

**CHAPTER IV**  
**THE ANALYSIS OF THE FAIRCHILDS' ENCOUNTERS**  
**DURING THE PREPARATION OF THE WEDDING**

**IV.1. The Fairchilds by blood**

**IV.1.1. *George Fairchild (Dabney's Uncle)***

George is the darling of the Fairchild family. He is so attached to his Fairchild family since they build a solid wall of love among themselves. He also has an important role in the Fairchild family which is to protect the Fairchilds from harm. His deed on saving Maureen on the trestle is the proof of his devotion to the Fairchild family. His willingness to risk his life for the Fairchilds' sake makes him neglect his wife's yell in which she tells him to run for his life. George's attitude toward his wife's yell on the trestle makes his wife leave him since he does not give an answer or a damn care on her. Therefore, when he gets news about his niece's marriage, he leaves Memphis alone to Shellmound. He again chooses

family over wife when he comes for the pre-wedding activities instead of looking for his absent, heartbroken wife (Magill, 2824). The writer believes that George is not a selfish person. He tends to think for others. His going to Shellmound is also for the Fairchilds' sake. He does not want to let the Fairchilds down and even make them worry about him. Moreover, he is a person who is strong in his principle. He thinks that he is right so he does not look for his wife. Yet, he does not realize that there is a misunderstanding that makes Robbie leave him. The resolution depends on the efforts of both spouses in trying to solve their conflicts.

George's presence on the pre-wedding preparation makes him come to the realization that he has to pay attention to his own marriage. His realization makes him hope that Robbie will come on time on Dabney's marriage. He sees how hard Dabney's struggle is to defend Troy as her future husband from her family who object toward her upcoming marriage. George can finally think clearly that his marriage is in a mess too. Dabney's case is the same as George's case. George's marriage also gets a strong objection from the Fairchild family. He, as Dabney's uncle, should give Dabney a good example otherwise he will feel ashamed of his incapability to solve his own problem. Whereas his niece, Dabney, shows her high spirit of

struggles toward her own life. Moreover, George can stubbornly sacrifice for other's sake, for instance, his act of saving Maureen on the trestle. There is no reason for him to not fight for his own happiness. His determination to marry Robbie is his own decision. Therefore, he has to take the responsibility of his decision. The thesis writer considers that a sense of responsibility is one of the important things in life in determining one's success of life. The less sense of responsibility someone has toward his/her life, the worse his/her life will be. In George's case, George has the responsibility to fix his relationship with Robbie since Robbie is his own choice. Besides, he faces this difficult situation right before another wedding in which his niece's marriage depends on his happiness. He is glorified by the Fairchild so he becomes the example for the Fairchilds. In *Contemporary Literary Criticism*, it states that the individuality of George is somewhat buried in familial expectations imposed upon him (Marowski, 1985: 422). All his virtues, acts and life are noticed by the Fairchilds. For this reason, George bears a big responsibility not only on his own life but also on the Fairchilds' lives.

George's care for others makes him slip of his mind about his own wife's need. When he meets a run-away girl in the wood, his heroic quality encourages him to offer

help. Yet, he accidentally sleeps with her (79). His meeting with the girl makes him begin to be aware of Robbie's running away from him. A little girl dares to run away from home in searching for affection. Moreover, Robbie who feels she is neglected by her husband will not feel at home. While his act of sleeping with the girl is only a temporary desire. Even though the Fairchilds adore his virtues, he is not completely perfect. He still has his weaknesses. He is attracted to the girl because he is amazed by her beauty. It cannot be said as love. Besides, love which is based only on someone's beauty cannot last long. Yet, when a person falls in love with someone because of his/her virtues, an everlasting relationship will exist. George, as a husband, has the obligation to devote his attention more to his own private life than to the Fairchild family since he has a family to support. He cannot interfere his family life with the Fairchilds' even if he cares for the Fairchilds. He has to know how to balance his attention so that he is not in either side of them in order to achieve happiness and avoid jealousy from both sides. Although George has been adored by the Fairchilds and influenced by the Fairchilds' way of life to do only the heroic deed while women rule the roost, he needs to alter the traits he has sowed for years. For the sake

of his happiness with Robbie, a lot of sacrifices are needed.

George's presence without his wife makes all the Fairchilds wonder, especially Ellen. She keeps asking why he does not come with his wife. Ellen is very curious to know about her. Unable to avoid and give any excuse, George at last tells Ellen the truth:

*"I'm in trouble, Ellen!" he called after her, his voice wide awake and loud in the half-empty house. "Robbie left me!" She ran back to him. He still lay back his eyes shut. The Spanish look was not exhaustion, it was misery." (51)*

From George's look, it shows that he is upset; particularly, after he sees how thoughtful his family is toward his happiness. On the other hand, he also gets sarcasm from his sister about his marriage:

*"About Robbie Reid, your wife", said Tempe. "You have to tell the Delta something when your wife flies off and you start losing your Fairchild temper. Right at the point of another wedding! You should have thought of it when you married her, wake up the night." (114)*

His sister's sarcasm leads him to become more introspective on himself. Even though he only listens and gives no response, deep down in his heart he thinks over about his marriage. He himself cannot give any explanation to the Fairchild family about his wife's running away from him.

George is a type of a person who cannot directly express himself. His character is effected by his surroundings. Living in a matriarchal family, he rarely gives comments on something. He becomes a man who does not demand too much. He does not notice that his family's resistance on his marrying her also influences his wife's judgement on him. His ignorance toward his wife's yell on the trestle makes his wife unable to stop thinking why he pays so much attention on the Fairchilds while the Fairchilds do not appreciate his decision when he says he wants to marry Robbie. George even makes her feel unworthy in front of his family when he chooses to stay on the trestle. Right at Dabney's wedding where everyone of the family gather together, George gradually becomes aware of his own deed. On one hand, his act of saving Maureen is indeed the right thing to do, yet on the other hand he has to consider his wife's yell. He finally realizes that he has his own life to care for, besides the Fairchild family. He, a married man, indeed has to be responsible for his own desire to marry Robbie. He also needs to fight for his own happiness in order to make the Fairchild wipe out of their bad prejudice toward Robbie.

The arrival of George's wife before Dabney's wedding gives George a chance to pull up all his courage to explain his deed on the trestle so that Robbie can make

sense out of what he has done. From the explanation, he can clarify his way of thoughts to avoid misunderstanding. The writer considers that through the explanation, George can open Robbie's mind on the things she judges badly. In the talks, both George and Robbie can explain their reasons and exchange their thoughts. This may help both sides to understand one another and to avoid misleading thoughts that may keep them apart. This is George's explanation to Robbie:

"To me I speak for myself", he said matter-of-factly ... "I don't think it matters so much in the world what. Only", he bent over Robbie with his look gone relentless - he was about to kiss her", I'm damned if I wasn't going to stand on that track if I wanted to! Or will again." (187)

Through explanation, George clarifies his deed on saving Maureen on the trestle incident. He mentions to her that he saves Maureen because he wants to. He does not choose who he is going to save; yet, he will save anyone who is in trouble. He is also not able to fight what he believes to be the right thing to do since it would go against his conscience not to do that, the act of saving. Besides, it has been his responsibility as a human being to save other human beings who are in critical situation and cannot do anything since God creates human beings with their responsibility to love one another as God loves them all.

And in order to reply God's love, one can show it through his/her love of other human beings. George's openness through explanation to his wife about his reason to save Maureen is one of the best ways to overcome their conflict. Besides, it is better to work out everything together when both sides have cooled down.

#### IV.1.2. *Dabney Fairchild (Bride-to-be)*

Dabney, who is seventeen years old, is going to get married with Troy, an outsider, who is twice older than her and has lower status. Considering her age, she is still an adolescent. During that period, one's stability in building up a family needs to be questioned, since she is too young to go through it. She still needs to enjoy her youth in which youth is one of the important periods in one's life and in Piper's opinion it is "a merely awkward stage in the difficult process of growing up, the sooner over the better" (Piper, 1965: 59). Besides, the process of growing cannot be separated from the parents' involvement as according to Theodore Lidz

"Adolescent is a period during which the youth can prepare for self sufficient and independence while still gaining support, protection and guidance from his family" (Lidz, 1968: 300)

Dabney, during her youth, still needs her parents to guide her and give her advice and guidance, but whatever she decides is still under her own consideration so that she does not tend to think that she is under her parents' power. In this period, young people are mostly enthusiastic to find out their identity and their position in life. This also happens to Dabney. Her identity as a Fairchild indeed matters to her; yet, her happiness with Troy makes her not so sure with her identity. Her love toward Troy also makes her forget about her Fairchild nature, her solidness toward the outsiders. Love is the most powerful feeling which can block someone's mind and make someone forget everything. Aside from that, love can make someone willing to sacrifice for the sake of her lover.

Her insistence on marrying Troy shows her rebellion toward her family. Her sudden decision to marry Troy does not get a full approval from her family. Dabney's parents disapproval is based on Troy's status, his age which is twice older than Dabney, and especially on Dabney's sudden decision without discussing with them first. As parents, they feel being underestimated, surprised and curious to know further about him before they give their blessing. It is true that she is not a child any more who can be directed and controlled fully by the parents. She has

grown up, she has her own dream which waits for her to fulfil. But as long as the parents are still alive, they have the right to prevent her if it endangers her happiness. On the other hand, her parents cannot hold her desire back since Dabney has her own demand in her that makes her rebel against her parents' wish. As Magill states that the serious threat comes from the part of human heart and mind that seeks to go its own way (Magill, 1983: 2822). So, the parents are not able to interfere deeper into her privacy. However, she is still the one who has the right to determine her own life. If she decides for herself, she will not put the blame on others because it is her own choice and she has to undergo it whatever the consequences are. As she is used to being close with her family, when Dabney declares her marriage with Troy, she feels a bit awkward in her relationship with her family. Her mother acts like a stranger, she does not talk much with Dabney as they did before, which makes her feel uncomfortable about it. Her mother does not say any words toward her sudden decision. She and her sister, Shelley, also seems to have distance in their relationship. When they lie together on the settee, Shelley suddenly shouts that they will never be like this again which makes both of them stare at each other and end it without any explanation about each other's feelings as if there is no help for it.

Their way in solving the problem is rather awkward since they do not express what they think or disapprove. They just see and observe the problem according to their own perception. The writer thinks this could be the source of any misunderstanding. Talking openly to each other can make both sides understand what they want and mean. Besides, each person can grasp the meaning of their talks.

Her devotion to Troy makes her love and care for her future husband more than her family. Dabney is always curious about what Troy is doing whenever he is not with her. When she is with Troy, she treats him so tenderly. She is always close to him as if she is so afraid to be separated. Spending most of her time with Troy, she indirectly neglects her family. She is not aware of the Fairchilds' desire to put the Fairchild family first since she gets excited with her relationship with Troy. Moreover, this is her first love so she seems to be obsessed by him. Her concern toward her family is changing since her feeling of love is deeper toward her lover.

During her pre-wedding period, Dabney accidentally drops the night lamp which she gets from her aunts as a wedding present (53). The night lamp is her family heirloom. Her aunts regard the night lamp as a precious thing since it means a lot to them in order to connect and keep them in touch with their past (44). Yet, Dabney does

not feel guilty or even cry for it whereas the other Fairchilds are very sensitive toward the family's heirloom. Dabney's upcoming marriage makes her tend to think more about her life with Troy than with her family. Besides, everyone has a dream to be fulfilled, she will not stop trying until she achieved it. In achieving it, she will ignore anything that seems to prevent her. Dabney should feel sorry on breaking the night lamp, but on the contrary she acts like nothing has happened. Her attitude is encouraged by her devotion to build up a family with Troy. She has determined her strong desire to live with Troy, so nothing can change it.

Dabney's solidness toward the outsiders is influenced by her surroundings. On Dabney's pre-wedding days, Robbie comes to defend herself. She leaves George in the sense that George will look for her; yet, George does not look for her. He goes alone to the Delta to attend Dabney's wedding. Since Robbie loves George, she struggles to defend her relationship by going to the Delta to find George. Dabney at first does not like Robbie's coming. But then she witnesses how sincere Robbie is. Her bad prejudice toward Robbie is gradually fading. Dabney is amazed by her courage of coming alone and of resisting the Fairchilds' accusation on blaming her from leaving George. Dabney comes to realize that she has judged Robbie badly.

She particularly has judged Robbie only from her background which is lower than the Fairchilds' status. She is too quickly in judging a person. The writer believes that Dabney has come to realization that she should avoid being cheated by the appearance of the person. The first impression of a person is indeed an important thing to consider, but people have to really examine him/her carefully. There are people who are very clever to cover their real characters.

#### **IV.1.3. *Shelley Fairchild (Dabney's Sister)***

Shelley who is surrounded by too much family love is very difficult to stay away from the family love. Being always at home she does not have many companions, particularly male ones. This gives her little knowledge about men. She only has a few pictures of a man by looking at her father and uncle. However, she is not so close to her father, while her uncle often leaves the Delta. Therefore, she has little chance to know more about man. When she sees Troy, Dabney's upcoming husband, dealing with violence, she feels shocked about it and worry about Dabney's strong desire to have Troy as her husband. It happens when Troy has not shown up in time for his marriage rehearsal. Shelley is told to look for him. Coincidentally, she finds Troy having a problem with two

field Negroes. One of them hold an ice-peak while Troy uses the gun to frighten him with his intention to let the ice-peak off his hand. As she sees the incident, she is suddenly afraid of man. She notices that man in some way or another often use violence to face his surroundings.

*Running back along the bayau, faster than she had come, Shelley could only think in her anger of the convincing performance Troy had given as an overseer born and bred." (196)*

Being not able to grasp fully the purpose of Troy's violent act, Shelley comes to the feeling of fears toward man. Her feelings of fears leads her to regard Troy's act as his existence as an overseer born and bred. She also connects Troy's violence with her father's since in her outlook, her father is a rough man. One of his rough attitude toward Shelley is stated below:

*"Oh, papa, you are so hot", said Shelley. She pulled at his starched coat sleeve and tried to kiss him, and he spanked her ahead of him to the table"*

(115)

She never gets tender treatment from her father; therefore, her prejudice against men becomes worse. The writer believes Shelley just meets such unexpected scenery coincidently. Moreover, seeing her mother so gentle and caring to her children, she feels a woman is more tender

than a man. When she is with her father, she cannot feel the same as when she is with her mother.

Shelley who has lack of courage to face risky things is amazed by her younger sister's decision on marrying Troy. She is puzzled by Dabney's easy acceptance of Troy. Keeping all her thoughts in her diary, she never asks Dabney's reason to choose Troy. According to John Edward Hardy (Hardy, 1952: 410), the failure of communication between Shelley to Dabney on the engagement to Troy leads Shelley to close a door upon her understanding of Dabney, perhaps even upon her sympathy with the entire family. Nevertheless, Shelley is able to grasp the significance of Dabney's determination, that is Dabney's courage. Dabney dares to take the risk in her determination of taking Troy as her husband, although she does not know much about Troy's background as an overseer. Dabney is younger than Shelley, yet she does not hesitate in making a decision. Shelley also realizes that as the eldest she cannot always be an example. She can also pick the good sides of her younger sister.

Shelley does not have strong desire to be on her own; therefore, she easily gets influenced. Lack of association makes her unable to experience many things that may enlarge her view. By looking at others, people can correct themselves. Shelley sees the difference between

her and Dabney. She notices that Dabney does not stop trying to defend her decision. Although Shelley's family rather object on Dabney's marriage. Dabney keeps with her determination. From Dabney's insistence upon her marriage with Troy, she learns to take a stand. Shelley hardly tries to oppose her parents since she is demanded to be her brothers and sisters' example. This leads to her hesitance to make up her mind on the thing she desires since she needs to consider her family's concern. She also becomes a person who always follows her parents' demands. Considering her sister's insistence and her age, she begins to learn to be herself. It is not too late for her to change even without any support.

Shelley is a person who is difficult to express herself. She devotes all her feelings and thoughts in her diary. When Shelley sees Dabney dare to express her thought about Troy to make her parents understand her feeling for Troy. Shelley also sees Dabney's struggle to persuade her parents so her parents' bad prejudice on Troy as an overseer gradually fades. The writer believes noone can stand to keep his/her feelings and thoughts alone without sharing with others. The person will undergo stress when she tries to keep everything by herself. Sometimes, she needs to let out her feelings or thoughts to others to make her feel at ease. Shelley, being unable to

see her mother's burden of taking care of so many children, criticizes her father of being unconcern with her mother (229). She takes pity on her mother who keeps expecting another baby, whereas her father does not consider her mother's condition. Her mother, besides keeping expecting another baby, has to care for all her children's needs and take care of the household. Therefore, Shelley takes pity on her mother by saying that her family is perfect enough as a family. For that reason, her mother needs not to deliver another baby into the world. Her expression of her mother's condition is encouraged by her compassion. That feeling exists because she sees how busy her mother is that she does not have time to look after herself. She hardly spends much time talking to the members of the family. Her love toward her mother also supports her to express her feelings. Besides, Shelley also gives comments on Troy.

*"Mama, I think it's so tracky the way Troy comes in from the side door," said*

*Shelley all at one. "It's like somebody just walks in the house from the fields and marries Dabney." (205)*

Shelley is encouraged to express her feelings about Troy after witnessing Troy's act of violence. He is holding a gun in order to ask one of the Negroes to let the ice-peak off his hand. This unpleasant sight makes her feel a bit worried on Dabney's happiness which leads her to express

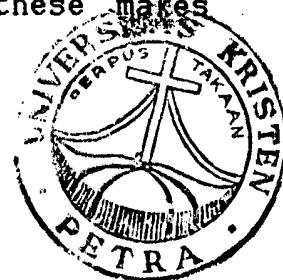
her feelings about Troy to her mother. She intends to let her mother reconsider Dabney's marriage to Troy.

Shelley's solidness to the outsiders makes her indifferent with others. She does not even consider others' feelings. Her attitude toward Robbie is one of the example. She does not care much on Robbie's feeling toward George, not until she witnesses Robbie's sorrow herself. She sees Robbie crying for George in front of the public. She has used to think that Robbie is not a match for him and is worth blaming for leaving George. It never crosses her mind that Robbie is so much in love with George that she encourages herself to come to Shellmound to find George after she has left George.

*"But Shelley had stiffened the moment she entered the store. Sure enough, she could hear somebody crying, deep in the back. She went to look, her heart pounding. Robbie was sitting in the cashier's stool, filling the store with crying and shameless tears, under a festoon of rubber boots" (138)*

She herself witnesses how desperately she wants George that she is willing to suffer the shame she has done to herself, that is, crying for George in public. Shelley notices that Robbie is so encouraged that she does not mind to lower her dignity in front of the Fairchild by looking for George

instead of George's looking for her. Shelley is also amazed by Robbie's bravery. Robbie dares to come alone to fight for George over the Fairchilds. All these makes Shelley gradually feel pity for Robbie.



#### IV.2. The Fairchilds by marriage

##### IV.2.1. *Ellen Fairchild (Dabney's mother)*

Ellen's fear of losing her children's love makes her hesitant to let Dabney go. As a mother who is for the first time going to give Troy responsibility and trust to look after her daughter whom she has raised and loved for years, she doubts Troy's sincerity. Besides, the writer feels that Ellen has less faith in Troy since she has not got to know him very well. Therefore, she seems so hard to let Dabney be away from her. She also devotes too much love on her children. She foresees Dabney's happiness by looking at George's happiness. She always leads herself to believe that George is happy; therefore, she does not give any comments on Dabney's sudden decision. When she finds out that Robbie leaves George, she tries to cover George's problem from Dabney by begging the Fairchilds not to say anything about George in front of Dabney (106). Ellen loves Dabney so much that she does not want to make her feel sad or disturbed by her Uncle George's problem which may affect her happiness with Troy since Dabney adores him

so much. Although Ellen is afraid of losing Dabney to Troy, she does not want Dabney to feel miserable. She hides her feeling as far as she can. Here, the writer considers that Ellen seems to treat Dabney as a child whom she sometimes thinks that a child does not have to know much about adults' problem. Yet, according to the writer, Dabney deserves to know Fairchild family problems. She is part of the family so she has the right to know. Moreover, she is not a child anymore. She needs to face problems so she will get used to overcoming her own problems.

Ellen is overprotective toward her children so that she cannot stand to offer help to a runaway girl whom she meets in the wood. The girl is about the same age as Dabney so Ellen offers help eagerly to the girl. She thinks the child should go back to where she belongs and gets more attention from her parents whom she thinks have neglected her. However, the girl rejects her help and tells her that she cannot stop her as it is stated below:

*"You couldn't stop me", the girl said, comfortably also, and a half smile, sweet and incredibly maternal, passed over her face. It made what she said seem teasing and sad, final and familiar, like the advice a mother is bound to give her girls." (71)*

She feels amazed with the girl's reply. At that very moment, she is aware that the girl has her own life to

choose and not every girl in the world gets the proper affection and full protection from their parents. Besides, not every child's life wants to be ruled or controlled when they have grown up and has their own way of thinking. Moreover, the writer thinks that a mother will follow her children's desire when they have grown up. A mother can only help them to change their mind through explanations and advices. Yet, the decision is still made by her children. The way a mother gives advices is very important. She cannot use force since the more a mother forces her child the more the child goes against her.

Ellen who does not dare to interfere with the Fairchils' affairs gradually gets to know the Fairchilds deeper. Ellen realizes that everyday life is so complicated.

*"Not her young life with her serene mother, with Battle, but her middle life knowing all Fairchilds better and seeing George single himself from them had shown her how deep were the compatities of the everyday, of family, ..."*

(157)

George's life and the Fairchilds' attitude toward Robbie makes her feel the complexities of life. She does not understand why the Fairchilds dislike and put all the blames on Robbie instead of George. She feels pity for Robbie who dares to come to Shellmound and face the

Fairchilds in order to find her husband. The writer considers that Ellen finally notices that sometimes there is a problem which someone is facing that nobody can interfere in it or understand it since it is so private. Ellen who cannot stand the Fairchilds' attitude toward Robbie, at last, speaks out for Robbie.

*"Do you know that she walked from the Fairchilds?" said Ellen, turning her face toward the room. "And nobody's even offered her a bath till Shelley just now, or a place to lie down? ... (168)*

Ellen's reaction shows her disapproval that the Fairchilds blame Robbie completely since they do not know the real case. They should appreciate her struggle to come at Shellmound alone and at least offer her to take a rest like Shelley does. According to the writer, every one has his/her own private matter that other persons cannot involve in it since a person cannot feel the pain and suffering if the person himself/herself does not experience it. It is very difficult to look into someone's feelings about something he/she experiences. Therefore, it is not right for the Fairchilds to judge Robbie badly by only noticing her attitude toward George, that is, leaving George. Ellen also begins to feel encouraged to express her feeling to George, the Fairchild about the runaway girl she meets.

"She had not had a chance to face this fear before, for at the time she had had to cope with the runaway girl herself, who was only the age of her daughter Dabney, so she had believed." (80)

She is afraid that what happens to the girl might happen to her daughter, Dabney. On the other hand, when George tells her that he has met the girl and slept with her at the gin, she realizes that every person has the right to choose what he/she wants to do or go. So is Dabney for Ellen, Ellen should let Dabney go with whoever she feels in love with.

#### **IV.2.2. *Robbie (George's wife)***

Robbie is obsessed by her love and relationship to George. She wants to possess her husband's love fully by demanding George to show his love to her. George's ignorance on her on the trestle incident, the act of saving Maureen, makes Robbie leave George. Being alone for some time, Robbie rethinks the incident. She is aware of her attitude of too demanding to George to show his care to her. Her awareness leads her to encourage herself to come to look for George at the Delta. She realizes her selfishness over George when the train stops and George is safe as this quotation shows:

"The moment she had thought over with the most ruin to her pride was the one after the train had actually stopped. George was safe, and the engineer had leaned out." (147)

She cannot say anything when the train stops. She feels ashamed of herself since she has shouted as loudly as possible that George does not do for her sake. She comes to think that she acts improperly since she is angry with George who is willing to risk his life in saving a mentally retarded child from danger. Because she is too obsessed by her love and her thought that the Fairchilds seem to take away George from her, she becomes blind in judging George in his deed on the trestle. Robbie's struggles to come to Shellmound shows how much she cares for George and her willingness to accept his deed on the trestle. Besides, she realizes that she cannot run away from her problem. Even though how hard the way to Shellmound, she is able to get through it.

"I wondered how far you'd get", he said. "Jump up in front of me and ride".

"No, sir", said Robbie. Then because she always told everything, she said, "I want to be real hard, like this, to make him feel worse" (149)

She gets the vision that she cannot be too selfish since she does not care with Maureen's life because she is only thinking of her own affair. She cannot afford to lose

George since she loves him. As Douglas Messerli (Messerli, 1977:229) states that every person has an individual desirous of love and a person will tend to break through the "solid wall of too much love" in order to share the love from the inside. Robbie also has an individual desire of love toward George in which she wants George to share his love from the inside with her since she longs for George showing his tenderness and care to her. On one hand, George also has his individual desire of caring for others that makes Robbie doubt his love toward her.

Robbie and the Fairchild who have kept distance to each other finally have the chance to have a talk. She is the one who leaves George because of her emotion of seeing George's care to the Fairchilds bigger than to her. Therefore, Robbie must have great courage to come to see the Fairchilds in the Delta in which all the Fairchilds get together to celebrate Dabney and Troy's wedding. It is not easy for a person to put herself together to come to a place where she is not friendly accepted. She must have a great deal of courage and a goal which she really desires to achieve. Without strong desire, she will not have the courage to come. Robbie's coming shows she truly wants to renew her relationship with the Fairchilds, especially with George. Talking face to face can make everything clearer since both sides can devote all their feelings and thoughts

straightfowardly. Besides, both sides can at least come to understand each other so that they can gradually wipe out the barrier between them. In John Edward Hardy's opinion (Hardy, 1952: 399), the barrier between Robbie and the Fairchilds is great simply because she is a woman, that she is the unworthy wife of the darling of the family, but most important of all, that she is a lifelong near neighbor. In any society, of course, class distinctions are always, though ironically, most keenly appreciated by native members of the immediate community. When it is only class distinction that becomes the barrier between Robbie and the Fairchilds, an approach is needed. Robbie's approach by coming to Shellmound and having a talk is a great help to unite them. The sooner they talk about their thinking openly, the sooner they will solve the barrier between them, for instance the talk between Robbie and Aunt Mac, one of the Fairchilds. Aunt Mac, mentions about Robbie's social status as this quotation seen below:

*"You are in Shellmound now, Miss Robbie, but I know where you were brought up and who your pa and your ma were, and anything you say don't account to a row of pine." (163)*

Robbie interrupts it by saying that they are a spoiled and conceited family that think they are above others. They do not realize that they are only small plantation family

(163). The Fairchils are touched by Robbie's criticism. Moreover, they come to the awareness that Robbie is not like what they think that she wants to take away George from them when Robbie reveals her feeling that she wants to be part of the Fairchilds since she loves George.

*"Once I tried to be like the Fairchilds. I thought I know how. ... "Don't any other people in the world feel like me? I wish I knew. Don't any people somewhere love other people so much that they want to be -not like- but the same? I wanted to turn into the Fairchild. It wasn't I thought you were so wonderful." (165)*

She wants to get acquainted with the Fairchilds so that she can live with George happily and understand him more.

Robbie and the Fairchilds do not establish a close relationship so they have opposite judgement on each other. This causes them to have a gap on their relationship. When Robbie meets the Fairchilds, either Robbie or the Fairchilds can express what they feel or think. One of the Fairchilds mentions that the fact that she is married into the Fairchilds (141) displeases her. She tries to change the Fairchilds' outlook by her reaffirmation that she marries George not the Fairchilds. She tries to make the Fairchilds understand that her marriage has nothing to do with the Fairchilds' social status. She marries George

since she loves him. Her reaffirmation can make the Fairchilds aware of their maljudgement toward Robbie. Sharing feelings and thoughts is able to lead Robbie and the Fairchilds notice their own maljudgement toward each other. Facing the problem is better than avoiding it since the faster the problem is solved the more relieved they will be. The longer the problem is the deeper the gap will be between them.

Robbie's struggle of coming to Shellmound is not in vain. Robbie's also gets response from George. She gets explanation about his recklessness as stated below:

*"To me I speak for myself," He said matter-of-factly ... I don't think it matters so much in the world what. Only", he bent over Robbie with his look gone relentless - he was about to kiss her," I'm damned if I wasn't going to stand on that track if I wanted to or will again." (167)*

Through the explanation, Robbie is able to be aware of his deed. By not giving any explanation can make her have a prejudice against him. Moreover, explanation will succeed if both sides are willing to let themselves listen to each other. So, it also needs cooperation to work out a problem. Robbie's willingness to listen to George's explanation shows she still cares for George. As long as no deep hard feelings exists in both sides, their relationship can be saved.

Briefly, The Fairchilds' encounters during the preparation of Dabney Fairchild and Troy Flavin's wedding make the Fairchilds both by blood and by marriage start to change. In those encounters, the Fairchilds both by blood and by marriage meet, see each others' desire, exchange thoughts and feelings and experience things which make them start to be aware of themselves.