

# Struggle between good and evil in east of eden

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The novel *East of Eden* written by John Steinbeck takes place in Salina Valley in Northern California, and just like any other place, the history is the same. The central question of the novel is “ what causes individuals to struggle between good and evil”? Throughout the *East of Eden* all the characters such as Adam, Charles, Cyrus and Cathy each show their struggle.

As shown first when Cyrus wants his son Adam to go fight in war as a way of him following his legacy. But at the same time he doesn't want his other son Charles to go to war when he states that the army would refine a part of him that needs to be held back. While also adding that he loves Adam more, which indicates favoritism for Adam. Showing that Cyrus' intentions come from a good place in his heart but then at the same time is coming out in a not so nice way.

Then a little further on during Cyrus' birthday both his sons present him with a gift. Charles gave a German knife and Adam presented him with a stray puppy. Due to Adam's present Charles went from being happy to being jealous, which resulted in him beating Adam then leaving him in a ditch in the side of the road. Leading to Cyrus then going out in search of Adam and Charles thinking he doesn't love him.

Later on in chapter 8 we are introduced to Cathy who is described as an innocent childlike schoolgirl, but she's manipulative, selfish and uses her sexuality to hurt those around her. She does this by luring boys with her body which soon leads to her mother finding her tied up in the barn with her skirt pulled up, and later her Latin teacher committing suicide after their involvement with each other. Cathy is the type of girl that doesn't like having

her parents in her business so she decides to run away to Boston and she fails. Soon leading to her stealing money from her father's safe, setting fire to the house, pouring chicken blood on the floor and locking the front door from the outside. Resulting in her parents dying and the neighbors thinking that she was murdered. Soon leading her to encounter Adam and Charles in Connecticut.

Later on Adam and Cathy get married and have twins together and in chapter 17 she tells him she's leaving and doesn't care what he does with the infants. Making him then lock her in the room and when he later opens it she shoots him in the shoulder leading to him falling on the floor and lying helplessly. Cathy soon gets involved in prostitution as a way of making money for herself.

Leading to her forming a bond with her "pimp" named Faye and in chapter 21 leads to her poisoning Faye with drugs, and once Faye is dead pretending to be in grief. But in chapter 45 this action soon comes back to her when a prostitute runs away knowing that Cathy used bottles of poison to kill Faye, and so she wanted to kill Ethel before the secret came out. Then later on towards the end of the book Cathy realizes that she can't manipulate people into doing what she wanted anymore, and so at the end of it all after realizing her whole life was committed to evil she escapes it all by overdosing on the only drug available which is morphine.

Throughout this entire novel different characters have been introduced and each one has struggled between good and evil. But for some reason always leaned toward evil more than good. There is no answer within the novel that

explains why this is. Maybe it's caused by society or families or maybe just what the the individual their self believes is right.