

INFANTICIDE IN O'NEILL'S *DESIRE UNDER THE ELMS*

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Abstract

This study aims to discuss "Infanticide in Eugene O'Neill's *Desire under the Elms*" as an alternative understanding of literary text-oriented approach. The study explores O'Neill's *Desire under the Elms* through analyzing its interrelated intrinsic elements within such as character, conflict, setting, and theme

This study examines the intrinsic elements O'Neill's *Desire under the Elms* by applying structural approach. The series of analysis is conducted to find out the description of two protagonists, finding out the conflicts happened among them, finding out the setting by describing environment, and finding out the theme referring to the previous problems. Finally, the result of this study shows the motives, based on the focusing on character, conflict, and setting, driving to practice infanticide done by Abbei in Eugene O'Neill's *Desire under the Elms*.

Keywords: infanticide, protagonist, conflict, motives

A. INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of infanticide is as old as many cultures, and has likely accounted for millions of selective deaths throughout history. It is the act of killing a baby. It remains a critical concern in a number of countries today, notably the two most populous countries on earth. In all cases, specifically infanticide reflects the low status accorded to women in most parts of the world. It is arguably the most brutal and destructive manifestation of the societies. It is the intentional killing of baby due to some specific preferences. It is a specific crime equivalent to manslaughter that can only be committed by the mother intentionally killing her own baby during the first twelve months of its life; in other cultures, the concept of infanticide includes the intentional killing of children older than twelve months.

The practice of infanticide has been within multiple cultural and historical contexts. Anthropologist Laila Williamson notes that "Infanticide has been practiced on every continent and by people on every level of cultural complexity, from hunter gatherers to high civilizations, including our own ancestors. Rather than being an exception, then, it has been the rule." (1978: 61-75). In ancient history, child sacrifice, the ritualistic killing of children in order to please supernatural beings, was far more common in ancient history than in present times. Carthaginians, descendants of the Phoenicians, sacrificed infants to their gods. (1991: 22-23) The United States in North America ranked eleventh for infants less than one year killed, and fourth for

those killed from 1 through 14 (1983: 137) In the U.S. over six hundred children were killed by their parents in 1983. (1990: 134) In Canada 114 cases of child murder by a parent were reported during 1964-1968.(1971) Some of the cases that made news were those of Amy Grossberg and Brian Peterson, Genene Jones, Marybeth Tinning, Melissa Drexler, Dena Schlosser and Waneta Hoyt.

Desire under the Elms is a play by Eugene O'Neill, published in 1924, and is now considered an American classic. It represents attempts to place plot elements and themes of tragedy in a rural New England setting. The characters in the play are Ephraim Cabot, Simeon, Peter, Eben, Abbie Putnam, Young Girl, Two Farmers, The Fiddler, A Sheriff, and other folk from the neighboring farms. The play is popular in the modern era in which it freely expresses and shows human realism and naturalism that shows narrative of human life from dark and negative sides. In the play, The Cabots is puritan follower; meanwhile the playwright conveys the negative sides to the public. Love as well as natural desire is the major theme in the play.

The play tells a story Widower Ephraim Cabot abandons his New England farm to his three sons, who hate him but share his greed. Eben, the youngest and brightest sibling, feels the farm is his birthright, as it originally belonged to his mother. He buys out his half-brother's shares of the farm with money stolen from his father, and Peter and Simeon head off to California to seek their fortune. Later, Ephraim returns with a new wife, the beautiful and headstrong Abbie, who enters into an adulterous affair with Eben. Soon after, Abbie bears Eben's child, but lets Ephraim believe that the child is his, in the hopes of securing her future with the farm. The proud Ephraim is oblivious as his neighbors openly mock him as a cuckold. Madly in love with Eben and fearful it would become an obstacle to their relationship, Abbie kills the infant. An enraged and distraught Eben turns Abbie over to the sheriff, but not before admitting to himself the depths of his love for her and thus confessing his own role in the infanticide.

The playwright of the play is Eugene Gladstone O'Neill (16 October 1888 – 27 November 1953). He was an American playwright, and Nobel laureate in Literature. O'Neill died in Room 401 of the Sheraton Hotel on Bay State Road in Boston, on November 27, 1953, at the age of 65.

This study briefly examines Eugene O'Neill's use of various types of realism in *Desire under the Elms*. The study points out that O'Neill does not deal with the preoccupations of the external world but rather with his own preoccupations, which are derived not from these personal demons but from his religious treatment of them. The study then relates that the realism in *Desire under the Elms* involves aspects of immorality.

The study explores O'Neill's *Desire under the Elms* through analyzing its interrelated intrinsic elements within such as character, conflict, setting, and theme. The writer focuses on finding the answers to the following problems stated as follows:

1. What is the description of Eben and Abbie as protagonist in O'Neill's *Desire under the Elms*?
2. What conflicts are experienced by Eben in O'Neill's *Desire under the Elms*?
3. What settings are taken in O'Neill's *Desire under the Elms*?
4. What motives drive committing infanticide in O'Neill's *Desire under the Elms*?

B. LITERARY REVIEWS

Play

The literary reviews used to be theoretical references in this study as the follows; Mayer (1990: 929) asserts that there are three major genres of literary works such as play, fiction, and poetry. The play as one of literary works has been existed since hundred years ago. Furthermore, Reaske (1966: 5) clarifies that a play is a work of literature or a composition which delineates life and human activities by means of presenting various actions of and dialogue between a groups of characters. It means that play as a literary work portrays the life of human by presenting it. Horace cited in Budianta (2002: 19). The function of the play toward the readers is not only for pleasure or entertainment but also for giving moral lesson.

Characters in Play

Character is the first elements that have an important role in the story, because character plays the story while characterization in the way. How the character is presented to express his or her personality in a story will be alive and interesting because the character exists and it is impossible to tell a story without mentioning any character in it. The term character often refers to a person. In a narrative work, character can be defined as the actors of the story. They are people who live and experience the story from the beginning to the end of the story. Kennedy (1983:45) states that "Character is an imagined person who in habits story, where the author of the story conveys his or her message and mandates through the characters to the readers" (1983:45)

Character in a play or in fiction can be divided into two major characters; namely protagonist and antagonist. Usually, a protagonist reflects good sides of play as central character in fiction that represent a hero as reader's expected while the antagonist is always against the protagonist. In this connection, Potter (1967:7) says that:

The protagonist is always the focus point of the action of the story. The character in the story is most obviously about. He is usually in the fore front of the action and usually has the most to say whether we like to approve him or not. The antagonist is the main person or things or forces that opposite the protagonist. (1967:7)

Character usually its own qualities as described by the author, the character could be young or old person, bad or well mannered person, handsome or beautiful.

All of them depend on the author who considers them as one element that could help to serve the stories. A character usually is the imitation of real person's personality. Sometimes, he has similar personality to that of human being. According to Holman (1980:443):

A character is brief descriptive sketch of a personage who typifies some definite quality. The person is described not as an individualized personality but as an example of some vice or virtue type as a busy body, a supercilious fellow. (1980:443)

Based on the importance of character in a story, there are main character and peripheral character. Main character usually dominates and affects the development on the plot and moreover, he or she may suffer from lot of conflicts whereas peripheral character plays fewer roles than the former. (Nurgiyantoro, 2002:176-177).

Conflicts in Play

A conflict is the two opposing forces in the story. It can influence the character especially development character. A conflict is not only opposing between two persons, but it can be ideas, desires of character. Perrine (1993:42) states that "conflict is a clash of actions, ideas, desires or wills". Without opposition or force in the story, there is no conflict at all. Potter (1967:25) states that:

The term conflict is familiar; it is result of an opposition between at least two sides. Just as it takes two to make argument, it takes two opposing people or forces to produce the conflict. The conflict may be overt and violent, or implicit and subdued; it may be visible in action. (1967:25)

Thus conflict can be divided into two things. They are internal and external conflicts (Meyer, 1990:45):

External conflict may place one individual in opposition to another individual, nature or society. Conflict may also be internal such as a case some morals or psychological issue must be resolved within the individual inner conflict frequently accompany external one. (1990:45)

Furthermore, Perrine (1987:42) also asserts that "There are three kinds of conflicts: conflict of a person against person, conflict person against environment, and conflict of person against himself or herself".

Settings in Play

Setting is the foundation of the story and it is important to lead the readers to get impression of the story as if it is in a reality. Explanation about setting through a

story is more effective than any other media, because setting in a fiction is related directly to the figure's attitude in the fiction that is sometimes regarded as their own identification. It is "the context in which the action of a story occurs" (Meyer, 1990:10)

Nurgiantoro conveys that setting is an element can be classified into three fundamental elements, such as place, time and social. Although each of those three elements offering different problems and can be discussed autonomously, practically they were connected each other and influencing. (1) Place Setting, this setting is related to the events told in a fiction, the places here have names. Place setting refers to location where the event is narrated in a fiction. Place initials, or maybe certain locations without clear name. The places with name are places found in the real world. The use place setting with the certain name should reflect, or at least don't oppose or against the nature of and geographical circumstance of the place, (2) Time Setting, this setting has something to do with the question "when" and is commonly connected with factual time, i.e. a time that is closely related to historical moments. Incoherence between story's time and history's time usually forming in using two times that different in setting a fiction. The cause of anachronism maybe about entering the time of "past" into the story with time setting of present, or on the other side entering the time of "present" into the story with time setting of the past. The "time" element mentioned could be anything, such as situation and condition at a place, culture, certain things, name, and even language which are only occupied by certain time, not by other time, and (3) Social Setting, this setting refers to social behavior of certain group of society in a certain place which is revealed in a fiction. The society's way of life includes many complicated problems. The problems can be people's tradition, faith, way of thinking, etc. The social setting also related with social status of the figures, such as low, medium, and high. (1995:27)

C. METHOD OF THE STUDY

Research Design

In this study, the writer uses qualitative descriptive research design. Azwar in Harsono (1999:115) says that in qualitative research the descriptive analysis has an important role. The descriptive data analysis is aimed to give a description about to research subject base on data from variable obtained from the subject group that is examined and does not have any attention for hypothesis testing. (1999:115). Using this design, the writer composes the result of the study in a clear description.

Source of Data and Units of Analysis

The object of study is *Desire under the Elms* by Eugene O'Neill. The units of analysis are intrinsic elements described in the play especially within such as character, conflict, and setting.

Technique of Collecting Data

The technique of data collection for this study is the library research. It is the research conducted by the researcher to collect any relevant data and information about the topic or problem of the study from books or any audio-visual sources available. Briefly, library research is a research that done in the researcher's room or in a library room, where the researcher gets the data and information about the object through some books or any other audio-visual equipment (Semi, 1993:6).

Technique of Analyzing Data

This study discusses the intrinsic elements O'Neill's *Desire under the Elms* by applying structural approach. Structuralism is a way of thinking about the world which is predominantly concerned with the perceptions and description of structures. At its simplest, structuralism claims that the nature of every element in any given situation has no significance by itself, and in fact is determined by all the other elements involved in that situation. The full significance of any entity cannot be perceived unless and until it is integrated into the structure of which it forms a part (Hawkes, 1977: 11).

D. DISCUSSION

The discussion of this study scopes on intrinsic elements based on the major qualities that are conventionally attributed to play, such as character, conflict, and setting.

O'Neill prepares about Cabot by giving one act that talking about Cabot and the background of his family. There are some conversations between his sons such as Peter, Simeon, and Eben. From their conversation, it can be seen that Cabot has gone for a while, and they suppose the death of him for inheriting the farm. They also tell that Cabot has married for twice and the farm that he has right now is the fortune of Eben's late mother. This play centers on a family that is the Cabot Family. The incident moment begins the three sons of Ephraim Cabot: Simeon and Peter, from his first marriage, and Eben, from his second.

The First Protagonist –Eben's Description in O'Neill's *Desire under the Elms*

Eben is the youngest son of Ephraim Cabot. He is the most dominant character in this story. Eben's character is described as a son that is very loyal to his mother, but on the contrary he hates his father very much. He claimed that the farm belongs to his mother, and after her mother died he thought that he was the one that inherit the farmland. Eben's life is quite not easy as any other boy at his age. In age of twenty-five he has to work to his father as a farmer in his own land. The farmland has made him as a strong, unbeatable, and work hard to stay alive.

Eben: God Purty! (His eyes fall and he stares about him frowningly. He is twenty-five, tall and sinewy. His face is well-formed, good-looking, but its expression is resentful and defensive.

His defiant, dark eyes remind one of a wild animal's in captivity. Each day is a cage in which he finds himself trapped but inwardly unsubdued. There is a fierce repressed vitality about him. He has black hair, mustache, and a thin curly trace of beard. He is dressed in rough farm clothes.

(O'Neill, 1924:3)

Eben also a selfish man, he always blames someone else if there is something wrong. He also accuses Simeon and Peter for not helping his mother if they claim she was good to them. And he does not get along with his two brothers very well, because they are not from the same mother. Simeon and Peter were born from Cabot's first wife, while Eben was born from Cabot's second wife.

EBEN I'm maw- every drop o' blood!

PETER (reminiscently) She was good t' Sim 'n' me. A good step-maw's scurse.

SIMEON she was good t' everyone.

EBEN (greatly moved, gets to his feet and makes an awkward bow to each of them-stammering) I be thankful t' ye. I'm her-her heir.

PETER she was good even t' him.

EBEN An' fur thanks he killed her!

SIMEON No one never kills nobody. It's allus some thin'. That's the murderer.

EBEN Didn't he slave Maw t' death?

(O'Neill, 1924:6)

EBEN Ay-eh. They's somethin'. Why didn't ye never stand between him 'n' my Maw when he was slavin'her to her grave- 't pay her back fur the kindness she done t' yew?

(O'Neill, 1924:7)

Eben has a distinct personality. He will defend his truth, and will never let anyone obstruct his way. He would do anything to make his dreams come true. He believes his mother would inherit him the farmland because he is the only son for her. Considering himself as the heir of the farmland, Eben thinks that Cabot has stolen the farmland from his mother.

Eben: (jumping to his feet) Ye've no right! She wa'n't yewr Maw! It was her farm! Didn't he steal it from her? She's dead, It's my farm.

(O'Neill, 1924:7)

Eben is a type of man who likes older women. He has relationship with some women that much older than him. Since he misses his mother very much after her

death, he looks for a figure of his mother in an older woman. He considers that the older woman could give him love and affection like his mother. In his case, age will not be a matter. Though Eben is just still twenty-five years old, he could attract a forty-year-old town whore named Minnie, even though Minnie has affairs with Cabot, Simeon and Peter before. Knowing that Minnie has some romance story with Peter, Simeon, and even his father before, has made him angry.

EBEN I'm goin' out fur a spell-up the road.

PETER T' the village?

SIMEON T' the village?

SIMEON T' see Minnie?

EBEN Ay-eh?

PETER The Scarlet Woman!

SIMEON Lust-that's what's growin' in ye!

EBEN Waal-she's purty!

PETER She's been purty for twenty year!

SIMEON A new coat o' paint'll make a heifer out of forty

EBEN She hain't forty!

PETER if she hain't, she's teeterin' on the edge

EBEN What d' yew know

PETER All they is... Sim knew her-an' then me arter-

SIMEON An' Paw kin tell yew somethin' too! He was fust!

EBEN D'ye mean t' say he...?

SIMEON Ay-eh! We air his heirs in everythin'!

EBEN That's more to it! That grows on it! It'll bust soon! I'll go smash my fist in her face!

SIMEON Mebbe-but the night's wa'm-purty-by the time ye git thar mebbe ye'll kiss her instead!

(O'Neill, 1924: 9)

Eben is easy to influence; he trusts every single word that his father said to him. This makes him angry. And he's trying to kill Abbie. This has made the writer realizes, no matter how strong one person is, they will easily become weak when dealing with emotional things, and so does Eben to Abbie.

EBEN Ha-ha-ha! So that's her sneakin' game-all along-like I suspicioned at fust-t' swaller it all-an' me, too...! I'll murder her!

CABOT No, ye don't!

EBEN Git out o' my road!

(they tring to kill each other)

ABBIE Eben!Ephraim! (She tugs at the hand on Eben's throat) Let go, Ephraim! Ye're chokin' him! (O'Neill, 1924:47)

To Abbie, Eben is very attractive person compare to her husband that is too old for her; Eben has something that Cabot didn't have. Since the first time they met, she feels obsessed to Eben because Eben's attitude was not like his brothers, he decides not to welcome her at the first time she arrived, that what makes Eben different. She feels curious about Eben's behavior. She is trying to approach Eben with many kinds of conversations. Although Eben always resist her whenever she is talking to him. He ignores her and replies her words with impolite sentences. But it didn't make Abbie gave-up, on the contrary Abbie has found that she felt crush on him. Abbie gets jealousy to Eben when he is going to see Minnie.

ABBIE T' see that Min, I s'pose?

EBEN Mebbe

ABBIE What d'ye want t' waste time on her fur?

EBEN Ye can't beat Nature, didn't ye say?

ABBIE An ugly old hake!

EBEN She's purtier'n yew be!

ABBIE Don't ye dare compare...

(O'Neill, 1924:25)

The Second Protagonist –Abbie' Description in O'Neill's *Desire under the Elms*

Abbie is Cabot's new wife. She is still young and attractive. She is Eben's stepmother from his father third marriage. She is the one who has personal attraction and conflict with Eben.

ABBIE is thirty-five, buxom, full of vitality. Her round face is pretty but marred by its rather gross sensuality. There is strength and obstinacy in her jaw, a hard determination in her eyes, and about her whole personality the same unsettled, untamed, desperate quality which is so apparent in Eben.

(O'Neill, 1924:18)

As a new comer in Cabot's family, she acts like the lady of the house. By marrying Cabot, she also married his property. At first, she looks like she wants to have all of Cabot's property for herself and she does not want to share it with anyone else including Cabot's sons.

CABOT Har we be t' hum, Abbie.

ABBIE Hum! It's purty-purty! I can't b'lieve it's r'ally mine.

CABOT Yewr'n? Mine! Our'n-Mebbe! It was lonesome too long. I was growin' old in the spring. A hum's got t' hev a woman.

ABBIE A woman's got t' hev a hum!

(O'Neill, 1924:18)

She was obsessed of owning the farm, because she wants a better life. A life that she had never felt before. But the good thing is that she could understand Eben's

feeling about losing someone who is really meaningful to him. But although she has told Eben about her life suffering, he still does not trust her. This made her mad.

EBEN An' bought yew-like a harlot! An' the price he's payin' ye-
this farm-was my Maw's, damn ye!-an' mine now!

ABBIE Yewr'n? We'll see 'bout that! Waal-what if I did need a
hum? What else'd I marry an old man like him fur?

EBEN I'll tell him ye said that!

ABBIE I'll say ye're lyin' a purpose-an' he'll drive ye off the
place!

EBEN Ye devil!

ABBIE This be my farm-this be my hum-this be my kitchen!
(O'Neill, 1924:22)

Abbie's desire has made her to be a tough woman. She does not giving up for what Eben has done to her. She says many heavenly words to Eben. She convinced him that his mom allowed him to love someone. Abbie wants to replace his mother's place. She will do anything that Eben's mother did. She has promised Eben to be a good mother for him. Unfortunately, her maternal love has turn into a sexual love. The love is not like mother's love too her son anymore, but it has turned into lover's desire. And that happened when Eben declares his love to Abbie for the first time.

ABBIE I'll sing fur ye! I'll die fur ye! Don't cry, Eben! I'll take
yer Maw's place! I'll be everythin' she was t' ye! Let me kiss ye,
Eben! Don't be afeered! I'll kiss ye pure, Eben-same 's if I was a
Maw 't ye-an' ye kin kiss me back 's if yew was my son-my boy-
sayin' good-night t'me! Kiss me, Eben. Don't ye leave me, Eben!
Can't ye see it hain't enuf-lovin' ye like a Maw- can't ye see it's
got t' be that an' more- much more- a hundred times more- fur me
t' be happy-fur yew t' be happy?

EBEN Maw!Maw! What d'ye want? What air ye tellin' me?

ABBIE She's tellin' ye t' love me. She knows I love ye an' I'll be
good 't ye. Can't ye feel it? Don't ye know? She's tellin' ye t' love
me, Eben!

EBEN Ay-eh. I feel- mebbe she- but- I can't figger out- why-
when ye've stole her place- here in her hum- in the parlor whar she
was-

ABBIE She knows I love ye!

EBEN I see it! I see why. It's her vengeance on him- so's she kin
rest quit in her grave!

ABBIE Vengeance o' God on the hull o' us! What d'we give a
durn? I love ye, Eben! God knows I love ye!

EBEN An' I love yew, Abbie!- now I kin say it! I been dyin' fur want o' ye- every hour since ye come! I love ye!
(O'Neill, 1924:36-37)

His Conflict to Ephraim Cabot in O'Neill's *Desire under the Elms*

The conflict sparked by father's treatment to mother as a slave.

The first conflict begins when he knows that Cabot was treating his mother very bad since she was alive until she died. Eben loves his mother very much, and he couldn't stand if Cabot treats her like a slave.

EBEN (fiercely) An' fur thanks he killed her!

SIMEON (after a pause-judicially) No one kills nobody. It's allus some thin'. That's the murderer.

EBEN Didn't he slave Maw t' death?

PETER He's slaved himself t' death. He's slaved Sim 'n' me 'n' yew t' death-on'y none o' us hain't died-yit.

(O'Neill, 1924:6)

Eben has a strong reason why he hates his father so much. Eben loves his mother very much, because she is the only one that cares and loves him. He declares that he is the only one that entitled to his mother; no one could ever get her cares and loves, even for his brothers. Eben accuses Cabot for killing his mother by saying that he has made her worked like a slave around the house.

EBEN Didn't he slave Maw t' death?

PETER He's slaved himself t' death. He's slaved Sim 'n' me 'n' yew t' death- on'y none o' us hain't died-yit.

(O'Neill, 1924:6)

EBEN They was chores t' do, wa'nt they? It was on'y arter she died I come to think o' it. Me cookin'-doin' her work-that made me know her, suffer her sufferin'-she'd come back t' help-come back t' bile potatoes-come back t' fry bacon-come back t' bake biscuits-come back all cramped up t' shake the fire, an' carry ashes, her eyes weepin' an' bloody with smoke an' cinders same's they used t' be. She still comes back-stands by the stove thar in the evenin'-she can't find it nateral sleepin' an' restin' in peace. She can't git used t' bein' free-even in her grave.

SIMEON She never complained none.

EBEN She'd got too tired. She'd got too used t' bein' too tired. That was what he done. An' sooner'r later, I'll meddle. I'll say the thin's I didn't say then t' him! I'll yell 'em at the top o' my lungs. I'll see t' it my Maw gits some rest an' sleep in her grave!
(O'Neill, 1924:8)

The conflict sparked by bad relationship between father and his sons.

Cabot drives Eben become a person that as hardheaded. Eben and his father have a bad relationship. Cabot treats his sons very bad. He considers that his sons are his slaves that must do everything he said. Eben hates his father very much for this inconvenient condition, and even he wishes his father is dead.

EBEN (with a sardonic chuckle) Honor thy father! (They turn, startled, and stare at him. He grins, then scowls) I pray he's dead.
(O'Neill, 1924:5)

SIMEON Looky here! Ye'd oughtn't t' said that, Eben
PETER 'Twa 'n't righteous.
EBEN What?
SIMEON Ye prayed he'd dead
EBEN Waal-don't yew pray it?
PETER He's our Paw
EBEN Not mine! .
(O'Neill, 1924:6)

The conflict sparked by the father's third remarriage

He opposes his father plan to marry again. Although his objection does not influence his father decision to remarried. The pain that Eben feels becomes more intensive when he hears the news that his father has married again to a young lady that is still a half-years younger than his father. He thought that his mother has no meaning to his father. It shows Cabot's unfaithful attitude that has made Eben extremely mad. In other word, if his father marries again, he must prepare for a new competitor for getting the farmland.

EBEN Its nigh sunup. (Then explosively) He's gone an' married agen!
SIMEON and PETER (explosively) Paw?
EBEN Got himself hitched to a female 'bout thirty-five an'purty, they says...
Think I'm a dunce, do ye? The hull village says. The preacher from New Dover, he brung the news-told it t' our preacher- New Dove, that's whar the old loon got himself hitched-that's whar the woman lived-

PETER Waal...!
SIMEON Waaal...!
EBEN Ain't he a devil out o' hell? It's jest t' spite us-the damned old mule!
PETER Everythin'll go t' her now.
(O'Neill, 1924: 10-11)

The conflict sparked by matters pertaining in inheritance

Eben believes that the farm belongs to her mother, not Cabot. He assumes that the farm would automatically be his when his mother has died; even he has to fight to Cabot for this issue.

Eben: (jumping to his feet) Ye've no right! She wa'n't yewr Maw!
It was her farm! Didn't he steal it from her? She's dead, It's my farm.
(O'Neill, 1924:7)

The conflict sparked by triangular love

The conflict to Cabot does not end just with that issue. Even it is unintentional, but Eben keep making a new conflict with Cabot. He falls in love with Cabot's new wife. Love full of passion, ends with pregnancy that came from a betrayal. Definitely has built a new huge conflict between him and Cabot. Even since the beginning of Cabot's marriage, Eben was feeling objection because he was afraid that she would take the farm that should be his.

EBEN Ain't he a devil out o'hell? It's jest t' spite us-the damned old mule!
PETER Everythin'll go t' her now.
(O'Neill, 1924:11)

His Conflict to Abbie Puntman in O'Neill's *Desire under the Elms*

The conflict sparked by the first meeting

It is clearly stated that Eben hates her so much by not giving a good impression on the day they first met. On the other hand, when Abbie meets Eben, she feels attracted to him. She tries to seduce him while being wry. Eben is slightly attracted to her until she claims the house.

ABBIE I don't want t' pretend playin' Maw t' ye Eben.
(Admiringly) Ye're too too big an' too strong fur that. I want t' be frens with ye. Mebbe with me fur a fren ye'd find ye'd like livin' here better. I kin make it easy fur ye with him, mebbe. (With a scornful sense of power) I calc'late I kin git him t' do most anythin' fur me.
(O'Neill, 1924:21)

The conflict sparked by a new competitor

Abbie is a new competitor to Eben. Starting with her new status as his new mother, he thinks that someone replaces his mother place, and the worst she is his competitor for having the farm. The conflict develops after he falls in love with her, so the problem will not be as simple as we thought before, that the story will tell only about greed, but now definitely is also about passion and love possession.

EBEN An' the price he's payin' ye-this farm-was my Maw's damn ye!-an mine now!

ABBIE Yewr'n? We'll see 'bout that! Waal- what if I did need a hum? What else I marry an old man like him fur?

(O'Neill, 1924:22)

The play is also a criticism for materialistically life at that time. People will do everything for getting their willing. For example is Abbie who married the old Cabot for gaining better life, status, and financial. Her love is not a love at all. It is so reasonable because the old man like Cabot will be dead in short time, and automatically, she will gain all his fortune after the death.

The conflict sparked by passionate love

After having much of harsh conversations, they know that they are not allowed to fall in love to each other because Abbie is Eben's step-mother, even though she is not biologically the genesis mother of Eben, she is his father's wife. But the problem is not that simple, it is not easy to kill the love that has grown deeply in their hearts. It does not matter how hard they have tried to fight their feelings. The love has grown bigger each day. After many times of denial, finally Eben gives up and feels the same sense as Abbie. The love becomes very passionate and gets involving physical attraction.

ABBIE Waal, I kissed ye anyways-an' ye kissed back-yer lips was burnin'-ye can't lie 'bout that! If ye don't care, why did ye kiss me back-why was yer lips burnin'? (O'Neill, 1924:33)

EBEN An' I love yew, Abbie!- now I kin say it! I been dyin' fur want o' ye- every hour since ye come! I love ye!

(O'Neill, 1924:37)

The conflict sparked by Abbie's pregnancy

The love that Eben feels to Abbie has put him into trouble. Their affair has caused Abbie pregnant. And she bore a baby boy. But Cabot still believes that it is his son.

CABOT T'hell with Eben! Eben's done fur now! I got a new son! But ye needn't t' laugh at Eben, none o' ye! He's my blood, if he be a dumb fool. He's better nor any o' yew! He kin do a day's work a'most up t' what I kin-an' that'd put any o' yew pore critters t' shame!

(O'Neill, 1924: 41-42)

The conflict sparked by telling the truth

Abbie proves her love to Eben, and finally she tells Cabot the truth, how she has cheating on him for these times. And explain about her son identity, where Eben is the real father of the child.

ABBIE He wa'n't yewr son! Think I'd have a son by yew? I'd die fust! I hate the sight o' ye an' allus did! It's yew I should've murdered, if I'd had good sense! I hate ye! I love Eben, I did from the fust. An' he was Eben's son-mine an' Eben's-not your'n!

(O'Neill, 1924:54)

Since Cabot threatens Eben that he will not inherit any property of Cabot, and that he will inherit his property to his newborn son, ironically has made Eben angry. Cabot and Eben try to kill each other.

EBEN Ha-ha-ha! So that's her sneakin' game-all along-like I suspicioned at fust-t' swaller it all-an' me, too...! I'll murder her!

CABOT No, ye don't!

EBEN Git out o' my road!

(they tring to kill each other)

ABBIE Eben!Ephraim! (She tugs at the hand on Eben's throat) Let go, Ephraim! Ye're chokin' him!

(O'Neill, 1924:47)

When Abbie tries to explain that it was her statement before they were having a special kind of relationship, Eben does not believe her and determines for leaving her. Eben plans to go to California in the next morning.

EBEN Ye've made a fool o'me-a sick, dumb fool- a-purpose! Ye've been on'y playin'yer sneakin', stealin' game all along-gittin' me t'lie with ye so's ye'd hev a son he'd think was his'n, an' makin' him promise he'd give ye the farm and let me eat dust, if ye did git him a son! ...

ABBIE He told yew...?

EBEN Hain't it true? It hain't no good in yew lyin'.

ABBIE Eben, listen-ye must listen-it was long ago-afore we done nothin'-yew was scornin' me-goin' t' see Min-when I was lovin' ye-an I said it t' him t' git vengeance on ye! ...
(O'Neill, 1924:48)

The conflict sparked by the greatest love

Because of those conflicts between Eben and Cabot, Abbie gets crazy action by murdering his own baby boy to prove her love to Eben. Even she loves Eben more than her baby. She does anything for making Eben as the only heir of the farm.

ABBIE They's no cause fur ye t' go now- they's no sense- it's all the same's it was-they's nothin' come b'tween us now-arter what I done!

EBEN Ye look mad Abbie. What did ye do?

ABBIE I-I killed him, Eben

...

EBEN Instead? What d'ye mean?

ABBIE Not him.

EBEN Not-not that baby!

ABBIE ay-eh

(O'Neill, 1924:51)

And finally, he realizes that all the things that she has done was the effect of his mistake. He should not say any harsh words to Abbie.

EBEN I love ye! Forgive me!

I'm as guilty as yew be! He was the child o' our sin.

ABBIE I don't repent that sin! I hain't askin' God t' fergive that!

EBEN Nor me-but it led up t' the other-an' the murder ye did, ye did 'count o' me-an' it's my murder, too. I'll tell the sheriff-an' if ye deny it, I'll say we planned it t'gether-an' they'll all believe me, fur they suspicion everythin' we've done, an' it'll likely an' true to 'em. An' it is true-way down. I did help ye-somehow

(O'Neill, 1924:55-56)

The conflict sparked by fake testimony

Eben's greatest love for Abbie is shown when he admits to the Sheriff that he helps her for doing her crime to apologize for all the things that he has said to Abby for all this time. And he wants to put in prison to endure his punishment with her.

EBEN I lied this mornin', Jim. I helped her to do it. Ye kin take me, too.

ABBIE No!

EBEN I love ye, Abbie. Sun's a-rizin'. Purty, hain't it?

(O'Neill, 1924:58)

His Conflict to the Environment in O'Neill's *Desire under the Elms*

The conflict sparked by old memory

Living in a house that has so many memories is memorable. But not for Eben, he has so many bad memories living in that house. How that house will always remind him of her mother that has passed away. Besides, how his father has created so many suffers for him and her mother. Eben loves her mother very much; every corner of that house will always remind him of her. And how he is having love scene with Abbie in the parlor where used to be his mother room.

EBEN In the parlor? Maw! Whar air yew?

ABBIE I kin feel still feel- somethin'...

EBEN It's Maw

(O'Neill, 1924:34-35)

The conflict sparked by love affair rumor

The neighbors become Eben's new conflict, how they so curious about his affair with Abbie, and how they are curious about the father of the baby. Although we all know Abbie is legally Cabot's wife, but the rumors of love affair between Abbie and Eben has become the whole town secret, it is proved when by the conversation between Abbie and a man in the middle of party of welcoming the baby.

MAN They all is- t' their Maws. Listen Abbie- if ye ever git tired o' Eben, remember me! Don't fergit now! Waal- I guess I'll likker agin.

ABBIE Wonder what Eben's a-doin'?

(O'Neill, 1924:41)

The Irony is shown by the relationship between Eben and Abbie. First, the relationship between them is as mother and son, so the love must be form like family. In the fact, Eben seduces Abbie to have love with him and vice versa. Furthermore, the next irony when Abbie decide to kill her infant. In contrary, Eben doubts her love even reported the case to the sheriff.

The Climax and Main Conflict in O'Neill's *Desire under the Elms*

The climax of the play is when Abbie told Eben that she has already killed the baby. The moment is the pick of the story because Eben changes his mind to stick with Abbie. The main conflict is Eben hates his father and wants to fight his fortune. In order to realize his revenge, he seduces Abbie, his step-mother even in the end; they are trapped in deep love. In other hand, Ephraim Cabot, with his greed, does not want to share his farm to anyone else including his sons. The conflict itself was resolved when Eben was arrested by sheriff in the end of play due to his involvement in the infanticide.

Abbie makes a confession that she has murdered her baby and tells to Cabot that the child was not his but Eben's. Cabot is shocked hearing what Abbie just said.

ABBIE He's dead.

CABOT What..

ABBIE I killed him

...

ABBIE He wa'n't yewr son! Think I'd have a son by yew? I'd die fust! I hate the sight o' ye an' allus did! It's yew I should've murdered, if I'd had good sense! I hate ye! I love Eben, I did from the fust. An' he was Eben's son-mine an' Eben's-not your'n!

(O'Neill, 1924:53-54)

Cabot is struck by thunder after hearing Abbie's confession that has changed his life entirely. Because of reason, he decides to leave Eben and go to California to follow Peter and Simeon.

It can be concluded that the protagonist in the play is Eben Cabot. He almost succeeds in fighting his father's farm by making his half-brothers give their share for the farm to him if Ephraim Cabot were dead. Furthermore, he also get his Step-mother (Abbie) love and also done his revenge to Ephraim Cabot. However, at the end, Eben got nothing because following his desire to be caught together with Abbie.

Their relationship can be described only based on sexual desire and other motivation. But somehow the relationship turns to Love. Abbie killed her son to prove her love to Eben because he accuses her to take his father's farm by herself. Eben also want to share the punishment with Abbie although he was not involved directly and have bright future with the farm.

Time Setting in O'Neill's *Desire under the Elms*

Setting of time refers to when the problems happen in the fiction work. In this story, the first events happen in 1850. As we seen from the economical situation in 1850's, we found that there was a Civil War that happened in 1861-1865. Before that, in 1812 New England became genuinely merged in the Union in the slavery struggle of the Civil War. It is influence Eben's life in economic. They have to struggle to live, cultivate their own farm with their own hands.

The California Gold Rush (1848-1855) began on January 24, 1848, when gold was discovered at Sutter's Mill in Coloma. News of the discovery soon spread, resulting in some 300,000 people coming to California from the rest of the United States and abroad. And so as Peter and Simeon when they having a dream to find gold in California.

PETER Waal-she's gone. They's gold in the West, Sim.

SIMEON In the sky!

PETER Waal-in a manner o' speakin'-thar's the promise. Gold in the sky-in the West- golden Gate-Californi-a!-Goldest West!-fields o' gold!
(O'Neill, 1924:4)

In 1850, people who were farmers were mostly men and children because the women worked inside and around the house. The women did have a small garden near the house where they kept their vegetables. Farmer had to have their own land and built their own barn. Most farmers didn't have many tools so used their hands and handmade tools to get their work done. Most people living in rural areas were farmers. They taught their children to farm, and many of children grow up to be farmers.

Place Setting in O'Neill's *Desire under the Elms*

Setting of place is a place that exists in the story. It has the important meaning and relation with the story. It is in New England.

The action of the entire play takes place in, and immediately outside of, the Cabot farmhouse in New England, in the year 1850.
(O'Neill, 1924:2)

A farmhouse in which Eben and the family stayed and it looks so mess without a touch of a woman hands since Eben's mother has passed away.

The sky above the roof is suffused with deep colors, the green of the elms glows, but the house is in shadow, seeming pale and washed out by contrast.
(O'Neill, 1924:3)

Everything is neat and in order but the atmosphere is of a men's camp kitchen rather than that of a home."
(O'Neill, 1924:6)

New England is a region in the northeastern corner of the United States, bordered by the Atlantic Ocean, Canada and the state of New York, consisting of the states of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut.

In one of the earliest European settlements in the New World, Pilgrims from the Kingdom of England first settled in New England in 1620, in the colony of Plymouth. Ten years later, the Puritans settled north of Plymouth Colony in Boston, thus forming Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1630. In the late 18th century, the New England colonies would be among the first North American British colonies to demonstrate ambitions of independence from the British Crown via the American Revolution, although they would later oppose the War of 1812 between the United

States and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. In the 19th century, it played a prominent role in the movement to abolish slavery in the United States. New England was the first region of the United States to be transformed by the Industrial Revolution.

Social Setting in O'Neill's *Desire under the Elms*

The social setting of the novel is usually about moral. The social behavior is the process of social interaction, and gives social form to human behavior. The life in New England at that time is classified based on the farm owner. In this story we can see that Eben is not from the upper class but from the lower class. Eben and his family work as a farmer on their own land.

SIMEON We've wuked. Give our strength. Give our years. Plowed 'em under in the ground,-rottin'-makin' soil for his crops! Waal-the farm pays good for hereabouts.
(O'Neill, 1924:4)

Motives Infanticide in O'Neill's *Desire under the Elms*

The motives that drive Abbie to kill her baby are the conflicts experienced by Eben, Cabot, and Abbei. Those are

O'Neill's *Desire under the Elms* has written this play, which is divided into four scenes. The story is about an old man, Ephraim Cabot, the owner of a farm. He then is called by the name Cabot. He has three sons. They are Simeon, Peter and Eben. The play starts with the discussion of three brothers; all of them hate their father and accused of Cabot for the death of their mother whom Cabot had overworked to death. Simeon and Peter express their desire to go to California in search of gold. But Eben wants to inherit the farm after his father's death. He comes to know that Cabot has again married, he proposed his brothers to sign away their right to the farm to Eben and for that he gives them 300\$ each. When Cabot arrives with Abbie a 35 year old, beautiful lady, few insulting words are exchanged between Abbie and Eben. He blames her for selling herself for the sake of property, but both of them are attracted to each other. Abbie is a clever lady and insinuates Cabot that Eben has tried to make love with her. At night when Cabot goes to the barn Abbie goes to Eben's room and starts kissing him. When Eben thinks that if he seduces her then he will be able to take revenge from Cabot and his mother's soul will be satisfied. They both are engaged in making love to each other. Abbie promised him that she will die for him if necessary. After a year Abbie got a boy and Cabot gives a party to all the relatives who all know that the child is not of Cabot but of Eben. After the party, father and son have a heated discussion and Cabot declared that he will inherit his property to Abbie's son and tells that Abbie also wants the same. He also hits Eben by his neck and goes out. Now Eben accuses Abbie of treachery and

hypocrisy and says that he will love her only if the child does not exist. Abbie declares that she will kill her child to retain Eben's love. At the same night she smothers the child when Eben hears this he is horrified and abuses her and accuses her of killing his child and goes to call the police. The irony is that Abbie murdered the child for Eben and Eben imputes altogether different motives to her and misunderstands her love. When Cabot awakes Abbie tells Cabot the child is not his but Eben's. Ultimately Sheriff arrives and then Eben realizes her love and confesses to the Sheriff his share in the crime and both are taken away, kissing and embracing. Old Cabot is then destined to live and work loneliness on the unlucky farm.

I find these lines horrible because it is said by the mother who has the heart to kill her own child. Furthermore, it's also very horrible for scarify her child which is invaluable thing.

E. CONCLUSION

Based on the character analysis of the protagonist Eben and Abbei, it can be concluded that Eben is the youngest son of Ephraim Cabot. He is the most dominant character in this story. Eben's character is described as a son that is very loyal to his mother. He a selfish man, he always blames someone else if there is something wrong. He also accuses Simeon and Peter for not helping his mother if they claim she was good to them. He is easy to influence; he trusts every single word that his father said to him. This makes him angry. And he's trying to kill Abbie. This has made the writer realizes, no matter how strong one person is, they will easily become weak when dealing with emotional things, and Eben is a type of man who likes older women. He has relationship with some women that much older than him. Since he misses his mother very much after her death, he looks for a figure of his mother in an older woman. He considers that the older woman could give him love and affection like his mother.

Abbei is Cabot's new wife. She is still young and attractive. She is Eben's stepmother from his father third marriage. As a new comer in Cabot's family, she acts like the lady of the house. By marrying Cabot, she also married his property. She is obsessed of owning the farm, because she wants a better life. Abbie's desire has made her to be a tough woman.

Based on the analysis of conflict, it can be concluded that the conflict is divided into three, those are Eben's conflict to Cabot, his father, Eben's conflict to Abbei, and Eben's conflict to environment.

Based on the setting analysis in O'Neill's *Desire under the Elms*, it can be concluded that Because in years when this story made is the years when New England is having a difficult time before the Civil War. The economic conditions that have made them act like that. They hardly fight for their future by becoming farmers in their own farm. And they speak also as a farmer; the writer didn't find an upper-class behavior in these characters. They say a bad language and impolite to each other, even it is between children to their parents. Just like Eben, Peter and Simeon

did to their father. Another social setting in this story is about their neighbor's attitude. Since they lived in a small town, their life was easily being known by the other people who live near them. The rumor about Eben and Abbie has spread around the village.

The underlying theme of the play is the desire of materialistic wealth, greed, and love. The main character intends to gain the fortune as well as his love with Abbie. It is a universal theme. This case occurs around the world because family is one of common issue.

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