

# Big mama's funeral by gabriel garcia marquez

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Angela Pham Mr. Kakes World Lit/Writ 8 October 2012 Big Mama's Funeral

Big Mama is a rather large person, giving her the name Big Mama. She is considered to be a mom to the people of Macondo because she provides them with everything they need and she is a queenlike figure to them. Big Mama's Funeral by Gabriel Garcia Marquez is about a woman given the title of Big Mama. She is the leader of Macondo. Marquez uses her to represent corruption on government and in this case, the government she runs. Big Mama is a corrupt leader.

Then, her funeral became a festival and celebration of her death and everyone who came did not care that she had just passed away because she was a corrupt leader and they are happy that she has passed away. Big Mama represents a corrupt government, and Marquez uses dark humor and hyperboles often to show how people are being festive instead of mourning at the funeral. Big Mama represents a corrupt government. She arranges marriages in the case where the blood related members of a family marry within each other. That practice is the way she is able to stay in power for many years.

Marquez attempts to show that some governments can be corrupt and somehow she has all the people believing it is okay or that there is nothing corrupt happening. " On the margin of the official family, the exercise of the *jus primae noctis*... " (199). Her " official family" is all of the family members related by blood in some way. She has them marry each other. Her family does not react to what she is doing. Big Mama has been using that practice for so long and somehow the family thinks that it is okay for her to do that and they are afraid of her.

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Big Mama does this practice so no one new or someone she does not know can try and have a chance to take her position. The time that Big Mama has ruled “ For many years, Big Mama had guaranteed the social peace and political harmony of her empire by... three trunks full of forged electoral certificates which formed part of her secret estate” (207). Big Mama is able to stay in power by forging “ electoral certificates”. The certificates are similar to voting for a president. She forges them and uses fake votes so she can win the election.

Also, the “ men in her service, her proteges, and tenants.. exercised not only their own rights of suffrage but also those of electors dead for a century” (207-208). She has been forging votes for a very long time. Marquez believes that corruption is something funny when in reality, it is not. Thus, using dark humor to make corruption seem funny when it is a serious matter. Big Mama uses the people who have been dead for over a hundred years, votes to make it seem like she has more votes and more people voting for her every time there is an election.

There have been no new rulers ever since she has taken power. Very many people do not like her and are forced to follow her rules because they are afraid of her and the amount of power she has frightens them. The people only attend her funeral in hopes of gaining something because of how well known she is and her position in society. They know that many people are going to be there because she is like a celebrity. They do not care about her or that she has died. People call the day of her funeral “ the great day”. “ The great day had arrived” (212). In the streets crowded with carts, hawkers, or fried foods, and lottery stalls, and men with snakes wrapped around their

necks" (212). The great day is the day of her funeral. But, there are many carts and stands filled with fried food. Most funerals do not usually have carts with fried food around. The "men with snakes" are used for entertainment purposes and are just there to make a profit because all the vendors know that almost everyone is attending the funeral. It is humorous that there is entertainment and fun at a funeral.

This is an instance of dark humor because instead they have entertainment and food carts at a funeral and are not mourning. They do not really care that she died. The "Duke of Marlborough... overcame their centenarian hatred of Big Mama... and came to her funeral to ask for... the payment of their veterans' pensions which they had been waiting for for sixty years" (212). They came to the funeral and asked for the money Big Mama owed them after 60 years. They know that she has just died. That is the perfect time to collect the money she owes them because she cannot prevent them from getting their money.

They have hated her for over a hundred years and decide that the day of her funeral is the day to finally get their money back. After the funeral, "No one noticed that the nephews, godchildren... of Big Mama closed the doors as soon as the body was taken out, ...pulled the nails out of the planks, and dug up the foundations to divide up the house" (214). The family of Big Mama and everyone that is considered to be family to her do not even care about her and as soon as her body was out of the house they start to tear apart the house.

Her nephews are ecstatic that she has died because now they can move on and forget about her. They are happy instead of sad. Marquez uses dark

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humor to show how people are festive at the funeral and hyperboles to really emphasize that there are many people at the funeral. On the first page of the story, the sentence that starts the story is " Now that the nation, which was shaken to its vitals, has recovered its balance... the time to lean a stool against the front door... before the historians have another chance to get at it" (197-198).

The sentence is actually a whole paragraph and there are semicolons to separate the people who attend. The sentence is telling who is at the funeral and where they come from. Marquez uses hyperboles to emphasize the numerous amounts of people who are there and that they come from all over the world. Marquez uses dark humor to show how people are not mourning because she dies but are celebrating. They call it " the great day" because she is gone after many years and her family is relieved that she is gone and they do not have to listen to her anymore.

When someone passes away people mourn but in this case, Big Mama passes away but everyone is celebrating by having a festival instead of a proper funeral. Her family is ready to move on because " as soon as the body was taken out... pulled the nails out of the planks, and dug up to foundations to divide up the house" (214). When her body is gone they do not leave the house the way it is but start to break it and tear it apart because they want to completely forget her and anything that reminds them of her. Another hyperbole used is when " the garbage men will come and will sweep up the garbage from her funeral, forever and ever" (214).

There is not " garbage" that is swept up forever and will take an infinite amount of time to clean. The " garbage" represents all the wrong and <https://assignbuster.com/big-mamas-funeral-by-gabriel-garcia-marquez/>

corrupt things that Big Mama does and it will take a very long time to fix what she has caused. In conclusion, Big Mama represents corruption in a government and the people who attend her funeral do not care that she passes away; Marquez uses dark humor to show how people are celebrating by using hyperboles to emphasize the fact that there is a large amount of people at the funeral.

Big Mama forces her family to marry each other so she can stay in power. The people in Macondo obey her because they are afraid of her. The people at the funeral use the fact that she is very popular as a way to make money or gain something. The dark humor Marquez uses is to show that people are celebrating her death and it is humorous because at funerals, people are sad and mourning. At Big Mama's funeral, people are having fun and it is similar to a carnival.