The Symbiotic relationship between Mother and daughter in The Piano Teacher by Elfriede Jelinek

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the misery of women in the hand of her mother without getting liberty to live at home. Mother is able to control everything which enters and leaves to her child’s body so that she could enjoy the earning of her daughter till her death. Mother fulfills her dreams by her daughter so she monitors her in each and every minute in her life. Erika is irritated with the behavior of her mother but also sustains everything for her mother. Erika is ready to sacrifice her life to her mother because she knows that she is unfit to live in the family life. Mother dominates her in every event which she faces in her life by pointing with her attitude and appearance is not good to lead a family life with the new partner. Erika controls her emotions and feelings always because she lacks privacy in outside world especially at home not even a single friend for sharing her problems so she puts all her problems into her heart and smiles outside like an ordinary woman. A mother's love is like nothing else in the world's mother's role is to love her children with all her heart without expecting from her daughter. It is also the role of every mom to understand her daughter and let her child in their own. Trust is the most essential part to any good relationship, particularly those between mothers and daughters. Trust can often be a big issue during the time of daughter’s adolescence, but as daughters mature, mother should trust their child equally as they love .Boundaries are also necessary once a daughter leaves the home but she should have some limitations too, whether or not she calls before she arrives. Healthy mother daughter relationships take into consideration the way they speak to one another. It is important that both must be respectful, even when they disagree. Best mother should have some qualities they are patience, strength, empathy, humility, understanding, forgiveness, faithfulness and love. A mother should provide to her daughter, motional support, help us heal, sacrifice for their children and she is the model of her daughter how to be a functional adult. Relationship between mothers and daughters must build on trust, love, and respect. When you this happens between mother and daughter can truly become best friends so that daughter could achieve in their life.

Keywords; control, frustration, trust, freedom, suspect, slave, respect etc…

A mother is the person who can take the place of all others but whose place no one else can take. Because mothers occupy such a critical role to their children's physical and emotional growth. Mother and daughter relationships are complex and diverse. Mostly, mothers and daughters are best friends but this paper explores the Insalubrious relationship between mother and daughter. Erika is a woman who is in her late thirties. Her mother is very old enough to be her grandmother. The baby was born after long years nearly 12. so she cares her daughter much in order to secure her future because mother is old and she could not live alone without the help of anyone so she sticks her daughter tightly for her own life but Erika is trying to escape from the hand of her mother but she fails to do. Her father has promptly left, passing the torch to his daughter. Erika entered to the world meanwhile her father passes so Erika has to take over the family responsibilities on her shoulders. Mother wants Erika to be a single without any relationship with men. If she falls in love with anyone then she may leave her so she plays this game cunningly for her life. she monitors her daughter in every minutes from home to till she comes back from office which was irritated by Erika so she bursts her frustration every time to her mother.
Now she bursts into the apartment like a swarm of autumn leaves, hoping to get to her room without being seen. But her mother looms before her, confronts her. She puts Erika against the wall, under interrogation-inquisitor and executioner in one, unanimously recognized as Mother by the State and by the Family. She investigates: Why has Erika come home so late? Erika dismissed her last student three hours ago, after heaping him with scorn. You must think I won't find out where you've been, Erika. A 4 ELFIUEDE JELINEK child should own up to her mother without being asked. But Mother never believes her because Erika tends to lie. Mother is waiting. She starts counting to three.

Erika’s mother was both mother and father to her. Erika’s mother’s association with the symbol of the Phallus occurs therefore, not only because of her role as a symbol of gratification, but also perhaps because she assumed the role of both mother and father in their relationship. At no point in the relationship between Erika and her mother is one able to detect a moment of castration by Erika, from her mother’s (controlling) influence. One should not control the others emotions but here Mother controls her own daughter emotional feeling by manipulating her ambition.

Mother makes a cutting remark: If SHE were left to her own devices, SHE would show more enthusiasm for some young man than for her piano-playing. The piano has to be tuned every year, for this raw Alpine climate quickly thwarts the finest tuning. The piano tuner arrives on the train from Vienna. He pants his way up the mountain, where some lunatics claim they’ve got a grand piano, three thousand feet above sea level! The tuner prophesizes that this instrument can be worked for another year or two; by then, rust and rot and mildew will have gobbled it up in unison. Mother makes sure the piano is kept properly tuned; and she also keeps twisting her daughter’s vertebrae, unconcerned about the child's mood, worrying solely about her own influence on this stubborn, easily deformable, living instrument.

Mother has a lot of ambition in her life which wants to fulfill through her daughter. she wants to move to the new apartment so she asks Erika to save money by stopping the wishes of Erika on dresses. She always scolds her daughter for purchasing things even dress.

Mother rails against the purchase. The dress, pierced by a hook, was so seductive at the shop, so soft and colorful. Now it lies there, a droopy rag, pierced by Mother's glare. The money was earmarked for their savings account. Now it's been spent prematurely. The dress could have been visible at any time as an entry in the bank book-if you didn't mind going to the linen closet, where the bank book peeks out from behind a pile of sheets. But today, the bank book went on an outing, a sum was withdrawn, and the result can now be seen. Erika should put this dress on whenever they wonder where the nice money went. Mother screams: You've squandered your future! We could have had a new apartment someday, but you couldn't wait. All you've got now is a rag, and it'll soon be out of fashion. Mother wants everything "someday." She wants nothing right now-except the child. And she always wants to know where she can reach the child in an emergency, in case Mama is about to have a heart attack. Mother wants to save now in order to enjoy someday. And then Erika goes and buys a dress, of all things! Something more fleeting than a dab of mayonnaise on a sardine sandwich. This dress will soon be totally out of fashion-not even next year, but next month. Money never goes out of fashion.

The symbiotic relationship between Erika and her mother is disturbed, as Erika does not wholly identify with her mother. Their relationship is akin perhaps to slavery since Erika is unable to act on her own wishes. Mother wants to make use of her daughter's life for her wish.

Mother demands only a tiny tribute: Erika's life. Mother wants to utilize the child's life herself.
Mother now explains why a pretty girl never has to get gussied up. Erika confirms it. She has so many things hanging in her closet. But why bother? She never wears any of them. Her clothes hang there uselessly, decorating the closet. Mother can't always prevent Erika from buying something, but she can dictate what Erika puts on. Mother is an absolute ruler. She decides what Erika will wear outside the house. You are not going out in that getup, Mother dictates, fearing what will happen if Erika enters strange homes with strange men in them. Erika has resolved never to wear her clothes. It is a mother's duty to help a child make up her mind and to prevent wrong decisions. (PT 9)

The original maternal function has been mutated in such a way, that she, as the mother, still controls every aspect of her (adult) daughter's life. It is she, who stays at home and prepares their meals, and takes care of the maintenance of the apartment while Erika is away at work, and it she who controls what Erika wears. Mother could not always prevent Erika from buying something, but she can dictate what Erika puts on. Mother is now taken the role of invidulator/supervisor for her daughter life.

In the dark underpass of the elevated line, Klemmer makes a daredevil attempt, he briefly grabs at the professor's hand. Give me your hand, Erika. This hand can play the piano so marvelously. Now the hand coldly slips through his net and is gone. A puff of air arose, and then the air fell still again. Erika acts as if she hasn't noticed the attempt. First misfire. The hand got up its nerve only because Erika's mother was walking side by side with them for a brief distance. Mother has become a sidecar in order to supervise the front line of the young couple. There are no autos in the street now, and the sidewalk is narrow at this point. Erika perceives a danger and gets her foolhardy mother back on the sidewalk immediately. (PT 76-77)

Mother is an absolute ruler. because she decides what Erika would wear outside the house. It is a mother’s duty to help a child make up her mind and to prevent wrong decisions. Erika and her mother exist in a fundamentally self-destructive relationship. Mother and daughter fight each other every day. One day fought each other for Erika who comes late from work. Mother soundlessly strikes out at her child, and the child strikes back - a brief reaction time. Erika's shoe soles give off an animal smell, indicating at least decay. Because of the neighbors, who have to get up early in the morning, the two women keep their wrestling silent. (PT 156)

Conventional mother-daughter roles have been replaced by roles resembling more of a subject-object relationship. The mother has ceased being a mother, and become a tyrant, a dictator - “an absolute ruler. Erika on the other hand has ceased being a daughter, and become an object – property - governed, controlled and owned by her mother the proprietor. As the proprietor, her mother keeps a vigilant eye on her property, striving at all costs, never to let it out of her sight. As the proprietor her mother believes that she has made an investment in her property, and the best way to ensure lasting returns on an investment, would be to ensure that her property does not stray out of her control; that is, that it remains immovable so mother does not want her daughter to be in any relationship with men and protects her from all.

The only item missing from her dismal wardrobe is, fortunately, a wedding gown. Mother does not wish to become a mother-in-law. She prefers remaining a normal mother; she is quite content with her status (PT 11).

Mother worries for every activity of Erika, for the first thing a proprietor learns, and painfully at that, is: Trust is fine, but control is better. Her greatest anxiety is to keep her property immovable, tie it down, so it won’t run away. That’s why they have in their home like; the TV set, which prefabricates, packages, and home-delivers lovely images, lovely actions.” so mother plays a trick to be her close so that she can get rid of her close friends and relatives from the side of Erika. So she praises her with Jesus.

Mother nags away at friends and relatives (of whom there are very few, for she broke with them long ago; she wanted to keep Erika safe from their influence). Mother tells all these people that Erika is a genius. She says she keeps realizing it more and more clearly. Erika is truly a keyboard genius, but she has not been properly discovered as yet. Otherwise, she would have long since soared over the mountains, like a comet.
Compared with that, the birth of Jesus was chickenshit. The neighbors agree. They enjoy listening when the girl practices. It's like the radio, only you don't need to have a set. All you have to do is open the windows and perhaps the doors, the music comes in, spreading like poison gas into every nook and cranny. People indignant about the noise stop Erika whenever they run into her, and they ask her for peace and quiet. (PT 25-26)

In terms of the relation to power and control, the condition demonstrates itself as an ideal means by which to ensure that the child remains under the control and influence of the mother, as an “unhealthy” child is less likely to rebel against his/her mother or caregiver Erika’s mother has sought to keep her child, her property, as far from the influences of the outside world as possible. so Erika’s life turns unhappy and sad by her mother.

Time passes, and we pass the time. They are enclosed together in a bell jar: Erika, her fine protective hulls, her mama. The jar can be lifted only if an outsider grabs the glass knob on top and pulls it up. Erika is an insect encased in amber, timeless, ageless. She has no history, and she doesn’t make a fuss. This insect has long since lost its ability to creep and crawl. Erika is baked inside the cake pan of eternity.(PT 14)

Erika has not been properly weaned from her mother, and as a result has been denied a life of independence. Instead, Erika’s life and indeed her world, revolve solely around her work – her music – and her apartment. Erika, to a large extent, does not deal with reality – with the reality, demands, expectations and threats of the outside world and of functional adulthood – but is instead fed and subjected to an alternative, un-threatening and aesthetically pleasing image of reality, a reality which is false and nothing more than a representation, packaged and delivered via the television set - the practice of watching the television is fundamentally passive in that one simply watches what other people doing. Even though sexual feelings crosses her but also she understands the reality of life and concentrates her work.

SHE only has to glance at this scene, and HER face instantly becomes disapproving. SHE considers her feelings unique when she looks at a tree; she sees a wonderful universe in a pinecone. Using a small mallet, she taps reality; she is a zealous dentist of language. The tops of simple spruces turn into lonesome, snowy peaks for her. The horizon is lacquered by a spectrum of colors.(PT 57)

Erika is safe and under no immediate threat, except from herself and her mother. These threats often manifest themselves physically, addressing a violent and abusive quality in the destructive nature of their relationship. When Erika comes home one night, her mother confronts her regarding the purchase of a dress – with funds reserved for the eventual purchase of a condominium. In light of the fact that there was no cessation of the original maternal function Erika was, and still remains simply her mother’s child. She longs for happiness in the hands of her mother as an ordinary woman. Women does not want big gifts to make her bliss, happiness are lying in silly matters. Erika is the woman who longs for the silly happiness.

In other homes, hot steaming water hisses into bathtubs. A girl mindlessly tries a new hairdo. Another girl picks the right blouse for the right skirt. There are new, sharply pointed shoes here, to be worn for the first time. A telephone rings. Someone picks up. Someone laughs. Someone says something.(PT 57-58)

As a child she has, according to the mother, done something wrong and needs to be punished. However, the punishment does not in any way resemble the ‘slap on the wrist’ one would expect a child to receive as punishment. Here, mother-child roles are replaced by the mother, the ultimate authority. Every women in the world who loves to fly like butterfly but Erika was not happy with her life like machine so she decided to suicide herself for several times by cutting her hands with blade.

Butterflies, half unconscious, circle the kerosene lamp. SHE is not attracted by a bright circle. SHE sits alone in her room, isolated from the crowd, which has forgotten her because she is such a lightweight. She jostles no one. From an intricate package, she carefully unwraps a razor blade. She always takes it everywhere. The blade smiles like a bridegroom at a bride. SHE gingerly tests the edge; it is razor-sharp. Then she presses the blade into the back of her hand several times, but not so deep as to injure tendons. It doesn't hurt at all. The metal slices her hand like butter. For an instant,. a slit gapes in the previously intact tissue; then the arduously tamed blood rushes out from behind the barrier. She makes a total of four cuts. That's enough, otherwise she'll
bleed to death. The razor blade is always wiped clean and then wrapped up again. Bright red blood trickles and trails from the wounds, sulllying everything as it flows. It oozes, warm, silent, and the sensation is not unpleasant. It's so liquid. It runs incessantly. It reddens everything. Four slits, oozing nonstop. On the floor and on the bedding, the four tiny brooks unite into a raging torrent. "Just keep following my tears, and the brook will take you in." A small puddle forms. And the blood keeps running. On and on. It runs and runs and runs and runs.(PT 43-44)

Mother monitors her daughter and threatens her daughter indirectly to avoid sexual interest so she would not allow her daughter to go out from the home unnecessarily. Mother is harsh, violent and both physically and verbally abusive her daughter so Erika accuses her mother that she keeps her in the house always

Erika then accuses her mother of always spitefully keeping her in the house, so she won't go somewhere and experience something. After all, she, the daughter, is long overdue for a new hairdo. But Mother, who doesn't dare do what she'd like to do, sticks to Erika infectiously, like a burr or a leech. Mother is sucking the marrow from Erika's bones. What Erika knows from her secret observations, Mama knows; and what Erika is in reality, a genius-why, no one knows that better than her mama, who knows the child inside and out. Seek and you shall find the repulsive things you secretly hope to find. .(PT 98-99)

Erika furiously yells at the superior authority. She grabs her mother’s dark-blond hair with its grey roots. Now, Erika yanks at the hair of her mother that she herself beautified. She pulls the hair of her mother furiously. Her mother weeps. When she stops pulling, her hands are filled with tufts of hair. Erika does not know what to do with the discolored dark-blond tufts. She goes into the kitchen and throws them into the garbage can. Erika teenage is over and she became complete old enough so she got anger at her mother and reveals through fighting with her.

After the trials and tribulations of the day, the daughter screams at her mother: She should finally let her lead her own life. She's old enough, the daughter yells. Mother's daily reply is that Mother knows best because she never stops being a mother. .(PT 104)

Erika’s mother has exercised supreme control over her life. Erika’s mother fears that by dressing in the way that she considers inappropriate, Erika runs the risk of attracting unwanted – unwanted for her, the mother – male attention. For this reason, although Erika’s wardrobe consists of many attractive and flattering items, Erika has never worn them, and her existing dress sense caters to her mother’s dictates. Even in this seemingly superficial area of her life, Erika is denied the expression of her femininity. The risk of attracting the attention of male individuals, by extension, means the risk of possibly losing Erika to this individual: Mother does not wish to become a mother-in-law. She prefers to remain as a normal mother; she is quite content with her status. So mother discourages her daughter that she is not suit for marriage.

She could never submit to a man after submitting to her mother for so many years. Mother is against Erika's marrying later on, because "my daughter could never fit in or submit anywhere." That's the way she is. She's no sapling anymore. She's unyielding. So she shouldn't marry. If neither spouse can yield, then a marriage is doomed. Just be yourself, Mother tells Erika. After all, Mother made Erika what she is. You still aren't married, Fraulein Erika? the dairy woman asks, and so does the butcher.(PT 13)

Erika’s mother seeks to control even her basic human right to reproduction, which could be regarded in a manner similar to castration and serving as a consequence, as the ultimate abuse. Erika was designed never to have a relationship. Erika’s penchant for purchasing clothes which eventually remain in her wardrobe, never to be worn, demonstrates that she is indeed aware, to some extent, of certain aspects of her femininity and the desire to not only project this femininity, but also to maintain her connection with it: For these clothes belong to her! Mother could take them away and sell them, but she cannot wear them herself. She tells to her daughter these dress do not fit her. But things are all Erika’s. She has no freedom to wear her dress as she wishes. Women career are chosen by someone else because women has no freedom still to choose her choice for future not even dress.
Mother chose a career for Erika when her daughter was still young. It had to be an agnostic profession, so she could squeeze money out of the arduously achieved perfection, while average types would stand around the anist, admiring her, applauding her. Now, Erika has at last been patted into perfection. Such a girl was not meant to do crude things, heavy manual labor, housework. She was destined, congenitally, for the subtleties of classical dance, song, music. A world-famous pianist—that is Mother's ideal. And to make sure the child finds her way through every entanglement, Mother sets up guideposts along the way, smacking Erika if she refuses to practice. Mother warns Erika about the envious horde that always tries to destroy other people's achievements—a horde made up almost entirely of men. Don't get distracted! Erika is never allowed to rest at any level she reaches, never allowed catching her breath and leaning on her ice pick. For she has to keep climbing. To the next level. Forest animals come too close for common; they want to turn Erika into an animal. Competitors try to lure Erika to a cliff, pretending they'd like to show her the view. But how easily one can plunge down! Mother graphically describes the chasm, so her child will watch out. The peak offers international fame, which is never reached by most climbers. A cold wind blows up there, the artist is lonesome and admits his solitude.

So long as Mother lives and continues planning Erika's future, there is only one possibility for the child: the top of the world. (PT 24)

Though her mother cannot control biology, or Erika's biological make-up, she can, however, distort it. Erika’s mother however, perceives and interprets her daughter’s actions not as natural, but rather as an indication of her vanity, and as a consequent flaw in her character. Erika is the woman who has all feelings like woman and she does not have any place to expose her emotion either in a friend or lover so she starts to watch others sex through her eyes and satisfy her pleasure of watching.

All Erika wants to do is watch. Here, in this booth, she becomes nothing. Nothing fits into Erika, but she, she fits exactly into this cell. Erika is a compact tool in human form. Nature seems to have left no apertures in her. Erika feels solid wood in the place where the carpenter made a hole in any genuine female. Erika's wood is spongy, decaying. Lonesome wood in the timber forest, and the rot is spreading. Still, Erika struts around like a queen. Inside, she is decaying, but she glares discouragingly at the Turks. (PT 51)

Erika’s vanity is a major issue for her mother, driving thorns into her flesh. Erika’s vanity is the only drawback for Erika should learn to do without. Better now than later. In old age, which is just around the corner, vanity is a heavy load to bear. An old age is enough of a burden as it is. The only thing that Erika should give up is her vanity, because which makes them to separate. Mother does not want to let her daughter from her side so she sticks with her always so Erika feels that has no privacy in her home.

However, they will have a common living room to meet in. If they wish. But of course they do, because they belong together. Even here, in this dump, which is slowly falling to pieces, Erika already has her own realm, her own roost, which she rules and is ruled in. It is only a provisional realm; Mother can walk in at any time. There is no lock on Erika’s door. A child has no secrets from her mother. (PT 5)

Erika seeks to prevent those obstacles from achieving success. She too, was once a promising pianist with aspirations of becoming an equally promising concert pianist. Erika, however, was unable to achieve this ambition and consequently became a teacher at the Vienna Conservatory. so she works hard for a job and controls her emotions for her career. Though she is a failure woman in life but not carrier.

Erika sharpens her face arrogantly. Her nose, her mouth—everything becomes an arrow pointing in one direction; it plows through the area as if to say: Keep moving. A pack of teenagers makes a derogatory comment about Erika, the lady. They don't realize they are dealing with a professor, and they show no respect. (PT 45)

Erika’s alienation from her sexuality could be traced directly back to the control and influence of her mother as a result of (negative) conditioning. She shows her frustration on her own body by hurting it because she does not have a platform to show her frustration to anyone or anybody so she shows on herself.
SHE would never get into a situation in which she might appear weak, much less inferior. That is why she stays where she is. She only goes through the familiar stages of learning and obeying. She never looks for new areas. The gears squeal in the press that squeezes the blood out from under her fingernails. Learning requires her to be sensible: No pain, no gain, she's told. Her mother demands obedience. If you take a risk, you perish. That advice comes from Mother too. When SHE's home alone, she cuts herself, slicing off her nose to spite other people's faces. She always waits and waits for the moment when she can cut herself unobserved. No sooner does the sound of the closing door die down than she takes out her little talisman, the paternal all-purpose razor. SHE peels the blade out of its Sunday coat of five layers of virginal plastic. She is very skilled in the use of blades; after all, she has to shave her father, shave that soft paternal cheek under the completely empty paternal brow, which is now undimmed by any thought, unwrinkled by any will. This blade is destined for HER flesh. This thin, elegant foil of bluish steel, pliable, elastic. SHE sits down in front of the magnifying side of the shaving mirror; spreading her legs, she makes a cut, magnifying the aperture that is the doorway into her body. She knows from experience that such a razor cut doesn't hurt, for her arms, hands, and legs have often served as guinea pigs. Her hobby is cutting her own body. (PT 85-86)

Erika dreams are not fulfilled in her life and she ever live happily in the hands of her mother. A mother should be a good friend of her daughter and she has to give some space and privacy when the daughter attends the adulthood. If she ignores that then their child future will be spoil as the character like “Erika”.

Erika is geared to watching people who work hard because they want results. In this respect, the normally large difference between music and sexual pleasure is quite tiny. Erika is less interested in seeing nature. She never goes to the forest area, where other artists are renovating farmhouses. She never climbs mountains. She never dives into lakes. She never lies on beaches. She never whizzes over snow. The man greedily hoards orgasms until finally, bathed in sweat; he remains lying where he first started out. (PT 106)

A mother's love is like nothing else in the world’s mother's role is to love her children with all her heart without expecting from her daughter. It is also the role of every mother to understand her daughter and let her child in their own way when they attend their adulthood. Trust is the essential thing to any good relationship, particularly those between mothers and daughters. Trust can often be a big issue during the daughter’s adolescence, but as daughters mature, mother should trust their child equally as they love. Boundaries are also necessary once a daughter leaves the home but she should have some limitations too, whether or not she calls before she arrives. Healthy mother daughter relationships take into consideration the way they speak to one another. It is important that both parties show respect, even when they disagree. Best mother should have some qualities they are patience, strength, empathy, humility, understanding, forgiveness, faithfulness and love. A mother should provide to her daughter; emotional support, help us heal, sacrifice for their children and she is the model of her daughter that how to be a functional adult. mother should treat her daughter as they given rights as son. Relationship between mothers and daughters must built on trust, love, and respect. When this happens between mother and daughter can truly become best friends. so that daughter could achieve in their life.

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