

Mozart, My Comrade

In a moment of rest, the narrator of Julio Cortazar's *Meeting*, feeling emotional, weak, and feverish, chooses to redirect his attention to Mozart and his music in an effort to refocus. Stressed about his son, who is "thousands of miles away," (Cortazar 54) he turns his attention to Mozart's *The Hunt* quartet. This piece of music, which he knows entirely by heart, is an anthem that represents his rebellion's political goals and social resistance. He describes the "gentle voice of the violins, that transposing of a savage rite, to a clear introspective joy." (Cortazar 54) Perhaps, in this way, the narrator is validating his sacrifices and political aspirations. The narrator then imagines that the melody interplays with nature, comparing the musical dynamics to parts of a tree. "A rhythm coming from a lower branch... repeat the melody." (Cortazar 55) This quote illustrates the harmony between music and nature, suggesting that sound and rhythm are interconnected with the natural world, much like branches forming part of a larger tree. Furthermore, the symbolism of *The Hunt* is multifaceted: First, the name of the piece mirrors the narrator's situation. Second, Mozart's music is often thought to promote dialogue, foster cultural exchange, and encourage social cohesion. (Morgan) By comparing the narrator's experience with Mozart's music, the author reinforces the merit of the narrator's quest.

Through his evocation of *The Hunt*, the narrator is led to compare his friend Luis to Mozart. He notices the similarities between *The Hunt* and his current circumstance: fighting for justice at a large personal cost. Through this lens, he sees Luis as the composer and conductor of his mission. "I am comparing him to Mozart, seeing him put this recklessness to order, little by little." (Cortazar 55) The narrator takes this comparison

one step further by showing empathy towards Luis and the overwhelming difficulty of what they are trying to accomplish. "But what a bitter, what a desperate task to be a musician of men, to plot, despite mud and bullets and discouragement." (Cortazar 55) In essence, the two friends are deeply committed to their mission of bringing communism to Cuba, no matter the cost. For this reason, as the narrator thinks back on Mozart, his music, and Luis, he finds himself emboldened to continue his journey alone in the wilderness. Additionally, the narrator is amused by his own introspection and imagines that Luis would find it funny to be compared to Mozart, though he would also appreciate the analogy. "Luis would laugh, although he, too, likes Mozart, I am sure." (Cortazar 55) This moment highlights the narrator's deep connection to Luis, blending humor with admiration. Ultimately, the narrator is comforted by thinking of a powerful piece of music that reflects his experience and reminds him of a dear friend.

Works Cited:

Cortazar, Julio. *Meeting*. 1966.

Morgan, Ralia. "The Enduring Influence of Mozart's Music on Society." *Radio Art - the Art of Stress Relief Music*, 2023, www.radioart.com/blog/the-enduring-influence-of-mozart-s-music-on-society. Accessed 12 Mar. 2025.