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English 1 Honors  
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### Unit 1 Short Stories Project

In this unit, I have read four different short stories, but for this project, I chose to analyze the short story *Tuesday Siesta* by Gabriel García Márquez. The story begins with the narrator explaining what is outside the train that the mother and girl are on. The narrator then proceeds to explain what it is like inside the third-class car in which the mother and daughter are in. The story continues explaining different small events that happened on the train. Next, when the girl and mother get off the train, the narrator explains how empty the station that they are in is, and how empty the town that they are in is. The mother then knocks on the priest's door, and after a conversation with a woman at the door, the mother and the girl sat down and began to speak with the priest. The mother was attempting to get the keys to the cemetery so she could visit the grave of her son, a thief that was killed the week before, with her daughter. Eventually, the mother is awarded the keys, but the priest recommends that she waits to leave because people been to surround the house watching the mother and the girl, but the mother insists on leaving immediately. Before you know it, the story ends. The author, Gabriel García Márquez, never describes the mother and the girl's trip to the cemetery. Gabriel García Márquez is a world-renowned author of many short stories and poems. He has been awarded the Nobel Prize, along with various other awards. Gabriel García Márquez was born on March 6, 1927, in Aracatuba, Colombia, and he died on April 17, 2014, in Mexico City, Mexico. Some recognize him as one of the best writers in the twentieth century.

In the story Tuesday Siesta, there are two main characters the girl and the mother. The girl is twelve years old and is very quiet as, during her mother's conversation with the priest, she only spoke once, and did not speak much throughout the rest of the story. A few more characteristics to describe the girl are resilient, prideful, and poor. The girl is resilient because when her mom said, "Later, don't take a drink anywhere even if you are dying of thirst. Above all, no crying." The girl nodded her head." The girl simply nodded her head after her mother made this town seem extremely dangerous, but she did not show her fear, she overcame her fear and confidently walked off the train holding her bouquet wrapped in newspaper. The girl is prideful because she is always standing up straight and tall, and never complaining about being hungry despite her poverty. "The girl was twelve years old, and it was the first time she'd ever been on a train.". This quote proves that the girl is poor because, in a time when traveling by train was a lot more common than it is today, the girl had never been on a train until she was twelve. This is most likely because her parents could not afford the tickets because her family is poor. The mother, on the other hand, was outspoken, showed great dignity, prideful, rude at times, and determined. The mother is outspoken as when she was asked by the priest, "Didn't you ever try to get him on the right track?" she replied, "He was a very good man." This shows that the mother is outspoken because most people would think of a robber as a bad person, but she finds her son, who was a robber, to be a good person. I find the mother to be rude at times because, throughout the whole train ride, she never spoke to her daughter once other than telling her what do to.

The mood of the story is mysterious and suspenseful. I find the mood to be mysterious because you do not find out the reason as to why the mother and girl traveled to this town until about halfway through the story. I find the story suspenseful because suspense builds up as the mother's conversation continues, and the reader is still unaware of who the mother and girl are

visiting. The building suspense ends when the story says, “‘He’s the thief that was killed here last week,’ said the woman in the same tone of voice. ‘I am his mother.’” The suspenseful mood is broken as you, the reader, are finally aware of who’s grave the girl and the mother are seeing in the cemetery. An example of the mysterious mood in the story is when the mother says to the girl before they step off the train, “Later, don’t take a drink anywhere even if you are dying of thirst. Above all, no crying.” This shows a mysterious mood as it is very mysterious what could be so dangerous in this town.

In the story Tuesday Siesta, a great amount of imagery is used. Most of the imagery in the story is at the beginning of the story, and it describes the land surrounding the train as it strolls down the railroad tracks. For example, at the very start of the story the narrator describes the train and its surroundings, “The train emerged from the quivering tunnel of sandy rocks, began to cross the symmetrical, interminable banana plantations, and the air became humid and they couldn’t feel the sea breeze anymore. A stifling blast of smoke came in the car window. On the narrow road parallel to the railway, there were oxcarts loaded with green bunches of bananas. Beyond the road, in uncultivated paces set at intervals, there were offices with electric fans, red-brick buildings, and residences with chairs and little white tables on the terraces among dusty palm trees and rosebushes.” Another example of the great use of imagery in the story is when Gabriel García Márquez uses great figurative language in using imagery to greatly describe the train station and end around it, “There was no one at the station. On the other side of the street, on the sidewalk shaded by almond trees, only the pool hall was open. The town was floating in the heat. The woman and girl got off the train and crossed the abandoned station— the tiles split apart by the grass growing up between—and over to the shady side of the street.” Gabriel García Márquez greatly used the imagery in this story, and I feel as though it greatly affected the story in a positive.

The story, Tuesday Siesta, has a wonderful theme. The theme of the story is to show dignity despite your social class. This theme fits the story as both the mother and daughter show dignity and maintains their pride despite their poverty. For example, the mother showed dignity when she said, "It's an emergency." This shows dignity as she did not show a lack of pride when the woman at the door told her she could not come in. The mother also shows dignity when she says, "We're alright this way." This shows great dignity and bravery as the woman went against the priest's advice and walked through a crowd of people that had been staring at her in the house

#### **Work Cited**

Page González Echevarria, Roberto. "Gabriel García Márquez." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Encyclopedia Britannica, inc., November 1, 2019, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Gabriel-Garcia-Marquez>.