Importance Of Family In Like Water For Chocolate And Chronicle of a Death Foretold

Family is the most important and valuable thing in a person's life. Within a family, comes responsibility, and family duty. Both Laura Esquivel's Like Water for Chocolate and Gabriel Garcia Marquez's Chronicle of a Death Foretold addresses the theme of family duty through magical realism. The novel Like Water for Chocolate is a story about forbidden love condemned by a family tradition involving the De La Garza family. The tradition prohibits the youngest daughter in the family to take care of her mother until the mother dies. On the other hand, Chronicle of a Death Foretold is a story about events that led up to the murder of a young man who, according to the woman who has lost her virginity, has taken the virginity of a family member from the Vicario's family. Both books use similar and different techniques to enhance the theme of family duty through magical realism. Like Water for Chocolate incorporates symbols through magical realism while Chronicle of a Death Foretold uses exaggeration.

The technique symbolism is applied through magical realism in Like Water for Chocolate, especially about food. Tita made quail in rose petal sauce that served as a way of communicating her passion for Padro, but for Gertrudis, 'the conducting body through which the singular sexual message was passed' by the food, it made her run away to find her desire. The food symbolized as a message between Padro and Tita, but also to Gertrudis. Even if Tita is forbidden to be with the person she loves, she found a way to communicate with him that does not surpass the family tradition. The foods she cooks carry her emotions along with them. On the wedding day of Padro and Rosaura, when the guests 'took their first bite of the cake, everyone was flooded with a great wave of longing.' (Esquivel, p. 39) The cake Tita cooked carried the feelings Tita had when she finds out that Rosaura was marrying the person she loves and was forbidden to marry. It made everyone at the wedding sob and vomit all over the patio. Symbolism within magical realism developed the theme of family duty, which is making Tita stay home to take care of her mother for life by not allowing her to marry.

Exaggeration within magical realism is one technique that is used in Chronicle of a Death Foretold but isn't in Like Water for Chocolate. One exaggerated event is when Pura Vicario tells the narrator that 'they were three slow knocks, but they had that strange touch of bad news about them.' Pura knew it was about bad news just by the slow knocks before the person behind the door tells her about it. It was Angela Vicario at the door who came back to her mother's house on her wedding day because her husband figured that she wasn't a virgin when she married him. Her family thought she was a virgin when they let her marry. Another exaggerated event is the event that followed when Angela's brothers hear about what happened to her. Her brothers went to the person who dishonoured their family and stabbed him dozen times, but he managed to 'walk more than a hundred yards, completely around the house, and went in through the kitchen door' and died on the floor. The fact that he walked after getting stabbed so many times is unbelievable. Angela's brothers did what they did because Angela was supposed to be married as a virgin woman. However, exaggeration within magical realism helped develop the theme of family duty, which Angela failed to do by losing her virginity.