

Gabriela, Clove and Cinnamon Study Guide

Gabriela, Clove and Cinnamon by Jorge Amado

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Plot Summary

Gabriela, Clove and Cinnamon is a romantic tale set in the small Brazilian town of Ilhéus during the 1920's. Due to a record cacao crop, Ilhéus is thriving and enjoying great progress, but many townspeople are still bent on observing old traditions, including violent political takeovers and vengeance against unfaithful women. The romance between Nacib Saad and his new cook, Gabriela, challenges the rules of Ilhéus society and inadvertently changes them forever.

Gabriela, Clove and Cinnamon introduces readers to a community on the verge of sweeping change. Ilhéus is a charming town filled with diverse personalities. The cacao plantation owners (called "colonels,") wield the majority of the political power in the region, but a newcomer, Mundinho Falcão, has recently moved to Ilhéus from Rio and is preparing to seize power from the colonels. The town patriarch, Colonel Ramiro Bastos, disapproves of the outsider's interference and vows not to surrender without a fight, even as Mundinho and his followers threaten to seize control from Ramiro and his men during the upcoming election.

Nacib Saad, also known as Nacib the Arab or Turk, owns the Vesuvius bar, a popular meeting place for prominent members of Ilhéus society. Although the town remains bitterly divided among political lines, Nacib vows to remain neutral and befriends members from both factions. When Nacib's longtime cook, Filomena, finally delivers on her threat to quit her job at Nacib's bar, Nacib must find a new cook fast. Nacib finds Gabriela, a migrant from the backlands.

Gabriela is a striking beauty, although Nacib does not realize this when he first hires her. Having traveled the dusty roads to Ilhéus in search of work, Gabriela is covered with dust and dirt when Nacib first sees her. After Nacib takes her to his home to cook and clean for him, Gabriela has a chance to clean herself up, and Nacib realizes how truly beautiful she is. The two become lovers almost immediately.

Gabriela and Nacib soon fall deeply in love, and despite reservations about marrying a woman without a pedigree, Nacib asks Gabriela to marry him. Gabriela does not understand why their relationship must change. She is content to cook and clean for Nacib during the day and sleep with him at night. Nacib, however, knows that other men are lusting over Gabriela, and fears the only way to keep her is to marry her. Gabriela is a brilliant cook, and business is prospering at Nacib's bar. Nacib marries Gabriela to keep from losing both his lover and his cook.

Once they marry, Gabriela realizes that Nacib expects her to accept the trappings of a traditional Ilhéus wife. She can no longer come and go as she pleases. She must pretend to enjoy things she hates, like dressing up in uncomfortable clothes and attending boring formal events. Gabriela becomes unhappy. She loves Nacib, but she grows restless for her old life.



Gabriela begins keeping secrets from Nacib until one day Nacib learns the truth about Gabriela's infidelity. His reaction to Gabriela's betrayal shakes up the entire town and changes the social norms for the residents of Ilhéus forever.



Part One, First Chapter: The Languor of Ofenísia, Sections titled Of the Sun and the Rain and a Small Miracle, Of the Mixture of Past and Future in the Streets of Ilhéus, Of the Notables at the Fish Market, and Of the Doctor's Claim to Noble but Not Imp

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The story opens in the year 1925 in Ilhéus, a small Brazilian town. Ilhéus has a history of violence. In the old days, plantation owners fought for land and killed anyone who got in their way. Now, Ilhéus is a place of great prosperity thanks to the successful cacao business, and the town's residents are eager for modern technology and progress in all its forms. Jacob the Russian and his partner, Moacir Estrêla, establish a bus line between Ilhéus and neighboring Itabuna, and Jacob plans a banquet at Nacib's bar to celebrate.

The Doctor, a well-respected public speaker and author, reminisces with Colonel Ribeirinho about a time when Ilhéus remained uncivilized and men fought for control of the cacao in the region. They are two of the men who gather early every morning near the fish stands, supposedly to buy the freshest fish, but really to talk amongst themselves about the weather, crops, and current events.

The men also discuss Mundinho Falcão, a newcomer who is trying to change the town's culture. Colonel Manuel wonders what Mundinho is trying to accomplish, and why he gets involved in everything instead of simply tending to his own affairs. The Doctor explains that it is men like Mundinho that the town needs, and that Mundinho wants to be the next mayor of Ilhéus. Mundinho is already responsible for many new additions to the town, including the Progress Club, the Ilhéus and an avenue built along the beach. As they walk, the group hears a ship's whistle. Another ship has run aground, a



common occurrence in Ilhéus, due to a nuisance of a sandbar. The men curse the sandbar, which prevents larger ships from entering the Ilhéan port and exporting cacao directly to foreign countries.

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Many key themes are introduced in this first section of the book. Irony is already evident in the narration of the St. George procession. Ilhéan residents pray for rain to save their cacao crop, only to receive an excess of rain that threatens to ruin it. The priest, Father Basílio, is a hypocrite, praying to Saint George for rain and allowing his housekeeper's children to take his name out of "Christian charity," when he is actually the children's father. The priest promises God that he will abstain from sex with his mistress, but only for a short time, and then only in exchange for the rain he needs to save his cacao crop. He prays more ardently for rain than he has ever prayed before, but only out of greed, since he is thinking of his own cacao crop and the losses he could be faced with if the crop fails.

Another theme, the changing of the guard, is also introduced. The old colonels may have seized power by brute force, but many Ilhéan leaders now yearn for progress and a more civilized culture. They do not want to be perceived as barbarians, even though it was violence that brought the town its wealth and influence. Many of Ilhéus' most powerful residents believe in Mundinho Falcão's ideas for improving Ilhéus, but some of the old colonels do not embrace the changes being suggested. These differences expressed by the old and new guard establish the conflict that will become a central plot in the book.

In this section, the problem of the sandbar is discussed. The sandbar is symbolic of the barriers between the old Ilhéus with its outdated customs and the new Ilhéus that is ready to be born. The sandbar hinders commerce and keeps Ilhéus isolated from the rest of the region. Since ships get stuck on the sandbar nearly every day, it becomes obvious that the sandbar is probably the center of many jokes about Ilhéus, its residents, and their "backward" ways. The sandbar represents Ilhéus' resistance to change, to improvement, modernism, and progress.

The habit of the men, especially the colonels, to meet casually near the fish market under the pretense of buying fish reminds readers that this group of characters is very concerned with outward appearances. Instead of simply meeting each other every morning to chat, they pretend that they just happen to see each other during morning errands instead, even though this routine plays out nearly every morning. The last

section gives insight into the Doctor's mind and his fascination with the history of both his family and the town of Ilhéus.



Part One, First Chapter: The Languor of Ofenísia, Sections titled Of Filomena's Departure and Nacib's Predicament, Of Law, Justice, Birth, and Nationality, In Which Mundinho Falcão, an Important Character, Makes his Appearance Looking at Ilhéus through

Part One, First Chapter: The Languor of Ofenísia, Sections titled Of Filomena's Departure and Nacib's Predicament, Of Law, Justice, Birth, and Nationality, In Which Mundinho Falcão, an Important Character, Makes his Appearance Looking at Ilhéus through Binoculars, and Of the Ship's Arrival Summary

Nacib wakes up to find that his cook is leaving and he must immediately find another one. Mundinho Falcão visits his family in Rio, and his two older brothers, both influential leaders there, question his fondness for Ilhéus and its people. Mundinho informs them he is considering a move into politics. He is optimistic as he returns to Ilhéus, and seems unsurprised when his ship gets stuck in the sandbar. A crowd gathers to watch and complain about the menacing sandbar, and how the state government seems unable or unwilling to do anything about it. Many of the old colonels keep voting for the politicians because they owe them loyalty based on events from years past. After the ship breaks free of the mud, Mundinho disembarks and receives a warm welcome from Nacib, the Captain, and the others. Mundinho introduces his companions - the blond-haired ballerina Anabela, and her husband, Prince Sandra, the magician.



Part One, First Chapter: The Languor of Ofenísia, Sections titled Of Filomena's Departure and Nacib's Predicament, Of Law, Justice, Birth, and Nationality, In Which Mundinho Falcão, an Important Character, Makes his Appearance Looking at Ilhéus through Binoculars, and Of the Ship's Arrival Analysis

These sections establish several major plot points. Filomena, Nacib's cook, is quitting, which forces Nacib to find another cook to take her place. The fact that Nacib spent the night with Risoleta also demonstrates his weakness for women, which is simply foreshadowing of how this weakness will lead him to make bad decisions later on in the story.

Nacib is the hero of the story and the man who will later be called the most civilized man in Ilhéus. Nacib's disgust for the Turks, whom he considers violent barbarians, offers insight into his non-violent nature, at least in comparison to other Ilhéans, especially the powerful colonels.

The fact that Nacib becomes a Brazilian citizen so easily, thanks to a corrupt registry official, is just one clue as to the level of corruption within government offices in the area. This practice of easily obtaining fraudulent documents will play a key role in Nacib and Gabriela's marriage, and its dissolution, later on.

As one of the principal characters in the book, Mundinho Falcão is also one of the most interesting and mysterious. Mundinho's visit to see his family in Rio explains his motivation for coming to Ilhéus and trying to be an agent in the town's progress. The sibling rivalry he has with the two older brothers who still view him as a boy drives Mundinho to succeed without their help, and even to rebel against the causes they support.

The distance Mundinho places between himself and Madeleine shows his vulnerability, which makes him more likeable, even as he brashly challenges the Ministers to send an engineer to Ilhéus and have the school there accredited, even resorting to blackmail in the process. Mundinho's amusement at the situation also shows his boyish, mischievous side and further develops the character.

The significance of the sandbar problem in Ilhéus is also further illustrated, especially after Mundinho's own ship gets stuck in the mud. The conversation among the men also explains the colonels' motivation to choose sides based on previous allegiances with members of the state government.



Part One, First Chapter: The Languor of Ofenísia, Sections titled Of the Dos Reis Sisters and their Nativity Scene, Of a Desperate Search, Of a Political Boss in the Sun, and Of a Political Conspiracy

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Colonel Bastos is a former mayor and one of the most powerful men in Ilhéus. Bastos controls the politicians. He does not believe Ilhéus needs schools and athletic fields. He does not approve of the Progress Club and refuses to even consider dredging the harbor to remove the dreaded sandbar.

Lately, however, Ramiro fears he is losing control. Mundhino Falcão refuses to acknowledge his authority. Ramiro has tried unsuccessfully to block some of Mundhino's projects. He learns that Mundinho is investing in a new daily newspaper that he had refused to back. Professor Josué tells Ramiro the school is now accredited, thanks to Mundinho's influence. Ramiro had told his son Alfredo to get the school accredited, only to be told that would not be possible until the following year. Ramiro wonders why suddenly Mundinho has more political clout than him.

Mundinho and the Captain decide to form a political opposition to the Bastos regime. Mundinho pretends to let the Captain talk him into the idea, but what the Captain does not know is that Mundinho is meeting with him solely in the hopes of reaching this conclusion. Mundinho wants the Captain to think that it was all his idea.



Part One, First Chapter: The Languor of Ofenísia, Sections titled Of the Dos Reis Sisters and their Nativity Scene, Of a Desperate Search, Of a Political Boss in the Sun, and Of a Political Conspiracy Analysis

The author uses foreshadowing to hint at the challenges Nacib is about to encounter in his search for a new cook. The Dos Reis sisters mention how difficult it is to find a good cook who is not already taken. This section also gives a bit of lesson on appropriate social conventions in Ilhéus. Nacib must go through the motions of visiting with the women and making small talk, drinking liqueurs, and discussing the tableau before he can broach the subject that is behind the visit - his request for help with the bus line dinner.

The frustration of Nacib's long search for a new cook builds the reader's anticipation, for such a search can only result in a miraculous find. The new cook will certainly be a treasure, a reward for all of Nacib's efforts. His failures also point to the progress that is taking over the town. Several women turn down Nacib's offer of work, and the Dos Reis sisters are too expensive for him to afford for more than a few days. As Euclides explains, times have changed since Nacib first opened the bar. Nowadays, more opportunities exist for women who want to work.

Readers also see inside the mind of Colonel Ramiro Bastos, one of the most powerful characters in the book. The events that keep happening in Mundinho's favor are almost comical in light of the Colonel's skewed idea of his control over the town and its people. By comparing the two leaders, Ramiro and Mundinho, the author is able to clearly illustrate both the similarities and differences between the two men, which further advances the central theme of Changing of the Guard. Ramiro's days of power are numbered, while Mundinho's turn is just beginning.

The stage is now being set for a huge political battle between Mundinho and Ramiro. Residents of Ilhéus will feel pressured to join one side or another as the story progresses, and each will have unique reasons for doing so. Irony is once again employed in this section as readers are in on the secret that Mundinho has led the Captain to make the invitation without even realizing that was what Mundinho wanted all along. So as Mundinho declares his interest in bettering Ilhéus and ridding the area of corrupt politicians, he himself is secretly manipulating others to get his way.



Part One, First Chapter: The Languor of Ofenísia, Sections titled On the Art of Gossiping and Gabriela on the Way

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Migrant workers are moving toward the town from the backlands. One of the travelers is Gabriela. Along the way, Gabriela meets another migrant named Clemente, and they become lovers. Clemente dreams of having his own cacao fields, and he promises to marry Gabriela, but Gabriela does not want to be a cacao planter's wife. One night, out of frustration, Clemente shoves Gabriela away in anger, telling her, "You don't really want me. You don't love me." Gabriela does not understand why Clemente is upset. She tells Clemente it does not matter that they will not see each other again. It is clear that Clemente has much stronger feelings for Gabriela than she does for him.

Part One, First Chapter: The Languor of Ofenísia, Sections titled On the Art of Gossiping and Gabriela on the Way Analysis

This town loves its gossip. The men at Nacib's bar gossip about Risoleta, about the search for a new cook, about Ramiro Bastos, and even about the town morals that may be keeping Anabela's dance performance out of the theater. Nacib's anticipation grows as he suspects a conspiracy is about to be revealed among the three political schemers.

Finally, readers get to meet Gabriela, the long-awaited cook and woman the book is named after. Although little is revealed about her, it is already clear that Gabriela has a profound impact on the men around her, that she is a free spirit, and not a romantic. She has simple tastes and aspirations. Readers also learn in this section that Gabriela is now all alone in the world, but does not feel the need to be tied to a man, even a man with whom she is intimate.



Part One, Second Chapter: The Loneliness of Gloria, Sections titled Of Temptation at the Window, Of the Cruel Law, Of Black Stockings, and Of the Law of Concubines

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Gloria, Colonel Ribeiro's mistress, lives in one of the best homes in town. She sits by her window each day and gazes suggestively at men that pass by. Since Gloria belongs to Ribeiro, she must stay at home and wait for him to visit her. Professor Josué is tempted, but fears retaliation from Colonel Ribeiro.

Josué is also in love with a young. Suddenly, Nacib hears Tuísca shouting that Colonel Jesuíno has killed his wife, Dona Sinhazinha, and her lover, Dr. Osmundo. The news of the murder spreads quickly. All of the men at Nacib's bar approve of the murder, as it is well-known that a man is justified in killing both an unfaithful wife and her lover. In Ilhéus, this type of murder is not uncommon, and no husband has ever been convicted of murder under these circumstances.

Sinhazinha was completely naked when she was killed, except for black stockings. Some of the men blame progress. Sinhazinha had recently scaled back her church attendance and begun attending tea dances at the Progress Club, and Dr. Osmundo danced the Argentine tango. One man, attorney Dr. Maurício, explains, "The dissolution of old customs is an important factor in these cases."

The Captain disagrees, and says although he does not condone infidelity, adultery cannot be blamed on progress. He blames husbands who ignore their wives and treat them like servants as they shower gifts on prostitutes and mistresses. When the Dr. explains a woman's function is to stay at home and take care of her husband and children, the Captain demands, "And what's the function of the other woman—to squander the husband's money?"



Part One, Second Chapter: The Loneliness of Gloria, Sections titled Of Temptation at the Window, Of the Cruel Law, Of Black Stockings, and Of the Law of Concubines Analysis

The murders serve as a reminder of what a violent place Ilhéus actually is. The theme of hypocrisy is also expanded here in Gloria's story and poem. Colonel Ribeiro puts Gloria up in a beautiful home like a high-class lady, but Gloria is just a kept woman, and scorned by all of the "respectable" people in town, including those who have mistresses of their own.

The ultimate example of hypocrisy and further illustration of the double standard for men and women in Ilhéus is presented by Colonel Ribeiro's unwillingness to share Gloria's affections with other men, even as Ribeiro's wife is undoubtedly expected to share her husband with his very well-known mistress, Gloria. Ribeiro's wife, in contrast, is not permitted to be unfaithful to her husband, as is evidenced by the murders.

The way that the people of Ilhéus accept Jesuíno's violent act says a lot about the people of the town and the roles of husbands and wives in Ilhéan society. No one disputes that the Colonel did the right thing under the circumstances, and no one defends his poor murdered wife. Even Dr. Osmundo, who was well-liked and respected in his own right, is believed to have gotten what he deserved.

The "cruel law" of Ilhéus further explains the mindset and behavior of citizens who live in a town where violence is often justified not only by the townspeople, but by the courts who refuse to convict a man who murders his unfaithful wife. The author is using foreshadowing here, since the "cruel law" will become a critical part of Nacib and Gabriela's love story later in the book.

These sections are some of the most important in the book, because they illustrate the heart of the town in all of its gossip-loving hypocrisy. The murders of two people are never blamed on the Colonel, but on the victims, on progress, on bloodlines, and anything else the residents of Ilhéus can come up with to justify them.

Dr. Mauricio is one of the Old Guard, while the Captain and João Fulgêncio are clearly part of the new regime, as is Mundhino, who reminds the young students he encounters that a beautiful woman is sacred, and such a death is always tragic.

The mystery of Gloria is revealed. Gloria resembles a fairy-tale princess who has been locked away in a tall tower away from everyone and everything. The residents' fear of Colonel Ribeiro is well-justified, and the author uses foreshadowing to tease the reader into guessing who might dare cross the Colonel in pursuit of Gloria's much sought-after affections.



Part One, Second Chapter: The Loneliness of Gloria, Sections titled Of a Charming Rascal, Of Twilight, Of the Intricate Ways of Love, or How Nacib Hired a Cook, and Of the Boat in the Forest

Part One, Second Chapter: The Loneliness of Gloria, Sections titled Of a Charming Rascal, Of Twilight, Of the Intricate Ways of Love, or How Nacib Hired a Cook, and Of the Boat in the Forest Summary

Tonico Bastos is a real ladies' man. Tonico is married to a rich, awful woman named Dona Olga. Nacib admires Tonico, and even the Captain admits, "He's a charming rascal, a bad character but irresistible." Dona Olga is well-known for her jealousy. Tonico implies that he was also involved with Sinhazinha before she died. Nacib is stunned, and does not know whether to believe Tonico.

Nacib is troubled by the murders, but he hides that from the other men. He secretly wishes the killer would be convicted of the murders, although he knows that is impossible. Nacib fears Ilhéus is still very uncivilized. The backward old customs still remain. The cruel law is one of the reasons Nacib has never married. He fears being deceived and then expected to fulfill his duty as a husband, to kill his wife and her lover. Nacib would like to marry, but he could never kill someone. Nacib carries a gun in his belt, like all of the men in town, but he never wants to use it. Nacib is not a violent man.

Later that evening, Colonel Melk Tavares approaches Clemente and Fagundes at the migrant camp and offers them jobs. When Nacib first sees Gabriela, she is covered in dirt. When she tells him she once cooked for a rich family, he does not believe her, but after she calls him "a beautiful man," he takes her with him.



Part One, Second Chapter: The Loneliness of Gloria, Sections titled Of a Charming Rascal, Of Twilight, Of the Intricate Ways of Love, or How Nacib Hired a Cook, and Of the Boat in the Forest Analysis

This part of the book includes a character study on Tonico Bastos, Ilhéus' version of Don Juan. There is plenty of foreshadowing here, as the relationship between Tonico and Nacib is described, full of trust and admiration. Tonico's greatest fear is being discovered by his jealous wife, Dona Olga, and he must be relieved that he was not with Sinhazinha at the time of her unfortunate death. One wonders if Tonico has just dodged a bullet, both literally and figuratively. Tonico's charm still lingers, and it is clear that he is flirting with disaster.

More information is revealed about Nacib, including his true nature as a non-violent man, despite his graphic stories of violence in his home country. Readers also learn it is Nacib's gentle nature that has made him avoid marriage in this barbaric town. Nacib grieves for the loss of Sinhazinha when no one else appears to, at least not publicly.

Nacib is clearly disturbed by the old customs of Ilhéus, including the cruel law that allows husbands to kill their wives. Nacib's disgust for the law is well-explained, and provides additional foreshadowing of a time when Nacib's failure to adhere to the law will come into question.

Perhaps it is Nacib's destiny that he find Gabriela at the slave market, for he certainly does not choose her based on her beauty or her cooking skills, which remain hidden from him. He remains troubled about the secrets and scandals in the town, and in another example of foreshadowing, predicts that something bad is going to happen to his trusted friend, Tonico. Nacib now knows Tonico is sleeping with married women, a dangerous practice in Ilhéus, as proven by the day's tragic events.

Additional foreshadowing shows readers that even Fagundes has figured Gabriela out already, as the sort of woman who can never belong to just one man. Fagundes' skill with a rifle will also come up again later in the story. Melk will not forget that the young man spoke of it.



Part One, Second Chapter: The Loneliness of Gloria, Sections titled Gabriela Asleep, Of Food and Funerals, A Parenthetical Story with a Moral, and The Banquet

Part One, Second Chapter: The Loneliness of Gloria, Sections titled Gabriela Asleep, Of Food and Funerals, A Parenthetical Story with a Moral, and The Banquet Summary

Nacib tells Gabriela she is to keep the house clean, do the laundry, and prepare his meals. He wants to sample her cooking before letting her cook for the bar. He also tells Gabriela to take a bath. He later finds Gabriela asleep in a chair. Now that she has bathed, Nacib can see how truly beautiful she is. The next morning, Nacib attends the two funerals. Few people are participating in Osmundo's funeral procession, out of fear of offending Colonel Jesuíno and Ilhéan social customs. Nacib joins the procession, even though he does not know Osmundo well.

At the house where Sinhazinha's wake is being held, Sinhazinha's family seems annoyed by her death. The head of the household, a distant relative, does not want to offend Colonel Jesuíno, since the two men do business together. He is also concerned about the expense of the funeral, and wonders who will reimburse him. The mourners are scandalized by the unexpected appearance of Malvina, Colonel Melk's daughter, as she enters the room, prays over Sinhazinha's body, and leaves flowers at the foot of the casket.

Nacib is depressed by the behavior of the townspeople, few of whom even bother to mourn the deaths. After Nacib returns to the bar, Chico brings him the lunch Gabriela has prepared, and it is delicious. Tonico is there, and learns of Gabriela's great beauty from Chico. Nacib feels better once he starts thinking about Gabriela, and buys her a gift.

A political war is brewing between Mundinho and Ramiro, and Nacib is worried there will be trouble at the bus line dinner. João Fulgêncio and Professor Josué admire the vision of Gloria sighing at her window, and João tells a story about the day that Tonico Bastos and Colonel Coriolano clashed over Gloria. João tells Josué when Colonel Coriolano first put Gloria up in her fine house, Tonico immediately showed an interest in Gloria and began visiting her. When the Colonel found out, he went to Tonico's home to confront him.



Riding whip in hand, Coriolano says, " Tonico, it has come to my attention that you are hanging around my ward's house. I value your friendship highly, Tonico. I remember you as a little boy, the son of my son's godfather. Therefore I'm going to give you some advice, the advice of an old friend: stay away from there. I also thought very highly of Juca Viana, the son of an old poker companion of mine. I knew Juca too, when he was a little boy. You remember what happened to him? Too bad, poor boy, but he insisted on fooling around with another man's woman."

Tonico lies, saying someone is slandering him, that he has never touched Gloria. The colonel agrees, and calmly explains that he knows Tonico has never touched her, and that if he had, the two men would be having a different type of conversation altogether. Coriolano tells Tonico not to even look at Gloria, and from that day on, Tonico would not even walk past Gloria's house, which made her even lonelier. The Colonel's warning was not only heeded by Tonico, but by all the men who fantasized about Gloria and decided that day they would not try to turn that fantasy into reality.

That afternoon, the Captain tells Nacib that the article in the paper is only the first of many, of a political crusade that will shape the future of Ilhéus. That night, the guests at the bus line dinner are anxious, and no one wants to mention the newspaper article for fear they will cause conflict between the rival factions present. When Colonel Bastos arrives with Tonico, Nacib grows uneasy. Yet Bastos greets everyone, including the newspaper publisher, quite warmly. He must be furious, but he behaves admirably, and Nacib is pleased.

Several of the men make speeches praising the bus-line and discussing the future of relations between Ilhéus and Itabuna. Toasts are made both to Ramiro and Mundinho by their respective supporters, and everyone touches glasses. João remarks to the Judge that it is better the political rivals make war through speeches rather than bullets, but the Judge fears that bullets are inevitable.

Later that night, Nacib returns home and decides to leave Gabriela's gift at the foot of her bed so she will discover it the next morning. He enters the room and watches Gabriela as she sleeps, nearly naked, again admiring her beauty. Gabriela awakens, and Nacib gives her the gift. She is pleased, and Nacib is again drawn to her childlike innocence and beauty. Nacib cannot hide his desire for her, and takes Gabriela in his arms.

Part One, Second Chapter: The Loneliness of Gloria, Sections titled Gabriela Asleep, Of Food and Funerals, A Parenthetical Story with a Moral, and The Banquet Analysis

Hypocrisy, especially on the part of the men, is extremely evident in this section. Dr. Maurício, the attorney who earlier condemned Sinhazinha's behavior and who will



defend her murderer in court, is now with a young girl whom he has convinced to play Sinhazinha's role for him in the bedroom.

Nacib and Gabriela's romance is just beginning. Nacib's dream, in which Sinhazinha and Gabriela's identities are blended together, is another example of foreshadowing. Gabriela will eventually betray Nacib just as Sinhazinha betrayed Jesuíno. Someone will also come between Gabriela and Nacib and keep them from being together, just as in Nacib's dream.

The funerals are an unfortunate reminder of the strict social expectations of Ilhéus, and it is no surprise that Nacib, one of the most likeable characters in the book, is disgusted by the lack of respect shown for the dead lovers. Malvina's presence at the funeral is an indication of her independent spirit and nonconformist nature, traits readers will become more familiar with as the story progresses. The tale of Tónico and Coriolano's meeting about Gloria serves as a warning to others, and also provides insight into Tónico's character. For it was Tónico who first dared visit Gloria's home, and Tónico who acted like a coward afterward, not even daring to walk on the street next to Gloria's home. Tónico's bad judgment about women will be seen again later in the story, as will his cowardice.

This section is filled with new beginnings. The success of the new bus-line is celebrated just as political battle lines are drawn in anticipation of a long struggle for power, similar to the conflicts that the old colonels waged in the old days when they killed each other to acquire land. Nacib and Gabriela also become lovers, and their romance begins.



Part Two, Third Chapter: The Secret of Malvina, Sections titled Gabriela and a Flower, Of a Welcome and Unwelcome Guest, Of Nacib's Confusion, and Of Conversations and a Burning

Part Two, Third Chapter: The Secret of Malvina, Sections titled Gabriela and a Flower, Of a Welcome and Unwelcome Guest, Of Nacib's Confusion, and Of Conversations and a Burning Summary

Several months have passed, and Gabriela and Nacib are very much in love. Gabriela enjoys bringing Nacib's lunch to him at the bar. Gabriela's cooking, her beauty, and her regular visits to the bar have made the Vesuvius a very popular meeting spot for many of the men in town. Nacib is happy and content with Gabriela, both as his cook and his lover, until one day he realizes that Gabriela is very good for business, but not just for her cooking. He sees how other men gaze upon her with lust in their eyes. He knows some have offered her more money to cook for them. Tonico warns Nacib that Manuel of the Jaguars wants to set Gabriela up in a house of her own. Nacib panics at the prospect of losing both his cook and the woman he has grown to love.

Meanwhile, Colonel Ribeirinho joins Mundinho and becomes active in politics for the first time. After three long months and many newspaper articles debating his very existence, the engineer Mundinho promised finally arrives in town. Dr. Rômulo Vieira is young and athletic. His arrival is a huge blow to the Bastos followers, who have been saying for months that no engineer would come. Ramiro had received personal assurances from the Governor himself on the matter, but Mundinho's brothers had intervened on his behalf, unbeknownst to him, and exerted the political pressure needed to guarantee the engineer's arrival in Ilhéus. On the day of his arrival, the engineer meets Malvina, Colonel Melk's mysterious daughter. Vieira is married, but his wife is in a sanitarium for the insane.

Colonel Jesuíno returns to town, and Ezequiel Prado, the lawyer retained by Osmundo's father, is outraged that the killer is walking the streets of Ilhéus. João reminds him that if all of the killers were banished from the town, none of the colonels would ever be permitted to leave their plantations! Osmundo's father has visited the town and insists upon a more proper memorial for his son. He orders wreaths and flowers and visits everyone who knew Osmundo. He even organizes a group of mourners to visit Osmundo's grave site. Many Ilhéans are moved by the father's sadness, and many



attend the memorial gathering, even though few had attended Osmundo's funeral. Osmundo's father has the marble slab covering his grave inscribed with the words, "COWARDLY MURDERED."

A new figure in the political struggle is Colonel Altino Brandão. Yet when the Colonel meets with Mundinho, he advises him to get married if he wants to succeed in politics. He tells Mundinho they will meet again, but he does not commit his support, suggesting that Mundinho might want to marry one of Bastos' granddaughters to form an alliance instead. Mundinho disagrees, wanting to be elected based on his ideas and achievements, not family alliances.

Nacib sees Malvina talking with the engineer on the beach avenue. Professor Josué also sees her, and is depressed to see his true love with another man. In the heat of the moment, Josué forgets himself and greets Gloria at her window, a scandalous and dangerous thing for him to do. Soon after, Tuisca finds Nacib and tells him that someone has set fire to the Ilhéus Daily newspapers.

Part Two, Third Chapter: The Secret of Malvina, Sections titled Gabriela and a Flower, Of a Welcome and Unwelcome Guest, Of Nacib's Confusion, and Of Conversations and a Burning Analysis

In these sections, it becomes clear that Ilhéus is on the verge of great change. Political rivals are choosing sides, and even Osmundo's father is able to change people's minds about the great injustice of his son's murder. Malvina exerts her independence by choosing a banned book and courting the married engineer. Josué risks the Colonel's wrath by greeting Gloria, and now someone has created a bonfire with Clóvis Costa's newspapers. Even Nacib is affected by emotions that are unfamiliar to him. He has fallen in love and now stands to lose what he holds most dear. For bad or for good, all of the characters are now influenced by progress, whether they like it or not.



Part Two, Third Chapter: The Secret of Malvina, Sections titled Of Newspapers and Hearts on Fire, Gabriela and Arminda, By Lamplight, and Of the Ball and the Englishwoman

Part Two, Third Chapter: The Secret of Malvina, Sections titled Of Newspapers and Hearts on Fire, Gabriela and Arminda, By Lamplight, and Of the Ball and the Englishwoman Summary

A group of ruffians sets fire to the Ilhéus Daily newspapers, but the Doctor proclaims that the will of the people will not be silenced. From their strategically located position nearby, Amâncio Leal and Jesuíno celebrate a job well done. The men involved are recognized by many as workers in Amâncio, Jesuíno, and Melk's employ. Professor Josué informs Gloria of the latest news.

Back at Nacib's house, Gabriela has amazingly tamed a wild cat and now has it meowing in her lap. Dona Arminda tells Gabriela Nacib is in love with her and might even marry her if she plays her cards right. Gabriela is confused. Why should Nacib marry her? She believes Nacib should marry "a nice girl from a high-class family." Gabriela does not want to be a wife, to wear fancy clothes and shoes. Colonel Manuel visits Gabriela and offers to set her up in a nice house with a maid and charge accounts at the stores. Gabriela explains that she has everything she needs, and is happy where she is.

Meanwhile, Clemente and Fagundes are busy working in Melk's cacao groves. Fagundes is not very good at the work, and longs for the fighting to start, just like in the old days of Ilhéus. One night, when Fagundes is in town, he sees Gabriela at the bar. Clemente is despondent when he hears the news. That night, he dreams of holding Gabriela in his arms again.



Part Two, Third Chapter: The Secret of Malvina, Sections titled Of Newspapers and Hearts on Fire, Gabriela and Arminda, By Lamplight, and Of the Ball and the Englishwoman Analysis

Gabriela's behavior with the cat is symbolic of her own life. She is a wild animal that longs to run free as the stray cat does, but she, too, has been domesticated by her life with Nacib. Nacib, on the other hand, is moving up in society, having attended the Commercial Association Ball with all of the town leaders and their families. The paths of the two lovers are going in opposite directions.

The town is also being further split apart, as some of the colonels have turned to violence and intimidation in an attempt to stop the bad press the opposition is generating. Mundinho seems to stay above the fray, as he enjoys dancing with different women at the ball, including Jerusa, Ramiro's granddaughter. Jerusa is the one who was previously suggested as a match for him, a way to create an alliance with the colonel.



Part Two, Third Chapter: The Secret of Malvina, Sections titled Of the Old Ways, Of a Bird's Sad Song, Gabriela and a Bird in a Cage, and Of High-Backed Chairs

Part Two, Third Chapter: The Secret of Malvina, Sections titled Of the Old Ways, Of a Bird's Sad Song, Gabriela and a Bird in a Cage, and Of High-Backed Chairs Summary

Mundinho visits Colonel Altino's plantation and tries to get Altino to talk about politics, but the Colonel resists. When the subject of the newspaper fire comes up, Altino admits he does not approve, but stuns Mundinho by saying that Mundinho should have fought back and burned the Southern Journal building! When Mundinho returns from the visit, he tells the Captain what happened, and the Captain agrees that harsher measures may have to be taken in order to fight the Bastoses. Mundinho disagrees, saying their response to the violence will be to fix the sandbar so that larger ships can pass through safely.

Back at the bar, Nacib is beside himself with worry. Ribeirinho also approached Gabriela and offered her a house, a diamond ring, and a gold locket. Tonico is the only man in the bar who has remained respectful around Gabriela, which is ironic, since Tonico was the man Nacib feared would be his biggest rival. Tonico suggests Nacib should marry Gabriela. Nacib is conflicted, thinking he is supposed to marry "a gifted young lady of good upbringing, respectable family background, and carefully preserved virginity, a girl with a fine trousseau." Gabriela has none of these things, yet he loves her still. Nacib worries what his family and friends will say. Nacib decides Gabriela will no longer bring his lunch to the bar where the other men can see her. When Nacib tells Gabriela, she is upset. Gabriela enjoys the attention she gets from other men, even if she does not want to accept their offers. Since Gabriela enjoys coming to the bar, Nacib agrees to let her come, but she will have to stay in the back where only he can be close to her, and the other men cannot.

Nacib and Gabriela make love in his room for the first time that night, and Nacib murmurs words of love in Arabic. Afterward, Gabriela reflects on what Nacib said. She thinks Nacib's jealousy is silly. She thinks of all of the young, beautiful men who desire her, even Mr. Tonico, who tries to kiss the back of her neck when Mr. Nacib is not looking. She sees each of them in her mind, along with her former lovers, each time she



and Nacib make love. The flirtation during the day is like a warm-up for their nightly lovemaking sessions. When Nacib leaves, Gabriela admires the bird, called a *sofrê*, that Nacib bought her. The bird sings a sad song. Gabriela thinks the bird is beautiful, but is sad to see it in a cage, unhappy and beating its wings against the bars. Gabriela decides to free the bird in the back yard, and is delighted when it flies out of its cage and sings a happy song for her.

Colonel Altino meets with Ramiro to discuss a possible alliance with Mundinho. Altino is surprised how much Ramiro has aged in the last few months. Altino sits in a beautiful and expensive, yet uncomfortable high-backed chair in Ramiro's home. He remembers the chairs in Mundinho's office, the soft chairs that are so comfortable they make visitors want to stay there forever. Altino questions Ramiro's refusal to remove the sandbar in the harbor. Ramiro says everything will happen in its own time, but Altino says the time is now. Altino suggests a compromise with Mundinho. Tonico agrees, but Ramiro wants no part of any deal. He grows furious, and tells Altino to leave his home. Altino tells the Colonel in parting that he believes Ilhéus needs new leaders, and Mundinho will receive his votes.

Part Two, Third Chapter: The Secret of Malvina, Sections titled Of the Old Ways, Of a Bird's Sad Song, Gabriela and a Bird in a Cage, and Of High-Backed Chairs Analysis

The author further develops several themes in these sections. Altino's support of Mundinho reflects a Changing of the Guard. Altino has supported Ramiro for years, but now sees the need for new leadership and thus makes a new alliance.

The bird in the cage is symbolic of Gabriela. She longs to be free, and frees the bird, who sings happily once freed from its cage. The hard backed chairs at Ramiro's home are also a powerful symbol of the Colonel's rigid, formal style. The fact that Mundinho's chairs are soft, inviting, and flexible are reflections of Mundinho himself and his leadership style.

Another key point in these sections is Gabriela's reaction to Nacib's jealousy. Readers have now learned that not only is Gabriela not offended by the attention she receives from other men, she actually enjoys it, and fantasizes about other men when she and Nacib make love. Gabriela also reveals that Tonico, the one man Nacib believes to have acted respectfully around her, has been trying to kiss her neck, but only when Nacib is not looking.



Part Two, Third Chapter: The Secret of Malvina, Sections titled Of the Devil Loose in the Streets, The Virgin of the Rocks, Of Love Eternal, or a Door Ajar, Gabriela's Song, Of Flowers and Vases, and Of Dredges and a Bride

Part Two, Third Chapter: The Secret of Malvina, Sections titled Of the Devil Loose in the Streets, The Virgin of the Rocks, Of Love Eternal, or a Door Ajar, Gabriela's Song, Of Flowers and Vases, and Of Dredges and a Bride Summary

Women in town are gossiping about Malvina's affair with the married engineer, and how it reflects a change in the town's morals, especially since the couple is doing little to hide their relationship. Word also gets out that immediately following Altino's visit, Tonico had to summon the doctor for Colonel Ramiro, who had fainted.

Colonel Melk finds out about Malvina's affair and decides to put a stop to it. When he sees the couple on the beach together, he confronts them, riding whip in hand. Young Rômulo panics. Melk orders Malvina to go home at once, and tells the engineer to leave town.

When Melk returns home, Malvina announces her intention to leave Ilhéus with Rômulo. Melk attacks Malvina with the whip and threatens to kill her. Everyone hears Malvina's screams. Finally, Malvina's mother, fearing for her daughter's life, intervenes and gets Melk to stop beating the girl.

That night, Malvina secretly contacts Rômulo and asks him to meet her on the rocks at the edge of the sea so they can run away together. Rômulo, afraid of Colonel Melk, never shows up, so Malvina decides she does not need a man to escape. Two weeks later, Malvina's father sends her to boarding school in Bahia. Josué, distraught over Malvina's affair with the engineer, begins to have an affair with Gloria.

After learning from Dona Arminda and Tonico that many men are still pursuing Gabriela, Nacib decides to marry her. He asks Tonico for help, since Gabriela does not have a birth certificate, which is required for a legal marriage. Tonico tells Nacib not to worry, that he will "fix everything up" in the registry office. João Fulgêncio is troubled by the



news. He tells Nacib he wishes him the best, but also offers the following warning: "There are certain kinds of flowers —have you ever noticed?— that are beautiful and fragrant as long as they grow in the garden. But if you put them in vases, even silver vases, they wilt and die."

After Nacib and Gabriela get engaged, Nacib sends Gabriela to stay with Dona Arminda until the wedding. Gabriela protests, but Nacib is worried it would not look respectable for his future wife to stay with him. However, he still allows Gabriela to sneak over the wall at night and stay with him in secret.

Tonico is Nacib's best man. The Judge performs the service, and comments on the couple for whom "true love had united on a level higher than that of social convention and class distinction." After the ceremony, the guests celebrate with Nacib and Gabriela at the bar. The party is interrupted when someone sees the arrival of dredges in the harbor, and many of the guests continue the party at the pier as they watch the tugboats deliver the dredges that will resolve the sandbar problem for good.

Afterward, once everyone has left and Nacib and Gabriela are alone at the bar, Gabriela removes her shoes and begins to clean up. Nacib explains she cannot walk barefoot anymore, for now she is a lady. Gabriela does not understand, and tells Nacib she is not a lady. She is still the same as she was before.

Part Two, Third Chapter: The Secret of Malvina, Sections titled Of the Devil Loose in the Streets, The Virgin of the Rocks, Of Love Eternal, or a Door Ajar, Gabriela's Song, Of Flowers and Vases, and Of Dredges and a Bride Analysis

Malvina, like Gabriela, has no need for the social conventions surrounding marriage and proper behavior for the women of Ilhéus. After the two men in her live both betray her, Malvina's father by beating her, and cowardly Rômulo by deserting her, she knows what she has to do. She will not wait for her father to arrange an unloving marriage with a man who will try to control her. She will make a life for herself on her own terms. Malvina is like the caged bird Gabriela released. Only freedom can bring her happiness.

João Fulgêncio's comment to Nacib about flowers and vases is also symbolic of Gabriela's need to be free and flourish without restriction. When Nacib tells Gabriela that she has to wear shoes now that they are married, he is forcing Gabriela into the vase, into being something she is not. He is taking away her freedom to just be Gabriela.

The theme of hypocrisy is also expounded upon here as Nacib makes Gabriela leave the house prior to the wedding, although she has been his lover for months and continues to sleep with him at night. The appearance of propriety is much more

important to Nacib than his lover's feelings. Nacib is still worrying too much about what others expect of him.



Part Two, Fourth Chapter: The Moonlight of Gabriela, Sections titled Of an Inspired Bard and his Mundane Needs, Of Mrs. Saad's Conformity and Nonconformity, Of Candidates and Deep-Sea Divers, and The Man Hunt

Part Two, Fourth Chapter: The Moonlight of Gabriela, Sections titled Of an Inspired Bard and his Mundane Needs, Of Mrs. Saad's Conformity and Nonconformity, Of Candidates and Deep-Sea Divers, and The Man Hunt Summary

The circus is in town, but Nacib tells Gabriela she cannot go since he has bought two tickets for a poet's lecture instead. Gabriela begs Nacib, but he tells her it will look bad if she goes to a silly circus instead of attending the lecture with her husband.

Gabriela attends the lecture, which is incredibly boring. Even Nacib has difficulty staying awake, and Gabriela, dressed in fine clothes and shoes that pinch her feet, is miserable. Afterward, Nacib rushes back to the bar, and Gabriela secretly attends the second half of the show at the circus. Tonico follows her, and Gabriela asks him not to tell Nacib. Tonico agrees, and escorts Gabriela home. He has been paying a lot of attention to Gabriela lately. He tells Gabriela he is the one who convinced Nacib to marry her.

Ramiro is relying on Colonel Aristóteles Pires from Itabuna to keep Mundinho from winning the congressional election, explaining, "Aristóteles will vote the way I tell him." The man owes his career to Bastos. Amâncio Leal tells Ramiro it will be hard to stay in power, and "to put it over, we'll have to use our boys and scare the hell out of a few people." Ramiro approves.

Mundinho visits Aristóteles and tells him he will not try to summon his support, since he knows Aristóteles is loyal to Ramiro. Aristóteles surprises him by saying he is not loyal to Dr. Vitor, the current congressman. Vitor has visited Itabuna, but treated Aristóteles disrespectfully. He did not help Aristóteles get the funds he asked for or even answer any of Aristóteles' many letters to him. Aristóteles assures Mundinho Vitor will not get any votes in his town.



Aristóteles tells Mundinho he will give him his support in the election, which means all of the votes in Itabuna will go to Mundinho, not Bastos' follower, Dr. Vitor. Aristóteles tells Mundinho to keep his support a secret for now, and he will make an announcement closer to the election. Soon after, Ramiro asks Aristóteles to meet with him at his home, where he gives Aristóteles a list of the pro-government candidates he wants Aristóteles to support. Aristóteles tells Ramiro he will not vote for Vitor again, since he has done nothing for Itabuna. Ramiro scolds Aristóteles as though he were a child, but Aristóteles tells Ramiro he will be voting for Mundinho instead. Enraged, Ramiro tells Aristóteles to leave, and Aristóteles goes to the office of the Ilhéus Daily. He tells Clóvis Costa to announce his support for Mundinho in the newspaper.

Jerusa, Ramiro's granddaughter, finds her grandfather in poor health following his meeting with Aristóteles. Ramiro asks Jerusa to send for Amâncio Leal right away. Later the doctors confine the old colonel to his bed and explain that his heart cannot bear any more emotional turmoil. The newspaper prints the announcement about Itabuna's support for Mundinho's candidacy. Aristóteles observes the dredging operation with Mundinho, and as the two men are returning, someone in the distance shoots Aristóteles in the chest. Witnesses identify the shooter as a Negro man.

Aristóteles survives the shooting and Altino and Ribeirinho's men organize a man hunt for the shooter, who is hiding in the woods. The men demand that the would-be assassin be recovered dead or alive. Fagundes is not afraid to die, but he does not want to be tortured. He escapes down the hill and jumps the wall behind Nacib's house, where he sees Gabriela in the kitchen doing dishes.

Part Two, Fourth Chapter: The Moonlight of Gabriela, Sections titled Of an Inspired Bard and his Mundane Needs, Of Mrs. Saad's Conformity and Nonconformity, Of Candidates and Deep-Sea Divers, and The Man Hunt Analysis

Once again, Gabriela is forced to wear shoes and clothing that constrict her movements. Gabriela's shoes actually cause her pain, just as Nacib's insistence on her attendance at the lecture causes her pain. When Gabriela decides to sneak out to see the circus, her decision shows readers that although Gabriela does not want to upset Nacib, she finds it acceptable to deceive him if she does not agree with his decisions. Her encounter with Tónico is also significant, especially since Tónico now knows of her deception and unhappiness.

Aristóteles' support for Mundinho is a surprise, and when he abandons Ramiro in favor of the outsider, Ramiro's health is again threatened. These events further the Changing of the Guard theme. The shooting in the last section is a return to the old Ilhéus way. Violence and fear have returned to the town. Fagundes is revealed as the man who tried to shoot Aristóteles, and he is now on the run. The dismissal of the Chief of Police



from the chase is another indication that change is on the way. The people who used to hold all of the power are now losing it to the others. Even Fagundes is surprised that he is the subject of such heavy pursuit. It is clear that the people who paid him to shoot Aristóteles did not anticipate this outcome.



Part Two, Fourth Chapter: The Moonlight of Gabriela: Sections titled How Mrs. Saad Became Involved in Politics, in Violation of her Husband's Traditional Neutrality, and of that Lady's Adventurous Night, Of the Joys and Sorrows of Matrimony, Of Gabriela's

Part Two, Fourth Chapter: The Moonlight of Gabriela: Sections titled How Mrs. Saad Became Involved in Politics, in Violation of her Husband's Traditional Neutrality, and of that Lady's Adventurous Night, Of the Joys and Sorrows of Matrimony, Of Gabriela's Sighs, of the Christmas Festivities, and Of the Shepherdess Gabriela, or Mrs. Saad at the Ball Summary

Fagundes asks Gabriela to help him. Gabriela goes to Leal's home and the men decide to help Fagundes escape. Ramiro tells Gabriela that Nacib must not know Fagundes is there. That night, when Gabriela and Nacib make love, she is very loving and passionate. Nacib notices the change in her. He had recently complained to Tonico that their lovemaking was not as exciting or frequent as it had once been, and Tonico told him that was what happened when couples got married, that the lovemaking becomes sweeter and happens less often. After Nacib is asleep, Gabriela quietly gets up and tells Fagundes that Leal and his men are waiting outside. The men help Fagundes escape so his life will be spared.

Later, Nacib and Gabriela argue about his expectations of her as a well-to-do lady and her lack of interest in lovemaking. Gabriela cries and apologizes, and Nacib regrets hurting her. She tells him he has much to forgive her for. After the argument, Nacib and Gabriela resume their passionate nights, but Nacib notices that Gabriela is always tired. Nacib complains to Tonico about Gabriela's fatigue at night, and Tonico reminds him that making love to a wife is different than being with a mistress. Tonico tells him it is his own fault for trying to turn Gabriela into a respectful woman. Tonico promises to get



Gabriela to hire a maid. When Tónico leaves the bar early, Nacib teases him about having a new woman in his life. "Some day I'll tell you all about it," Tónico says.

Gabriela hates being married. She cannot do any of the things that she likes, like playing with the children outside and going to the circus. Gabriela still does some of these things that are now forbidden to her, but she keeps those activities secret from Nacib. Gabriela has been secretly rehearsing as a shepherdess for the upcoming Christmas pageant, although she knows Nacib would not approve. Dora the seamstress is making her costume.

Malvina has disappeared. The police in Rio question the young engineer about her whereabouts, but he has not spoken to her since he left Ilhéus. Nearly everyone expects her to return soon, to regret her actions and beg her father's forgiveness for such bad behavior. Months later, they discover Malvina is working in an office in São Paulo. She also studies at night and lives alone. She is free, and Melk now says he has no daughter.

At the inaugural display of the Dos Reis sisters' famous Nativity tableau, Ramiro greets Gabriela warmly, remembering how she protected Fagundes and helped him escape. Nacib's snobby family members are mean to Gabriela, barely acknowledging her presence with anything more than disdain. Gabriela finally summons the courage to ask Nacib if she can perform in the Christmas pageant, but he refuses. He worries what people will think of a man who lets his wife participate in such things. What would people say? What would his family think? He would be humiliated. This sort of thing is beneath her. No distinguished married woman takes part in the pageant.

Nacib knows that Gabriela is upset, so he takes her to a little carnival. They also attend a holiday ball at the Progress Club. Gabriela is uncomfortable talking to the other wives, who look at her disapprovingly. The Christmas pageant takes place during the ball, and the guests can hear the parade from inside the Progress Club. Many of them run outside to see the performance as the paraders stop in front of the club, and Gabriela, caught up in the excitement, stuns the crowd by kicking off her shoes and joining the other performers. As she dances down the street, several people join her, including Jerusa and Mundinho.



Part Two, Fourth Chapter: The Moonlight of Gabriela: Sections titled How Mrs. Saad Became Involved in Politics, in Violation of her Husband's Traditional Neutrality, and of that Lady's Adventurous Night, Of the Joys and Sorrows of Matrimony, Of Gabriela's Sighs, of the Christmas Festivities, and Of the Shepherdess Gabriela, or Mrs. Saad at the Ball Analysis

These sections illustrate just how much Gabriela is being forced to hide and pretend. Her friend, Fagundes, needs her help, and she has to sneak around and deceive Nacib in order to provide it. She goes to the pageant rehearsals and visits the seamstress without telling her husband. She makes plans without telling him.

The author uses several instances of foreshadowing in these sections as well. Gabriela is fatigued and less interested in her husband for reasons that are not clear. Tonico is also behaving suspiciously, leaving the bar early and not responding to Nacib's questions about the new woman in his life. His interest in Nacib and Gabriela's love life is also interesting.

Another theme, Fish out of Water, is also expanded upon in these sections. Although Gabriela is not supposed to go out late at night alone, she does not hesitate to do so. Yet she hates going to lectures and balls. She does not know what to say to the other wives when they speak to her, and she knows that they are mocking her behind her back.

Malvina has found her freedom, and is living on her own terms. Since Malvina's story seems to run parallel to Gabriela's, one can only suspect that Gabriela will also find freedom soon.



Part Two, Fourth Chapter: The Moonlight of Gabriela: Sections titled From the Aristocratic Ofenísia to the Plebeian Gabriela, with Divers Events and Thefts of Money, Of How Nacib Broke and Did Not Break the Unwritten Law, or How Mrs. Saad Became Gabriel

Part Two, Fourth Chapter: The Moonlight of Gabriela: Sections titled From the Aristocratic Ofenísia to the Plebeian Gabriela, with Divers Events and Thefts of Money, Of How Nacib Broke and Did Not Break the Unwritten Law, or How Mrs. Saad Became Gabriela Again, Of Gabriela's Love, and Of Life's Surprises Summary

Nacib is happy, although he remains disappointed that Gabriela refuses to act like a lady. Nacib is counting on his new restaurant to "get her in line," and Tonico has assured him it probably will.

One day, Nacib catches Eaglebeak stealing money from the bar. He strikes the boy, who retaliates by calling Nacib a cuckold and telling him Gabriela is having an affair with Tonico. Eaglebeak says Tonico sees Gabriela every day after he leaves the bar. When Nacib returns home that night, he cannot sleep. He says nothing about what he has learned. The next day, shortly after Tonico leaves the bar, Nacib grabs his pistol and goes home. Lazy Chico warns João that Nacib is going to kill the two lovers, so João runs to the house, too. As João approaches, he hears Dona Arminda screaming, and sees Tonico running away, barefoot and shirtless.

When Nacib finds Gabriela and Tonico, they are both naked and in bed. Nacib strikes Tonico but does not kill him. He then beats Gabriela badly, but lets her live. He has the pistol with him, but never uses it. Nacib cannot kill anything, even an unfaithful wife. João gets Nacib to stop beating Gabriela and go with him. Nacib warns Gabriela not to be there when he gets back. João takes Nacib back to his house to calm down.



Nacib fears he will have to leave town now because he did not kill the lovers, due to the unwritten cruel law that says a husband can only get his honor back by spilling blood. João tells him he did the right thing by not killing Tonico and Gabriela, and there is another solution. Since Tonico created false documents for the marriage, the ceremony was not legal. Nacib can have his marriage annulled. If Gabriela was only his mistress and had never really been his wife, the law would not apply to her. The beating he gave her would be sufficient. João tells Nacib he will get Ezequiel Prado, the attorney, to handle all of the legal details.

João and Ezequiel tell Tonico he needs to tell the Judge the documents were false. Tonico refuses, afraid of what will happen if his role in creating the forged documents is revealed. Ezequiel gives Tonico a choice. Either Tonico does as he is asked, even if that means telling the Judge that Gabriela deceived him and accepted the false documents, or Ezequiel will sue him on Nacib's behalf for annulment of his marriage. He will reveal that Tonico knowingly falsified documents in order to "marry off your paramour, whose favors you continued to enjoy, to a good and ingenuous man whom you called your friend." When Tonico hesitates, João asks him also to consider what Dona Olga and his father will think when the news gets out, and how the scandal might impact Ramiro's health.

João also tells Tonico that if he refuses, he will publish a story about the entire scandal in the newspaper the next day. Tonico protests on the basis of their friendship, but João stands firm. "You took advantage of Nacib," João explained. "If it had been some other man I wouldn't care. I'm his friend too, and Gabriela's. You took advantage of both of them. Either you agree or I'll cover you with shame, I'll hold you up to ridicule. With the political situation as it is, you won't even be able to stay in Ilhéus."

Tonico finally agrees, and the men visit the Judge to get his approval. Gabriela also agrees. Nacib can stay in town, still a bachelor, and Gabriela was never really Mrs. Saad. Nacib's restraint impresses many, including Nhô-Galo, who explains, "I always liked Nacib and now I like him even more. At last Ilhéus has a civilized man." Gabriela goes to live with Dona Arminda. Gabriela still loves Nacib, and does not understand why married men are allowed to be with other women, but a married woman cannot do the same. She hopes that having the marriage annulled will mean that Nacib will stop being angry with her. Dona Arminda warns Gabriela that Nacib will never take her back, but Gabriela hopes to at least go back to the bar and cook for him.

Nacib is miserable. He thinks back on happy memories of Gabriela, not realizing that most of the best memories are from the time before they wed. Nacib becomes very popular, and constantly receives invitations from people in town. People like and respect Nacib even more than before. Although he expects people to mock him for letting Tonico and Gabriela live, no one does. Instead, they mock Tonico, who no longer visits the bar. No one mentions Gabriela, but Nacib learns from Dona Arminda that Gabriela is working in Dora's dress shop.

The bar, however, is not the same without Gabriela. Nacib desperately needs a new cook. While he is waiting for one to arrive, Mundinho contacts him about the restaurant.



Nacib explains he has been too depressed to move forward with their plans without Gabriela, but now he is feeling better and is ready to proceed. Mundinho tells Nacib he understands, that he has been in a similar situation himself, and that is why he ran away to Ilhéus in the first place.

Part Two, Fourth Chapter: The Moonlight of Gabriela: Sections titled From the Aristocratic Ofenísia to the Plebeian Gabriela, with Divers Events and Thefts of Money, Of How Nacib Broke and Did Not Break the Unwritten Law, or How Mrs. Saad Became Gabriela Again, Of Gabriela's Love, and Of Life's Surprises Analysis

Gabriela is finally free again. Although she loves and misses Nacib, she regrets having married him and all of the expectations that came with that commitment. When Nacib allows Tonico and Gabriela to live, he sets an example for the entire community. Some of the smartest people in town, including João, Ezequiel, and the Judge, help Nacib devise a solution that is less violent than the traditional methods of handling these types of problems. The town's reaction is a sign of how much people like Nacib and how good a person he is. The people are loyal to him. Nacib becomes more popular and more respected as a result. Tonico, having betrayed his friends, is now the outcast, so he is also punished, yet in a more civilized way. As Ilhéus continues to embrace progress, all of its people are becoming more civilized. Their acceptance of Nacib's actions demonstrates their willingness to change.



Part Two, Fourth Chapter: The Moonlight of Gabriela: Sections titled Of the Glass Snake, Of the Tolling of the Bells, Of the (Official) End of Gloria's Loneliness, Of Profit, Loss, and a Chef de Cuisine

Part Two, Fourth Chapter: The Moonlight of Gabriela: Sections titled Of the Glass Snake, Of the Tolling of the Bells, Of the (Official) End of Gloria's Loneliness, Of Profit, Loss, and a Chef de Cuisine Summary

Clemente still mourns for Gabriela, and Melk grieves for his daughter Malvina. After the seedlings are planted, the colonel summons Fagundes. Melk tells Fagundes he will take him back to Ilhéus soon, for he will need his help to win the election, and they will have to use guns to do it. Clemente kills a beautiful glass snake. When Fagundes asks why, since the snake is harmless, Clemente says the snake is "too pretty, and that's harm enough."

Colonel Ramiro dies, and Ilhéans wonder who will take his place. Alfredo Bastos and Colonel Leal seem to be the most obvious replacements. Although Leal has never accepted an invitation to political office before, the Governor offers him the state senate seat that now sits vacant. Coriolano finds out about Gloria's other lover, but does not kill the couple. He just puts Gloria out of her fine house.

Leal visits Mundinho at his office. He admits he ordered the newspapers burned, and Aristóles shooting. He tells Mundinho he was prepared to do whatever was needed in order to secure Ramiro's position. He had already assigned a longtime employee to kill Mundinho. If Ramiro had not died, Mundinho would have been killed. Leal explains he would have done anything to support his friend if he were still alive, but now the contest is over. Now Leal says Mundinho is the only man who can take Ramiro's place.

Mundinho is shocked. When he learned Leal was waiting to see him, he had gotten his pistol ready. He was prepared for anything but what actually happened. He never expected Leal to support him. He tells Leal he had also hired someone to get rid of Leal, but the days of violence are now over. Before Leal leaves, he tells Mundinho to consider him a friend, and he would like Mundinho to visit his plantation one day after the election is over.

Nacib still needs a new cook. Dona Arminda tells him Gabriela is the best cook for the restaurant, but Nacib cannot imagine having her work for him again. Nacib decides to



hire a professional chef on Mundinho's recommendation. The new chef, Fernand, calls himself a "chef de cuisine" and goes by only one name. He speaks often in French, although he is Portuguese, and he is incredibly expensive. He cooks strange dishes that are unfamiliar to the customers, and they don't like them.

Part Two, Fourth Chapter: The Moonlight of Gabriela: Sections titled Of the Glass Snake, Of the Tolling of the Bells, Of the (Official) End of Gloria's Loneliness, Of Profit, Loss, and a Chef de Cuisine Analysis

The glass snake that Clemente kills is symbolic of Gabriela, which is why Clemente kills it. He associates the beauty of the snake with Gabriela's beauty, and takes out the pain of losing her on the innocent snake.

When Colonel Ramiro dies and Mundinho takes his place, the Changing of the Guard theme is complete. Even Nacib's sudden involvement in politics reflects the change, since he has always stayed out of politics before, preferring to stay neutral. Coriolano's surprisingly non-violent response when he discovers Gloria's affair is a sign of the town's progress and its new era of civility. Leal's admissions to Mundinho and his desire to keep the peace further reflect the change that has taken place.



Part Two, Fourth Chapter: The Moonlight of Gabriela: Sections titled Of the Comrade in Battle, Of a Distinguished Son of Ilhéus, Gabriela Again, Of the Swedish Ship and the Golden Mermaid

Part Two, Fourth Chapter: The Moonlight of Gabriela: Sections titled Of the Comrade in Battle, Of a Distinguished Son of Ilhéus, Gabriela Again, Of the Swedish Ship and the Golden Mermaid Summary

Gabriela still longs for Nacib. One of her friends, Sete Voltas, has tattoos and notches on the handle of his razor for every man he has killed. When he sees Gabriela crying, he tells her he can make the new chef disappear. Sete says he will just scare him a bit to get him to leave town.

When Fernand vanishes, Nacib panics. The restaurant is scheduled to open the next day, and people from all over the region are on their way for its inauguration. João, his new best friend, encourages him to rehire Gabriela. The next day, everyone is happy to see Gabriela again, and the food is wonderful. Soon Nacib and Gabriela become lovers again. Nacib still makes love with other women, too, but Gabriela is his favorite.

In the harbor, a channel emerges, and the sandbar problem is finally resolved. The town holds a large farewell party to say goodbye and thank you to all of the engineers. New businesses and professional associations are being created every day in Ilhéus, and great progress is underway. As the elections are about to be held, a huge Swedish freighter arrives in Ilhéus, and the entire town celebrates this latest sign of change. Fireworks go off, and everyone goes to the harbor to admire the ship. Businesses close their offices, and schools release their students to join in the merriment. The colonels draw their pistols and fire shots into the air, and a symbolic bag of Ilhéan cacao, the first to be shipped directly to a foreign country, is ceremoniously carried onto the ship and announced by a speech by no less than the Doctor himself. The following night, a drunken Swedish sailor goes into Nacib's bar. The bars in town served free rum to the sailors the night before, but tonight the man has to pay for his liquor. The Swede offers Nacib a brooch with a golden mermaid as payment, and thinking of Gabriela's face when she sees the gift, Nacib pours the sailor a drink.



Part Two, Fourth Chapter: The Moonlight of Gabriela: Sections titled Of the Comrade in Battle, Of a Distinguished Son of Ilhéus, Gabriela Again, Of the Swedish Ship and the Golden Mermaid Analysis

The final sections of the book resolve several sub-plots at once. The sandbar is now fixed, a clear channel now in its place. Large ships can navigate freely in the harbor without fear of being trapped. This revolutionary improvement in Ilhéus is a symbol of the changes in everyone's lives. In this thriving era of progress, everyone can now breathe and move more freely without fear.

Gabriela can cook and love Nacib, but still sing and dance with the other shepherdesses and walk barefoot. She is no longer trapped like the old vessels mired in the harbor. Even Professor Josué and Gloria walk freely about town and are frequently seen together. The road for Mundhino's changes has also been cleared, and the days of the unwritten cruel law appear to be over, so residents no longer have to live in fear. The violence from the days of the cacao wars appears to finally have come to an end, and with the election results predetermined, the conflict between the two warring political factions has also been resolved. A bit of hypocrisy remains, as evidenced by Tónico's appearance as the "personification of propriety" when he goes with Dona Olga to the pier to see the Swedish ship. In all other ways, peace, harmony, and love have come to Ilhéus, all in the name of progress and civilization.



Characters

Gabriela

Gabriela is a young mulatto girl, a migrant from the backlands who travels to Ilhéus to find work as a cook. After Nacib hires her, the two become lovers and eventually marry. Gabriela, however, is a free spirit. Sensual and beautiful, the young woman is still a child at heart, and dreams about attending the circus and dancing in the town Christmas pageant.

Gabriela has no desire to be a kept woman. Before marrying Nacib, she declines multiple offers from the colonels in town who want to make Gabriela their mistress. The men offer her charge accounts, a fine home and fine clothing, but Gabriela is not interested. For Gabriela, the finer things in life are not expensive. She enjoys Nacib's cozy little home and bar. She is content to cook and clean all day, and does not understand why she should stop doing those things after she and Nacib get married. Gabriela is a simple woman of simple tastes, and has no need for social conventions of the time, especially those that define how a married woman should behave.

Gabriela also believes that sex between two consenting adults is fine, even if one or both of the partners is married, and it is this belief that ruins Gabriela's marriage with Nacib. Gabriela loves her husband. She is unfaithful simply because she wants to have sex with another man she finds beautiful - Tonico Bastos. Although Gabriela knows that this behavior is forbidden, she indulges anyway since she sees no harm in it. She does not think of the consequences before she acts. Even after Nacib kicks her out of the house, Gabriela does not believe having sex with Tonico was wrong, but she understands that it was wrong to hurt Nacib.

Nacib the Arab

Also called the Turk, Nacib Saad is described as an "honest, hardworking fellow." He owns the Vesuvius bar, and eventually opens the Commerce Restaurant. Nacib is Syrian, but he has lived in Ilhéus since he was a child. Nacib is tall and fat, with large eyes, "a flat head, and a luxurious growth of hair." He has an enormous black mustache that makes him look "like a dethroned sultan."

Nacib hires Gabriela to cook at the Vesuvius bar and later at the restaurant, but his true dream is to one day own his own cacao plantation. After Nacib and Gabriela fall in love, Nacib tries to change her, molding her into the high-society wife Nacib wants her to be, but his efforts are wasted. Nacib does not understand why Gabriela does not want the things other women want.

When Nacib finds Gabriela with Tonico, he beats her savagely. Yet he does not kill her, despite "the cruel law" that would allow him to do so. Nacib banishes Gabriela from his home and annuls their marriage. Nacib's decision to let both Gabriela and Tonico live



establishes a precedent in Ilhéus for civilized behavior, and some residents begin to view Nacib as the most civilized man in all of Ilhéus. Although Nacib is heartbroken by Gabriela's infidelity, he later rehires her as the cook for his new restaurant, and their romance begins anew.

Mundinho Falcão

Mundinho Falcão is a businessman from Rio who comes to Ilhéus to sell cacao but grows attached to the town and its residents. Mundinho becomes a politician, opposing Colonel Ramiro Bastos. Mundinho brings engineers and dredges to town to remove the sandbar problem in the harbor and make it possible for large ships to pass through and export Ilhéan cacao directly to foreign countries.

Father Basilio

Father Basilio is one of the town's priests. He also owns a cacao plantation, and he has several children with his housekeeper, Otália.

Tuíscã

Tuíscã is a young Negro boy who works for the Dos Reis sisters and befriends Gabriela.

Colonel Manuel of the Jaguars

Colonel Manuel is another plantation owner, so named because his plantations are "out in the wilds where the roars of jaguars could still be heard."

Jacob the Russian

Jacob the Russian organizes the bus line with Moacir Estrêla.

Moacir Estrêla

Moacir Estrêla organizes the bus line with Jacob the Russian.

The Doctor

The Doctor's full name is Pelópidas de Assunção d'Ávila, but he is commonly referred to as the Doctor. He is a retired public servant, writer, respected speaker, and man of great influence in Ilhéus.



Colonel Ribeirinho

Colonel Ribeirinho is one of the plantation owners who support Mundinho's political efforts.

Colonel Amâncio Leal

Colonel Amâncio Leal is blind in one eye and has a crippled left arm due to his early struggles for control of the cacao in Ilhéus. He is a fierce and loyal supporter of Colonel Ramiro Bastos.

Nhô-Galo

Nhô-Galo is a functionary of the Tax Board, described in the book as "an inveterate bohemian, sociable, nasal-voiced, and uncompromisingly anticlerical."

The Captain

The Captain's full name is Miguel Batista de Oliveira. He is the son of former mayor Cazuzinha, who was driven out of politics by the Bastos family.

Professor Josué

Professor Josué is a professor at the parochial school in Ilhéus. He first falls in love with Malvina, and then begins a scandalous affair with Colonel Ribeiro's mistress, Gloria.

Dr. Ezequiel Prado

Dr. Ezequiel Prado is a lawyer, drunk, and excellent orator. He is also retained by Dr. Osmundo's father to prosecute Colonel Jesuíno for the murders of his son and Jesuíno's wife. Dr. Prado is instrumental in helping Nacib get his marriage from Gabriela annulled.

Ofenísia Ávila

Ofenísia Ávila is the Doctor's ancestor and tragic heroine featured in a Teodoro de Castro poem, *The Languor of Ofenísia*, after which the first chapter of the book is named. The poem describes a secret love affair between Ofenísia and Pedro II, a former Emperor.



Risoleta

Risoleta is the cross-eyed prostitute Nacib sometimes sleeps with.

Lazy Chico

Lazy Chico is one of the young men who work at the Vesuvius bar for Nacib.

Dona Arminda

Dona Arminda is Lazy Chico's mother. She is also a spiritualist and friend to Gabriela, as well as Nacib's next-door neighbor.

The Dos Reis Sisters

The Dos Reis Sisters are two sisters who help Nacib by cooking for the Vesuvius bar occasionally. They also create the annual Christmas Nativity tableau.

Segismundo

Segismundo is the man who ran the registry office when Nacib was a child and registered his Syrian family as Brazilians.

Lourival Falcão

Lourival Falcão is one of Mundinho's older brothers.

Emílio Mendes Falcão

Emílio Mendes Falcão is one of Mundinho's older brothers. He is also a congressman.

Madeleine

Madeleine is the wife of Mundinho's brother, Lourival. Mundinho loves her, and moves to Ilhéus to get away from her.

João Fulgêncio

João Fulgêncio is one of the more intellectual and admired members of Ilhéan society. He becomes Nacib's best friend after Tônico betrays him with Gabriela.



Filomena

Filomena is Nacib's original cook at the Vesuvius bar. She is later replaced by Gabriela.

Anabela

Anabela is the ballerina who comes to Ilhéus to perform at the theater and the cabaret.

Prince Sandra

Prince Sandra is the magician who comes to Ilhéus to perform at the theater. He is married to Anabela the ballerina.

Colonel Ramiro Bastos

Colonel Ramiro Bastos owns a cacao plantation and controls most of the politicians in the state. In the book, Ramiro becomes engaged in a power struggle with Mundinho Falcão.

Tonico Bastos

Tonico Bastos is one of Ramiro's sons. Tonico is a ladies' man and eventually becomes a source of ridicule for the other men after Nacib finds him with Gabriela and strikes him.

Clovis Costa

Clovis Costa owns the newspaper, the Ilhéus Daily.

Alfredo Bastos

Alfredo Bastos is Colonel Ramiro's son. Alfredo is a pediatrician and a state assemblyman.

Eaglebeak

Eaglebeak is one of the young men who work at Nacib's bar. He is the one who tells Nacib about Gabriela's affair with Tonico.



Clemente

Clemente is one of Gabriela's former lovers that she met while traveling toward Ilhéus. Clemente is also friends with the Negro Fagundes and a member of Melk's crew.

The Negro Fagundes

The Negro Fagundes is a friend to Gabriela and Clemente, a member of Melk's crew, and the would-be assassin of Aristóteles Pires, a powerful colonel from Itabuna.

Gloria

Gloria is the most scandalous woman in all of Ilhéus. She is the mistress of the feared Colonel Coriolano Ribeiro, and off-limits to all other men in town. She waits at her window every day and sighs at all of the men she cannot have. Gloria is very lonely until she begins a passionate affair with Professor Josué, which ultimately ends her position as Colonel Ribeiro's kept woman.

Colonel Coriolano Ribeiro

Colonel Coriolano Ribeiro is Gloria's lover. He throws Gloria and Professor Josué out of the house when he finds them together.

Colonel Melk Tavares

Colonel Melk Tavares is another plantation owner. Melk is one of Ramiro Bastos' closest allies. He hires Clemente and the Negro Fagundes as part of his crew, and pays Fagundes to assassinate Aristóteles Pires.

Malvina

Malvina is Melk Tavares' daughter. Malvina falls in love with the first engineer who arrives in Ilhéus and then runs away from boarding school to live on her own. Malvina is the most independent woman in Ilhéus.

Sinhazinha

Sinhazinha is the wife of Colonel Jesuíno Mendonça. Sinhazinha and her lover, Dr. Osmundo, are murdered after her husband finds them in bed together.



Dr. Osmundo

Dr. Osmundo is a dentist and poet. He is murdered after Colonel Jesuíno Mendonça finds him in bed with Jesuíno's wife, Sinhazinha.

Colonel Jesuíno Mendonça

Colonel Jesuíno Mendonça is the colonel who executes his wife Sinhazinha and her lover, Dr. Osmundo, when he finds them in bed together. He is later convicted of their murders, contrary to the unspoken "cruel law" that has previously led to the acquittal of other murderers committed under these circumstances. Colonel Jesuíno Mendonça is the first man to be convicted in Ilhéus of murdering an unfaithful wife and her lover.

Dr. Maurício Caires

Dr. Maurício Caires is the attorney who defends Jesuíno in the murder of his wife and her lover.

Dona Olga

Dona Olga is Tónico Bastos' much-feared jealous wife.

Felipe

Felipe is the Spanish shoemaker who befriends Gabriela.

Dr. Rômulo Vieira

Dr. Rômulo Vieira is an engineer that gets involved with Malvina.

Colonel Altino Brandão

Colonel Altino Brandão is one of the biggest planters in the region. He stops supporting Ramiro and makes an allegiance with Mundinho.

Jerusa Bastos

Jerusa Bastos is Ramiro's granddaughter and Tónico's niece. She is also a friend to Gabriela.



Dr. Argileu Palmeira

Dr. Argileu Palmeira is a poet who visits Ilhéus and gives a lecture.

Colonel Aristóteles Pires

Colonel Aristóteles Pires is a key figure in the election. Pires lives in Itabuna, and he is shot in Ilhéus by Fagundes.

Dr. Vitor Melo

Dr. Vitor Melo is the congressman Mundinho is trying to replace.

Whitey

Whitey is one of Melk's henchmen. Whitey is involved in the newspaper burning and Aristóteles Pires' attempted assassination.

Fernand

Fernand is the chef from Rio that comes to work at Nacib's restaurant and leaves when Sete threatens him.

Sete Voltas

Sete Voltas is a friend of Gabriela's who threatens Nacib's new chef, Fernand, to get him to leave town so Gabriela can get her job back.



Objects/Places

The Southern Journal

The Southern Journal is the Bastoses' weekly newspaper.

A History of the Ávila Family and of the City of Ilhéus

A History of the Ávila Family and of the City of Ilhéus is the name of the Doctor's book.

A Historic Love Affair

A Historic Love Affair is a new publication of the Doctor's book that only includes chapters on Ofenísia and her affair with the Emperor.

The Vesuvius Bar

The Vesuvius Bar is the oldest bar in town. Owned by Nacib the Arab, the bar is where Gabriela first comes to work as a cook. The bar is also a popular meeting place among Ilhéan residents.

The Southern Bahia Bus Line

The Southern Bahia Bus Line connects Ilhéus to Itabuna. It is organized by Jacob the Russian and Moacir Estrêla and backed by Mundinho.

The Model Stationery Store

The Model Stationery Store is run by João Fulgêncio. The store sells books and is a popular meeting place.

The Ilhéus Daily

The Ilhéus Daily is a daily newspaper run by Clóvis Costa and backed by Mundinho.

The Progress Club

The Progress Club is an organization of business and professional men led by Mundinho Falcão. It is the site of Sunday tea dances and many balls.



Bahia

Bahia is the state capital.

Itabuna

Itabuna is a city near Ilhéus, connected by the bus-line.

The Rui Barbosa Literary Society

The Rui Barbosa Literary Society is a group for poets and other intellectuals in town, including Ari Santos and Dr. Osmundo.

The Cruel Law

This unspoken law allows men of Ilhéus to kill their wives and their wives' lovers if they discover they are having an affair.

The Nativity Tableau

The Nativity Tableau is the annual holiday display created by the Dos Reis sisters.

Seabra Plaza

Seabra Plaza is where Nacib meets Colonel Ramiro Bastos during Bastos' daily habit of sitting in the sun on a bench.

The Slave Market

The Slave Market is what Ilhéans call the migrant camp where Nacib first finds Gabriela.

The Big Noise

The Big Noise is the bar where Gabriela goes to find Whitey after Fagundes shoots Aristóteles.

The Commerce Restaurant

The Commerce Restaurant is Nacib's new establishment, backed by Mundinho.



Themes

Hypocrisy

Ilhéus is full of self-righteous residents who are busy secretly doing the exact same immoral things for which they condemn others. When Colonel Jesuíno murders his wife and her dentist, he is being hypocritical. Jesuíno is not faithful to his wife. The author explains that the Colonel has a fondness for young country girls. There is a double standard for the men and women of Ilhéus, which only feeds this environment of hypocrisy.

When Gabriela first becomes Nacib's lover, she knows that he is also lying with Risoleta, the prostitute. She knows that there may be others as well. She does not mind. She does not complain, she does not attack Nacib or the other women, and she certainly does not consider killing them. Yet when Nacib finds Gabriela with his friend, Tónico Bastos, he is expected to kill them both, and fears he will be called a coward if he does not. When Nacib strikes Tónico and beats Gabriela, his actions are not frowned upon. To the contrary, Nacib is praised for not resorting to even more violence, for sparing the lovers' lives.

Dr. Maurício, the attorney who will eventually defend Jesuíno in court, complains about immoral, depraved behavior by faithless women like Sinhazinha. He strongly believes she got what she deserved for betraying her husband. The news that Sinhazinha was found naked wearing nothing but black stockings is a further titillation to the town gossips, including Maurício, who implies that such things are a further implication of how "depraved" Sinhazinha, and indeed the entire town of Ilhéus, has become in the name of progress. Yet hours after Dr. Maurício condemns Sinhazinha's behavior, he asks a young woman (who is not his wife) to lie down wearing nothing but black stockings.

The Changing of the Guard

Gabriela, Clove and Cinnamon provides the rich history of a violent Ilhéus, full of cacao colonels who fought over land and killed anyone who got in their way. Colonel Ramiro Bastos, Colonel Melk Tavares, and Colonel Amâncio Leal are some of the most powerful men in town, and they remember the old, violent days when they were first making names for themselves. They cling to the old ways that have served them well and resist any pressure to change.

Mundinho Falcão, in contrast, brings new ideas, technology, and gentility to Ilhéus. He represents change in the town, and he rejects the idea that things must be done the same as they have for years. By the end of the story, Mundinho has invested in or created multiple enterprises, including the new bus line that runs between Ilhéus and Itabuna, the Progress Club, the Ilhéus Daily, and the Commerce Restaurant.



Mundinho also uses his influence to have engineers and dredges brought to the Ilhéus harbor to remove the sandbar obstacle that has prevented Ilhéus from being able to export their cacao directly to foreign countries. This change allows Ilhéan exporters to avoid costly state export taxes and increase their profits.

When Colonels Leal and Melk have the newspaper burned and attempt to assassinate Colonel Aristóteles, this is a clear example of the Old Guard clinging to their power and resorting to the old way of handling problems. After Ramiro dies, the Old Guard gives up. Leal gives his support to Mundinho, and the opposition wins the election, thereby making the Changing of the Guard complete.

Fish Out of Water

The book is filled with examples of people being placed in uncomfortable, unfamiliar situations. Gabriela is so miserable wearing her fancy shoes that they literally cause her physical pain. When the other wives speak to her at the ball, she does not know what to say, so she remains silent. She does not want the things that other wives want, and Gabriela cannot understand the reasoning behind Ilhéan social conventions, including the idea that you cannot sleep with whomever you wish.

Many of the old colonels and their wives profess interest in the lectures given by poets from out of town, yet they really do not even understand what is being said. Even Nacib, after he forces Gabriela to miss the opening of the circus and instead attend the poet's lecture, has difficulty staying awake during the reading. He pretends to be interested in something that is not interesting to him, pretends to be someone he is not. He is much more comfortable serving drinks and chatting with friends at the bar.

Style

Point of View

Gabriela, Clove and Cinnamon is mostly written from Nacib's point of view, in the third-person, yet in a few sections, Nacib is not even present, and readers are treated to a third-person narrative. The author switches easily, so that readers learn the thoughts of a character like Colonel Ramiro Bastos in one section, Mundinho Falcão in the next, and then a totally different character like Tuísca or Fagundes in another. The language also changes subtly based on the person whose thoughts are being exposed, which clarifies who is thinking what.

For example, in the section titled, "Of a Political Boss in the Sun," readers see the perspective change from Nacib, who has been busy searching for a new cook, to Colonel Ramiro Bastos. Although Ramiro's thoughts become the principal view in the section, the Colonel's simple acknowledgement of the Captain also reveals the Captain's feelings about Ramiro, with third-person objective narration that explains the history between the two influential men.

Setting

The story takes place during the 1920s in Ilhéus, a small town in the Bahia region of Brazil. Although many of the sections in the book are set in Nacib's bar, other common meeting places in Ilhéus are also depicted, including Ramiro's home, Mundinho's office, the Progress Club, and Nacib's house, especially the little room where Gabriela sleeps.

Occasionally, other towns are also depicted, specifically when Mundinho visits Rio to see his family, when Gabriela, Clemente, and Fagundes travel from the backlands to Ilhéus, and when Mundinho meets with Aristóteles in Itabuna. Occasionally, especially when Clemente and Fagundes are speaking, the action takes place on Melk's cacao plantation or en route to that location.

Language and Meaning

The book was written in the 1950s and has been translated from Portuguese to English. Many of the names have spelling and symbols that may be unfamiliar to some students. The author uses a strong, highly descriptive vocabulary that is slightly formal and may require some mastery of vocabulary in order to get the full effect of the writing.

Readers will notice that the language becomes increasingly formal when any of the more intellectual characters, especially the Doctor, the Captain, or one of the visiting poets, is being discussed or giving a speech. Some words are also older and not in common usage today, so that presents a slight challenge in reading comprehension.



The book is written in an older style that relies on very descriptive passages and flashbacks in order to tell the story. For example, readers will learn quite a bit about the history of Ilhéus and its many characters before they are even introduced to Gabriela, who does not appear until page 91 of the book.

Structure

The book is 425 pages long with a short postscript that is only a few short paragraphs. It is split into Parts One and Two, and then further divided into four lengthy chapters. Each chapter contains multiple sections that tell a single story. For example, the first chapter contains fourteen individual sections. The first chapter takes the longest to read, since much of the early sections is devoted to highly descriptive passages that describe each of the characters and the history of Ilhéus in detail.

The book also takes some time to get through, since the vocabulary used is fairly extensive, and the author uses foreshadowing, sometimes very subtly, to give an indication of how each character's actions will affect the outcome of the multiple sub plots involved in the story. There are dozens of characters introduced in the book, and most play significant roles in the storytelling process.



Quotes

"The only talent you ever showed here was for girls and liquor. So when you left and took your money with you, we assumed you were off on a super-binge of some sort. We've been waiting for you to come back so we could straighten you out." p. 41, Part One, Ch. 1, In Which Mundinho Falcão, an Important Character, Makes His Appearance Looking at Ilhéus through Binoculars

"The snake has come to sun itself."
p. 65, Part One, Ch. 1, Of a Political Boss in the Sun

"A woman's place was in the house, taking care of her children and home. A young woman's occupation was to wait for a husband and, meanwhile, to learn to sew, play the piano, and run the kitchen." p. 68, Part One, Ch. 1, Of a Political Boss in the Sun

"Backward and ignorant, hostile to the new world in which they live, incapable of understanding the very meaning of civilization or of progress, these men must no longer be allowed to rule." p. 97, Part One, Ch. 2, Of Temptation at the Window

"Gloria would have liked to slam the window in their faces, but alas! She could not bring herself to do it, for those gleams of desire in the men's eyes, those smiles, those fearful, fleeting phrases, were all she had in her loneliness. Much too little for her thirst and hunger, but if she closed the window she would lose even that little."
Gloria, p. 100, Part One, Ch. 2, Of Temptation at the Window

"For this was how it was in Ilhéus: the honor of a deceived husband could be cleansed only by blood." p. 104, Part One, Ch. 2, Of the Cruel Law

"The only treatment for a faithless wife was violent death."
p. 104, Part One, Ch. 2, Of the Cruel Law

"Who would have thought it? Such a good churchwoman!"
p. 105, Part One, Ch. 2, Of Black Stockings

"It's always sad to learn of the death of a beautiful woman. Especially such a horrible death. A beautiful woman is sacred." p. 107, Part One, Ch. 2, Of Black Stockings

"Between death and love, I choose love." p. 107, Part One, Ch. 2, Of Black Stockings

"An honorable woman is an impregnable fortress." p. 110, Part One, Ch. 2, Of Black Stockings



"A dentist's obligation is to treat teeth and not to recite verses to pretty clients, my friend. It is as I say and repeat: we are threatened by these depraved customs of decadent lands. The society of Ilhéus is being dissolved by the solvent slime of imported modernism."

p. 113, Part One, Ch. 2, Of Black Stockings

"I don't keep women for others to enjoy." p. 117, Part One, Ch. 2, Of the Law of Concubines

"Women are dangerous, they get you in trouble."
p. 134, Part One, Ch. 2, Of the Boat in the Forest

"Ilhéus nowadays isn't worth a damn. It's not like it used to be. It's becoming civilized."
p. 135, Part One, Ch. 2, Of the Boat in the Forest

"Life was rotten, full of hypocrisy; Ilhéus was a heartless town where nothing mattered but money." p. 151, Part One, Ch. 2, Of Food and Funerals

"Morality grows weak, customs degenerate, alien adventurers intrude upon us..."
p. 171, Part Two, Ch. 3, Gabriela and a Flower

"Keep an eye on your treasure. There are robbers about."
p.190, Part Two, Ch. 3, Of Nacib's Confusion

"Marriage is a serious matter, Colonel. First you have to meet the woman of your dreams. Marriage is born of love." p. 196, Part Two, Ch. 3, Of Conversations and a Burning

"If you, sir, agree, who is he to refuse?" p. 215, Part Two, Ch. 3, Of the Ball and the Englishwoman

"The resistance of every woman, even the most faithful, has its limit." p. 219, Part Two, Ch. 3, Of the Ball and the Englishwoman

"Isn't that what it is? Love — the most wonderful and most terrible thing in the world." p. 227, Part Two, Ch. 3, Of a Bird's Sad Song

"I won't ever compromise. No one else is going to rule Ilhéus. What was good enough yesterday is good enough today. Even if I have to die with my gun in my hand."
p. 242, Part Two, Ch. 3, Of High-Backed Chairs

"I agree with Dona Dorotéia. She has just told me that the devil is on the loose in Ilhéus.



She's not quite sure whether he's living in Gloria's house or here in the bar. Where did you hide him, Nacib?"

p. 244, Part Two, Ch. 3, Of the Devil Loose in the Streets

"There are certain kinds of flowers —have you ever noticed?— that are beautiful and fragrant as long as they grow in the garden. But if you put them in vases, even silver vases, they wilt and die." p. 274, Part Two, Ch. 3, Of Flowers and Vases

"I was born a penny and I can't pass for a nickel." p. 292, Part Two, Ch. 4, Of an Inspired Bard and His Mundane Needs

"Why the devil did they have to go and kill people on the day when they were giving me a dinner? Couldn't they have picked some other time?"

p. 316, Part Two, Ch. 4, The Man Hunt

"But it's for your own good that I pick on you. I want you to make a good impression on people."

p. 335, Part Two, Ch. 4, Of the Joys and Sorrows of Matrimony

"There's nothing I enjoy more than to observe Gabriela in the midst of a group of people. Do you know what she reminds me of? A fragrant rose in a bouquet of artificial flowers."

p. 360-61, Part Two, Ch. 4, From the Aristocratic Ofenísia to the Plebeian Gabriela, with Divers Events and Thefts of Money

"Love is not to be proven or measured. It's like Gabriela. It exists, and that is enough. The fact that you can't understand or explain something doesn't do away with it. I know nothing about the stars, but I see them in the heavens; and my ignorance in no way affects either their existence or their beauty."

p. 376, Part Two, Ch. 4, Of Gabriela's Love



Topics for Discussion

Discuss the town of Ilhéus and its residents. Would you like to have lived there during the 1920s? Which characters and aspects of Ilhéan life do you think you would enjoy most? Which would you enjoy least?

Who do you think is the most noble character in the book - Nacib, Gabriela, Malvina, or Gloria? A different character? Discuss the reasons behind your choice, and how you define nobility in terms of these characters.

Do you approve of Nacib and Gabriela's romance? How do you think Nacib should have acted when he learned that Gabriela was unfaithful? Should Gabriela regret her indiscretion? If so, why?

Who is the biggest villain in the book - Colonel Jesuíno, Fagundes, Tónico, or someone else? Discuss the reasons behind your choice, and how you determine who is a villain in terms of these characters.

Do you see any parallels between the political struggle in Ilhéus and the politics of today? What are the similarities? What are the differences?

If you could speak to the residents of Ilhéus, what would you say? What lessons could you teach them?

If you could be any character in the book, which would you be, and why? What type of social conventions would be important to you?