

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This study concerns with the study on the significance of a fairy in the development of the main character's love relationship with his spouse in *The Cricket on the Hearth*. As has been stated in the previous chapter, the thesis writer employ the Objective theory in doing this analysis, that is a theory which judges a work of literature through its internal elements. Thus, to work with the theory, the writer will also base this study on the Intrinsic approach, for she focuses her analysis on the intrinsic elements of the story, those are plot, character, conflict and setting.

A. Objective Theory

This theory has been elaborated by the New Critics who concentrate their thought about the work itself. This theory regards the literary work as an object that has an independent existence and is used for analyzing the work as a self-sufficient entity, as stated by Abrams:

...'Objective orientation', which on principle regards the work in isolation from all these external points of reference, analyzes it as a self-sufficient entity constituted by its parts in their internal relations, and

sets out to judge it solely by criteria intrinsic to its mode of being." (Abrams 26)

As the thesis writer will base her analysis on the intrinsic elements of the story, she will then disregard any extrinsic elements such as the background of the author, the social, economical or political situation of the period when the work was written, etc.

B. Intrinsic Approach

This study will explore the intrinsic elements of the short story by analyzing its plot, character, conflict and setting. Therefore, the writer will apply intrinsic approach in this study.

B.1. PLOT

Plot means the arrangement of incidents. It is an ordered chain of physical, emotional, or intellectual events that ties the action together. The term *plot* has come to mean a very particular kind of story structure, a planned sequence of interrelated actions that begins in a state of imbalance, grows out of conflict, reaches a peak of complication, and resolves into some new situation (Jaffe 272).

Plot is also the principal element of the story where something happen in it. If a story is a narrative of events arranged in their time-sequence, a plot is also a narrative of events, the emphasis falling on causality. "The king died and then the queen died," is a

story. "The king died and then the queen died of grief" is a plot. The time-sequence is preserved, but the sense of causality overshadows it. If it is in a story we say "and then?" If it is in a plot we ask "why?" That is the fundamental difference between these two aspects of the novel. A plot demands intelligence and memory also (Hugo 143).

Further, Forster said that if we would grasp the plot we must add intelligence and memory. The intelligent novel-reader sees it from two points of view: isolated, and related to the other facts that he has read on previous pages. Memory and intelligence are closely related, for unless we remember we cannot understand. If by the time the queen dies we have forgotten the existence of the king we shall never make out what killed her. The plot-maker expects us to remember, we expects him to leave no loose ends. Every action or word ought to count; (Hugo 144).

Plot is the narrative means by which characters advance certain problems that are meant to warrant our attention and involvement. As Mark Schorer said in *The Variety of Fiction*: "Plot is a form of organized actions; but action required actors and these are the 'people' of fiction, its characters. Plot cannot exist without people; we cannot see people without plot..."(Bloom 82). Plot cannot be apart from agents of movement, or characters, therefore the thesis writer will also use the theory of characterization in analyzing the work.

Another element, which is necessary to all plots, is conflict. The term *conflict* refers to the train of opposition which animates the characters and impels the movement of the plot (Bloom 83). The various elements in stories are closely related and influence each other. This is especially true of the two elements of conflict and character, for a story does not merely happen, it happens to somebody. And in the skillful short story the characterization will determine the nature, development, outcome, and effect of the conflict (Jaffe 275). In *The Cricket on the Hearth*, the conflict exist within a single character - who is John Peerybingle, the main character - as he is forced to meet a crisis or make a decision.

B.1.1. Characterization

A story cannot exist without characters; through their thoughts, words and actions, characters reflect plot, theme, and meaning as well as their own natures. The nature of the short story demands that there be connection and unity between who and what a character is and what he does. The short story writer reveals his characters through their thought, speech and action. He may also describe and develop a character through the thoughts and comments of another character (Hurtik 19). No character in a book is a real person. Characters in fiction are like real people. They are also unlike them. In realistic fiction, which includes most novels and short stories, writers have

tried to emphasize the life-likeness of their character. And they have tried to restrict the events of their narrative to things likely to happen in ordinary life (Scholes 11).

Two basic types of characters are the round and the flat; the former possesses depth and complexity while the latter possesses only one or two identifying traits. The round character is important and valuable in him, while the flat character usually serves one specific purpose (to contrast with the main character, to represent a particular type of person, to introduce a conflict, etc). Similarly, the static character, usually minor, remains unchanged through out the story, while the developing or dynamic character experiences some permanent change in nature, personality or outlook.

According to Graham Little, there are three steps for the readers to observe characters' basic characteristics or usually called character-traits. The first step is seen from the physical quality, such as age, appearance and mental quality, which usually shows the way of thinking and the ways the character act. The next step is to observe the relationship between one character and others. And the last step is finding out whether they are major character or minor character (Kirkland 89). Yet, the writer will only apply the first and second step to reveal the relationship of the characters in the story being analyzed.

B.1.2. Conflict

The term *conflict* simply means that a story brings together two opposing forces, which we call a protagonist and an antagonist, and then resolves the resultant struggle between these forces. (A protagonist is 'one who struggles for' and an antagonist is 'one who struggles against'). Conflict is the backbone of a story; it is conflict that provides us with pattern and direction and gives us the sense of a story going somewhere. As a result of a given conflict, the character(s) involved will never again be quite the same people that they were before the incident occurred.

In Peden's *Short Fiction - Shape and Substance*, there are three basic conflicts and all fiction is in one way or another concerned with at least one of them:

1. Man against forces over which he can exert little or no control: natural disasters, like floods, earthquakes, hurricanes, plagues of locusts or similar unclassifiable "acts of God"; or man-made catastrophes, such as war, prejudice, man's inhumanity to man, unjust social condition.
2. Man against other men: the good guy versus the bad ones, "our" boys against "theirs", and so on.
3. Man against forces within himself, his own physical or emotional limitations; man confronted by inner doubts, fears, inhibitions; man beset with psychological, spiritual or intellectual dilemmas

In *The Cricket on the Hearth*, the main character deals with the third kind of conflict, that is the conflict within himself, concerning his wife's sincerity and their husband-and-wife relationship.

B.2. Setting

Setting is the physical background against which characters act out their lives. Setting is an element of place, of time. Setting helps to create the appropriate mood and helps to establish a specific time and place and conditions our expectations. It may impart a sense of history, the season of the year, or the hour of the day (Bloom 149). It helps to give credibility to both action and plot. It is not merely scenic or temporal but is connected to the people and happenings of the short story.

According to Holman and Harmon, setting is the physical and sometimes spiritual background against which the action of a narrative (novel, drama, short story, poem) takes place. Further, they states that the elements making up a setting are:

1. The actual geographical location, its topography, scenery and such physical arrangement as the location of the windows and doors in a room.
2. The occupation and daily manner of living of the characters.
3. The time or period in which the action takes place, for: epoch of history or season of the year.

4. The general environment of the character, for example religious, mental, moral, social and emotional condition through which the people in the narrative move (Holman 465).

Setting is also used to convey information about the characters and the world of the play, as told by Henry James that "if I watch (my characters) long enough I see them come together, I see them *placed*, I see them engaged in this or that act and in this or that difficulty. How they look and move and speak and behave, always in the setting I have found for them is my account of them" (Bloom 82). Setting performs, then, as an adjunct of character and plot, and so of mood and theme. It may also be the main source of *atmosphere* in the novel. *Atmosphere* is defined by the dictionary as a "mental or moral environment." But it is sometimes rendered as insubstantial as an essence, imparts the over-all mood or feeling of the short story (Bloom 150).

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS