

Example 1

In Allende's *The House of the Spirits*, Uncle Marcos building and taking off in the airplane shows that you are able to engage in activities that are in a sense, larger than yourself. Uncle Marcos doesn't undertake this airplane trip just for himself, he does it for all the people. Marcos build the plane, and in doing so he became a major spectacle. Through his flying machine, Marcos "became the star attraction of the season." People went on "Sunday outings to see the bird" and "venders and strolling photographers made a fortune." Marcos did not do this for himself, but he did it for all the people. His bird made many people happy, and that was his plan all along. Marcos did this activity selflessly, he put others enjoyment of the even before his own, and even his own safety. He built the "bird" from "an instruction manual written in English" and used his "invincible imagination, and a small dictionary." When the day came that he actually had to fly, the sky was "full of clouds." Marcos, caring more about the people and the even than his own safety, "did not want to disappoint them." Marcos showed up "punctually" at the spot where he would take off and "did not once look up at the sky," showing that he realized that if he did not take off on that day, he would let everyone down. The event attracted a very large amount of people, who were described as "perching" and "squeezing" to see Marcos take off. Marcos knew about the risks, and made a joke when people gave him flowers, telling them to "hold on to them and wait for him to crash, so they could take [the flowers] directly to the funeral." All of these details show how Marcos was not interested in monetary gain, personal gratification by being a star, but how he truly wanted to make people happy in the best way that he could. He knew the risks, but did not let them affect his true goal of doing something larger than himself, for his community.

Example 2

Esteban Trueba, in Allende's *The House of the Spirits*, is a violent, stubborn, and strongly opinionated man. He believes that he is always right, and that others that go against him should be punished. As he ages he continues to have outbursts and defy others wishes. The cemetery scene, on pages 304-306, displays Esteban's realization that he is in denial about his vicious manner and mortality.

At the beginning of the scene, he feels powerful and in control. He only wanted the best for "the two sisters that won my(his) heart." He fights for intricate details and perfection to be showcased by the mausoleum. He wanted the statues to be "faithful portraits of Rosa and Clara, with...their real shape," and he only accepted the designs when an artist did what he "had in mind." He used bribery and his "political power" in his attempts to persuade the del Valle family to allow Rosa's body to be moved. He denies defeat and decides that he must steal her body. This Esteban is the one seen throughout the book up to this point. He is a harsh man that doesn't take no for an answer, and Allende uses this as a direct contrast to his confession at the end of the scene.

Allende then begins to give examples of Trueba's softer side by using flashback asides and strong imagery and his memory of Rosa. These devices lead to to the conclusion that Esteban was truly infatuated with Rosa and her "milky skin, her mermaid hair, her honeyed eyes that caused such havoc, her hands clasping her mother-of-pearl rosary, her nuptial flower crown." His memory of her is so vivid that all he has to do is "close(ed) his eyes" in order to see her clear as life. The idea of him becoming emotionally softer is then physically supported by Esteban's statement that he "realized there was precious little

youth left in me if moving a coffin was enough to knock my heart off beat and make me see bright dots in the dark.” It is with this statement that he admits his aging and loss of strength. This revelation is then directly juxtaposed with Esteban’s “irrevocable decision” to see Rosa once more. Allende does this to prove that his stubborn, self-confident attitude is still very much alive in his character.

When her body is revealed, Rosa continues to be “just as I(he) had seen her many years before” and “exactly as I’d(he’d) seen her in my(his) dreams.” She is perfectly preserved in her intended “eternal rest.” As Esteban kissed his “immortal beloved,” “a breeze...slipped through a crack in the coffin.” Rosa disintegrates into “powder,” and all that was left was her “skull with empty sockets, a few strips of marble-colored skin clinging to its cheekbones, and a lock or two of moldy hair.” The dissolving of Rosa’s body is symbolic of Esteban’s destructive nature. It is only then that he mourns himself. It took him hurting someone he truly loved in an obviously recognized way for him to realize the faults in his vicious manner. The scene ends with Esteban finally agreeing to the words of his sister that he will be “left all alone,” “shriveled(ing) up,” and “die like a dog.” It is this final area of the scene in which he comes to a full realization of his flaws. Allende uses stages with in scene to show the progress and change. Esteban isn’t suddenly a different man in this scene, and he doesn’t completely change for the remainder of the book. He is growing as a person as he ages physically.

Esteban Trueba is a harsh and critical man throughout the story. This scene shows how a character’s attitude can be softened by someone they love. It is during this scene that he realizes why others dislike him. In the cemetery, surrounded by death, he discovers how alive and human he is.

