



Acquainted with Grief

©2010 eNotes.com, Inc. or its Licensors. Please see [copyright information](#) at the end of this document.

Characters Discussed

Gonzalo Pirobutirro de Eltino (gohn- ZAH-loh pee-roh-bew-TEE-rroh day ehl- TEE-noh), a middle-aged engineer and writer. Gonzalo carries a grudge against everything and everyone, including his mother, father, and brother (the latter two are dead). He often abandons himself to bouts of anger and makes all kinds of violent accusations: He accuses the peons of thievery, the middle class of being society's disgrace, the rich of having taken advantage of the war to make money, and the military of being irresponsible warmongers. Often, Gonzalo not only insults and yells at his mother but also batters her. The last heir of the Pirobutirro family, Gonzalo basically is a misanthrope.

Elisabetta Francois Pirobutirro, Gonzalo's mother. Señora Elisabetta lives in a world of illusion. She believes that the family is still wealthy, and she is more concerned with the appearance of their social status than with the emotional problems of her son Gonzalo. She is obsessed with the memory of her son who died in the war.

Doctor Higueroa (hee-gway-ROH- ah), the Pirobutirro family's physician. Doctor Higueroa, through his thoughts, symbolizes society's point of view in its perception of Gonzalo's personality and behavior, especially the way that Gonzalo treats his mother, Señora Elisabetta.

Cavaliere Trabatta (trah-BAHT- tah), Gonzalo's neighbor. Cavaliere Trabatta is the victim of a burglary after refusing the protection of the Nisitúo, a vigilante group. He hires mercenaries to be his guards instead, and it is they who find Señora Elisabetta after she is attacked.

Bibliography

Adams, Robert Martin. "Carlo Emilio Gadda," in *After Joyce: Studies in Fiction After Ulysses*, 1977.

Biasin, Gian-Paolo. "The Pen, the Mother," in *Literary Diseases: Theme and Metaphor in the Italian Novel*, 1975.

Dombroski, Robert S. "Overcoming Oedipus: Self and Society in *La cognizione del dolore*," in *Modern Language Notes*. XCIX (January, 1984), pp. 125-143.

Lucente, Gregory L. "System, Time, Writing, and Reading in Gadda's *La cognizione del dolore*: The Impossibility of Saying 'I,'" in *Beautiful Fables: Self-consciousness in Italian Narrative from Manzoni to Calvino*, 1986.

Pacifici, Sergio. "Carlo Emilio Gadda: The Experimental Novel," in *The Modern Italian Novel: From Pea to Moravia*, 1979.

Copyright Notice

©2010 eNotes.com, Inc.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

No part of this work covered by the copyright hereon may be reproduced or used in any form or by any means graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, taping, Web distribution or information storage retrieval systems without the written permission of the publisher.

For complete copyright information, please see the online version of this work:
<http://www.enotes.com/acquainted-with-grief-salem>