
From our Legends: The Miraculous

03/07/2017



La Milagrosa (The Miraculous) —statue erected at the tomb of Amelia Goyri de la Hoz in the Colon cemetery— adds to its legend over the years.

She is always adorned by diverse gifts, most of them linked to motherhood. The Miraculous also tells a beautiful love story between Amelia and Jose Vicente Adot Rabell. She was descendant of the Cuban gentry in the 19th century. He was born in a middle-class family.

However, the couple got married although the class difference brought some problems. Jose Vicente enlisted in the Cuban independence war.

He became Captain of the Liberation Army once the war against the Spanish colonialism was over. Jose Vicente returned to Havana and decided to ask her beloved Amelia's hand in marriage.

In June 25, 1900, the sisters Amelia and Maria Teresa got marriage with their respective grooms.

A Beautiful Love and an Unexpected Breakup

Soon after Amelia got pregnant, but eight months later she suffered from eclampsia (related to high blood pressure) and her health deteriorated. Dr. Eusebio Hernandez could not save the life of the baby girl nor the mother's.

There it began the greatest tragedy in Jose Vicente's life. He never recovered from that. Due to her family status, she should have been buried in the Pantheon of the Marquises of Balboa, but he does not allow it as both were rejected by such social class.

Therefore, Amelia and her little baby girl (between her legs) were buried in a tomb whose owner was Gaspar Betancourt, friend of Jose Vicente.

This man visited the tomb for 40 years. To him, her beloved wife was slept and he woke her up by touching one of the four big rings in the crypt. Afterwards, he stood there for hours while talking to her in silence.

A friend of him —Jose Vilalta Saavedra, who was in Italy by that time— knew the sad news. He decided to create Amelia's sculpture made of white marble from Carrara and gave it to Jose Vicente as a gift.

Jose Vicente sent him a picture of the wedding. In 1909, Vilalta brought the sculpture personally and it was placed on the ossuary of the tomb.

The artist was inspired by motherhood. That is why he placed Amelia's left arm the figure of her baby girl while her right arm holds a cross as she died the Day of The Holy Cross.

Ritual Turned into Legend

The novelty changed Jose Vicente's ritual. Those who have written about The Miraculous have confirmed that after he "woke her up" and "talked to her", she walked away —dressed in black— and took his hat off without turning his back on her.

Workers started to comment what happened there. Therefore, a simple ritual turned into legend step by step.

From that moment on The Miraculous —known worldwide— is symbol of supernatural powers. The faith of children and pregnant women is credited to her.

That is where the name comes from. The popular worshipping overcame the years and centuries.

Flowers, gifts, promises, and offerings are always present on the tomb. People from all around the world come here to visit her. It is a love story turned into a legend.

Translated by Sergio A. Paneque Diaz / CubaSi Translation Staff
