

Alexis gedallovich 02
28 11 acting 2

[Family](#), [Mother](#)



Alexis Gedallovich 02/28/11 Acting 2 Desire Under the Elms by Eugene O'Neill

Desire Under the Elms is a play written by Eugene O'Neill that I very much enjoyed. It is a play full of lust, desire, and vengeance. At the beginning of the play we are introduced to Eben and his two older brothers, Peter and Simeon. Throughout the first scene it seemed to me as if Eben was the older brother because even though he has a young boyish quality to him he seemed to be in control of his brothers in a way. All the brothers feel bitterness towards their father at this point because he has abandoned them to seek out a new wife and left them to work the farm, but Eben has other motives. Eben feels bitterness and resentment towards his father because he believes he stole the farm from his mother and had worked her to the death. This, to me, put Eben in a completely separate state of mind from his brothers. Eben, although young and naïve was very strong willed and did a lot in order to get his way even though the play ended in tragedy. He sold his brothers away from the farm as well as bore a son with his father's new wife behind his back. I think O'Neill wanted to make it seem that Eben was young and innocent on the surface, but really he was tough and vengeful on the inside. I like how O'Neil set up this irony. His father was always complaining how soft he was like his mother, yet he was plotting against his father the entire time. I also really enjoyed the secretive and lustful relationship between Eben and Abbie. At first I saw Abbie as a very strong and conniving woman, but at the end of the play this view sort of changed for me as Eben started to take control of her. At the start of the play, Abbie seduces Eben and wins him over with her advances. She ingrains it in his head that she loves him like his maw. She claims that she is replacing her and that his

maw's farm is her farm now. Abbie seems controlling of him when she convinces him with her seductive manner that being together is what Eben's mother would have wanted. Eben is then convinced that this is his Maw's revenge against his father and she can finally be at rest in her grave and so he gives in to Abbie's desire. This to me made Abbie seem strong and manipulative until Eben learns of Abbie's intention of conceiving a son with him in order to pretend she had conceived the child with Ephraim and be able to keep the farm. Eben then takes complete control of the situation until he has Abbie on her knees begging for him not to leave her. In a way, Eben has seduced Abbie and Eben's longing and desire for Abbie turns around so that Abbie cannot function without Eben. Although most don't like such a tragic ending, I found the ending to be very interesting and also lovely as ironic as that may sound. Although Abbie and Eben's baby did end up being killed by his own mother and Abbie and Eben were sent to prison, probably to be hung together, they were still together in the end. What started out as a conniving and lustful relationship turned into an unbreakable bond as the two went off to their punishment hand in hand. Personally, I would love to play the character of Abbie in this play. I think this a role I can play because I am young and able to be seductive yet innocent. I can lower my voice to give myself a seductive tone and I also have a very fit figure. It will be a challenge for me to play someone so simple and uneducated, but it will be a fun challenge nonetheless.