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**THE MAIN CHARACTER'S CONFLICTS AS A PROMINENT
FACTOR SUPPORTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PLOT
IN GEORGE ELIOT'S SILAS MARNER**



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By

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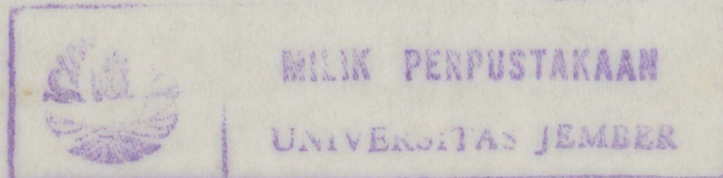
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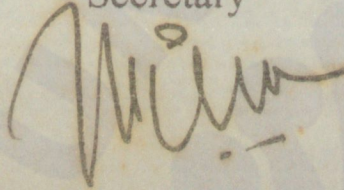
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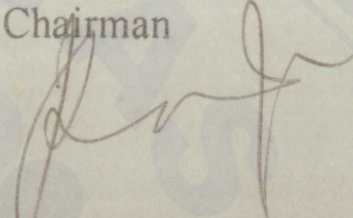
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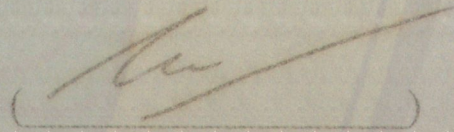
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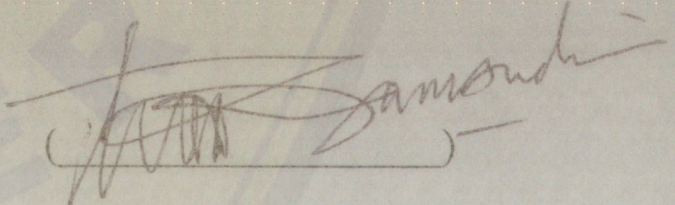
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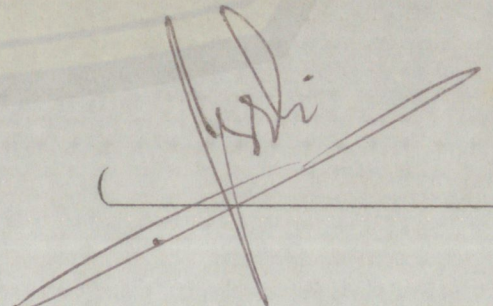
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This thesis is dedicated to:

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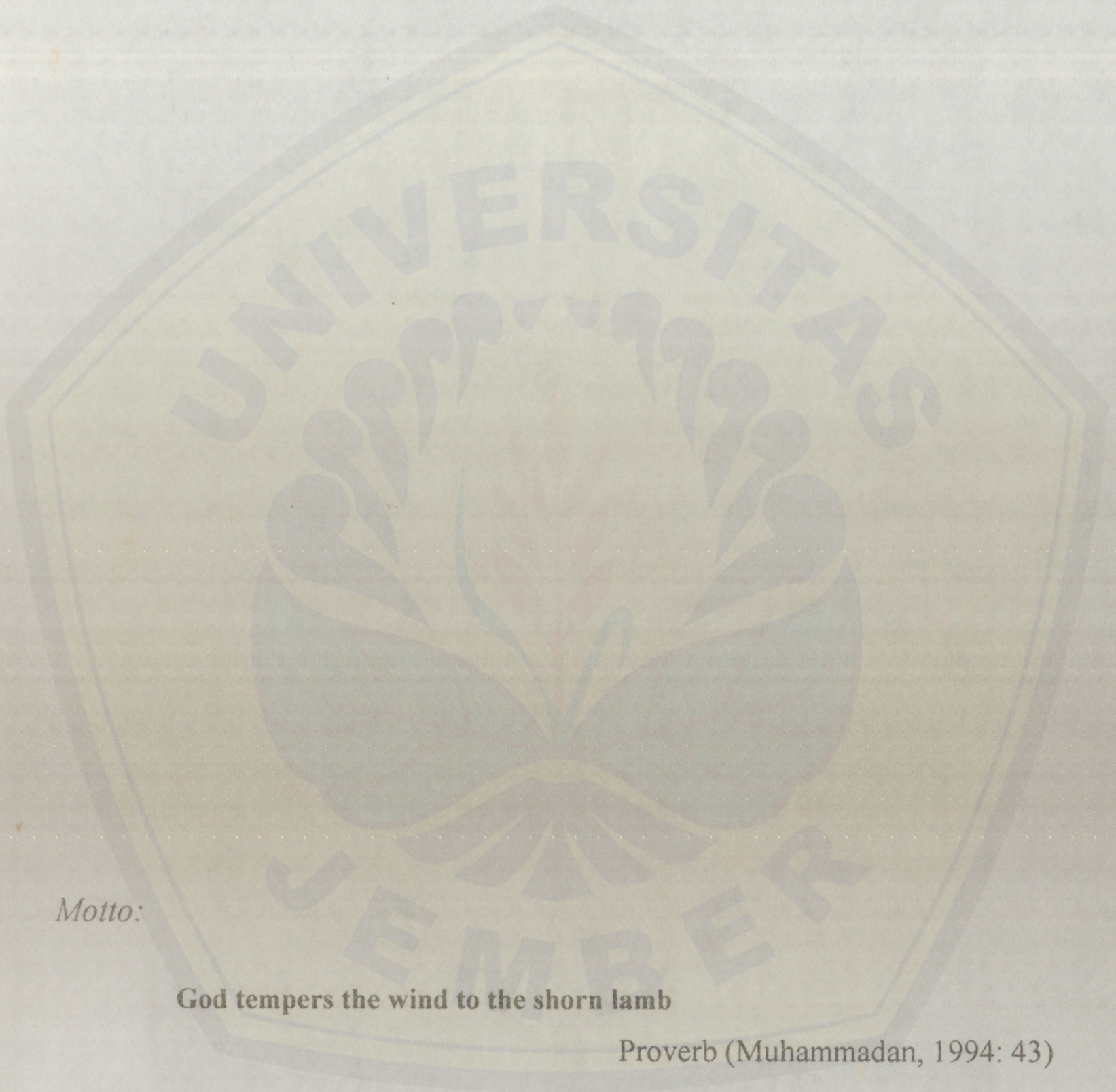
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Motto:

God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb

Proverb (Muhammadan, 1994: 43)

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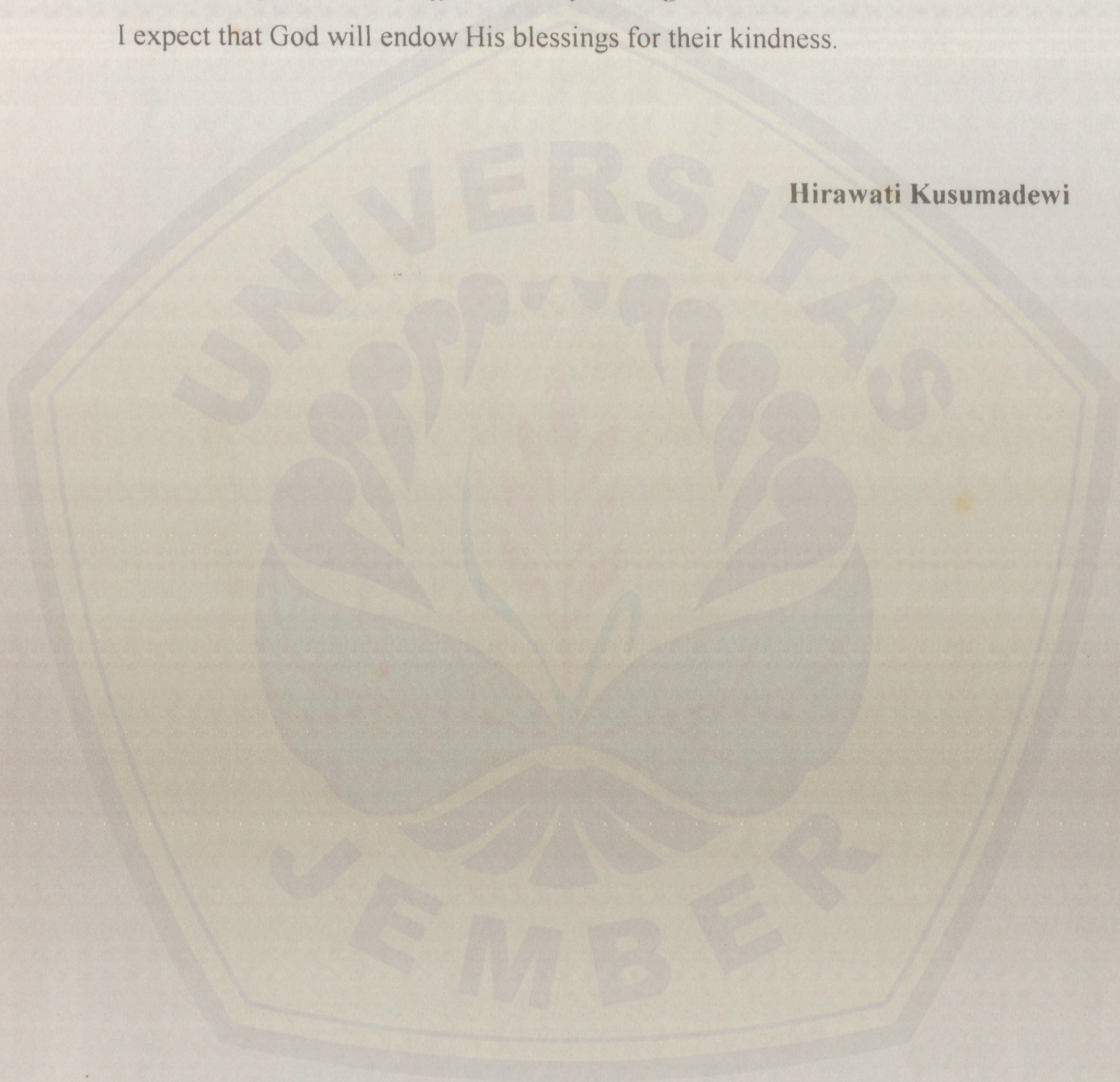
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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

1.1 Rationale

Literature cannot be separated from human life, for it constitutes the reflection of human experiences. Rhythm of life whether it concerns with happiness or human misery is depicted through the imagination of an author, and it is presented in a literary work he or she creates, while “language is the material of literature as stone or bronze is of sculpture, paints of picture or sounds of music (Wellek and Warren, 1956: 22)”. Hudson states:

... Literature is a vital record of what men have seen in life, what they have experienced of it, what they have thought and felt about those aspects of it which have the most immediate and enduring interest for all of us. It is thus fundamentally an expression of life through the medium of language (1965: 10).
...

Novel is one of literary forms which constitutes the long fictional story written in prose. It contains several elements such as character, setting, theme, plot etc. *Silas Marner*, the novel written by George Eliot in 1861 does not only show the close connection between the conflicts and the plot but also good arrangement in its plot's structure. Basically, there are two kinds of plots strand in the novel, but Eliot skilfully interweaves them into a unity. The presence of the subplot as a counterpoint compromises the unity of the work as a whole and makes the story focus on the main plot. The establishment of plot of the novel is formed through conflicts undergone by the main character, Silas Marner. He experiences them in his life which forces him to face a crisis. At first, he is betrayed by his bosom friend, William Dane and afterwards he must struggle against the fate as the impact of William's deed. An ordeal befalls him once more since Godfrey Cass intends to take Eppie, the baby

found by him, from his upbringing. Such conflicts support the establishment of plot of the novel.

1.2 The Problem to Discuss

Reading a novel does not merely give entertainment but also moral teachings to us. Some philosophies of life conveyed through its good arrangement of words, which reflects social reality around us. Courage, disillusion, weakness, struggle, conflict etc are created by a novelist through character's action, as though they really happen in real life. It is in accordance with Jones's statements:

Each person has a desire to live life as fully as possible- to do and see many things or hear about and read of many things. Such a life is filled with conflicts, with problems, with struggles, with dilemmas. Such a life becomes an exciting life, for life itself is a problem-solving business (1968: 30). ...

Conflict, as a basis of every story, can happen between characters and some opposing forces which emerge from either inside or outside him or her, or perhaps both. The conflict may be with another person or persons, environment, some aspects of his or her own personality or certain great force that controls the universe. "Conflict arises from circumstances that cause an unstable situation (the origin of suspense) and is resolved when the character either overcomes this opposing force or succumbs to it and the situation becomes stable again (Singleton, 1966: 289)".

Principally, conflict is closely related with plot, for the plot itself deals with conflicts. Plot, which means "a series of carefully devised and interrelated actions that progress through a struggle of opposing forces (conflict) to a climax and a denouement (Shaw, 1972: 289)" is not simply the events recounted in a story but an author's arrangement of those events according to their causal relationship. In the case of plot, the events do not purely happen; they happen because a certain character with a specific disposition, placed in a specific situation, and motivated to act in a certain way.

Conflicts between the main character against others and also, his struggle against the fate falling upon him constitute a prominent factor supporting the establishment of plot of *Silas Marner*. Such conflicts encompass; first of all, the conflicts between the main character, Silas Marner, against William Dane; secondly, his struggle against the fate falling upon him which finally changes his attitude toward his belief in God and man, and the last, conflicts between him and Godfrey.

In relation with conflicts and plot, *Silas Marner* begins with religious life of Silas Marner in Lantern Yard where he lives with his bosom friend, William Dane and other brethren. He relies on William strongly, and this becomes the beginning of his misfortune. William slanders him of killing the Senior Deacon. This happening constitutes the beginning of conflicts faced by him. When this difficult situation befalls him, he strongly believes that God's aid will rescue him. Instead of a real guilty person founded, he is accused to be a murderer. He then denies God in his affliction besides, his trust upon man vanishes. In his alienation from God and man, once more, happens conflicts between him and Godfrey. Problem to discuss in this thesis concerns with the influences of the conflicts undergone by Silas to the development of the plot of the novel.

1.3 The Scope of the Study

Basically, the elements of literature link up one another. A study about an element will automatically lead us into others; each of them cannot stand alone. If we discuss about plot, for example, the subject will concern with other elements such as character, conflict, theme and setting. To avoid any complicated discussion, the analysis is only focused on the main character's conflicts in relation with the plot of the novel. By the limitation, it is expected that better understanding about the topic will be gained.

Studying plot means discussing sequence of events knitted chronologically from the very beginning or exposition up to the end of the story or denouement. Based on

that point, the exposition, rising action, climax and denouement of *Silas Marner* which their establishment are dominated by the main character's conflicts will be analyzed in detail.

1.4 The Approaches to Use

Suitable approaches which are appropriate with conflicts are needed to analyze a story. In *Silas Marner*, it seems that Silas undergoes the psychological conflict which leads him into his alienation from God and man, that is why the writer of this thesis uses psychological approach for analyzing the novel. Scott states that there are three applications of the psychological knowledge to art;

... First, it provides a more precise language with which to discuss the creative process. ...

Second, it can study the lives of the authors as a means of understanding their art. ...

Third, psychology can be used to explain fictitious characters (1962: 71-72).

...

Among the three applications, the most suitable one that relates to the topic is the third one, so it is used for the analysis.

Another approach which is also reliable to be applied in the study is Structural one. Teeluw asserts that the approach "emphasizes on the structure of the literary work itself (1984: 135)". He explains further "the aim of structural analysis is to elaborate the interrelated aspects of literary works which altogether produce the whole meaning (1984: 135)". The foregoing quotation affirms that the approach is appropriate for analysing the interrelationship between the conflicts undergone by Silas and the construction of the plot of the novel.

1.5 The Method of Analysis

Library research is done in writing this thesis. It concerns with collecting data and information taken from several books and dictionaries. In this analysis, inductive method which means "a method of logical reasoning that obtains or discovers general

laws from particular facts or examples (Hornby, 1995: 607)” is used. Such a method is applied by picturing the specific discussion about three dominant conflicts faced by the main character, first, and then go on with the general discussion about the development of the plot of the novel. By the application of the method, it is hoped that it can find out the fact that the main character’s conflicts constitute a prominent factor supporting the establishment of plot in *Silas Marner*.

1.6 The Goals of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to understand Silas Marner’s conflicts in relation with the establishment of plot in *Silas Marner*, therefore the writer of this thesis analyzing them in detail. Another purpose is to apply the theories of literature given during the study. It is hoped that the study will be a useful contribution to develop a comprehension and increase an interest in studying *Silas Marner*.

1.7 The Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of four chapters. Chapter One presents the introduction. The biography of George Eliot and the synopsis of *Silas Marner* are described in Chapter Two. While Chapter Three elaborates the main discussion about the main character's conflicts, the plot of the novel and the construction of the plot through conflicts. The last chapter, Chapter Four, is the conclusion of the whole discussion.

CHAPTER II

THE BIOGRAPHY OF GEORGE ELIOT AND THE SYNOPSIS OF *SILAS MARNER*

2.1 The Biography of George Eliot

George Eliot, who wrote under the pen-name of Mary Anne or Marian Evans was a well-known English novelist of the Victorian Era. She was born on November 22, 1819, at South Farm, Arbury, Warwickshire, where her father, Robert Evans was the estate agent for the Newdigate family. In 1828, she went as a boarder to Mrs. Wallington's school at Nuneaton, then from 1832 to 1835, she went to school at Coventry. There, her friendship with the daughter of Reverend Francis Franklin, the baptist minister at Coventry, influenced much on her religious ardor; she became deeply religious.

After her mother's death in 1836, she was compelled to return home and took charge of the household. Since her father who allowed her to learn Latin and German turned his business over to her brother, Isaac and left Griff house, she moved with him to Foleshill road, Coventry. It happened in March, 1841.

At the new place, her relationship with Charles Bray, Sara and Charles Hennel, whose religious views were radical, finally made her begin to question about her early belief. Such a vacillation which was confirmed with her wide reading of the various books on relation between the Bible and science and also with her knowledge that many dissenters- like the Franklins, the Hennels, and her aunt, Mrs. Samuel Evans- possessed better lives than many churchmen, at last made her announce that she was unwilling of going to church anymore. The occurrence led to a rift with her father. Since then, she was never again an ortodox Christian but however, she remained strongly influenced by religious concept of love and duty, therefore, her works contain many affectionate portraits of dissenters and clergymen.

From 1843 to 1846, she devoted herself to complete a translation of D.F. Strauss's *Das Leben Jesu*, published as *Life of Jesus*, which appeared without her name, then she began translating Spinoza's *Tractus Theologico Politicus*. After a period of uncertainty following her father's death, in 1850, she met John Chapman, the publisher of *Life of Jesus*. Not long afterwards, she became a contributor to the *Westminister Review*, a leading liberal intellectual journal.

In September 1851, she moved to Strand, London and accepted assistant editor to the *Westminister Review* until 1854 when her translation of Ludwig Feurbach's *The Essence of Christianity* appeared. Early in her London career, she met George Henry Lewes, a man of great brilliance who was well-known as a literary critic and the writer of scientific and philosophical subject. At the time of their meeting, he had married but after long consideration, she agreed to live with him in 1854. Their position was difficult since Lewes's wife refused to divorce him.

With Lewes encouragement, in 1856, she started writing fiction. She began with *The Sad Fortunes of the Reverend Amos Barton* which recounted about an episode during her childhood in Chilvers Cotton Parish. It was published in *Blackwood Magazine* in 1857 and made an instant success. The two more tales, *Mr. Gilfil's Love Story* and *Janet's Repentance* appeared serially in the same year. Since then, her genius was recognized immediately by some of the well-known writers of Victorian Era such as Dickens, Thackeray and Mr. Carlyle and there was a speculation about her identity who was widely supposed to be a clergyman or possibly, a clergyman's wife. In an era when a novel tended to romance and adventure, her realistic and sympathetic treatment of everyday joys and sorrow of commonplace people brought a decidedly new note to English fiction.

In 1859, she published *Adam Bede*, the tremendously popular novel which established her in the front ranks of Victorian novelist. It was perhaps the finest pastoral novel in English. *The Mill on the Floss*, her next novel, appeared in 1860. It related with her own early experience. She published *Silas Marner* in 1861, which

was well-known as her most objective rustic novel. Her other novel, *Middlemarch* was generally considered as her masterpiece. It was published in instalments in 1871-1872. Her last novel, *Daniel Deronda* was published in the same way in 1874-1876. Since then, she was at the height of her fame and widely recognized as the greatest English novelist, even though she also wrote some poems such *Spanish Gipsy* (1860), *How Lisa Loved the King* (1867), *Armgart* (1870), *The Legend of Jubal* (1870) and *Impression of Theophrastus Such* (1879).

Lewes died in 1878 and she devoted herself to prepare his manuscript works for publication. Two years later, she married the forty years old John Walter Cross, her financial adviser whom she met in Rome in 1869. The marriage distressed many of her friends but caused a close relation with her brother, Isaac who had not communicated with her since 1857. It was of short duration for she died seven months afterwards, on December 22, 1880.

2.2 The Synopsis of *Silas Marner*

Silas Marner, a new inhabitant of Raveloe, lives in his solitude at his remote house. He alienates himself from the society since traumatic experiences befall him. They happen when he lives in a narrow religious sect in Lantern Yard, the place where he forms a close friendship with William Dane.

Silas trusts William strongly and deems him faultless until William taints the friendship. William slanders him of killing the Senior Deacon and stealing the church money, whereas in fact, William himself commits such a wickedness. Prospering in slandering him, William then marries Sarah, Silas's fiancée. Not only the tragedy makes his trust upon man shaken but also upon God, as well. He does hope an interference of God in the accusation but the fate ordains him to be considered as a culprit. In his wounded spirit, he leaves Lantern Yard and settles at Raveloe.

In his new life, he becomes a weaver who concentrates on his work only, without trying to make any relationship with his neighbors. He weaves like a spider, his gold

as his payment heap from time to time as a result of his hard work. His treasures which he adores much then are stolen by Dunstan Cass. His neighbors feel sympathetic toward his loss. They consider that the robbery is caused by his absence from going to church during his fifteen years living at Raveloe.

An opportunity for bettering life finally comes to him. At the New Year's Eve, he finds a child in front of his hearth. Many people may consider the foundling as a nuisance and a burden but he makes a right choice. He does not think about trouble or worry about responsibility; he does not feel disturbed or seek an easy way out. He loves Eppie, the foundling, and takes care of her tenderly. Since then, as his neighbors suggest him, she is baptized and he himself often goes to church accompanies her.

He lives happily with her for sixteen years but once more, a disturbance exists. Godfrey Cass, the father of Eppie, comes to take her from Silas's hands. Silas struggles to defend her for he is the only person who takes care of her for sixteen years besides, Godfrey never admits her as his child when Silas brings the baby Eppie to his house. She herself refuses to live with Godfrey, the person who never admits her and her mother, Molly Farren, as his family. The story ends when Eppie marries Aaron and still keeps her attention to Silas.

CHAPTER III

THE MAIN CHARACTER'S CONFLICTS AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE PLOT OF *SILAS MARNER*

Sometimes people undergo unexpected circumstances in their lives which lead them into tension. Such a state may arise because goals are not always easily attained. There are obstacles which must be overcome, deficiencies to supply and choices to make. Even though the goals at last are realizable, occasionally, postponement and difficulties in reaching them may exist. The condition may place a person in conflict personally, or else, with an environment.

Basically, the meaning of the word 'conflict' in literature is not widely different from general one. It is defined by Shaw:

The opposition of persons or forces upon which the action depends in drama or fiction is called conflict. Dramatic conflict is the struggle which grows out of interplay of opposing forces (ideas, interest, wills) in a plot; conflict may be termed the material from which a plot is constructed (1972: 91).

While Bergman and Epstein convey "conflict occurs when an obstacle blocks a character's pursuit of a goal or when the goal of two characters are opposed (1992: 171)". The foregoing quotations explain that conflict constitutes character's struggle in facing an obstacle which hampers his or her goal. It emerges as the result of serious difference of ideas, interests and wills between characters. The difference then causes tension which constructs plot in drama or fiction.

Conflicting incidents in literature are divided according to typical occasions.

Shaw asserts:

One type of conflict is *elemental*, or *physical*: a struggle between man and the physical world. ...

Another type of conflict is *social*: a struggle between man and man. ...

A third kind of conflict is *internal* or *psychological*: a struggle between desires within a person. ...

A variant form of social conflict is a protagonist's struggle against society, ...

... A fifth kind of conflict is a man's struggle against fate or destiny (1972: 91-92). ...

Most conflicts are basically physical or elemental (a struggle between man and the nature or physical world), social (a struggle between man and man), and internal or psychological (a struggle between desires within a person) and others constitute the combination of those three. The protagonist's struggle against society is the variation of social conflict, while a man's struggle against fate or destiny constitutes the broadening of internal or psychological one.

Conflict plays a prominent role for it will conceive a story as though it happens in real life. It may emerge in the beginning or in the middle of plot. In relation with conflict, Silas Marner undergoes many of them in his life in which their existence construct the plot of *Silas Marner*.

3.1 Silas Marner's Conflicts

Silas Marner, a pale weaver of Raveloe experiences conflicts in his life which force him to face a crisis. As it is mentioned in the synopsis, his in bosom friend, William Dane accuses him of killing the Senior Deacon and stealing the church money. The accusation causes the Minister and other brethren ascertain a culprit by drawing on the lot. Silas relies on God's aid to rescue him, but apparently, the lot declares that he is guilty. Since then he does not believe in Him anymore. His trust upon man also vanishes as the impact of William's deed. The baby Eppie comes to his life then. Her presence causes his life better. He begins involving himself into the relationship with his neighbors, even, he goes to church to baptize her. Sixteen years after the finding, Godfrey Cass intends to take her from Silas's upbringing. He wants to do his duty as her father. The detailed analysis of such conflicts are presented as follows.

3.1.1 Silas Marner's Conflicts with William Dane

As a social being, a person spends most of his or her life to interact with others. The interaction does not merely go smoothly but occasionally an obstacles exist. Somebody's good deed is not always rewarded with goodness, but wickedness often

presents as the reply. The circumstance happens to Silas Marner whose honesty is betrayed by William Dane.

Before William's accusation happens, Silas's life is filled with mental activities and close fellowship in a narrow religious sect in Lantern Yard. There, he is believed to be a young man of exemplary life and ardent faith. Among church members, a young man, a little older than him called David or Jonathan is also regarded as a shining instance of the community. His real name is William Dane. He is a bosom friend of him. Both of them possess different trait, Silas remains simple, on the other hand, William seems somewhat overseverity toward weaker brethren and he also considers himself wiser than his teachers. Whatever blemishes others discern in William, in Silas's mind, he is faultless. He never realizes that actually William is not a good friend. Behind his meekness, William always attempts to ruin him.

He trusts William strongly, thus it makes him never object to William's occasional presence in his meeting with Sarah, his fiancée. Even he is delighted upon his attendance. He never thinks that the familiarity between them eventually will harm him.

In the beginning, William never shows his dislike to Silas but from time to time, his demeanor begins changing. He often comments on Silas cataleptic fit during the prayer meeting sarcastically. When the various queries and expressions of interest about the occasion addressed to him by the community, instead William regards such a trance looks more like a visitation of satan than a proof of divine favor. Even, he forces him to throw over an accursed thing from his soul. He does not feel any resentment but only pain at William's doubts concerning him.

The conflicts with William occur when the Senior Deacon is seriously ill. Being a childless widower, he is accompanied night and day by some younger brethren and sisters. Silas frequently takes his turn at the night watching with William, the one relieving the other at two in the morning. One night, he observes that the Senior Deacon's audible breathing ceases. Examining him, he convinces that the Senior Deacon is dead. It is already four in the morning, but William does not arrive yet. He

seeks for a help and soon, several friends assemble in the house, the minister among them, while he goes away to his work, wishing he can meet William to know the reason of his absence.

Unexpectedly, the death of the Senior Deacon constitutes the beginning of Silas's misfortune. Summoned to Lantern Yard to meet the church members, he is seated in the vestry and afterwards interrogated by the minister.

... Nothing further was said until Silas was seated in the vestry, in front of the minister with the eyes of those who to him represented God's people fixed solemnly upon him. Then the minister, taking out a pocketknife, showed it to Silas, and asked him if he knew where he had left that knife. Silas said he did not know that he had left it anywhere out of his own pocket- but he was trembling at this strange interrogation. ...

(Page 10)

Silas is tremble during the interrogation. Such condition is caused by the minister's authority whom he deems as a representation of God and he is startled that the summon is apparently in connection with him, for he is not informed about causes of the summon before. It is right that the knife is his, but he does not know at all about the place where he has left it for the last time.

Since the knife is found in the bureau by the departed deacon's bedside- found in the place where the little bag of church money lain which the minister himself sees the day before, the accusation incriminates against him, the owner of the knife. The bag is lost, and he is accused of stealing it. Afterwards, he is forced not to hide his sin, but to confess and repent. He is not guilty, so he denies the accusation.

... For some time Silas was mute with astonishment; then he said, "God will clear me: I know nothing about the knife being there, or the money being gone. Search me and my dwelling: you will find nothing but three pound five of my own savings, which William Dane knows I have had these six months." ...

(Page 10)

Silas's close friendship with William makes him sure that William will side with him. He will speak of the truth about his possession, even, he will deny that he has committed an evil deed, for it is impossible that the stealing is done by a simple

honest person like Silas. Unexpectedly, William groans, as though he objects to bear a testimony upon Silas's possession.

The minister perseveres that Silas is guilty, since the money is lost at the night of the Senior Deacon's death and he is the only person who accompanies him, for William has declared to the minister and other brethren that he cannot accompany the Senior Deacon because of his sudden sickness. Whereas he himself acknowledges that William has not come at the night of the Senior Deacon's death. The proof forces him into a corner, but he keeps defending himself.

"I must have slept," said Silas. Then, after a pause, he added, "Or I must have had another visitation like that which you have all seen me under, so that the thief must have come and gone while I was not in the body, but out of the body. But, I say again, search me and my dwelling, for I have been nowhere else."

(Page 10)

Confirming that he is not guilty, Silas asks the minister and other brethren to search the church money in him and his dwelling. The search is really made and it ends in William Dane's finding the well-known bag, empty, folded behind the chest of drawers in Silas's chamber. Afterwards, he forces him to confess and not to hide his sin any longer. He is startled upon William's doubt concerning his honesty. It is proved through the following quotations: Silas turned a look of keen reproach on him, and said, "William, for nine years that we have gone in and out together, have you ever known me tell a lie? But God will clear me (Page 10)".

As a bosom friend, of course William knows exactly about Silas's traits, even their friendship has persisted for nine years. He is an honest person, but he is not clever enough to talk, so he cannot protect himself from the accusation. The proof asserts him guilty, though he does not kill the Senior Deacon nor steal the church money, therefore he just submits his destiny to God. On the other hand, the sly William pretends as though he is a pious person. Finding his defense, he protests him with his wise talk. "Brother," said William, "how do I know what you may have done in the secret chambers of your heart, to give satan an advantage over you? (Page 10)".

Even though other brethren who are present in the inquiry expect further explanation, Silas cannot say anything about the matter. Thereafter the resort to ascertain a culprit is taken by the community, but it is on the contrary with the principle of the church in Lantern Yard. The minister and the brethren resolve on praying and drawing lot. Knowing that he cannot protect himself from the accusation, he relies on the aid of God to rescue him. Apparently, the decision disappoints him; the lot declares that he is guilty. As the punishment, he is suspended from the church membership and can be received once more in the community if he confesses his guilt. In such an occasion, he remembers the knife and realizes that he is betrayed by William. He approaches and abuses him:

“The last time I remember using my knife was when I took it out to cut a strap for you. I don’t remember putting it in my pocket again. You stole the money, and you have woven the plot to lay the sin at my door. But you may prosper, for all that; there is no just God that governs the earth righteously, but a God of lies, that bears witness against the innocent.”

(Page 11)

It is too late for Silas to realize the place where he puts the knife, while the decision has been pronounced. William’s betrayal makes him disappointed, but he pretends that the event happens as the consequence of his fault. It is proved through the following quotation: William said meekly, “I leave our brethren to judge whether this is the voice of satan or not. I can do nothing but pray for you, Silas (Page 11)”. The victory is in the hands of William. He prospers in slandering Silas while he is more and more buried in his sadness. Sarah breaks off their engagement and in little more than a month from the time she marries William. The tragedy drives him to despair; his trust in God and man is shaken. Since then he departs from the town and settles at Raveloe. At the new place, his life entirely changes. He lives in his solitude, alienates himself from society.

3.1.2 Silas Marner's Struggle against Fate

Struggle against fate constitutes the part of the conflicts faced by Silas. It happens since he is disappointed with the drawing lot. God, the only power he believes to rescue him, apparently ordains him to be considered as a culprit. On the contrary, the sly William Dane, a person who should be responsible for the wickedness, is not blamed, instead. He cannot accept the bitter occurrence as a trial, even, he leaves Lantern Yard in his serious psychological injury.

In a state of frustration, that is "the blocking or prevention of goal achievement, a condition or sustained motivation without satisfaction (Moskowitz and Orgel, 1969: 337)", a man is often difficult to think in a rational manner. In *Silas Marner*, Silas Marner undergoes the matter. The decision of the lot which is on the contrary with the truth makes him consider that God is unjust; God does not care of him.

Experiencing such a painful fate, he "retreats from the source of frustration" which "is called as withdrawal in psychological term (Moskowitz and Orgel, 1969: 328)". The act of withdrawal pictures his struggle, for, 'struggle' can mean "try to overcome a problem or prevent something undesirable from happening or continuing (Hornby, 1995: 1186)". Preventing himself from the previous happening, he moves to Raveloe. In his view, the moving can avoid him from the fate ordained in Lantern Yard. The following quotation shows clearly his opinion about it:

... There were no lips in Raveloe from which a word could fall that would stir Silas Marner's benumbed faith to a sense of pain. In the early ages of the world, we know, it was believed that each territory was inhabited and ruled by its own divinities, so that a man could cross the bordering heights and be out of the reach of his native gods, whose presence was confined to the streams and the groves and the hills among which he had lived from his birth. And poor Silas was vaguely conscious of something not unlike the feeling of primitive men, when they fled thus, in fear or in sullenness, from the face of an unpropitious deity. It seemed to him that the Power he had vainly trusted in among the streets and at the prayer meeting was very far away from this land in which he had taken refuge where men lived in careless abundance, knowing and needing nothing of that trust which, for him, had been turned to bitterness. ...

(Pages 13-14)

The further impact of his withdrawal is his avoidance both from God and man. Since the move, Silas lives in his solitude, trying to suffice his necessities. He never attempts to make a close relationship with his neighbors, as well, for he does not want his experiences happen again in his new living.

... Silas's hands satisfied itself with throwing of the shuttle, and his eye with seeing the little squares in the cloth complete themselves under his effort. Then there were the calls of hunger; and Silas, in his solitude, had to provide his own breakfast, dinner, and supper, to fetch his own water from the well, and put his own kettle on the fire; and all these immediate promptings helped, along with the weaving, to reduce his life to the unquestioning activity of a spinning insect. He hated the thought of the past; there was nothing that called of his love and fellowship toward the strangers he had come amongst; and the future was all dark, for there was no Unseen Love that cared for him. ...

(Page 14)

Becoming a weaver, he works hard on his loom. He weaves like a spider and he does not care about his fatigue. Finishing Mrs. Osgood's table linen sooner than she is expected, he is paid in gold. The diligence brings him in the success of his work. His treasures heap from time to time as the result of his hard work. Since then he possesses new habits, those are, holding the treasures in his hands, feeling them in his palm and looking at their bright faces. The quotation below shows the habits:

... Now, for the first time in his life, he had five bright guineas put into his hand; no man expected a share of them and he loved no man that he should offer him a share. But what were the guineas to him who saw no vista beyond countless days of weaving? It was heedless for him to ask that, for it was pleasant to him to feel them in his palm, and look at their bright faces, which were all his own; ...

(Pages 14-15)

The above action indicates a psychological symptom. It is stated by Edwards:

... An individual may substitute the desirable motives and abilities that he can assume in the fantasy of daydreams to disguise their lack in the real world. Each of these varieties of substitution and compensation disguises and covers the frustration and the consequent anxiety by focusing attention on some other behavior (1968: 350). ...

The love to his treasures displaces his usual affection for human beings. It is natural that every person possesses the desire to share problems or feelings but Silas who

undergoes the traumatic experiences concerning with the relationship with others cannot execute such a deed. To release himself from the feeling of loneliness, he loves the treasures very much. They become his only companion on his desolate life.

... He began to think it was conscious of him, as his loom was, and he would on no account have exchanged those coins, which had become his familiars, for other coins with unknown faces. He handled them, he counted them, till their form and color were like the satisfaction of a thirst to him; but it was only in the night, when his work was done, that he drew them out to enjoy their companionship. ...

(Page 17)

Silas does not only withdraw himself from the society, but also from the church activities. He never goes to church nor prays and says 'amen'. It is proved from the talk of Mr. Macey, the clerk of the parish of Raveloe:

... "Why, you've never heard me say "Amen" since you come into these parts, and I recommend you to lose no time, for it'll be poor work when Tookey has it all to himself, for I mayn't be equil to stand i' the desk at all come another winter." ...

(Page 71)

The state of alienating himself both from God and man persists for a long time, even until Dunstan Cass steals the treasure. The robbery makes his trust upon God entirely vanish. He does not only suspect the man who may take his treasures but his suspicion upon the cruelty of God also arises in his mind. He thinks that God may plan the occurrence to make him desolate for the second time. The opinion is proved through the following quotation which describes his condition at the moment he discovers that his treasures are stolen.

... When had the thief come? During Silas's absence in the daytime the door had been locked, and there had been no marks of any inroad on his return by daylight. And in evening, too, he said to himself, everything was the same as when he had left it. The sand and bricks looked as if they had not been moved. Was it cruel Power that no hands could reach, which had delighted in making him a second times desolate? ...

(Page 38)

The neighbors who are sympathetic to his misfortune show their care in various ways. Some of them persuade him to go to church, for they consider that the



misfortune is caused by his absence from going there since his fifteen years living at Raveloe. As the quotation cited below:

This change to a kindlier feeling was shown in various ways. The odor of Christmas cooking being on the wind, it was the season when superfluous pork and black puddings are suggestive of charity in well-to-do families; and Silas's misfortune had brought him uppermost in the memory of housekeepers like Mrs. Osgood. Mr. Crackentrop, too, while he admonished Silas that his money had probably been taken from him because he thought too much of it and never came to church, enforced the doctrine by a present of pig's pettitoes, well calculated to dissipate unfounded prejudices against the clerical character. Neighbors, who had nothing but verbal consolation to give, showed a disposition not only to greet Silas, and discuss his misfortune at some length when they encountered him in the village, but also to take the trouble of calling at his cottage, and getting him to repeat all the details on the very spot; and then they would try to cheer him by saying, "Well, Master Marner, you're no worse off nor other poor folks, after all; and if you was to be crippled, the parish 'ud give you a'lowance."

(Page 69)

Mr. Macey, the clerk of the parish at Raveloe also attempts to comfort Silas. He comes to Silas's house and says that the recent event gives him an advantage for it causes his involvement to the relationship with his neighbors. Mr. Macey suggests him to go to church regularly, too. Although he attempts to persuade him patiently, his cajoleries do not influence him in the least. His heart is still locked from the suggestions. The quotation below shows his response toward Mr. Macey's suggestions:

During this discursive address Silas had continued motionless in his previous attitude, leaning his elbows on his knees, and pressing his hands against his head. Mr. Macey, not doubting that he had been listened to, paused, in the expectation of some appreciatory reply, but Marner remained silent. He had a sense that the old man meant to be good-natured and neighborly; but the kindness fell on him as sunshine falls on the wretched- he had no heart to taste it, and felt that it was very far off him.

(Page 71)

Silas's indifference to everyone's suggestions is also shown through his reaction toward Dolly Winthrop's visit. She calls on him accompanied by her little boy, Aaron. Carrying some cakes in her hands, she intends to ease his sadness through her coming. She also influences him to go to church regularly, even, she orders Aaron to

sing a Christmas carol to attract him to church. The song falls on his ears like a strange music and it does not give effect on him. He wants to show her that he is grateful, but he cannot help feeling relieved when she leaves his house.

Silas said "Good by, and thank you kindly," as he opened the door for Dolly, but he couldn't help feeling relieved when she was gone- relieved that he might weave again and moan at his ease. Her simple view of life and its comforts, by which she had tried to cheer him, was only like a report of unknown objects, which his imagination could not fashion. ...

(Page 77)

It is really a hard effort to influence him for becoming closer to God, for he is not accustomed to pray to Him since his fifteen years living at Raveloe. Nobody can shake his conviction, he insists to isolate himself from the faith in God.

3.1.3 Silas Marner's Conflicts with Godfrey

The conflicts happen when Eppie, the foundling, attains the age of sixteen. Godfrey Cass, her lawful father, comes to take her from Silas's upbringing. He intends to claim her as his child, since he is disturbed by his guilty conscience about his past. Godfrey and Nancy Lammeter attempt to persuade her to move to their luxurious house. Knowing Silas's sensitive trait, he conveys his purpose very carefully.

"Well, Marner," said Godfrey, trying to speak with perfect firmness, "it's a great comfort to me to see you with your money again that you've been deprived of so many years. It was one of my family did you the wrong- the more grief to me- and I feel bound to make up to you for it in every way. Whatever I can do for you will be nothing but paying a debt, even if I looked no further than the robbery. But there are other things I'm beholden- shall be beholden to you for, Marner."

(Page 152)

Godfrey acknowledges that his brother, Dunstan Cass has stolen Silas's treasure. He deplors the robbery and makes it the reason for helping Silas's life. He has an intention to take care of Eppie in order to alleviate his burden.

... "You've done a good part by Eppie, Marner, for sixteen years. It 'ud be a great comfort to you to see her well provided for, wouldn't it? She looks

blooming and healthy, but not fit for any hardships; she doesn't look like a strapping girl come of working parents. You'd like to see her taken care of by those who can leave her well off, and make a lady of her; she's more fit for it than for a rough life, such as she might come to have in a few year's time."

(Page 153)

Hearing Godfrey's demand, Silas is hurt and feels uneasy, even when Godfrey speaks about the way he brings up Eppie. He speaks as though he undergoes some difficulties in taking care of her as good as possible. Silas admits that he cannot give her any luxury, but he never feels any complaints in bringing up her. He realizes that she may wish the luxury which is offered by Godfrey, therefore he gives her the chance to choose her own way of life, although he loses the hope of possessing her any longer. She is the only spirit of his life. Her presence makes his life happier, while she herself feels that she cannot be separated from him. Her love to him causes her to be reluctant to leave her simplicity and turns to the luxury.

"Thank you, ma'am- thank you, sir. But I can't leave my father, nor own anybody nearer than him. And I don't want to be a lady-thank you all the same" (here Eppie dropped another curtsy). "I couldn't give up the folks I've been used to."

(Page 154)

As a rich and respected person whose wishes are accustomed to be fulfilled, Godfrey is very angry with her refusal. In his anger, he reveals his secret past.

"But I've a claim on you, Eppie- the strongest of all claims. It's my duty, Marner, to own Eppie as my child, and provide for her. She's my own child: her mother was my wife. I've a natural claim on her that must stand before every other."

(Pages 154-155)

Apparently Godfrey is Eppie's father. His opium addict wife, Molly Farren, gives him a baby, Eppie. He repents his degrading marriage and intends to marry Nancy Lammeter. That is why, at the moment he knows her death in the snow, he hides his identity as her husband and also neglects the baby. He considers her death as the chance for marrying Nancy.

Godfrey reappeared in the White Parlor with dry feet, and, since the truth must be told, with a sense of relief and gladness that was too strong for painful

thoughts to struggle with. For could he not venture now, whenever opportunity offered, to say the tenderest things to Nancy Lammeter- to promise her and himself that he would always be just what she would desire to see him? There was no danger that his dead wife would be recognized; those were not days of active inquiry and wide report; and as for the registry of their marriage, that was a long way off, buried in unturned pages, away from every one's interest but his own. Dunsey might betray him if he came back; but Dunsey might be won to silence.

(Page 108)

Feeling sure upon Eppie's refusal and knowing the true identity of Godfrey, the courage of defending her arises in Silas's mind. Since then, he possesses the key to force him into a corner.

Eppie had given a violent start, and turned quite pale. Silas, on the contrary, who had been relieved, by Eppie's answer, from the dread lest his mind should be in opposition to hers, felt the spirit of resistance in him set free, not without a touch of parental fierceness. "Then, sir," he answered, with an accent of bitterness that had been silent in him since the memorable day when his youthful hope had perished- "then sir, why don't you say so sixteen years ago, and claim her before I'd come to love her, I'stead o' coming to take her from me now, when you might as well take the heart out o' my body? God gave her to me because you turned your back upon her, and He looks upon her as mine; you've no right to her! When a man turns a blessing from his door, it falls to them as take it in."

(Page 155)

Godfrey repents his fault, but Silas keeps on trying to defend her. He blames him for he comes easily and intends to take her from his hands after he has neglected her for sixteen years.

"I know that, Marner. I was wrong. I've repented of my conduct in that matter," said Godfrey, who could not help feeling the edge of Silas's words.

"I'm glad to hear it, sir," said Marner, with gathering excitement; "but repentance doesn't alter what's been going on for sixteen years. Your coming now and saying 'I'm her father,' doesn't alter the feelings inside us. It's me she's been calling her father ever since she could say a word."

"But I think you might look at the thing more reasonably, Marner," said Godfrey, unexpectedly awed by the weaver's direct truth-speaking. "It isn't as if she was to be taken quite away from you, so that you'd never see her again. She'll be very near you, and come to see you very often. She'll feel just the same towards you."

“Just the same?” said Marner, more bitterly than ever. “How’ll she feel just the same for me as she does now, when we eat o’ the same bit, and drink o’ the same cup, and think o’ the same things from one day’s end to another? Just the same? That’s idle talk. You’d cut us I’ two.”

(Page 155)

The quarrel still continues. They are unwilling to concede until Godfrey humiliates Silas’s weakness. He reminds him that his life is uncertain. He cannot guarantee her welfare. She may marry a low class man because of her state; she lives with a poor person and cannot involve herself into the relationship with some respectable classes of society. Godfrey, as her lawful father is not willing to let her marry a poor man. As the quotation cited below:

“I should have thought, Marner,” he said severely- “I should have thought your affection for Eppie would make you rejoice in what was for her good, even if it did call upon you to give up something. You ought to remember your own life’s uncertain, and she’s at an age now when her lot may soon be fixed in a way very different from what it would be in her father’s home: she may marry some low working man, and then, whatever I might do for her, I couldn’t make her well off. You’re putting yourself in the way of her welfare; and though I’m sorry to hurt you after what you’ve done, and what I’ve left undone, I feel now it’s my duty to insist on taking care of my own daughter. I want to do my duty.”

(Pages 155-156)

Silas, at last, is again stricken in conscience and begins thinking that Godfrey’s view may be true- he cannot force his own will as an obstacle to Eppie’s good. He submits the decision to her. “I’ll say no more. Let it be as you will. Speak to the child. I’ll hinder nothing (Page 156)”.

Godfrey keeps on trying to persuade her, but she refuses his wish. It makes him very angry. Afterwards, he leaves Silas’s house in his abrupt departure.

3.2 The Plot of *Silas Marner*

Plot is one of elements of fiction which reveals events to us. It is a chain of causally related events in a story. Kenney states “by plot in fiction, then, we mean not simply the events recounted in the story, but the author’s arrangement of those events according to their causal relationships (1966: 14)”. Based on the definition, it is clear

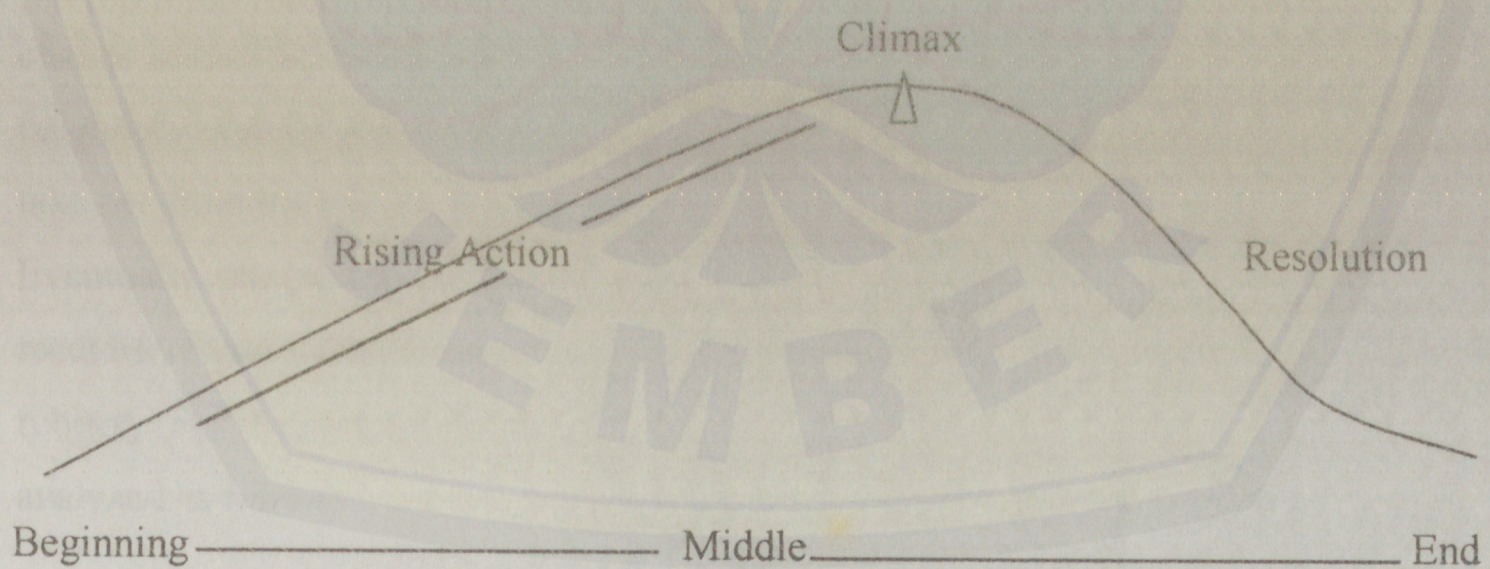
that each event in a story possesses a tight causal relationship. An event is a cause of another that follows immediately or occurs later in a novel.

In literature, plot possesses several meanings. Abrams defines “the plot in a dramatic or narrative work is the structure of its actions, as these are ordered and rendered toward achieving particular emotional and artistic effects (1957: 127)”. Another opinion is conveyed by Carpenter and Neumeyer that plot is “the interplay and sequence of events in a story artfully arranged to that the author may attain the desired aesthetic or artistic effects. A plot implies causality (1966: 438)”. The preceding quotations explain that plot is formed through the actions of a story. Some events affect one another and an author arranges them artistically to attain an aesthetic effect. The establishment of plot is based on causality.

Plot is planned by an author. The story turns from the beginning through a series of events to the climax or turning point, and then to the logical end.

There are a number of ways in which events can be ordered or interrelated but in each case, the relationship must be logical. ...The laws of the cause and effect govern their relationship and provide a logical plot progression (Taylor, 1981: 49).

Viewed in a diagram, a simple plot can be seen thus:



(Jones, 1968: 32)

Silas Marner pictures the compound plot which consists of the story of Silas Marner as the main plot and Godfrey-Dunstan affair as the subplot. The subplot is presented in the story to complete the main plot and eventually, the encounter of both comes to the unity. Abrams states:

... A subplot- a secondary story that is complete and interesting in its own right- is introduced into the play, and when it is skilfully managed, it serves to broaden our perspective on the main plot and to enhance rather than diffuse the overall effect. This underplot may have either the relation of analogy to the main plot or of counterpoint against it (1957 : 129). ...

The presence of the subplot in a story does not only make the story interesting but it also completes the way the story goes. The subplot clarifies the main plot and sometimes it possesses the analogy to the main plot, or else, it constitutes the counterpoint against it.

The plot of *Silas Marner* is dominated by the main character's conflicts. In the beginning, Silas Marner is involved in conflicts with William Dane. They lead him into his alienation both from God and man. Such conflicts do not only cause his withdrawal, but also his copious love to his treasures. That is why, at the time Dunstan Cass steals them, he feels truly desolate. Since then, his trust upon God and man entirely vanishes. The baby Eppie comes to his life. Her presence causes the change in his life. He begins involving himself into the relationship with his neighbors even he goes to church to baptize her. Therefore, when Godfrey comes to take her from his life, he defends her. He is unwilling to be alone anymore. Eventually, she prefers to stay with him and he invites her to go to Lantem Yard to meet Mr. Paston, the minister. He wants to clarify that he is not involved in the robbery. For the sake of clarity, the sequence of events of *Silas Marner* will be analyzed as follows.

3.2.1 The Sequence of Events in the Main Plot

The chain of events of *Silas Marner* will be listed chronologically in order to attain clear understanding. In the story, the beginning is told in flashback.

- Event 1 : Silas lives in a narrow religious sect in Lantern Yard. There, he forms a close friendship with William Dane.
- Event 2 : The Senior Deacon is seriously ill. Silas frequently takes his turn in the night watching with William, the one relieving the other at two in the morning.
- Event 3 : The Senior Deacon is dead. William does not come to take his turn in the night of the occurrence. Silas seeks for a help, after several friends and the minister assemble in the house, he goes away to his work.
- Event 4 : At six o'clock, William and the minister come to summon him to Lantern Yard. There, he is seated in the vestry and interrogated by the minister. He is accused of killing the Senior Deacon and stealing the church money, for his pocketknife is found in the bureau by the departed deacon's bedside.
- Event 5 : He denies the accusation, therefore the resort to ascertain a culprit is taken by the community. The minister and the brethren resolve on praying and drawing lot.
- Event 6 : The lot declares that he is guilty. He remembers the place where he puts his pocketknife for the last time and realizes that he is betrayed by William Dane. Since then, his trust upon God and man is shaken.
- Event 7 : Sarah, his fiancée, breaks off their engagement. She marries William Dane.
- Event 8 : Silas leaves the town.
- Event 9 : He settles at Raveloe and becomes a weaver.
- Event 10 : He lives in his solitude and concentrates only on his work. His treasures heap from time to time as the result of his hard work. To release himself from the feeling of loneliness, he is fond of the treasures very much.
- Event 11 : The treasures are stolen and it makes him feel desolate. He rushes to Rainbow.

- Event 12 : At Rainbow, he proclaims his loss and accuses Jem Rodney as the thief for he comes oftener than others.
- Event 13 : The robbery makes the neighbors feel sympathetic on him. They often come to ease his sadness. Some of them persuade him to involve himself into the church activity, but the cajoleries do not influence him in the least.
- Event 14 : He finds a baby in front of his hearth and her dead mother in the snow.
- Event 15 : He seeks for a help to Red House. Since there is not anybody recognize the baby and the dead mother, he takes care of her.
- Event 16 : The baby is named Eppie and baptized. Her presence changes his life. He begins involving himself into the church activity.
- Event 17 : The robbery is revealed. His treasures are returned by Godfrey Cass, the brother of the thief.
- Event 18 : Godfrey Cass, the lawful father of Eppie, comes to take her from Silas's upbringing. Silas defends her.
- Event 19 : Eppie refuses to live with Godfrey and prefers to stay with Silas.
- Event 20 : Silas invites Eppie to go to Lantern Yard. He wants to meet Mr. Paston to clarify that he is not involved in the robbery. Lantern Yard is all swept away, so he cannot meet Mr. Paston nor anybody he knows well.
- Event 21 : Eppie marries Aaron and Silas lives happily with them.

3.2.2 The Sequence of Events in the Subplot

- Event 1 : Godfrey Cass summons Dunstan to meet him. He wants him to return his money back for he must hand over the rent of Fowler to his father, Squire Cass. Dunstan refuses to give him the money for he considers the matter as Godfrey's responsibility. He cannot do anything about Dunstan's indifference for he knows his degrading marriage with Molly Farren. He does not want him to tell Squire Cass nor anybody else.

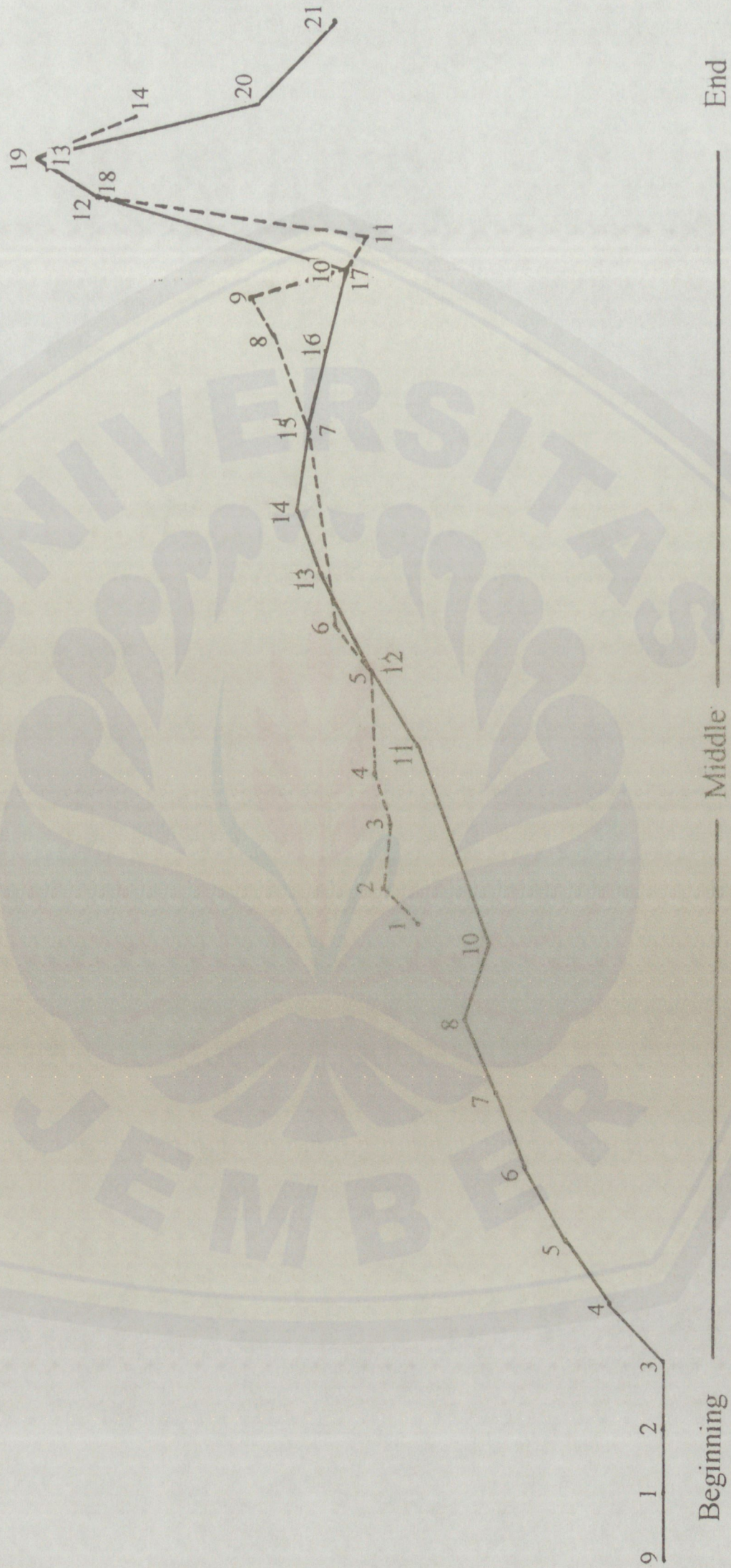
- Event 2 : Dunstan suggests him to sell Wildfire, his horse. Godfrey does not possess another choice, for he does not have any money and the horse is the only thing he possesses. He trusts Dunstan to sell him.
- Event 3 : Dunstan sells the horse to Bryce. He is paid a hundred and twenty and he must deliver him to Batherley stables.
- Event 4 : On his way to Batherley stables, Dunstan throws the horse down and broke his knees. He comes to Stone Pits and steals Silas Marner's treasures.
- Event 5 : Godfrey attends Mrs. Osgood's birthday dance. There, Silas proclaims his loss.
- Event 6 : When Godfrey returns from the party, he finds Dunstan does not come home. The next morning, Bryce, the buyer of Wildfire comes to Red House to meet Dunstan, for the horse is dead. Godfrey does not suspect his non-attendance.
- Event 7 : In the New Years Eve, there is a party at Red House. Silas comes in a hurry to report that he finds a baby and also a dead young woman in the snow. Looking at the baby, Godfrey wants to convince himself that the dead woman is his wife, Molly Farren. He follows Silas to the place where she lain. She is really his wife and since Dunstan does not appear, the wish to marry Nancy arises.
- Event 8 : He marries Nancy.
- Event 9 : Godfrey and Nancy do not have any children from their marriage. He makes it the reason for adopting Eppie, the foundling of Silas Marner.
- Event 10 : The robbery is revealed. Dunstan is dead. He is apparently the thief. Godfrey returns Silas's treasures which are stolen by his brother.
- Event 11 : He reveals his secret past to Nancy. He also conveys his wish to take care of Eppie.
- Event 12 : Godfrey and Nancy come to Silas's house. They intend to take Eppie to Red House.

Event 13 : Eppie refuses Godfrey and Nancy's wish.

Event 14 : Godfrey leaves the house in his abrupt manner.



The Compound Plot in *Silas Marnar*
(The Lists of Sequence of Events can be Seen on Pages 26-29)



— : Main Plot
- - : Subplot

3.2.3 The Contribution of the Subplot to the Main Plot

The unity of actions in a plot is an important factor in a story since it will make the readers understand the story line well and serve the story artistically. It is stated by Abrams:

A plot has unity of action (that is, it is “an artistic whole”) if it is a single, complete and ordered structure of actions, all directed toward the intended effect, in which none of the component parts, or incidents is unnecessary; all the parts are “so closely connected that the transposal or withdrawal of any one of them will disjoint and dislocate the whole (1981: 129).” ...

Based on the foregoing quotation, plot is considered of possessing a unity if the actions are arranged in a good order, so that story is served as a single and complete one. Each event presented in a story must be closely connected, an event constitutes the cause of the following happening.

Furthermore, there is a special aspect of the principle of a unity in the plot's structure. As the quotation cited below:

... The plot of a novel may be simple or compound; that is, it may be composed of one story only or two or more stories in combination; and the law of unity requires that in a compound plot, the parts should be wrought together into a single whole (Hudson, 1965: 142). ...

The principle explains that in a compound plot, main plot and subplot should be a single whole. They must constitute a unity which completes and clarifies one another. The presence of the subplot or a second story will not become a nuisance if an author masters in arranging a story into a good unity.

The main plot and the subplot of *Silas Marner* eventually come to a unity. The lists of the sequence of events both in the main plot and the subplot show several points which constitute the merging between two story lines. The unity is proved through encounters between event 12, 15, 17, 18 and 19 of the main plot and 5, 7, 10, 12 and 13 of the subplot. Such encounters indicate that Eliot attempts to fuse the plots into a unity. She establishes the subplot as a counterpoint which compromises the unity of the work as a whole. Its establishment is intended to broaden the

readers's perspective on the main plot and also to create an aesthetic impression on the story. The presence of the subplot as a counterpoint makes the story focus on the main plot. The story is focused on Silas Marner's life.

3.3 The Construction of the Plot through Conflicts

This subchapter presents the plot of *Silas Marner* which its establishment is dominated by Silas Marner's conflicts. Their presence construct the plot of the story from rising actions until climax.

Abrams defines "plots deal with a conflict (1957: 128)". "Thus, the plot of a story is, generally, a conflict and its resolution (Singleton, 1966: 289)". The foregoing quotation explains that conflict holds an important role in constructing the plot of a story for the movement of the plot much depends on the conflicts and the resolution taken by character in facing them. Sometimes, a story does not only contain a single conflict, but many kinds of it. The matter happens also in *Silas Marner*. The story is constructed through three kinds of conflicts. The first ones happen between Silas and William Dane, the second is Silas's struggle against the fate falling upon him and the third one is his conflicts with Godfrey Cass.

Like other stories, *Silas Marner* possesses a certain pattern in its plot's structure. The story can be divided into the beginning, middle and end. It is asserted that in the plot's construction,

... The beginning initiates the action in a way which looks forward to something more; the middle presumes what has gone before and requires something to follow; and the ends follows from what has gone before but requires nothing further: we are satisfied that the plot is complete (Abrams, 1957: 129). ...

While according to Kenney (1966: 19) "the beginning takes us from exposition to the initial statement of conflict; the middle, from conflict through complication to climax; and the end, from climax to denouement".

Generally, the structure of the plot can be listed as the beginning which informs the readers the exposition of the story to the beginning of conflicts, the middle which

contains conflicts until climax, and the end, that is, the movement from climax to denouement.

The way in which the conflicts befall Silas Marner and how they influence him can be seen through the elements of *Silas Marner*'s plot. It is presented in the following description.

3.3.1 Exposition

The information about characters or events is necessary to present in a story line, so that the readers will understand the developing action. In the plot's element, the information is called exposition. Singleton states:

... Exposition is the antecedent information necessary to understand the forward progress of the action; it includes a knowledge of the character and their relation to each other, the time, the place, the situation out of which the conflict develops (Singleton, 1966: 290). ...

While Kenney (1966: 15-16) explains:

... The process by which the writer imparts to the reader information necessary to the understanding of the story is "exposition", and exposition is normally a primary function of the beginning of any story. It gives the reader the picture of a situation in which there exist sources of instability. ...

Through exposition, the information about characters or events is set forth. The explanations about character's trait, appearance and his or her relation with other characters are presented in this part. Sometimes, exposition presents the time, the place or the situation where the conflicts are developed or else, it depicts sources of instability which lead character into conflicts. Exposition is usually placed in the beginning of a story, but in a certain circumstance, it is conveyed in a flashback.

... In the novel, the modern drama and especially the motion picture, the exposition is sometimes managed by *flashback*: interpolated narratives or scenes (which may be justified as a memory or a revery, or as a confession by one of the characters) which represent events that happened before the point at which the work opened (Abrams, 1957: 130). ...

While Singleton explains “much of the exposition is given in a *flashback*, the insertion of antecedent details after the action of the story has started either by description or in a scene (1966: 290)”.

There are two kinds of possibility in which exposition is conveyed. The first one is the story progresses steadily from the beginning or it opens with some events then goes back to tell what happens before. The second one is called flashback. Eliot uses such a method in the beginning of *Silas Marner*. She begins with the description about Silas Marner’s arrival at Raveloe, the picture of the situation there and also other description about him.

It is told that Silas, a pale undersized man comes to Raveloe, the place where fabric handicraft is indispensable. His appearance makes the shepherd is not quite sure that his trade of weaving can be carried on entirely without the help of the evil. Such a thought becomes stronger because the shepherd’s dog barks fiercely at the moment he appears on the land. As the quotation cited below:

In the days when the spinning wheels hummed busily in the farmhouses- and even great ladies clothed in silk and thread- lace, had their toy spinning wheels of polished oak- there might be seen, in districts far away among the lanes, or deep in the bosom of the hills, certain pallid undersized man, who, by the side of the brawny countryfolk, looked like the remnants of a disinherited race. The shepherd’s dog barked fiercely when one of these alien looking man appeared on the upland, dark against the early winter sunset, for what dog likes a figure bent under a heavy bag?- and these pale man rarely stirred abroad without that mysterious burden. The shepherd himself, though he had good reason to believe that the bag held nothing but flaxen thread, or else the long rolls of strong linen spun from that thread, was not quite sure that this trade of weaving, indispensable though it was, could be carried on entirely without the help of the Evil One. ...

(Page 3)

The above quotation gives us the description about Silas’s dreadful appearance. Eliot shows detailed illustration about the character she creates. His size, face and the place where he goes. Furthermore, she presents another characters’s comment concerning him like the fear of Raveloe boys in looking at him when they happen to play near his desolate house and Jem Rodney’s fear of Silas’s large eyes which set

like a dead man's. It is also told that in the view of his neighbors, he possesses strange manners: he never invites them nor anyone else to his house, never strolls into the village to drink or to gossip even he supplies his own necessities. He does not need anybody to help him.

Thereafter, she reveals the flashback to Silas's life at Lantern Yard. The information about his strange behaviors is presented. Apparently, his life before he comes to Raveloe is filled with mental activities and close fellowship in a narrow religious sect. There, he forms a close friendship with William Dane. The friendship blinds Silas and makes him trust William strongly. It is proved through the following quotation:

... But whatever blemishes others might discern in William, to his friend's mind he was faultless; for Marner had one of those impressible self-doubting nature which, at an experienced age, admire imperativeness and lean on contradiction. The expression of trusting simplicity in Marner's face, heightened by that absence of special observation, that defenseless, deerlike gaze which belongs to large prominent eyes, was strongly contrasted by the self-complacent suppression of inward triumph that lurked in the narrow slanting eyes and compressed lips of William Dane. ...

(Page 8)

Silas does not suspect William when he finds the familiarity between William and Sarah. He does not care about other parish's blemishes toward William, even he trusts every of William's words. The condition constitutes the source of instability which leads the plot of *Silas Marner* into rising actions.

3.3.2 Rising Actions

The part of a plot involving conflicts and leading up to a climax or turning point in a play or a novel is defined as rising action. Singleton states "the rising action consists of the incident or series of incidents by which the conflict is developed (1966: 290)".

The rising actions of *Silas Marner* are marked by Silas's conflicts with William Dane. At the beginning, he does not feel resentment but only pain at William's

sarcastic comment concerning his cataleptic fit during the prayer meeting. Knowing that it does not influence him in the least, William plans to slander him. When Silas falls asleep, he kills the Senior Deacon, lays Silas's pocketknife near the Senior Deacon's bedside, takes the church money and returns home. He prospers in slandering Silas. Based on the proof, the minister accuses him of killing the Senior Deacon and stealing the church money. At the moment, Silas really relies on William to assert his honesty.

... For some time Silas was mute with astonishment; then he said, "God will clear me: I know nothing about the knife being there, or the money being gone. Search me and my dwelling: you will find nothing but three pound five of my own savings, which William Dane knows I have had these six months."

(Page 10)

Hearing Silas's defense, William groans and unfortunately, the minister persists in his opinion that he is guilty.

... At this William groans, but the minister said, "The proof is heavy against you, brother Marner. The money was taken in the night last past, and no man was with our departed deacon but you, for William Dane declares to us that he was hindered by sudden sickness from going to take his place as usual, and you yourself said that he had not come; and, moreover, you neglected the dead body."

(Page 10)

Silas gets confused upon the occurrence which befalls him. He attempts to defend himself.

"I must have slept," said Silas. Then, after a pause, he added, "Or I must have had another visitation like which you have all seen me under, so that the thief must have come and gone while I was not in the body, but out of the body. But I say again, search me and my dwelling, for I have been nowhere else."

(Page 10)

The search is really made and it ends when William finds the bag in Silas's chamber. He forces him to confess and not to hide his sin any longer. Silas is startled upon his disbelief in him. ... Silas turned a look of keen reproach on him, and said, "William, for nine years that we have gone in and out together, have you ever known me tell a lie? But God will clear me (Page 10)".

Silas is disappointed with William. In his disappointment, vaguely, he remembers something. He speaks feebly, looking at William. The conflicts begin rising. "I remember now- the knife wasn't in my pocket." William said, "I know nothing of what you mean (Page 11)".

Because of Silas's denial, the resort to ascertain a culprit is taken by the community. They resolve on praying and drawing on the lot. When the lot declares that he is guilty, he remembers the place where he lays his pocketknife for the last time. But it is too late for him to reveal William's wickedness, for the decision has already been taken. The peak of his conflicts with William happens when he realizes William's betrayal. In his anger, he goes toward William. Thereafter, he says in a voice shaken by agitation:

"The last time I remember using my knife was when I took it out to cut a strap for you. I don't remember putting it in my pocket again. You stole the money, and you have woven the plot to lay the sin at my door. But you may prosper, for all that; there is no just God that governs the earth righteously, but a God of lies, that bears witness against the innocent."

(Page 11)

Through the occurrence, Eliot develops the next conflicts. She exaggerates the reaction of Silas Marner in facing them. It is in accordance with Meredith and Fitzgerald's statement "the basic conflict cannot be developed or sustained unless the author exaggerates the reaction of the protagonist to the stimulus of the environment (1972: 20)". In real life, when we come into conflicts with our environment, we often complain, but usually we do not do anything about it. In *Silas Marner*, she makes Silas feel truly disappointed on the decision of the lot, and also William's betrayal. She pictures his struggle against the fate falling upon him. She makes him leave the town in his psychological injury. As the impact of his bitter experiences, he becomes unwilling of making relationship with others, lives in his remote house, even he throws away all his faith in God. He never goes to church nor prays and says "amen". He leaves his praying habit whereas he used to be considered as an ardent faith man. He spends most of his time to work on his loom and becomes fond of his treasures.

They are the only companion for him, they are everything for him. The robbery occurs. It makes his trust upon God entirely vanish.

... When had the thief come? During Silas's absence in the daytime the door had been locked and there had been no marks of any inroad on his return by daylight. And in evening, too, he said to himself, everything was the same as when he had left it. The sand and bricks looked as if they had not been moved. Was it cruel Power that no hands could reach, which had delighted in making him a second times desolate? ...

(Page 38)

He really suffers from the lost. It is seen through the following quotation:

Again, he put his trembling hands to his head, and gave a wild ringing scream, the cry of desolation. For a few moments after, he stood motionless; but the cry had relieved him from the first maddening pressure of the truth. He turned, and tottered towards his loom, and got into the seat where he worked, instinctively seeking this as the strongest assurance of reality.

(Page 38)

The trial befalls him once more. Silas is involved in conflicts with Godfrey Cass. The finding of a baby in front of Silas's hearth in the New Year's eve constitutes the trigger of those conflicts. Since the baby's mother is dead and none admits them as his or her relation, Silas intends to take care of the baby.

"Why, you're better leave the child here, then, Master Marner," said good-natured Mrs. Kimble, hesitating, however, to take those dingy clothes into the contact with her own ornamented satin bodice. "I'll tell one o' the girls to fetch it."

"No- no- I can't part with it, I can't let it go," said Silas abruptly. "It's come to me. I've a right to keep it."

(Page 104)

He insists on taking care of the baby. He will learn the way to bring up her for he wants her to be fond of him and become his companion. He will devote his attention to her. It is proved through his conversation with Dolly Winthrop:

... "I'll be glad if you'll tell me things. But," he added uneasily, leaning forward to look at Baby with some jealousy, as she was resting her head backward against Dolly's arm, and eyeing him contentedly from a distance, "but I want to do things for it myself, else it may get fond o' somebody else, and not fond o' me. I've been used to fending for myself in the house- I can learn."

(Page 111)

He does not want to be separated from the child, for she is everything for him. Her presence constitutes a new light to his life. He becomes familiar with his neighbors, even he goes to church to baptize her. That is why when Godfrey Cass comes to take her from him sixteen years after the finding, he defends her wholeheartedly. He senses that Godfrey's intention constitutes the threat for him.

A plain man like Godfrey Cass, speaking under some embarrassment, necessarily blunders on words that are coarser than his intentions, and that are likely to fall gratingly on susceptible feelings. While he had been speaking, Eppie had quietly passed her arm behind Silas's head, and let her hand rest against it caressingly: she felt him trembling violently. He was silent for some moments when Mr. Cass had ended- powerless under the conflict of emotions, all alike painful. Eppie's heart was swelling at the sense that her father was in distress; ...

(Page 154)

Silas is emotionally unstable. His bitter experiences force him to become easily shaken. It is unfair for him that all of his possessions are taken arbitrary from his hands. He leaves his ardent faith life at Lantern Yard because of William Dane's betrayal, his fiancée breaks off their engagement and marries William, his treasures, his only companion are stolen, thereafter a foundling that he takes care of tenderly for sixteen years whose presence turns his belief in God and man better, will be taken from his upbringing. Godfrey's demand makes the spirit of resistance in him set free.

3.3.3 Climax

Climax is the element of plot which constitutes the culmination of a course of the action. It is a point where the action is at its peak, in its most intense. It is in accordance with the explanation of Kenney "the climax is reached when the complication attains its highest point of intensity, from which point the outcome of the story is inevitable (1966:18)". From the previous quotation, it is clear that complication is the highest point of conflicts.

Meredith and Fitzgerald (1972: 27) define complication as "something unpleasant that happens to a character which, if the character had had the freedom of

choice, he would have chosen not to happen". They explain further "by placing the protagonist in conflict with his own environment or the environment of others we have created major complication (1972: 27)". Based on the foregoing quotations, it is clear that complication is something unpleasant which is undergone by the character and he or she cannot avoid it in his or her life. It is created by the author by putting the character in conflict with his or her own environment or the environment of others.

In *Silas Marner*, complication happens when Silas quarrels with Godfrey. He persists in his opinion that he possesses the right to take Eppie from Silas for he is her lawful father. "... It's my duty, Marner, to own Eppie as my child, and provide for her. She is my own child: her mother was my wife. I've a natural claim on her that must stand before every other (Pages 154- 155)".

On the other hand, Silas regards that he is the only person who possesses the right to take care of Eppie. His care for her for sixteen years makes his right is stronger than Godfrey's. In his view, his neglect upon her eliminates his right to possess her. "... God gave her to me because you turned your back upon her, and He looks upon her as mine: you've no right to her! When a man turns a blessing from his door, it falls to them as take it in (Page 155)".

Godfrey realizes that he is wrong. He repents his behaviour. "I know that, Marner. I was wrong. I've repented of my conduct in that matter," said Godfrey, who could not help feeling the edge of Silas's words (Page 155)".

Silas is succeed in forcing Godfrey into a corner, but he keeps on telling his fault: "I'm glad to hear it, Sir," said Marner, with gathering excitement; but repentance doesn't alter what's been going on for sixteen year. Your coming now and saying 'I'm her father', doesn't alter the feelings inside us. It's me she's been calling her father ever since she could say the word."

(Page 155)

The wish of possessing her dominates Godfrey, that is why he persists in trying to take her from him. He considers that it will not give any impact on him.

“But I think you might look at the thing more reasonably, Marner,” said Godfrey, unexpectedly awed by the weaver’s direct truth speaking. “It isn’t as if she was to be taken quite away from you, so that you’d never see her again. She’ll be very near you, and come to see you very often. She’ll just the same towards you.”

“Just the same?” said Marner, more bitterly than ever. “How’ll she feel just the same for me as she does now, when we eat o’ the same bit, and drink o’ the same cup, and think o’ the same things from one day’s end to another? Just the same? That’s idle talk. You’d cut us i’ two.

(Page 155)

The quarrel increases in intensity. They are unwilling to concede. After all, Godfrey’s emotion is provoked. It seems to him that Silas is very selfish. His simple words make him angry.

“I should have thought, Marner,” he said severely. “I should have thought your affection for Eppie would make you rejoice in what was for her good, even if it did call upon you to give up something. You ought to remember your own life’s uncertain, and she’s at an age now when her lot may soon be fixed in a way very different from what it would be in her father’s home: she may marry a low working man and then, whatever I might do for her, I couldn’t make her well off. You’re putting yourself in the way of her welfare; and though I’m sorry to hurt you after what you’ve done and what I’ve left undone, I feel now it’s my duty to insist on taking care of my own daughter. I want to do my duty.”

(Pages 155- 156)

Silas is deeply stirred by Godfrey’s words. He cannot convey his defense anymore, becomes stricken in conscience and begins thinking that they may be true. He is doubtful that his wish to live with Eppie constitutes an obstacle for her good. She may get better life if she lives with Godfrey.

Silas, on the other hand, was again stricken in conscience, and alarmed lest Godfrey’s accusation should be true- lest he should be raising his own will as an obstacle to Eppie’s good. For many moments he was mute, struggling for the self- conquest necessary to the uttering of the difficult words.

(Page 156)

Silas realizes that he cannot force his own will as an obstacle for her good. He asks Godfrey to speak to Eppie. He does not want to hamper his intention anymore. “I’ll say no more. Let it be as you will. Speak to the child. I’ll hinder nothing (Page 156)”.

Godfrey attempts to persuade her. He wants her to love him and Nancy, his wife.

“Eppie, my dear,” said Godfrey, looking at his daughter, not without some embarrassment, under the sense that she was old enough to judge him, “It’ll always be our wish that you should show your love and gratitude to one who’s been a father to you so many years, and we shall want to help you to make him comfortable in every way. But we hope you’ll come to love us as well; and though I haven’t been what a father should ha’ been to you all these years, I wish to do the utmost in my power for you for the rest of my life, and provide for you as my only child. And you’ ll have the best of mothers in my wife- that’ ll be a blessing you haven’t known since you were old enough to know it .”

(Page 157)

The climax of *Silas Marner* is reached when Eppie decides to life with Silas. She refuses Godfrey and Nancy’s offers. It seems that his love and care are so precious for her and makes her to be reluctant to leave him.

“Thank you, ma’am- thank you, sir, for your offers- they’re very great, and far above my wish. For I should have no delight i’ life any more if I was forced to go away from my father, and knew he was sitting at home, a- thinking of me and feeling lone. We’ve been used to be happy together every day, and I can’t think o’ no happiness without him. And he says he’d nobody i’ the world till I was sent to him, and he’d have nothing when I was gone. And he’s took care of me and loved me from the first, and I’ll cleave to him as long as he lives, and nobody shall ever come between him and me.”

(Page 157)

3.3.4 Denouement

The plot of a story is completed by presenting the resolution of what is described in the preceding events. The part is called denouement. It is defined that denouement is “the action or intrigue which ends in success or failure for the protagonist, the mystery is solved, or the misunderstanding cleared away (Abrams, 1957: 130)”. While Shaw asserts “denouement is an ingenious untying of an intrigue that involves some explanation of the secrets and misunderstandings connected with the plot (1972: 109)”.

As denouement of *Silas Marner*, Eliot pictures the remorse in Godfrey for neglecting Eppie for sixteen years. He feels that her refusal constitutes the

punishment of his faults. He realizes that Silas's words are true. It is proved from his conversation with Nancy.

... - "there's debts we can't pay like money debts, by paying extra for the years that have slipped by while I've been putting off and putting off, the trees have been growing- it's too late now. Marner was in the right in what he said about a man's turning away a blessing from his door: it falls to somebody else. I wanted to pass for childless once, Nancy- I shall pass for childless now against my wish."

(Page 159)

On the other hand, Silas's victory to defend Eppie makes his courage to maintain the truth arise. He dares to visit Lantern Yard, the place which he avoids for thirty years, instead. He wants to clarify that he is not involved in the robbery, even, he intends to speak to Mr. Paston about the drawing on the lot and also the religion at Raveloe.

"Where to go, daddy?" said Eppie, in much surprise.

"To my old country- to the town where I was born- up Lantern Yard. I want to see Mr. Paston, the minister: something may ha' come out to make 'em know I was innocent o' the robbery. And Mr. Paston was a man with a deal o' light- I want to speak to him about the drawing o' the lots. And I should like to talk to him about the religion o' this countryside, for I partly think he doesn't know on it."

(Page 161)

The town entirely changes. At the end of Shoe Lane, he thinks that people comes from the old chapel which he used to attend, but it is replaced by a factory and the crowd is composed of the workers. They are not the parishioners. Since the place is all swept away, he cannot reveal the truth about the robbery and get the explanation about the drawing on the lot from Mr. Paston. It seems that God ordains him to know nothing about them, but however he returns again to his belief in God and to his involvement to the society. Eliot ends the story with the marriage between Eppie and Aaron. Godfrey cannot present in the celebration because he has to go to Lytherly for special reasons. The happiness is in the hands of Silas since she keeps her attention to him constantly.

CHAPTER IV CONCLUSION

In *Silas Marner*, Eliot uses Silas's conflicts as an influential device for the establishment of the plot. The conflicts comprise three cases. At first, Silas experiences conflicts with William Dane, his bosom friend. William accuses him of killing the Senior Deacon and stealing the church money. The accusation becomes the causal factor of the drawing on the lot for the Minister and other brethren intend to ascertain a culprit. He relies on God's aid to rescue him in the critical situation but apparently the lot declares that he is guilty. The occurrence leads to his disbelieve in Him and triggers into his further conflicts. He moves to Raveloe since he believes that the moving can avoid himself from the fate ordained in Lantern Yard, the place where the accusation happens. The ordeal befalls him once more. He is involved in conflicts with Godfrey Cass. Godfrey intends to take Eppie, the baby found by him, from his upbringing. Such conflicts become a foundation to determine the plot of the novel.

Basically, *Silas Marner* possesses compound plot. The life of Silas constitutes the main plot, while Godfrey- Dunstan's affair becomes the subplot of the story. Through the encounter between several events on the main plot and subplot, Eliot attempts to fuse the plots into a unity. The presence of the subplot as a counterpoint which is intended to broaden the readers's perspective on the main plot makes the story focus on the main plot. The story is still focused on Silas's life.

As the opening of the story, it is pictured that Silas Marner comes to Raveloe. In this part, which is called exposition, Eliot describes detailed explanation about his dreadful appearance: his pale face and large eyes which set like a dead man's. She also informs his strange manners: he never attempts to make a close relationship with his neighbors and he supplies his necessities without anybody's help. Furthermore, she reveals the flashback to his life in Lantern Yard. The causes of the manners are presented in the rising actions. Apparently, the betrayal of William Dane and his

disappointment to God's fate in the drawing on the lot constitute the causal factor of his moving. At the new place, he devotes almost all of his time to work in his loom, hence, his treasures heap from time to time as the result of his hard work. The treasures are stolen by Dunstan Cass and the loss makes his trust upon God entirely vanish. He experiences conflicts with Godfrey Cass, afterwards. They lead them into the quarrel. No one of them willing to concede. The climax is reached when Eppie decides to live with Silas. After all, denouement of the story is marked by Godfrey's remorse for neglecting Eppie for sixteen years and also the courage in Silas to visit Lantern Yard, the place which he avoids during his thirty years' living. His visit is intended to clarify himself from the accusation and also to ask Mr. Paston, the minister, about the drawing on the lot. Apparently, God ordains him to know nothing about them. The story ends with the marriage of Eppie and Aaron. Godfrey cannot present in the celebration for he has to go to Lytherly, for special reason. Silas's happiness increases for she still keeps her attention to him.

From the explanations, it is proved that Silas Marner's conflicts constitute a prominent factor supporting the establishment of plot in *Silas Marner*. The conflicts dominate the rising actions and complication of the plot.

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