

CHAPTER - III

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I

Faulkner's old persons are very assertive and possessive. They act as a controlling force in the lives of those around them. It is their possessiveness and reluctance to accept the law of changeability that generates a chain of misfortunes which causes the ruin of the entire family and the disintegration of the society. They want to face the problems on their own terms and they dislike any interference in the mode of their life.

In this chapter there are three female protagonists who try to control the lives of their loved ones. In every case it is the outsider that brings the fatal end to their existence as they are partially responsible for their ruin.

Emily Grierson in "A Rose of Emily", the Grandmother in "Elly", and Old Mrs. Boyd in "The Brooch", are the old protagonists who represent a decayed and dying tradition with its aristocratic pride and arrogance. They are associated with the death that is not natural. They are very obstinate and possessive. Because of this they are not inclined to give up their dominant position. In the struggle for authority they are very unyielding. In

order to retain authority they are prepared to go to any extent regardless of the consequences of their actions. These old women try to resist the flow of time, any sort of change and meet with frustration as change is the impersonal and timeless force. These three old protagonists are isolated from the society. Emily Grierson has confined herself to her old house and thereby attempts to cling to the traditional past of the ante-bellum South. Old Mrs. Boyd has lain propped upright in bed. The grandmother of Elly sits bolt-upright in the corner of the house, like Miss Jenny in "There was a Queen". This posture of these three old women is the physical manifestation of the ego of the class of aristocrats, and this characteristic pride isolates them from the society for which they lead a very lonely life. Another significant trait of these old women is that in them there is neither admission of guilt nor any submission to the forces of changeability symbolized by the young generation. The old protagonists in their relentless fight to retain their authority tend to forget the impersonal and timeless force of change invariably resulting in their ruin.

Secret indulgence in sensual pleasure is found in all these stories. With the exception of old Mrs. Boyd and the Grandmother of Elly, who try to safeguard their chastity and the family name, it is Emily Grierson who

set the pattern of amoral life for the new generation.

II

Mrs. Emily Grierson is the protagonist of "A Rose for Emily", who dominates the whole story. Emily is haunted by her past and her dead father. Old Emily's spinsterhood is the result of her dead father's sense of superiority, who had driven away many aspirants for her hand. Elizabeth Carney Kurtz's comment aptly substantiates Emily's affinity with the past and her reluctance to change:

Since Emily Grierson is a product of the Old South, as viewed by Faulkner, she would very naturally have participated in its rituals.

In the story, Miss Emily's central character trait is denial of change. She writes on "note paper of an archaic shape" in "faded ink". She insists that Colonel Sartoris who "had been dead almost ten years", will explain why she pays no taxes. She refuses for three days to admit that her father is dead. She wants to keep him as she has known him instead of allowing him to return to dust. ¹

Emily is possessed by the idea that she is socially superior to others and this is the same possessive instinct which has severed her from the common people. Emily's character has special significance as she is

the conscious aristocrat of the post-bellum South. Here the centre of the action is the Yoknapatawpha County. The stable society is already under the attacks of the forces of changeability and disintegration. Emily's attempts to prevent the flow of time prove futile as she ignores the inevitable forces of change, decay and death by indulging in a duel of illusion and reality. Till the end of her life she remains a bold, self-conceited aristocrat^{ic} lady. It is the most outstanding feature of the old protagonists who do not admit of any deviation from their ideology. This is seen when the four men of the town visited her house to sprinkle lime to prevent the foul smell from her house.

As they crossed the lawn a window that had been dark was lighted and Miss Emily sat in it, in the light behind her and her upright torso motionless as that of an idol.²

If sitting bolt-upright in all the old female characters is the physical manifestation of their ego, their motionlessness is an extension of the same ego that reflects psychologically on their behavioural pattern which has become a part of their possessive past expressed through their different postures and gestures. Emily's sitting motionless ultimately leads to an assumption

that she is reluctant to change. From the very beginning of the story Faulkner has suggested the encroachment upon the agrarian society by the industrial developments. Faulkner's use of the metaphors of speed suggests the idea of mobility. In order to substantiate the themes of change and decay he comments:

But garages and cotton gins had encroached and obliterated even the august names of that neighbourhood; only Miss. Emily's house was left, lifting its stubborn and coquettish decay above the cotton wagons and the gasoline pumps - an eyesore among eyesores.³

Emily has been indifferent to the calls of her society from the beginning till her end out of sheer detachment which is the offshoot of the superiority complex inherited by her. Emily's resistance to the forces of change and her arrogance become clear through her refusal to pay the tax. She even refuses to dignify the deputation of the city authorities. The behavioural pattern of Emily is very complex. Emily alludes to the dead Sartoris and attempts to revive her affinity with the agrarian aristocracy of the past. Emily cannot be called a mad woman because she is conscious of her position in the society and deliberately declines every offer of the city authorities although she merges illusion into reality. In her personality there is the assimilation of both the

past and present. Physically she is in the present (reality) but emotionally she is in the past (illusion) as she is reluctant to acknowledge the law of mutability. Emily's strong resistance to the forces of time is manifested through her refusals to accept the mailbox and metal numbers to be fastened to her door. This indicates her aristocratic pride that does not allow the ordinary people in her vicinity. There is dignity in her arrogance as she considers herself socially above all the common people of the town. It is her pride that separates Emily from the society. Cleanth Brooks comments:

Her pride is connected with her contempt for public opinion. This comes to the fore, of course, when she rides around about the town with the forman whom everybody believes is beneath her. And it is her proud refusal to admit an external set of codes or conventions, or other wills which contradict her own will, which makes her capable at the end of keeping her lover from going away. Confronted with his jilting her, she tries to override not only his will and the opinion of other people, but the laws of death and decay themselves.⁴

Emily has a strong will power to get the things done in her own way. She does not like interference by anyone.

She is obviously a woman of tremendous firmness of will. In the matter of taxes, crazed though she is, she is never at a loss. She is utterly composed. She dominates the rather frightened committee of officers who see her. In the matter of her purchase of the poison, she completely overawes the clerk. She makes no pretense. She refuses to tell him what she wants the poison for. And yet this firmness of will and this iron pride have not kept her from being thwarted and hurt. ⁵

Sutpen

The arrival of Homer Baron in the town has symbolic significance. He represents the forces of change and the industrial economy. Like Wash Jones in "Wash" Emily is torn between illusion and reality. When Wash is disillusioned he kills Thomos Sutpen, in the same way when Emily realizes the process of change through the reluctance of her lover to stay on with her, she is disillusioned and she kills him. Emily is reluctant to give up her authoritative position. When her authority is challenged she kills the challenger. Emily does not have any respect for the code of morality nor is she afraid of any confrontation with life. The revenge motive is present in her personality, because of which she goes to the extent of killing her lover, Homer Baron. Like Thomos Sutpen ("Wash") she never feels

guilty of her misdeed and cares little for what people think of her. Cleanth Brooks comments:

. . . she insists on meeting the world on her own terms. She never cringes, she never begs for sympathy, she refuses to shrink into an amiable old maid, she never accepts the community's ordinary judgements or values. This independence of spirit and pride can, and does in her case, twist the individual into a sort of monster, but at the same time, this refusal to accept the herd values carries with it a dignity and courage.⁶

In order to retain authority she kills her lover and keeps the dead body with her for years in a ritualistic manner. Emily has failed to make life worth living and she has not been able to realize the fulfilment of her desire to keep her lover in a true sense. Like most other female protagonists of Faulkner, Emily too is deprived of the conjugal bliss. She never accepts defeat, not does she feel guilty of her criminal act. Emily's affinity with the aristocratic past is accentuated by Faulkner :

They held the funeral on the second day, with the town coming to look at Miss Emily beneath a mass of bought flowers, with the crayon face of her father musing profoundly above the bier

and the ladies sibilant and macabre; the very old men - some in their brushed confederate uniforms - on the porch and the lawn, talking of Miss Emily as if she had been a contemporary of theirs, believing that they had danced with her and courted her perhaps, confusing time with its mathematical progression, as the old do, to whom all the past is not a diminishing road but, instead a huge meadow which no winter ever quite touches, divided from them now by the narrow bottleneck of the most recent decade of years.⁷

III

Faulkner's old protagonists represent a logical and stable social structure based on the aristocratic and agrarian existence. Any deviation from this established order is treated by them as the manifestation of evil. Obviously, the basis of this static society resists any impulse towards change, particularly by their young loved ones.

Elly's grandmother represents the puritan values of the early settlers and the conservatism of the South with its typical caste system and morality in its purest form. M.E. Bradford comments:

One of the older women, the grandmother we are not told much. She is upright, inflexible, taciturn and deaf. Yet we learn enough about her to recognize in her a close kinship to Faulkner's other matriarchs, the pillars of the old order . . . Yoknapatwapha matriarchs unless no men are available to act as their agents usually exert only an indirect influence on their families. They are ordinarily as effective in enforcing upon them some degree of cohesion as their heirs are conscious of their totemic significance, their agency as value transmitters. ⁸

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 Elly's grandmother is haughty old woman who does not have any companion. It is due to the absence of male persons, she enjoys the unbridled authority. Like most of Faulkner's old persons, the grandmother is seriously involved in the struggle for identity. The physically handicapped woman is mentally strong enough to control the situation by occupying a seat in the corner. She sits motionless which has symbolic significance. Her sitting bolt-upright suggests the rigidity of her race. Her motionlessness is opposed to change as she asserts herself by clinging to the past. Like Old Mrs. Boyd in "The Brooch" she tries to suppress the biological needs; but she does this out of sheer moral point of view to safeguard the honour of her family and the conservative South of her race. The conflict between Elly and her

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grandmother can be interpreted as the conflict between the old, motionless and static and new, mobile and dynamic forces of life. It is her steadfastness that instigates Elly to revolt against the heartless matriarch. The grandmother does not admit of any compromise on moral front. The conflict between the agrarian South and the industrial South is well represented through Elly and the grandmother. The grandmother is rigid, prosaic and even indifferent to Elly that drives Elly to revolt against the dying generation. It is the utter indifference of the old woman that is responsible for her plight. The old woman sits upright but motionless signifying her inability to move with the changing times, and suggests her reluctance to acknowledge the change. Like other old matriarchs of Faulkner, the grandmother does not wish to give up the reins of her authority and thereby attempts to retain her superior position.

The grandmother is consciously indifferent to the sentiments of Elly and hence she is isolated from the rest as most of Faulkner's old protagonists lead a lonely life as they are isolated from their loved ones. The grandmother ignores Elly's biological needs to safe-

guard her moral preoccupations, and goes to the extent of denying the existence of sex in human life. Emily's father had also done the same. Because of his indifference to Emily's biological needs, she became violent. She was haunted by him even after his death and recklessly murdered Homer Baron who attempted to move with the time.

The sanctity of personal relationship between male and female is not so rigorously observed in the post-bellum South and the grandmother does not acknowledge it. In order to consolidate her affinity with the puritanic past, she is totally alien, insensitive and indifferent to the granddaughter who represents new morality, the morality of the industrialized post-bellum South. It is her monstrosity that instigates Elly to conspire to bring about the downfall of a decayed tradition. It is the heartlessness and rigidity of the old woman that is responsible for the reckless behaviour of prurient Elly. The utter lack of sympathy on the part of the grandmother drives Elly to the state of nymphomania. The dead silence of the house coupled with the deadhearing of the old woman smother Elly all the time, the young generation is stifled in the compact world based on past ideals. Elly's indulgence in an act of fornication is the part of her design to

undermine the pride of the grandmother. But Elly is haunted by the grandmother, that she wishes to avoid the climax for the fear of her cold and rigid presence.

She and Paul were in a close clump of shrubbery on the lawn, in the wild close dark for that instant Elly was lost, her blood aloud with desperation and exultation vindication too, talking inside her at the very brink of surrender loud as a voice: " I wish she were here to see ! I wish she were here to see ! " when something- there had been no sound - shouted at her and she made a mad ackward movement of recovery. The grandmother stood just behind and above them. When she had arrived, how long she had been there, they did not know. But there she stood, saying nothing in the long anticlimax while Paul departed without haste and Elly stood, thinking stupidly, ' I am caught in sin, without even having time to sin. ' 9

Faulkner's old persons are particular about their assumptions of racial supremacy and dominant position in the society. In the crisis for identity the arrival of any young outsider in their vicinity is regarded by them as a challenge and an encroachment upon their autonomous world. Paul's arrival alarms the grandmother for whom he stands for the forces of change . The timelessness of the old woman is threatened by the flow of time marked

by Paul's arrival. His arrival is not welcome for the grandmother as it is a serious threat posed to the privileged society with its typical caste system.

The next afternoon Paul walked up on to the veranda. Elly was sitting in the swing, her grandmother in a chair nearby. She rose and met Paul at the steps. "Why did you come here?" she said, "Why did you ? " Then she turned and seemed to watch herself walking before him toward the thin old woman sitting bolt upright, sitting bolt and implacably chaste in the secret place, peopled with ghosts, very likely to Elly at any given moment uncountable and unnamable, who might well have owned one single mouth. She leaned down, screaming: "This is Mr. de Montigny, Grandmother ! "

" What ? "

" Mr. de Montigny ! From Louisiana ! " she screamed, and saw the grandmother, without moving below the hips, start violently backward as a snake does to strike. ¹⁰

This violent reaction of the grandmother is reminiscent of Aunt Jenny's equally violent reaction to the investigator Yankee in "There was a Queen ". The idea of racial supremacy is so deep rooted in the soil of South that the landed aristocracy goes to the extent of disowning its descendants. Thomas Sutpen in

"Wash" substantiates this when he disowned his first wife and children for she had negro blood. There is a general tendency in Faulkner's old protagonists who tend to cling fast to the past.

The grandmother is detached from the main stream of life and naturally she prefers to live in the ivory tower of the illusory past and resist the flow of change. The racial supremacy of the Yoknapatawpha is accentuated by Faulkner throughout the story. The maternal grandmother is conscious of her dominant and responsible position in the family. As long as she is in Jefferson, in the house of her daughter, she controls herself. She waits for the proper time to inform her son-in-law as she does not wish to unman him by giving him a piece of advice as to how to rear a daughter. The grandmother has the reins of authority while in Jefferson but the centre of the action is shifted from Jefferson to Mills City. This is suggestive of change. The change should be smooth and pleasant but here the change comes violently throwing overboard the values held dear by the dying and decayed tradition of the South. The present (industrialism) emerges out of the past (agrarian economy) by destroying it, and Elly stands for the new morality of the industrialized South, Sally R. Page comments:

The sex act for her is a wild defiance of her grandmother's stern prohibitions and is performed solely to avenge to herself upon this implacable woman. Elly engages in a sexual play nightly though like Temple Drake, she consistently refuses the final act which would make her unvirgin. Nightly, Elly returns to her room hating the acts but exulting in her revenge upon her grandmother who sits up each evening until the youngmen leave never speaking the words of condemnation Elly expects but staring after her with "inescapable cold eyes." Elly's final defiance is intercourse with a man she and the grandmother believe to be part Negro.¹¹

L- sp L The idea of racial supremacy is the basis of the static social structure of the ante-bellum South. The deep rooted hatred of the negro becomes clear through the reaction of the grandmother on her visit to the Mills City, when she refuses to go back to Jefferson.

They looked at one another for a full moment before the old woman spoke : "Not contented with deceiving your parents and your friends, you must bring a Negro into my son's house as a guest."

Grandmother ! Elly said,

"Having me sit down to table with a negroman."

"Grandmother ! " Elly cried in that thin whisper,

her face naggard and grimaced. . . . The grandmother read the card. She looked up. "I can understand Harward but not Virginia. Look at his hair, his finger nails, if you need proof. I don't. I know the name which his people have brone for four generations." She returned the card, "That man must not sleep under this roof."

. . . The grandmother read it. She sat with the card in her hand. "He shall not drive me to Jefferson. I will not put a foot in that car, and you shall not. We will go home on the train. No blood of mine shall ride with him again. ¹²

Faulkner's old persons are associated with death. Their rigidity and stubbornness bring them the death that is not natural. The grandmother is victimised by Elly through whom the forces of mutability displace her from the dominant position. She does not give in easily but till end she is rigid, invincible and consciously indifferent to the forces of change that root out her despite her resistance. The end is brought about by the flow of time suggested through the car which is the metaphor of mobility. The decayed tradition is given a fatal blow by the forces of change.

IV

symbolic
 Faulkner's world of old persons is peopled by the adamant, assertive and possessive old matriarch figures. Old Mrs. Boyd, the protagonist of "The Brooch" is one of them, who dominates the whole course of action. Her motives are aimed at the repression of the biological needs of her son Howard and Amy, her daughter-in-law, whom she considers to be socially below her. Like Faulkner's old protagonists she is reluctant to change. It becomes evident quite early in the story when soon after her husband's death she refuses her rich father to have her marriage annulled and get her son's name changed. The conservatism of the town with its typical caste system is hinted at by Faulkner through the character of Old Mrs. Boyd who has a keen sense of her being a "lady".

Mrs. Boyd is a widow like most of Faulkner's female protagonists. She is conscious of the superior position of her class in the social hierarchy and at the same time she has little concern for the welfare of her son whom she denies his natural and biological needs in her excessive affinity with the outdated past. In the crisis for identity she asserts herself in order to safeguard the honour of her family. Mrs. Boyd's

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 father was a rich merchant therefore. Mrs. Boyd repeatedly brings it to the notice of Amy, whose father is an ordinary rail-road conductor. Old Mrs. Boyd warns her son against his relations with Amy, her prospective daughter-in-law. Her possessiveness and superiority complex find expression in her conversation with Howard which throws much light on her personality.

They looked at one another. Then he seemed to know, perhaps, he had been expecting it . . .

" I know who's been talking to you," he said.

"Those dammed old buzzards."

" I'm glad to hear it's carrion, " she said.

" Now, I can rest easy that you won't bring it into our house."

" Go on Say, your house."

" Not, necessary, any house where a lady lives."

They looked at one another in the steady lamp which possessed that stale glow of sickroom lights.

" You are a man. I don't reproach you. I am not even surprised. I just want to warn you before you make yourself ridiculous. Don't confuse the house with the stable. 13

The metaphors stable and carrion suggest undignified, mean, low creatures that are associated with horses and servants, through which Mrs. Boyd suggests her affinity with the agrarian ante-bellum South, despite the changing

phases of life. She consciously uses the word "lady" that suggests the superior position in the house where a respectable lady lives.

2 Mrs. Boyd fearlessly attempts to control the actions of her son. She is much too possessive and does not want to give up the centre of authority. Sharon Smith Hult comments:

Almost every step taken by Howard's mother is a measure against her son's freedom . . . He thus "progresses" under his mother's tutelage, from attire which holds adolescence and adulthood in abeyance, to a school which renders him immune from the female sex, a university with a "mother-in-residence" and finally, back to the suffocating house of his mother. ¹⁴

59.10.14 Mrs. Boyd is bed-ridden due to a stroke. She has lain propped upright in bed for five years and thereby suggesting the motionlessness. Sharon Smith Hult comments:

Mrs. Boyd in her bolt upright position in bed is an example of the rigidity so often described in Faulkner's work, a destroying rigidity directly opposed to motion, to change.

One thinks not only of Aunt Jenny erect and upright in her wheel chair and finally shocked into rigid death in "There was a Queen," but also

of the grandmother in "Elly", with her dead hearing and her habit of sitting erect and still in the bedroom facing the hall with an open book in her hand. ¹⁵

9 Mrs. Boyd's motionlessness becomes a subtle and powerful preventive measure against the mobility of Howard's life. She is always alert and conscious of what goes on within the walls of her house which is suspended between the past and the present. She has tried to avoid future and in a way clings fast to the past for restricting the mobility of her son's life. In order to retain her unbridled authority she keeps watch on Howard's movements and motives. Sharon Smith Hult comments:

Mrs. Boyd is the sentry just behind the door, alert and powerfully inflexible. She is her son's protection against reality outside the house, carefully monitoring the activities within the house and in Howard's psyche. It is appropriate that Howard continually, secretly traverses the corridor and stairs leading from his mother's bedroom and that he also later transports Amy back and forth, up and down, between his room and the outside world. His is an obsessive and perpetual movement between the sense of security in his mother's room and the sense of autonomy within his own room. Howard's impasse is that he finds immunity from conflict in neither.

. . . Thus to enter Mrs. Boyd's room is to step

outside time into a state of changlessness which is absolute security and protection. Decidedly, this return to the womb is an escape from death. Yet paradoxically, the mother's timelssness - in preventing Howard from motion and growth - is death. ¹⁶

The dead clock in her room signifies the cessation of time for Mrs. Boyd. It is important to note that in most cases it is the outsiders that bring about the fatal end to their deadly existence. Howard's marriage with Amy marks the beginning of the process of change, more apparently Mrs. Boyd is afraid of Amy, the outsider and is alarmed of the awkward position. In order to keep her authoritative and dominating position in the house in tact, she gives Amy the brooch, the family heirloom after her marriage. The brooch symbolically signifies her inseparable associations with the past of the ante-bellum South which is under attack launched by the forces of time and change. Howard's assertiveness and potency that he displayed before marriage are destroyed by the wicked old woman, who haunts the lives of Howard and Amy. He is transformed into a meek and pathetically helpless, weak, unassertive and sentimental person who doesnot act but is acted upon and thought upon, whose mobility of life is resisted at every step. In the

house of Mrs. Boyd, which is a compact and stagnant world governed by the ideals of the dead past. The small world is indifferent to the inevitable change where the new generation is stifled.

For Mrs. Boyd the brooch is a reminder to Amy through which she tries to check the activities and motives of Amy who represents the forces of change.

It is a reminder that Amy's behavioural pattern should be in accordance with the ideals set by Mrs. Boyd's traditional past. Since the very beginning, Amy attempts to resist the monstrosity of the old woman. She reluctantly accepts the brooch, a controlling device of Mrs. Boyd which threatens the matrimonial bliss of Howard and Amy.

Sharon Smith Hult comments:

In this instance, the gift of a family heirloom is not a "welcome" to the daughter-in-law, but a direct challenge to Amy's capabilities as a wife for Mrs. Boyd's son. In transfiguring the brooch to the woman who will replace her, Mrs. Boyd does acknowledge Amy as her son's sexual partner but she is in effect asking, "Can you be a lady? Can you replace me?"

Further the brooch renders Amy inaccessible to Howard. For when Amy receives the heirloom she loses her sexuality as a force; it is weighed down by the burden of the brooch and the house. As a wife, Amy is of course sexually available to

Howard, but the matriarchal presence, which hears 'everything' which goes on in the house at any hour, makes the sexual relations furtive, forbidden and adolescent. ¹⁷

Synopsis

The conflict between the motionlessness and the mobility, the static and the dynamic is constantly at work. Mrs. Boyd, like Faulkner's other old protagonists, try dauntlessly and callously to retain the centre of the authority which has been threatened to be displaced by Amy's arrival. As Amy represents the fluidity of time and the forces of change, in this crisis for identity she consciously defies the age-old decayed tradition of the ante-bellum South represented Mrs. Boyd. The old woman spares no opportunity to humiliate Amy for her low ancestry. The old woman's reluctance to change, & her aristocratic pride hasten the process of disintegration of her family. She is fiercely critical of Amy's father and the class to which she belongs. This becomes apparent from her conversation with Amy and Howard.

They lived upstairs, where, a year later their child was born. They took the child down for Mrs. Boyd to see it. She turned her head on the pillows and looked at the child once: "Ah," she said. " I never saw Amy's father, that I know of. But then I, never travelled on a train a great deal. "

" The old - the old - " Amy cried shuddering and clinging to Howard. "why does she hate me so ? What have I ever done to her ? Let's move. You can work."

" No. She won't live always. "

" Yes, she will, She'll live forever, just to hate me. " 18

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The joint venture of Howard and Amy to defy the cruel and possessive authority of the old woman turns out a fiasco. Their effort for liberty is thwarted. As an act of defiance Amy displays the brooch in an improper way by wearing it on her apron. It is a serious affront. Amy fails to subdue the old woman and begins to frequent the Saturday Night Club with Howard's permission. It is because of Mrs. Boyd's possessiveness Howard remains a grown up child. He is cornered by her from whom he cannot separate himself. Since he has not come of age psychologically and mentally he fails to untie himself from the knot of maternalism and possessiveness of the stubborn mother. The betrayal by Amy renders him helpless and he grows more and more conscicus of his awkward position through the moments of frustration and disappointment. Mrs. Boyd comes to know about Amy's secret flights during the past nights. One one of her nightly outings Amy is caught red-handed by her. Mrs. Boyd at once becomes aware of the reality or changeability. As a part of her strategy she does not wish the forces of change/corrupt her son,

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she orders Amy out of the house by asserting her awe-inspiring authority over Howard. It is the pride and the strong maternal knot of his possessive mother that handicap him mentally and drive him to the edge of his doom. As she is bed-ridden. Howard has no courage and capacity to desert her. He chooses to escape from the clutches of his mother through death, which will permanently relieve him of tension.

Faulkner's old persons sacrifice willingly their loved ones to retain their authority in the crisis for identity. They are prepared to go to any extent in order to maintain their dignity and retain their authority. To preserve the fast fading glory in the flow of time Mrs. Boyd takes a firm stand regardless of the consequences of her action. She does not allow her son to grow. The awe-inspiring shadow of his mother's personality haunts him from his infancy to the moment of his suicidal death. Sharon Smith Hult comments:

Howard's revenge against his own impotence and against his mother's tyranny is finally, to abandon her. He is meticulous in his concern that his mother not hear the gunshot announcing his suicide, for it is both a forbidden adolescent masturbation and a pathetically "private consummation" of his marriage to Amy. 19

In every case it is the young outsiders, symbolizing change, who are partially responsible for the tragic end of these old protagonists. In Emily's case it is the Northerner, Homer Baron who represents change as he is associated with the railways that suggest mobility. Homer Baron attempts to escape from the horrifying personality that is guided by the past. When change becomes inevitable, in an attempt to prevent it, she kills her lover and tries to perpetuate her death-like existence. Emily experiences death in life.

In the case of Elly's grandmother it is Paul de Montigny, a young man with the negro blood who hastens the process of destruction of a decayed order represented by the haughty and grand old lady.

In old Mrs. Boyd's case it is Amy, her daughter-in-law, who brings the catastrophic end to the scurrilous and insolent old lady. The sexual repression of the young generation becomes the cause of conflict in the lives of these old protagonists. In her youth, Emily's father denied her the fulfillment of her biological needs. Even after his death Emily is haunted by the past. Homer Baron's refusal is the repression of her biological needs. Hence, she retains the corpse that is the

reminder of the past for Emily. For Mrs. Boyd it is the brooch and her house that symbolize the past. The stick of Elly's grandmother symbolize the past. Elly, Amy and Emily are denied the fulfilment of their biological needs.