

### CHAPTER III

#### THE FAILURE OF THE MARRIAGE

#### BETWEEN DOROTHEA BROOKE AND EDWARD CASAUBON

This chapter deals with the failure of Dorothea Brooke's marriage with Edward Casaubon. In this chapter the thesis writer wants to analyze the factors that **may** cause the failure. Since marriage is a union between a man and woman to create a family, the problems that appear in the marriage are the problems of the couple. Therefore, the thesis writer divides the factors into two groups; the factors that cause the failure of the marriage from Dorothea's side **as** well **as** from Mr. Casaubon's side because both of them cause the failure.

#### **3.1 The Factors that Cause the Failure of the Marriage from Dorothea's Side**

Dorothea Brooke is the most important woman character in Middlemarch. Not **only** because she is different from other women characters

but also her unique characters make her become the interest of this novel. She is a nineteen-year-old girl who is educated by life to be an independent woman and an idealist, but she is pictured lack of self-knowledge and has unreal ideas about her true relation to her environment. The thesis writer finds out that the failure of Dorothea's marriage to Mr. Casaubon is caused by three factors; Dorothea's character traits, Dorothea's illusion, and no love.

### 3.1.1 Dorothea's Character Traits

Dorothea, who is seen **as** an independent young lady, **has** very childlike ideas about marriage. "Dorothea with **all** her eagerness to know the truth of Life retained very childlike ideas about marriage" (7). She **does not** know the meaning of becoming a wife. The thesis writer sees that because Dorothea is too young to get married, she is lack of knowledge about marriage life. She considers marriage **as** a way to achieve her ideal and also to find a father figure. Dorothea says, "Thereally delightful marriage must be that where your husband was a sort of father, and could teach you even Hebrew, if you wish it" (**8**). It means that Dorothea will find her happiness in her marriage if her husband can do **his** role **as** a husband, a father **as well as** a teacher. She will be satisfied with having a wise husband. "She is certainly very **naïve** with **all** her alleged cleverness" (470). This statement contains a paradox. It seems that there is a contradiction between Dorothea's childlike personality and her **being** clever. It is hard to understand how such a clever

girl can have so childlike ideas about marriage. But, it is a fact that Dorothea is childlike while Dorothea's cleverness still needs to be questioned because it has never been examined intellectually. Dorothea lost her parents when she **was** twelve years old. Since then she lives with her younger sister in their uncle's house. The thesis writer may say that Dorothea's childlike way of thinking about marriage is influenced by her condition of being an orphan. She misses a father's figure in her life, and she tries to find it in Mr. Casaubon.

Dorothea's being childlike can **also** be seen from Dorothea's idea about marriage, which seems unconnected with passion and sexuality as she says to her uncle that she has never thought marriage **as personal** ease (30). At the beginning of her marriage with **Mr.** Casaubon, Dorothea **does** not know about the importance of intimacy between husband and wife. But, in the development she involves with a recognition of her sexual nature. The fact that Mr. Casaubon does not like any physical contact and intimacy frustrates Dorothea's natural tendency. The thesis writer finds out that Dorothea's spiritual and emotional maturation **begins** during her stay in Rome.

I am sorry to add that she was sobbing bitterly, with such abandonment to this relief of an oppressed heart as a woman habitually controlled by pride on her **own** account and thoughtfulness for others will sometimes allow herself when she feels securely alone. And Mr. Casaubon was certain away for

some time at the Vatican (143).

As a young bride, Dorothea expects that she will spend a wonderful time with her husband especially now they are in Rome, one of the most romantic cities in the world. But, the fact is far different from her expectation. She never feels what other new brides feel on their honeymoon. Mr. Casaubon stays away from her because of his study from morning until evening. He leaves her at home and does whatever he wants. She feels very lonely and sad that she has to explore this city alone without a guide.

But now, since they had been in Rome, with all depths of her emotion roused to tumultuous activity, and with life made a new problem by new elements, she had been becoming more and more aware, with a certain terror, that her mind **was** continually sliding into inwards fits of anger **and** repulsion, or else into forlorn weariness (146).

This quotation means that Dorothea becomes aware of what will happen to her marriage. In Rome, she becomes aware of what kind of a man she gets married to. Her being abandoned makes her angry. In addition, she finds out that Mr. Casaubon is impotent. This frustrates Dorothea's natural tendency. Without realizing her sexual tendency, she gets married to a man whose age

is much older than her. In the development she recognizes her sexual tendency. Her husband's disability in sexual intercourse frustrates her.

The thesis writer finds out that Dorothea's childish ideas make her fail in her marriage with Edward Casaubon. She is too young to realize what she likes. She lacks of knowledge about marriage and the relationship between husband and wife. She is too young to realize her sexual nature.

### 3.1.2 Dorothea's Illusion

Dorothea Brooke lives in illusion. She is too young to realize the real world she lives in. She has unreal ideas about her true relation to her environment. Her **being** young takes her to live in illusion; illusion about her husband and her marriage.

Dorothea is an intelligent and sensitive girl who was **born** into the English landed ruling class of the nineteenth century, who is **full** of half-formulated dissatisfactions with the fatuous, genteel life of a woman of her class, seeking something beyond the narrow 'selfishness' of her acquaintances and turning towards a religious Puritanism and a high-minded philanthropy (cottages for farm-laborers) to satisfy her unfulfilled potentialities; finally **and** disastrously **imagining** that in Marriage to Casaubon she will find the fulfillment of her aspirations (Kettle 177).

Dorothea has illusion about Edward Casaubon. She thinks by marrying Mr. Casaubon she will learn more from him. Dorothea is truly aware that self-study will not be enough; therefore, she uses marriage as a vehicle to fulfill her aspirations. And she is truly aware of her position in the society. She knows that Victorian women are not supposed to have **high** education because they are not born **as** thinkers. However, the thesis writer **finds** out that Dorothea is not aware about what will happen to her real life being Mr. Casaubon's wife.

In Chapter **2**, the thesiswriter finds out that Dorothea hasillusion about Mr. Casaubon's appearance. Dorothea sees from Mr. Casaubon's appearance, a wise and clever man, "Celia!He is one of the most distinguished-lookingmen I ever saw. He is remarkably like the portrait of Locke. He has the same deep eye-socket" (15). The thesis writer finds that Dorothea is under illusion since she thinks that her aspirations to gain a broader knowledge will be fulfilled by him. The reason Dorothea is drawn **to** Mr. Casaubon is **that** he is the **only** man in her acquaintance who **seems** to offerher "understanding, sympathetic guidance and intellectual stimulation" (Sweeney **58**).

Dorothea accepts Mr. Casaubon's proposal under the cloud of illusion – the illusion that she can somehow be of help to a man whom she considers "the epitome of wisdom and intellectual brilliance" (Sprague 269). She **thinks** that her marriage with Mr. Casaubon will deliver her from her "girlish

subjection” to her own ignorance, and gives her the freedom of voluntary submission to guide who will take her along the grandest path (21). It means that by marrying Mr. Casaubon, Dorothea will be freed from society’s control of what should be and should not be done by a lady. Dorothea ~~thinks~~ that Mr. Casaubon can be her guide who will help her through hard conditions – the condition where the society does not treat woman the same ~~as~~ man.

When the society does not support a woman to have high education and to use her talent, Dorothea finds that Mr. Casaubon is the only person who will support her. She wants to justify things by the completest knowledge, not only by the rules, which are never acted on. Dorothea’s heart is ~~full~~ of the romance of learning: “To reconstruct a past world, doubtless with ~~a~~ view to the highest purpose of truth – what a work... to assist in, though only ~~as~~ lampholder! . . . Since prayer heightened yearning but not instruction, what lamp was there but knowledge? Surely learned men kept the oil” (64). She ~~thinks~~ marriage to Mr. Casaubon will provide her an opportunity to act as “lamp-holder” in the Secretarial and wifely capacity. Dorothea wants to be ~~a~~ lampholder, a woman with knowledge. She sees that the lamp will not be ~~useful~~ without ~~oil~~. The thesis writer finds out that Dorothea believes that Mr. Casaubon is the person who can glow the light because Dorothea is sure that Mr. Casaubon keeps the oil. It means that Dorothea sees Mr. Casaubon as a person who will fill her brain with knowledge.

Dorothea is disillusioned of Mr. Casaubon when she realizes that her

husband's abilities are limited. Dorothea is married to Mr. Casaubon because she wishes to become **wise** in order to do great work. In the development she discovers not **only** that she cannot learn for her husband, the author of a projected Key to All Mythologies, but also that Mr. Casaubon is hardly wise. It changes her mind from idealistic hope to frustration. "What was fresh for her mind **was** worn out to **his**; and such capacity of thought and feeling **as** has ever been stimulated in him by general life of mankind had **long** shrunk to a sort of dried preparation, a lifeless embalmment of knowledge" (145).

Dorothea realizes that Mr. Casaubon is not an object for the satisfaction of her idealism. She feels disappointed when she **finds** that her husband does not plan to write a **book as** what he says before their **marriage**. Day by day she notices that her husband's ability is limited and that his character **as** being less enthusiastic is ~~also~~ his limitation. The thesis writer may **say** that Mr. Casaubon's study is useless because Mr. Casaubon never **makes** new invention, what he is studying has been done by the other **scholars**. **So**, the knowledge becomes lifeless. Dorothea **finds** that Mr. Casaubon only reads **books** and studies but he never gets new knowledge that he can publish it **as** a **book**. Dorothea is very frustrated because of the fact that her husband never involves her into **his** work.

To-day she had begun to see that she had been under a wild illusion in expecting a response to her feeling from Mr.



Casaubon, and she had felt the waking of a presentiment that there might be a sad consciousness in **his** life which made as great a need on his side as on her own (156).

It means that Dorothea realizes that it is useless for her to expect a **response** from her husband because of **his** disability. Dorothea learns no longer to seek Mr. Casaubon a reflection of herself, a satisfaction of her own need, but to see **his** objective self **as** it is, in all its otherness. Dorothea begins to emerge from her stupidity. What she can do it to **try** to oppress her own feeling **and** devotes herself to her husband.

### 3.1.3 No Love

Why **do** people *marry*? The answer will be numerous, **such as** “desire for wealth or position, assurance of care in old age, a steady source of **sex** satisfaction, love of children, the expectation of society, **and many** other reasons. But all of these are minor compared with the dominant urge for continuous and intimate companionship with **a** loved person” (Barber **162**). The thesis writer **finds** out that the problem with Dorothea’s marriage is that there is no love between them. Dorothea sees marriage only **as** a duty, “I know that I must expect **trial**, uncle. Marriage is a state of higher duties. I never thought of it **as** mere personal ease” (**30**). For her and the rest of Victorian women, marriage is a duty that every woman has to do when they

are adult. Dorothea does not know that marriage has to be built on love. There has never been no love between Dorothea and Mr. Casaubon, each idealizes the other into the perfect server of his or her own egocentric needs, and is prevented from knowing the others properly. The thesis writer sees that Dorothea has sacrificed her young life to get married to a man much older than her. She is not yet conscious that her sacrifice will be futile that neither her sexual nor her vocational needs will be satisfied with this marriage. She **begins** to realize that she does not love him but she has to spend her youth life taking care of her sick husband.

She was always trying to be what her husband wished, and never able to response on **his** delight in what she was. The thing that she liked, that she spontaneously to have, seemed to be always excluded from her life; for it was only granted and not shared by her husband it might as well have been denied (384).

She does all her best for her husband; nursing him, reading loud for him and also writing for him. She always tries to do what her husband wants. She is not happy with her marriage, "now it appeared that she was to live in more and more in virtual tomb" (384). Dorothea's life being Mr. Casaubon's wife is pictured as a tomb. It is lifeless and pale.

Besides, what shows that Dorothea does not love Casaubon is that her

marriage with Casaubon is reciprocal, it is based on give and take condition. When Dorothea decides to serve him with her whole life, she also has a sort of demand for her husband. The fact that Dorothea always gives without receiving in return makes her disappointed with her husband. In her disappointment she says to herself, "What have I done – what am I – that he should treat me *so*? He never knows what is in my mind – he never cares. What is the use of everything I do? He wishes he had never married me" (312). **As** a wife, she has given everything to her husband. **As** a consequence, she expects her husband does the same thing to her. She says, "I carry my sacrifice in my soul" (233). The word "carry" **signifies** that she has a kind of burden loaded on her shoulder. It shows that Dorothea cannot successfully **do** her role **as** a wife, which she considers before **as** her duty. She feels regretful that her marriage does not run **as** what she **has** expected. She is **sad** that her husband does not treat her **as** she wants, does not care about what she ~~thinks~~. Definitely, this woman is too young to be on formidable level of wifehood (208).

The thesis writer finds out that like other Victorian women, Dorothea has done her duty, which is to dedicate herself to her husband. The failure of her marriage with Edward Casaubon is not because she does not do her **duty** well, but because their marriage is not built on love.

### 3.2 The Factors that Cause the Failure of the Marriage from Mr. Casaubon's Side

Edward Casaubon is a man nearly *fifty* who dedicates most of **his** time for knowledge. His being busy makes him lose contact with people. When he realizes that he needs a wife, he is already old. He marries Dorothea who is twenty-seven years younger than him. He **finds** that she is an interesting woman. She is young, beautiful, clever and independent. Besides, she has the same interest **as** him. She is a type of woman whom he needs to be his wife. The thesis writer finds out that the failure of Mr. Casaubon's marriage with Dorothea is caused by three factors; Mr. Casaubon's character traits, no love, and the difference of age.

#### 3.2.1 Mr. Casaubon's Character Traits

After the marriage, **Mr.** Casaubon's personalities are revealed bit **by** bit. The thesis writer **finds** out that Mr. Casaubon is very selfish. His purpose of getting married is not to share the happiness for both couple, but **only** to get a companion who can help and accompany him in **his** aging years. He knows that Dorothea is clever; therefore, he chooses Dorothea **as his** wife. The thesis writer **finds** out that the main reason for Mr. Casaubon to marry Dorothea is because he needs help from Dorothea to be **his** secretary to help him doing **his** works. In the conversation between **Mr.** Casaubon and Mr. Brooke, Mr. Casaubon says, "She had the very considerate thought of saving

my eyes” (48). He needs Dorothea’s help to read books to him or write something for him because **his** eyes are not healthy. It seems that he treats Dorothea more as a secretary rather than **as** a wife. Indeed, he treats her as a secretary because he cannot afford to hire a secretary. He does not want to take the consequences that the secretary spies and copies Mr. Casaubon’s works for **his** or her own purpose. Before the marriage, **Mr.** Casaubon promises that he will teach Dorothea anything she wants to know, but after marriage **Mr.** Casaubon never actualizes **his** promise. “Even drawing Dorothea into use in **his** study, according to his own intention before marriage, was an effort which he was always tempted to defer, and but for her pleading insistence it might never have begun” (207).

His selfishness is clearly seen when he is going to have his honeymoon. He says to Dorothea, -- I would feel more liberty if you had a companion” (64). **Mr.** Casaubon suggests Dorothea to take her sister with them. He doesn’t want **to** feel annoyed with the presence of Dorothea besides him while he is spending the time for **his** study in Rome. Therefore, **Mr.** Casaubon feels that it will be better if Dorothea has a friend to accompany her when he is not beside her. It seems that **Mr.** Casaubon is a very understanding husband, but the thesis writer **finds** out that **Mr.** Casaubon has another purpose behind that. **Mr.** Casaubon’s purpose to go to Rome is not only for honeymoon, but also for **his** study. It shows **Mr.** Casaubon’s **selfishness**. **Mr.** Casaubon cannot divide his time between study and honeymoon. The thesis

writer is surprised that Mr. Casaubon does not see the honeymoon **as an** important period where a new couple learns to understand and accept the personality of each other. It is Mr. Casaubon's selfishness that leads him to choose **his** study more than **his** wife. He leaves **his** wife alone in Rome.

Another example that shows Edward Casaubon's selfishness is when **Mr.** Casaubon finds that his younger cousin visits Dorothea. The thesis writer finds that Mr. Casaubon feels irritated with Will Ladislaw's presence in Rome. Although Mr. Casaubon does not say **his** feeling directly, the thesis writer can understand Casaubon's mind from the narrator's description about him, "In fact, he had it in **his** thought to tell her that she ought not to have received young Ladislaw in his absence" (156). Once again, the thesis writer wants to say that Mr. Casaubon is very selfish. He does not want **his** cousin to be close to Dorothea, but he does not use his time to stay with his wife.

### 3.2.2 No Love

The thesis writer finds out that Edward Casaubon does not love Dorothea. Mr. Casaubon **marries** Dorothea just because he needs **a** friend and a companion, not because he loves her. It is right that Mr. Casaubon adores her, and it is not because of her beauty and personality but her intellect. "This is a happiness greater than I had ever imagined to be in reserved for me that I should ever meet with a mind and a person so rich in the mingled graces which could render marriage desirable, was far indeed from my conception"

(37). At first **Mr.** Casaubon does not expect that he might find a woman to get married to. But, when he meets Dorothea, he notices that Dorothea is the picture of a woman he has expected **as** a wife, "it was now time for him to adorn **his** life with the grace of female companionship" (48). From **this** quotation, the thesis writer finds out that Mr. Casaubon marries Dorothea not because he loves her, but it is only a matter **of** time. **Mr.** Casaubon realizes that he is not young anymore, and he needs a companion, a woman who can accompany him in **his** aging years. **Mr.** Casaubon sees marriage only **as** the provision of a graceful ornament for his life. For him, a woman should be beautiful, ardent, and clever; and he **finds all of** these qualities in Dorothea. "You have all – nay, more than all those qualities which I have ever regarded **as** the excellences qualities of womanhood" (37). **Mr.** Casaubon **finds** that Dorothea has **all** the qualities, which are considered by him **as** the qualities of **an** ideal woman, but it is a pity that Mr. Casaubon does not **know** how to treat woman and to make her happy.

Besides, the proof that Mr. Casaubon does not love Dorothea is that Mr. Casaubon does not feel excited about **his** coming marriage. In Chapter 10, the narrator states, "For in **truth**, as the day fixed for **his** marriage came nearer, **Mr.** Casaubon did not find **his** spirit **rising**" (62). **Mr.** Casaubon **does** not feel really excited about **his** coming marriage. It shows that he does not really love Dorothea. His purpose to *marry* her is only to have a companion in his old life. The thesis writer finds out that Mr. Casaubon is a person who

does not have love, "even before marriage, he found himself under a new depression in the consciousness that the new bliss was not blissful to him" (207). The thesis writer wonders that a man like Mr. Casaubon, who marries a beautiful young lady, does not feel **his** heart move. Even **Mr.** Casaubon himself is surprised that he does not feel excited with **his** coming marriage, "though he had won a lovely and noble-hearted girl he had not won delight" (63). It proves that **Mr.** Casaubon **does** not love Dorothea. At the beginning of **his** marriage, Mr. Casaubon is very grateful that he marries a beautiful young lady whom he ~~thinks~~ can be helpful to him, but later he **finds** that **his** wife is too much demanding him to do great works and publish books. It irritates **Mr.** Casaubon,

"My love, you may rely upon me for knowing the times **and** the seasons . . . It had been easy for me to gain a temporary effect by a mirage of baseless opinion; but it is ever the **trial** of the scrupulous explorer to be saluted with the impatient scorn of chatterers who attempt only the smallest achievements" (149).

The thesis writer **finds** out that the quarrel between Dorothea Brooke and Edward Casaubon happens because there is no love between them. This is not the first quarrel; one takes place earlier, when they are in Rome on their honeymoon. It arises out when Dorothea enthusiastically urges **Mr.**



Casaubon to give his research to the world which he **finds** uneasy to hear.

From the quotation above, the thesis writer finds a sort **of** irritation in

Mr. Casaubon's voice when he talks to Dorothea.

Besides not loving Dorothea, Mr. Casaubon cannot forgive her either.

When a person loves someone, he or she has to learn how to forgive the

person whom he or she loves. **Mr.** Casaubon cannot accept the fact that **his**

wife does not believe in **his** ability in doing his works. It hurts Mr.

Casaubon's pride **as** a scholar and **as** a husband. **Mr.** Casaubon **finds** that **his**

wife is judging him and her devotion is the reason of her unbelieving thought.

It seems to **Mr.** Casaubon that what **his** wife does for him (nursing him,

reading to him) is her effort to find her husband's limitation and disability.

### 3.2.3 The Difference of Age

The difference of age **between** Edward Casaubon and Dorothea Brooke

is one of the factors that cause the failure of their marriage. The thesis writer

finds out that Mr. Casaubon, who is twenty-seven years older than Dorothea,

is more suitable to be seen **as** an uncle than a husband, "he looks more like **an**

uncle – a more useful sort of relationship" (141). Edward Casaubon is a man

of fifty whose health is not good. He often gets heart-attack. Besides, Mr.

Casaubon **has** disability in sexual intercourse; in other words, he is impotent.

He cannot do his part as a husband, "Mr. Casaubon had never has a strong

**bodily** frame, and **his soul** was sensitive without being enthusiastic" (206).

The thesis writer **finds** out that Casaubon's being sensitive is caused by the fact that he is already old and has disability in doing **his** role **as** a husband. Meanwhile, his wife Dorothea is a girl, who is not already twenty but young and healthy. Their difference of age **makes Mr.** Casaubon have low self-esteem that causes the feeling of insecurity, together with the desire to compensate for such feeling. The closeness between Dorothea and Will Ladislav makes Mr. Casaubon jealous, "there is a sort of jealousy which needs very little fire" (156). The thesis writer **finds** out that **as** an elder cousin, Mr. Casaubon is jealous to Will Ladislav who is still young and healthy. Mr. Casaubon's mind is **full** with suspicions, "**Young** Ladislav, he was sure, meant to defy and **annoy him**, meant to win Dorothea's confidence and **sow** her mind with disrespect, and perhaps aversion, towards her husband" (276). **Mr.** Casaubon is worried about Dorothea's opinion about him. Mr. Casaubon worries that the conversation between Dorothea and Will Ladislav **will** make Dorothea lose her respect and belief in her husband. He feels insecure with the presence of Will in his house. The thesis writer thinks that Mr. Casaubon's feeling is not exaggerated. In Rome, Will tells Dorothea that **Mr.** Casaubon's work is pointless that German scholars have already come up with the answer, -- It is a pity that it should be thrown away, **as so** much English scholarship is, for want of knowing what is being done by the rest of the world. **If Mr.** Casaubon read German he would save himself a great deal of trouble" (154). Even though Mr. Casaubon suspects them, he never tells

them about it. He keeps his jealousy and suspicions until his death. The thesis writer wants to conclude that the difference of age makes **Mr. Casaubon** live in jealousy and suspicion. It can be seen from the will he writes before **his** death. In **his** will, he states that Dorothea will get his property only if she does not marry Will Ladislaw. This shows how he hates Will.

Dorothea Brooke is **still** very young when she gets married to **Mr. Casaubon**; therefore, she has childlike ideas about marriage. She sees marriage **as** a way to find a father figure. Besides, she **has** an illusion that her husband is a great man who is going to publish a book. In fact, he is impotent and **his** knowledge is limited. This condition makes Dorothea unhappy. Dorothea, who at the beginning of the marriage considers marriage as a duty, **finds** that she cannot accept her husband, who only takes and never gives. It **makes** Dorothea stressful and she finally realizes that she **does not love** him. Mr. Casaubon is actually a selfish man. He does not give enough attention to **his** wife. Instead of spending **his** time with **his** wife, **Mr. Casaubon spends his** time for his study. Furthermore, Mr. Casaubon does not love Dorothea. He marries Dorothea because he needs **a** companion for his aging years. Mr. Casaubon is twenty years older than Dorothea. The difference **of** age between them makes Mr. Casaubon jealous and suspicious to his wife. He is jealous because his younger cousin pays attention on **his** wife who is young and healthy. The thesis writer also **finds** out that the relationship between

Dorothea and Will, Mr. Casaubon's younger cousin makes **Mr.** Casaubon feels insecure. It makes their marriage unhealthy.