Modou. In Modou she saw his wealth and believed that her daughter's marriage with Modou could empower her and uplift her socio-economic status. So, she also wanted to escape poverty and have socio-economic status as Daba, Ramatoulaye's daughter, described her

"... her mother is a woman who wants so much to escape from mediocrity..." (Ba, 36)

She was satisfied by Modou's wealth, he promised her a villa, monthly allowance, jewels and a future trip to Mecca. But she made it seem like as if she was worried for the welfare of her daughter and her happiness but her frantic thoughts and tense nerves surrounded herself. She reasoned that it was best if her daughter married a man who could guarantee her a good life. However, it was apparent that she did not really care about her daughter as she did not take into consideration how her daughter felt about Modou and she did not care about her daughter's education either. She saw her welfare in wealth and financial stability, a man twice the age of her daughter or a man with already twelve children did not matter to Binetou's mother. So, it was evident that Binetou's mother's intentions were not for her daughter's good but rather for her own desire to empower herself by gaining socio-economic status.

Ramatoulaye's mother also seemed to desire social and economic status. She also in a way preferred her daughter Ramatoulaye to choose wealth over love. She did not like her daughter's choice of Modou amid knowing that they both loved each other; she wanted her to marry Dauda Dieng because of his higher socio-economic status as opposed to Modou, since he was a doctor.

Similarly, Aunty Nabou wanted her son Mawdo to marry someone from the same caste to upkeep the family's status. She totally regretted his marriage to a goldsmith's daughter Aissatou. Aunty Nabou saw her son, a man of higher caste marrying a blacksmith daughter, as a humiliation to her and a stain to her generation. Therefore, she decided to bring her brother, Farba Diouf's daughter Young Nabou to marry her with her son. She educated

Nabou before forcing Mawdo to marry her telling him that she will die of shame in the society if he did not accept, so Mawdo accepted. She did so because she wanted to preserve her socio-economic status which she felt was under threat when her son chose to marry outside and someone from a lower caste. So, Aunty Nabou to preserve her social class disregarded her son's happiness which laid in Aissatou because he truly loved her and she loved him. However, Aunty Nabou did not see this, she only saw her as a goldsmith's daughter and hence she saw her socio-economic status as of more importance than her son's happiness.

The only people who stood out differently were Ramatoulaye and Aissatou in So Long a Letter and Albarta Simonds in Chronicle of a Death Foretold. They were the only characters who knew the importance of love in marriage and had put love prior to wealth or socio-economic status. They knew that marriage should consist of love, financial stability, and happiness, rather than just financial stability or socio-economic status.

Ramatoulaye despite being proposed to by a millionaire Dauda, she went on to marry Modou whom she loved as she said

"... I preferred the man in the eternal khaki suit." (Ba, 16)

So she married considered love as of more importance than wealth. She refused Dauda even after Modou's death. She too could have opted to marry Dauda and escaped mediocrity and financial burden. Also, she could have enjoyed a higher socio-economic status than before by marrying Dauda, but she did not do so because she did not love him and she knew that this act of

her would destroy another woman's life; the woman who was already married to Dauda. Ramatoulaye, herself was cheated by her husband and therefore knew how it feels, so she did not want to Dauda's current wife to go through the same as she was.

Aissatou was also one of the few who knew the importance of love and happiness in marriage and had put love prior to wealth and socio-economic status. She divorced her husband Mawdo and went away when he took a second wife, Young Nabou, which shows that she did not want to share her husband and could not bear to see her husband with another woman in her house. That showed the importance of, love, financial stability, and happiness as a whole in marriage to Aissatou rather than financial stability or socio-economic status alone.

Alberta Simonds, Bayardo's mother is the only woman who is seen to be completely different. Alberta did not resist her son's marriage to Angela who was not only someone from outside their generation but also someone from a lower caste. So, unlike Aunty Nabou in Chronicle of a Death Foretold, Alberta did not see her son's marriage to Angela as a humiliation or threat to their social and economic status. Perhaps she was aware of son Bayardo's love for Angela and therefore she saw her as the right girl for him.

In conclusion, it can be clearly seen social and economic status as a bane of women empowerment. Women sought of empowering themselves through social and economic status by marrying of their daughters to a man with good fortune. Their views on marriage of their daughters entailed their own self-centeredness as they were mainly concerned about their own selfish

struggle and fears of financial stability and a secured future. Love was never a factor for the mothers in the marriage of their daughters; they did not care how their daughters' felt about the man. Mariama Ba and Gabriel Garcia show that those women strongly believed that a person's worthiness is not determined by personality or love but by wealth. The only importance they saw was financial stability and socio-economic status, unlike a few other characters that were aware of the importance of love, financial stability, and happiness as a whole.