

The Shadow of the Wind- A Quest For Self-Discovery

Project Report

Submitted by

Varsha Emmatt Airoor (SB21CE034)

Under the guidance of

Shahanaz M H

In partial fulfilment of requirements for award of the degree

Of Bachelor of Arts

St. Teresa's College (Autonomous), Ernakulam



College With Potential for

Excellence Accredited by NAAC with 'A++'

Grade

Affiliated to

Mahatma Gandhi University

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Declaration

I do affirm that the project “The Shadow of the Wind” submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the Bachelor of Arts degree in English Literature and Communication Studies has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma, fellowship or any other similar title or recognition.

Ernakulam

Varsha Emmatt Airoor

22/03/2024

SB21CE034

B.A. English Literature and Communication Studies

St. Teresa’s College

(Autonomous)

Certificate

I hereby certify that this project entitled "The Shadow of the Wind" by Varsha Emmatt Airoor is a record of bona fide work carried out by her under my supervision and guidance.



Ernakulam

22/03/2024

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Shahanaz".

Shahanaz M H

Department of Communicative English

St. Teresa's College (Autonomous)

Acknowledgement

I take this opportunity to offer my humble prayers and thanks to God Almighty for His mercy and blessings for the completion of this project.

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Varsha Emmatt Airoor

Table of Contents

- Chapter One- Introduction and Backdrop of the Novel
- Chapter Two- Introduction to Daniel and his Characteristics
- Chapter Three- The Mysterious Julian Carax
- Chapter Four- Parallels between Julian and Daniel's lives
- Chapter Five- Conclusion

Chapter One: Introduction and the Backdrop of the Novel

“The Shadow of the Wind” by Carlos Ruiz Zafon is a literary masterpiece. It is a story within a story. He weaves together a tapestry of literature, love, and intrigue set against the backdrop of post-war Barcelona, the Spanish Civil War, primarily in the 1940s and 1950s. It is set with the historical landscape of Francoist Spain. In the aftermath of the conflict, Barcelona underwent a profound transformation. The war had left scars on the cityscape, both physically and emotionally. The novel showcases the atmosphere of that time and incorporates historical elements into its narrative, including, the cultural and political shifts of that time period which gives depth to the characters and plot of the novel.

There was political unrest and repression. Francoist Spain was characterized by political repression, censorship, and the suppression of dissenting voices. This oppressive environment is reflected in the novel, where characters navigate a society marked by fear, surveillance, and the constant threat of political repercussions. The clandestine nature of certain activities, such as the characters' exploration of the Cemetery of Forgotten Books, highlights the need for secrecy and discretion. This period brought about significant social and economic challenges as well. The characters in the novel come from diverse backgrounds, and their stories unfold against a society facing difficulties with poverty, inequality, and the scars of conflict. The struggle for survival and the pursuit of individual dreams within this challenging context contribute to the novel's thematic depth. Despite the political constraints, Barcelona retained its cultural vibrancy. In summary, the city is unique and becomes a breathing and living character, it also, plays a crucial role in shaping the tone and thematic elements of the novel. The post-Spanish Civil War Barcelona in "The Shadow of the Wind" serves as a dynamic and charged setting, shaping the narrative with its political, social, and cultural dimensions. The

city becomes not only a physical space but a metaphorical landscape reflecting the resilience of the human spirit in the face of adversity.

At the heart of the novel lies the enigmatic Cemetery of Forgotten Books, is the hidden library where rare and neglected books are preserved. It is a secret repository for overlooked books. It is not just a physical location but a metaphor for the power of storytelling and the impact of literature on individuals and society. It symbolizes the importance of literature, and the preservation of stories. The winding shelves of the novel deals with the themes of memory, identity, and the way in which literature shapes someone's life. The concept adds a layer of mystery and intrigue to the narrative, creating a sense of depth and connection between the characters and the books they choose to save from oblivion. It also gives the idea that every book, regardless of its commercial values has a place in the literary heritage.

The Cemetery of Forgotten Books is the sanctuary that serves the protagonist, Daniel Sempere, to discover a forgotten novel by Julian Carax, titled "The Shadow of the Wind". The cemetery becomes a catalyst for self-discovery of the characters and their personal quests. Sempere explores not just a physical journey but an emotional and intellectual odyssey. The book once chose by the characters mirror their fears, aspirations, and their innermost desires which then lead to transformations and character development. The shared experience of picking a book creates a unique bond between the characters and connects individuals across storylines. This emphasizes that books serve as a bridge between disparate people.

The Cemetery is a symbol of resistance against the suppression of art and literature. It is a testament to the resilience of creativity in the face of political turmoil and censorship. It becomes an act of defiance against forces that tries to silence artistic expressions. The Cemetery of Forgotten Books is also a symbol of the timeless nature of literature. It embodies the themes of preservation, discovery, connection, memory, resistance, and motivation. Our exploration

unravels the symbiotic relationship between the characters and Carax's elusive work, examining how literature becomes a lens through which identities are shaped and destinies are entwined. Against the historical backdrop of post-war Spain, Zafon crafts a tale that not only captivates with its suspenseful narrative but also resonates with deeper themes of loss, redemption, and the enduring power of storytelling. As we navigate the labyrinthine streets of Barcelona, we witness the character's journeys intertwining with the city's rich history, echoing the profound impact of literature on the human soul. Through meticulous analysis, the thesis seeks to illuminate the layers of meaning within "The Shadow of the Wind", unravelling the threads of its complex narrative to reveal the profound reflections on life, love, and the enduring legacy of words on the pages of a forgotten book.

The novel is entwined with many themes into an intricate narrative. It is a mystery within a mystery. This adds an element of suspense and intrigue to overarching themes. It explores the profound impact of love and the inevitable loss that often accompanies it. The characters go through tragedies while experiencing love in different forms. It grapples with their identities in context of their personal histories, family legacies, and the societal changes at that time. It delves into the complexities of relationships, from friendships to familial bonds and romantic entanglements. The characters navigate these relationships while posed with post-war challenges. And the book emphasizes the power of literature. A refuge and source of strength for the characters that shapes their perspectives and their lives.

In essence, "The Shadow of the Wind" explores the impact of literature, the enduring nature of love and loss, and the resilience of the human spirit in the face of historical upheavals.

Chapter Two: Introduction to Daniel and His Characteristics

Daniel Sempere is the protagonist in the book, "The Shadow of the wind". Daniel was only 10 years old when he became entangled into the web of mystery that is Julian Carax and the devil, Lain Coubert, who is also the villain in one of Carax's books. The 10-year old boy is taken to the "Cemetery of Forgotten Books" by his father, with whom he shares a special and close bond. He was the man behind his fondness towards reading about collecting books.

Daniel has always been a child brimmed with curiosity. It was further fuelled when he discovered the Cemetery of Forgotten Books and found the book that altered his life forever. He finds himself in awe of Carax and his works influence him and his many decisions. As a person with a zeal for literature, he has always been one with a love for books and Carax's works further intensified it. The boy holds many traits including loyalty, innocence and resilience. His strength of character is shown throughout the novel as he faces various situations, be it family problems or others. He presents great courage when it came to matters like these. From a young innocent child, we see him turn mature as he goes through each stage of his life, each getting deeper and twisted as it goes, he matures into a man. We see him struggling to find himself throughout the novel. He is on a quest of self-discovery and to find his own unique identity than what had been influenced by Carax and his works.

The book the shadow of the wind is a book within this book and is the treasured possession of Daniel. The story of it told the story of a man in search of his real father, whom he had never known and whose existence was only revealed to him by his mother on her deathbed. This quest becomes a ghostly odyssey in which the protagonist struggled to recover his lost youth, and in which the shadow of a cursed love slowly surfaced to haunt him until his dying breath. As it unfolded, the structure of the story became such as one of those

Russian dolls that contain innumerable diminishing replicas of themselves inside. Step by step the narrative split into a thousand stories, as if it had entered a gallery of mirrors, its identity fragmented into endless reflections.

A colleague of Mr Sempere, Barcelo, was an expert on books and they thought that they could approach him to obtain more information on Carax and his work. Barcelo tried to buy the book from young Daniel but he didn't succumb to the offer and finds succumb to the offer and finds higher value in the book, earning Barcelos respect. He inspects the book and wants to further look into it and asks him to come by his house and that he would find more about Carax. As expected, Daniel went to the Barcelo household where Barcelo introduces him to his niece, Clara, as she is the expert on Julian Carax's work. Daniels innocence fades the more he got involved fell in love with Clara Barcelo at different points in his life. Daniel had fallen in love at 10 years old with a 20-year -old Clara. He visits the "angel" like girl very frequently to read to her as she was blind. He was instantly in love with the girl. He was very taken by her and her beauty and soul. He feels emphatic towards her as well. He considered her as someone pure and pristine. She told him about his father and the letters he sent during the war. She shared with him her life. He felt close to her and believed that she felt the same. Soon he turned 16 and invited Barcelo, Clara and Bernarda, their maid, who had become like a second mother to him. She nurtured and cared for him and became the motherly presence in his life that had been missing since he lost his mother. Bernarda had warned Daniel about his obsession with clara and so had his father but he paid no heed to their concerns. They asked and wanted him to engage with people of his own age like his best friend Tomas Aguilar. He hadn't seen in months or met. Daniels birthday dinner was important to him but unfortunately it is revealed by Bernarda, who comes and gives him her present almost in tears and kisses his cheeks, that Clara can't make it because of a music lesson and leaving him in disbelief, disappointment and even a little bit of anger. He could not believe that she would do this to

him after being so close throughout these years or so he thought. He felt heartbroken and felt it tear open. He was also upset with his father as he had predicted that inviting this family might turn disastrous. He slammed his way out of his door trembling with tears brimming up in his eyes.

Lost in his sadness, Daniel takes a few moments before he realizes that he is being followed by a person. He wore a dark suit, right hand buried in the pocket of his jacket, eyes like wisps of light in the glow of his cigarette. He was also limping slightly. He still wandered around for an hour or more, until he found himself in a familiar spot, the base of Columbus monument and felt nostalgic as he remembered fond memories he had with his father. And that is when a voice from the dark called out to him, frightening him from his trance. The voice offered him a cigarette and even knew his name. the stranger wanted to be his friend and what he wanted from Daniel was nothing else other than the infamous “the shadow of the wind” by julian carax. He even offered him thousand euros for the book. He continued to state that daniels treasured book was rubbish and he could buy much better books with the thousand euros. But Daniel didn’t give in and instead refused of having any claim on the book at all. this sparked something in the stranger. He saw integrity and that wasn’t a common sight for him. Its safe to say that Daniel and the stranger were surprised by each other though not in the same way. Daniel also noticed that the stranger strangely did not smell of tobacco but rather of burned paper, the good kind, used for books.

It is between these thoughts that the stranger threatens Daniel which scares him. And his blood runs cold when he mentions Clara. It is then that he recalls Clara telling him of someone pestering her and following her and realized that it was indeed this man that was talking to him. He had never been more scared. He feared for Clara’s life. He lied and said the book was with Neri, Claras music teacher as he didn’t like the man and regarded him with much distaste. He asked the stranger if he has other books of Carax to which he only gets a

reply that, “I’ve had them at some point.” It’s apparently Julian Carax is his speciality and he travels the world to collect them. The purpose? To burn them. The stranger demonstrates by lighting a match and holding it up whilst revealing his face. It was just black burned skin with no nose, lips or eyelids. He tells Daniel that they will meet again and to sort things out with Neri for the book. Little does Daniel know that this was his first encounter with his cherished author, the one and only Julian Carax.

He goes to the Barcelo household immediately to get the book which Clara had kept safely in a glass cabinet. He had a key to their house. He was going to slip out and away from Clara Barcelos life forever. He goes to open her room and he sees a sight he never wanted to see. He finds Clara having coitus with her music teacher. Neri, which to Daniel was a betrayal. Clara left a deep wound in Daniel. Neri beat Daniel and thrashed him badly and told him to not ever contact Clara again or visit the house again.

He staggers back into the street where a beggar he had refused to help asks him if he’s alright and proceeds to give him some wine to suffice the cold and it does the job. The beggar was friendly and chatty but Daniel thought of him as a mad person. He then thanked the kind man, Fermin Romero de Torres, whose name is doubtful to Daniel but he doesn’t say anything. And leaves for the cemetery of forgotten books”, while trying to get rid of Clara from his mind. He plans to keep the book at the cemetery where it would be buried where nobody else can get to it. The keeper, Issac, lets him in out of respect for his father Sempere Senior. Provides him with some warmth and hot drink. He educated Daniel on Carax or what he knew. He told him about Julian being half French and half Spanish. His mother was French. “The Red House” was Carax’s most sold book and that the publisher published Julian’s books despite losing money. He had published eight Carax novels between 1928 and

1936. And how the publisher's son was a buffoon. The stranger was a man named Lain Coubert. The character from Daniel's book who represented the devil and he even fit the description. Theatrical but also incredibly mysterious.

Beatriz Aguilar was his best friend's sister and his second love. They loved each other and Bea was submissive to him and supported his quest to unveil Julian Carax. On this journey he has experienced many betrayals be it from his trusted and loved ones. These experiences made him question the complexities of trust, love and loyalty. The both of them had endured a lot. With Bea getting pregnant and running away from home and Carax being their saviour. The pair truly has gone through all trials in life before getting the happiness they deserved.

Chapter 3: The Mysterious Julian Carax

Julian Carax is the man shrouded in mystery in this novel. It becomes his best trait, being mysterious. His identity and history is unknown and unrecorded. He is a talented writer who is passionate in his line of work. Coming from a devastating background, Julian's life was scarred with tragedy. This reflected in his novels which had melancholic undertones in them. He presents the real world with a sense of emotion, imagination and idealism while maintaining a focus on the accurate representation of everyday life. He explores through the themes of love and betrayal and its complexities. The complexity of human relationships and how it changes and could possibly destroy them and break one's personality. It reflected deeply in his work as well. For example, in his book, "The Red House". It is a story about a tormented individual who breaks into toy shops and museums to steal dolls and puppets. Once they are in his power, he pulls out their eyes and takes them back to his lugubrious abode, a ghostly old conservatory lingering on the misty banks of the Seine. He loots a tycoon's collection of dolls and while leaving encounters the daughter of the tycoon who falls in love with him. And while finding out the secret behind her lover's obsession, she discovers horrific truths about her own father's China figures collection. The tale ends with a sad gothic denouement. His works reflected his mind set and what he went through. His own journey to finding the muffled history of his own creation was led him to huge losses. The secrets of his present were tarnished by the secrets of his past and he lost everything and the one he loved. Penelope Aldaya was his best friend's sister. Penelope and Julian had set to escape and leave for Paris but when she didn't show up. He was disappointed and left Barcelona. But Julian was yet to discover the darkest secret his heart couldn't hold, his lover, Penelope had not been married off to another man and nor did she betray him. She was his half-sister because of which she was imprisoned. She had been pregnant with his child. Both of them died, the

child, named David, was stillborn. They were buried there and their graves marked in the family crypt. This was a huge turning point in Julian's life. He scoured the world to burn his books as a symbol of the loss of passion and love he had experienced. He found life to be pointless and empty. The man turned cold and bitter and filled with hatred towards himself. While roaming as "Lain Coubert", the devil in human form as depicted in his novel to destroy his books. He embodied the character. He looked the part, with the long coat and hat. A badly disfigured and burned face devoid of eyelids and lips, he looked ominous enough to be called the devil. He found an alter ego of himself, a mirror, in Lain Coubert was neither good nor bad. While he was on his own quest of destroying his life's work, Fumero, a psychopath who was having a one-sided love affair with his lover was on his quest to kill Julian. He was an Inspector and blamed Julian for not being able to be with Penelope despite the chance of it happening was a mere fiction of his imagination. But over the years, Julian had changed. He had started to care again, for the boy, Daniel. He saw himself in him. He felt the need to save him and he did when Fumero tried to kill him.

Chapter 4: The Parallels Between Julian and Daniel's Lives

Daniel Sempere and Julian Carax are similar in many ways and the one main similarity is how they love. They have loved and lost and suffered in similar ways. From loveless relationships to impossible relationships, they have done it all. The duo even though of different generations situate a relationship similar to that of a son and father. From the day that Daniel found Julian's book, *The Shadow of the Wind*, he was consumed by the book, its writing and its author. He felt connected to the author and was curious to find information about him but he only found that his books are unavailable and that nobody knew of his existence. He then takes it up as a mission to find the answers to his questions and unveil the author's identity, Julian's identity. There are quite a number of parallels between the lives of Daniel and Julian.

They have been shaped and influenced by their fathers deeply though not in the same manner. Daniel had a supportive father who encouraged his dreams of being a writer and his love for literature and helped him attain excellence in it whereas Julian's relationship with his father was strained. Once he realized the importance of fatherhood when Julian returns to Barcelona, he provided shelter for his son and saved him.

Both their love stories are intricate and complex. Daniel fell in love at 10 years old with his father's colleague's niece, Clara who was several years older than him and he remained so until he was 16. It ended with her music teacher beating him up and throwing him out of the house. But his true love was Bea, Beatriz Aguiar, his best friend Tomas's sister. Once they reconnected and spent time together, they started loving each other. Bea comes from a

wealthy family with a strict father while Daniels family owns a bookstore. Similarly, Julian's only love was Penelope Aldaya, his best friend Jorge's sister. The Aldayas were a wealthy family and she had a strict father as well who disapproved of her relationship with Julian. Julian and Penelope had planned to escape and elope to Paris but upon finding out that she was pregnant, her father imprisoned her in their house. Bea also got pregnant and ran away from home and took refuge in the old Aldaya house where Julian looked after her. Julian found himself in Daniel and both of them realized their decisions have been similar in nature and none of them wanted the same result as Julian. Julian had grown a fondness towards Daniel over time due to this and wanted to protect him.

Fumero has had a personal vendetta against Julian ever since him and Penelope got together. Fumero is a psychopath ever since he was a kid. He would kill animals for no reason but his amusement. He grew up to be a killer for who paid the highest under the cape of being a Barcelona police inspector, who was corrupt and murderous. The man could be called a devil more than Lain Coubert could ever be. He was cruel and driven with hatred. All he requires is to be power ridden to terrorise, murder, imprison and beat people. When he found out about Daniel and his quest to find Julian, he decides to use him to complete his plan. Seeing Daniel's connection to Julian, he cultivates a hatred towards Daniel as well. A spy, Fermin, a homeless man, was also hiding from Fumero. He was his sworn enemy. Fumero was furious when Daniel opened his home for Fermin and gave him a job. He came by to warn Daniel but he did not yield to the corrupt Inspector's warnings, this further fuelled his hatred towards Daniel and he wanted to terrorise him and threatens him. He had already been traumatized by Fumero once when he was a child, this foreshadows the danger that Fumero is to Daniel's life. There is a certain cat and mouse chase between Fumero and Daniel. This dynamic adds suspense to the narrative.

Daniel's friend Fermin gets beaten up by Fumero and barely escaped death. Miquel Moliner sacrificed his life for his friend Julian and died in Julian's name so that there will not be any record left of him and he could flee the country. They have strong friendships that became a very vital part of their lives. Such as Miquel Moliner, a schoolboy friend of Julian's is fiercely loyal to him and loves Julian so much so that he sacrifices his own life for him. Daniel and Julian lost their mothers at a young age and have had a whole in their childhood. Sophie Carax never told the truth about Julian's biological father to him. She and Julian had battles to fight with her abusive husband Fortuny. But she stood in helplessness and let Julian fight on his own and never stood for him since he was quite young. This took a toll on his young mind. It shaped his mind and matured him earlier than required and he found solace in writing.

Both are solitary children who love books, and both aspire to become authors. Each falls in love with the sister of his best friend, the daughter of a wealthier family than his own, and in each case, the girl's father is the main obstacle to their love. Daniel is aware of the parallels between his own life and Julián's, and this is why he feels such a strong identification with him. They even have certain places and objects in common. The mansion that had belonged to Penélope's father and which is abandoned in Daniel's time is shared as refuge by both. Also, both young men, at different times, become the owner of a fountain pen that had supposedly belonged to Victor Hugo.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

On the quest to find Julian, Daniel ended up finding himself. For so long he had not been his true unique self as he had been engaged in the authors world of romantic realism. He changed the course of his life and ended up with a happy ending. He found himself through the process of life. He grew and matured with each new experience, each heartbreak and each betrayal. He became a person of his own and conquers his demons. Daniel grows from a curious kid into a wiser person, learning more about who he is and what life is all about. His journey teaches us that self-discovery isn't always easy, but it's worth it in the end. Its like a labyrinth mirroring the paths of his internal thoughts. Like solving a puzzle, he found not just the aim of his quest but also secrets of his own family and himself. Understanding feelings and acting wiser. Finding your identity is not an easy task but the process is to be trusted and you will succeed and it will be a worthy result.

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