
One Hundred Years Of Solitude: The Banana Massacre

In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, throughout the whole book the main idea of the story talks about the solitude and magic realism that the characters face in their everyday life and their challenges, but when I was reading chapters fourteen through seventeen I came to a realization that in these chapters Gabriel Garcia Marquez introduced us with a realistic plot twist that happened in real life in his country of Colombia. The Banana Massacre was an important historical event that took place in Colombia, according to History Channel with publisher unknown they stated that:

Towards the end of 1928, in protest against poor pay and working conditions, banana pickers in Colombia took the decision to come out on strike. The industrial action threatened the interests of the American-owned United Fruit Company, who lobbied the American government to send troops into Colombia to suppress the strike. In order to obviate the need for US troops entering Colombian territory, the Colombian government acted to suppress the strike itself, and on 6 December sent armed forces into the town of Ciénaga, the strikers' stronghold. The suppression was ruthless and violent and was responsible for the deaths of scores of strikers and members of their families. It became known as The Banana Massacre, or Matanzas de las Bananeras.

Not only did the massacre affect the government and the people in real life but it also affected the Buendia family leading them through a tunnel of up-coming hardships and a downfall in the town of Macondo. I believe that both historical events in the story and in real life were a representation of the corruptions that occurs between the government and the people. This massacre was an act of communism and it was an emotional and deeply personal tragedy and from my point of view Gabriel Garcia Marquez gives his critique by showing in his writing how corrupted the government is in Latin America, a sad case where having Marquez live near the plantation and hearing about the bodies being dumped into the ocean is something that affected him and in his time this political event was erased and kept covered and even the numbers of the bodies have never been confirmed. In those times there was welfare and the rights of the working people were contravening and violated and silenced and brought to some people's their death. Gabriel Marquez narrative technique and the language which he used was writing about the banana massacre in his story as a plea for peace and justice. He uses this event to affect the Buendia family which brings an ending to the town of Macondo.

In addition, from my point of view I believe Gabriel Marquez wrote this historical event to use his narrative technique as a comparison what happened in real life. He believed that the government saw the workers like the fruit, "A banana with no value and worth" and that got him upset because some of the bodies that were found could not be recognized and others were wiped out like trash being dumped into the sea. Even though that was the language and the meaning that he used the author noticed that people decided to stay quiet and some of the bodies that were found didn't have families looking for them and the government officials were too scared to open up and talk about it because they knew that karma would get to them the same way and probably their lives would've been disappeared like bad fruit being dumped in a trash can. In the book the author stated:

Several hours must have passed since the massacre because the corpses had the same temperature as plaster in autumn and the same consistency of petrified foam that it had, and those who had put them in the car had had time to pile them up in the same way in which they transported bunches of bananas. (Garcia Marquez, 306-307).

Trying to escape from this huge tragedy Gabriel Marquez stated that Jose Arcadio Segundo was in his way chasing the train and seeing in which direction it was going until, "In the flashes of light that broke through the wooden slats as they went through sleeping towns he saw the man corpses, woman corpses, child corpses who would be thrown into the sea like rejected bananas" (Garcia Marquez, 307). In chapter fifteen some of the workers were treated like animals and all because they were asking for a better condition in their workplace but instead they were treated like animals like as if these people did not have a family to feed or like as if getting rid of them was going to solve the problem but instead of helping them the government lost more workers which can cause a decrease to the business and loss of employment because the next workers would feared working in that business. It was stated in the book in chapter fifteen that, "Jose Arcadio Segundo put him up there at the moment he fell with his face bathed in blood, before the colossal troop wiped out the empty space, the kneeling woman, the light of the high, drought-stricken sky, and the whorish world where Ursula Iguaran had sold so many little candy animals" (Garcia Marquez, 306). When Ursula used to sell her candy. She described it as a place of no harm where kids would come and get candy until it was destroyed by the troop bringing a downfall and destruction to the town. In my opinion I believe Gabriel Marquez was using the Candy animals and the town as symbolism comparing it to death and destruction of the town of Macondo and the candy animals to the people being killed like animals.

After the big incident, karma decided to take a big turn into the town of Macondo and in chapter sixteen it rained for four years and some people were getting used to it but their happiness was gone and it was harder to keep the livestock alive or to travel and most homes were flooded. Stated in the book it said, "The Sky crumbled into a set of destructive storms and out of the north came hurricanes that scattered roofs about and knocked down walls and uprooted every last plant of the banana groves" (Garcia Marquez, 315). Sadly, after so many chapters Ursula Iguaran has come to her last days and dies and Rebeca dies as well. Knowing how this will go the story will repeat itself with Amaranta Ursula and the most recent youngest Jose Arcadio and Aureliano and finally Fernanda being alive.

In conclusion, The Buendia family has been one of the most craziest family I have ever seen while reading this amazing book and even though the story is not over I know that the story will repeat itself and knowing that they repeat their names I know that some of them will eventually be the same or different than their families ancestors. The town of Macondo will slowly build itself right back up, but it is up to the Buendia family if they will keep destroying the town or restoring its great accomplishments or will they face hardships with the government and foreigners coming in to take ownership in the town of Macondo in the next upcoming chapters.

Works Cited

1. "Banana Massacre: History Channel on Foxtel." History Channel, 9 June 2017, www.historychannel.com.au/this-day-in-history/banana-massacre/.
2. Garcia Marquez, Gabriel, and Gregory Rabassa. One Hundred Years of Solitude.

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