

Like Water for Chocolate

To produce a good story, one must fabricate a plot in which the characters and the way they interact in the story seem natural. The plot of two love-struck people unable to be together is a classic among novels, but where it fails is the rest of the story is so run wild that the reader cannot relate. With credulously forced sexual innuendo, and quickly evanescent characters, *Like Water for Chocolate* tempts potential, but does not connect at any level with the reader.

Without strong supporting characters, it is harder to communicate with the reader. In *Like Water for Chocolate*, characters are introduced to solve conflicts and then they fade away from the tale. Rosaura is introduced when Pedro comes to ask Mama Elena for Tita's hand and is rejected, "But if you really want Pedro to get married, allow me to suggest my daughter Rosaura, who's just two years older than Tita." (pg 13) After Pedro and Rosaura marry, they move to San Antonio and become a footnote in each chapter. One cannot truly understand Tita's emotions toward Rosaura if she is not around. A pattern is formed when Tita's other sister, Gertrudis, is introduced and leaves in the same chapter,

"Without slowing his gallop, so as not to waste a moment he leaned over, put his arm around her waist, and lifted her onto the horse in front of him, face to face, and carried her away." (pg 55)

Before we learn much about Gertrudis, she is carried away naked by a man she has never met before and make love on a horse. Not only does this not help the plot in any way but it produces stereotypes on Mexican women. With Tita allowing perverted gazes, "She stopped grinding, straightened up, and proudly lifted her chest up s Pedro could see it

better,” (pg 67) and Gertrudis allowing her virginity to be taken on a horse it creates and image that all Mexican women are mad for sex. Writing should never impose stereotypes but *Like Water for Chocolate* not only imposes, but it also reinforces the idea into the reader’s mind every chapter. Throughout the story, characters leave hastily after they are introduced, generally following a sexually related activity, which prohibits the reader from taking Tita or the plot seriously.

A story without character development is doomed from the beginning. Adding an excess of unnecessary intercourse is not the recipe for a good book. The plot and magical realism in *Like Water for Chocolate* is completely undermined by the short life spans of its minor characters and its strained intimate insinuations

“Jesús had been her first sweetheart and he had never forgotten her” (pg 154)

“Suddenly the pounding ceased. A mortal silence spread through the room. It took her but a moment to realize that Pedro was dead” (pg 244)

“Fortunately, this did not go on for long, because after three days of the most violent and heartrending battles between the two sides, Rosaura, due to her terrible digestive problems, had died of ... whatever she had died of.” (pg 240)