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**Ruiz Zafón, Carlos. *El prisionero del cielo*. Barcelona: Planeta, 2011.**

*The Prisoner of Heaven*, the third installment of the Tetralogy of the Cemetery of Forgotten books, preceded by *The Shadow of the Wind* (2001) and *The Angel's Game* (2008), reunites the readers with unforgettable and endearing characters a year and a half after the action of the first novel had ended. The novel is smartly divided into five sections; the first, "A Christmas Story," consists of 12 chapters narrating the arrival at the bookstore of Fermín's old acquaintance named only as "13" that is looking for a key. The second and longer part of the novel comprising 24 chapters, entitled "From Among the Dead," is a flashback to 1939, and narrates Fermín's past when he was an inmate in Montjuic. In the setting of the prison, Fermín encounters many characters including, Daniel

Martin, the protagonist of *The Angel's Game*; Salgado, the enigmatic "13"; and Mauricio Valls, who will be the sinister villain of the novel manipulating events behind the scenes. The third section of 13 chapters, "Rebirth," recounts Fermín's disappearance from Barcelona for a year and his subsequent return to watch over Daniel and his father. In "Suspicion" the fourth division of equal length, the novel returns to the narrative time of 1957, where Fermín and Daniel continue to investigate where Salgado has hidden his loot. Also, Daniel with the assistance of Prof. Albuquerque conspires to give Fermín an official identity so that he can marry in the church. The fifth part of nine chapters entitled, "The Name of the Hero," centers on Fermín's bachelor party and wedding. The novel ends with an epilogue dated 1960 narrating Daniel's visit his mother's grave where he finds a clue which sets up the concluding novel of the tetralogy.

Each of these sections includes an initial black and white photograph taken by Francesc Català-Roca, whose photography also graces the cover of the book. This Catalanian photographer, best known for his documentary of society, attempted to encapsulate the human element through a play of light in order to capture an ephemeral moment of people going about their daily activities. These photographs taken in 1949 depict either landmarks included in the novel or everyday street scenes. The images capture the tone of each section and reflect the chiaroscuro technique of description utilized in the novel. Additionally, the black and white pictures are reflective of the fascist regime's view of Spain and hint to the bleakness of that time period.

By opening the book, the reader once again becomes immersed in the beautiful description of the shadows of Barcelona and the delirium inducing Cemetery of the Forgotten Books. As in *The Shadow of the Wind*, this novel defies a single classification as it responds to an amalgam formed by a variety of genres. The first which is directly alluded to in the epilogue is that of a Christmas story. This is depicted in the text with the narration of the bookstore's dire circumstances and the installation of a nativity scene in the window that results in a "Christmas miracle" where sales surpass expectations allowing the bookstore to stay in business. Elements of the romance novel are present in the text as the reader follows the trials and tribulations of getting Bernarda and Fermín to the altar. Another genre that can be traced is that of the *roman-feuilleton*. This genre which foreshadows the detective novel and the soap opera is interwoven into the plot with Daniel's discovery of a love letter from an old boyfriend in Bea's coat pocket which causes him to doubt his wife's fidelity. Daniel's ensuing suspicion leads to the confrontation between the two men which is interrupted with the comedic appearance of Fermín who poses as a police officer in order to extricate Daniel from the volatile situation. This novel relies not only on the *roman-feuilleton*, but also on the recourses found in the detective novel to create suspense and intrigue in the text. Daniel's tailing of the mysterious man from the bookstore and subsequent learning of his true identity initiate this sequence. Later it is Daniel and Fermín who follow Salgado to the train station to learn of the hiding place of the thief's booty. Linked to the detective novel are elements of the historical novel which

are presented as the reader learns of some of the events that occurred during the Spanish Civil war and its aftermath.

Once again Ruiz Zafón's reader is engaged in the delightful play of metafictional elements although this aspect is not as developed as in the first novel of the tetralogy. In the novel, the texts themselves multiply until they fuse into one work. This is evidenced in the title of this work, *The prisoner of Heaven*, which refers to two texts simultaneously. In a Borgian play, authorship is called into question when one begins to read Ruiz Zafón's novel entitled *The Prisoner of Heaven* only to find it begins with an epigraph quoted from Julian Carax's own book entitled *The Prisoner of Heaven*. In the epigraph, Carax states that the book consists of a retelling of a Christmas tale and alludes to details that the reader will find in the book that he/she holds. Later in the novel, there is a reference made of another novel attributed to Carax which is entitled *The Shadow of the Wind*, the name of another one of Ruiz Zafón's books (308). Authorship seems to be fluid as *The Angel's Game* in this book is not accredited to Ruiz Zafón but the writer David Martin (245). Not only is the ownership of works called into question, but also there exists intertextuality in the work. Through intertextuality, a writer is able to reference a previously produced work and transform it by incorporating it into his/her own text. This is the case of Alexander Dumas' work *The Count of Monte Cristo* which serves as the source of inspiration for Fermín's escape from Montjuic. The evocation of other texts is also present pointing to intertextuality such as Valle-Inclán's *Las galas del difunto* and the *sainetes* of Arniches.

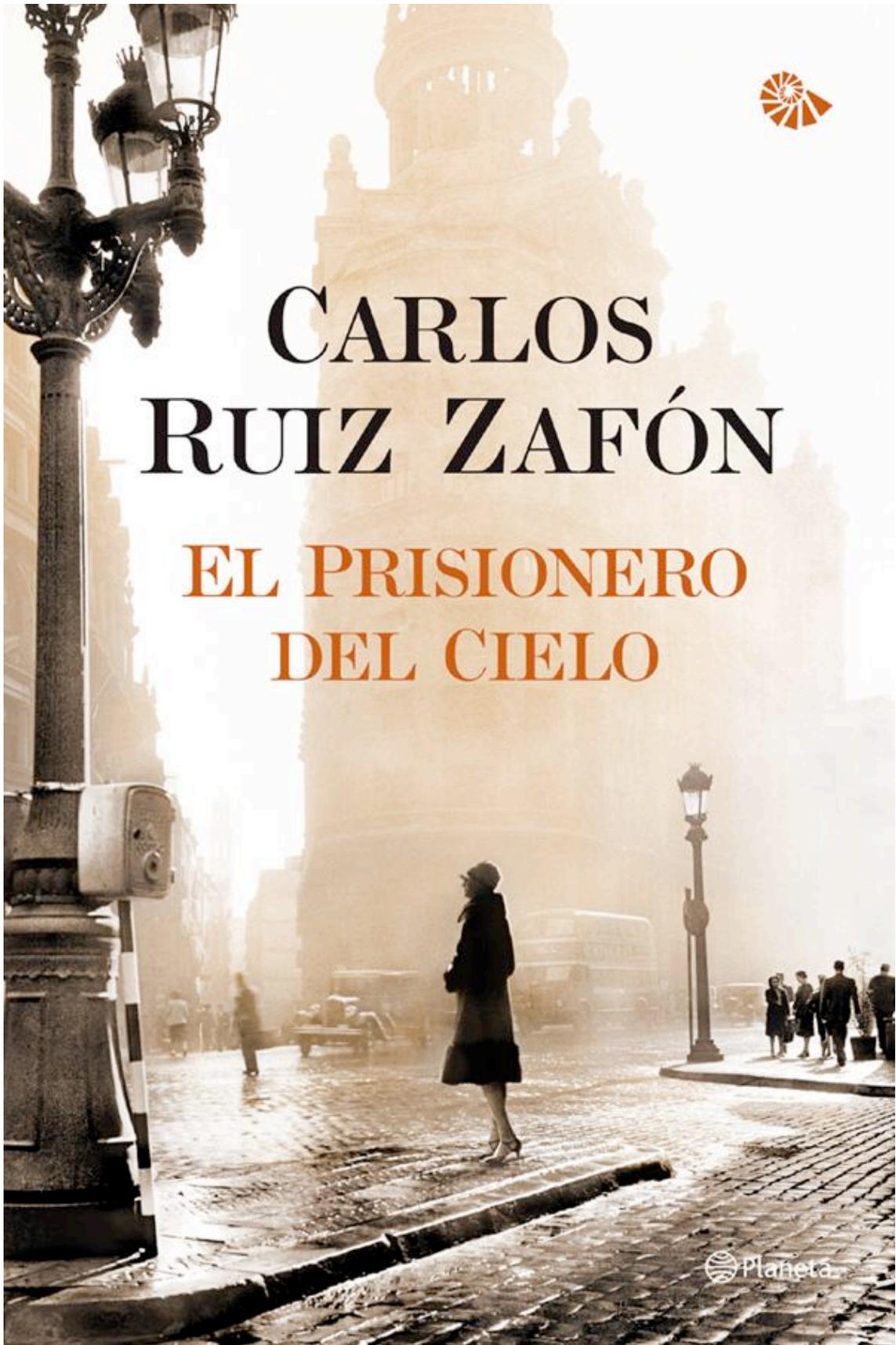
Besides utilizing literary works as intertexts, there is also a number of literary references made within the text. The persistent mentioning of writers such as Cervantes, Sir Conan Doyle, Unamuno, and Kafka calls to attention the fictionality of the novel being read. The oscillation of mentioning fictional text such as *La ciudad de los malditos* by Martín or Oswald Darío's work (295), as well as real ones calls the reader's attention to the nature of fiction. In addition to this, there is a reflection upon the torturous process of writing which David Martín experiences in his own literary endeavor, as well as a consideration on how texts are to be read (310), which points to the literary process.

New to the tetralogy of the Cemetery of Forgotten Books is the direct portrayal of events of the Spanish Civil war which had only been alluded to in the other texts. Following the ever popular trend in contemporary Spanish literature of the recuperation of historical memory, this novel deals with the ghastly events of the postwar that the previous two did not. In *The Shadow of the Wind*, Daniel asserts to the reader that he holds no memory of the war (41), yet in this text the silence is broken. The historical events presented in the novel center around Fermín's account of what occurred to him while he was incarcerated in Montjuic. Represented is a criticism of the fascist regime's *modus operandi* including the unjust imprisonment of many intellectual and Republicans who were judged by kangaroo courts, the "interviews" held by the police which were actually torture sessions, the capricious cruelty endured by many, the method of extorting information, and the hunger of the men. Also criticized is the false intellectuality that the regime espoused through the figure

of the mediocre writer Mauricio Valls who goes from running a prison to becoming the Minister of Culture. This false intellectuality extends to the edifying literature propagated by the regime including the marriage manuals which espoused their ideals (311). Other events that shaped people's lives in the postwar period are touched upon, such as the suspicion held by everyone of their neighbor, and the required church attendance (211). Even the society's effort to rebuild itself during the postwar period is portrayed as a farcical enterprise (306).

This novel clarifies many of the items that had been glossed over in previous books. It becomes evident in this text that *The Angel's Game* was the story of Daniel's mother Isabella Guisbert, as well as the reason for Fermín's nightmares. However, it also leaves the reader with even more unanswered questions such as: Who was responsible for removing the contents of Salgado's suitcase? What was in the suitcase? Why does Mauricio Valls disappear in 1956? Why is he interested in Daniel? Who is the unknown man who attends Fermín and Bernarda's wedding? Is David Martine still alive? Who left the angel with Valls' address at Isabella's grave site? These questions and more leave the reader anxiously awaiting the next installment of the tetralogy.

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