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“Some Creatures were Born to Live”: A Psychosocial Analysis of *Nada* (1944)

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Winner of the first Premio Nadal in 1945, *Nada* (1944), the first published work of then-unknown author Carmen Laforet, has remained a captivating, yet elusive work of Spanish literature. Since its very publication, readers, critics, and even censors have debated the true emancipatory message (or lack there of) within the pseudo-autobiographical, confessional work. While the majority of critics maintain the novel’s characterization as a feminist, female *bildungsroman*, dissenters cite traces of palimpsestic ennui mediated by the novel’s complex narrative schema as reason to believe otherwise. This critical reading of *Nada* seeks to shed new light on these debates through the analytical framework of Bronfenbrenner’s Theory of Nested Ecological Systems. The present analysis of relationships, environments, and systems presented to the modern reader throughout the novel seeks to refute critique of the novel as “a primer on self-discipline” (Barry 117) and further support the interpretation of the text as a tale of female emancipation and personal development in conservative post-civil war Spain.