

Desire Under the Elms=Character List=

Ephraim Cabot=

The patriarch of the Cabot family who worked the farm and made it successful, Ephraim has been married three times. His first wife bore him Simeon and Peter but died, and his second wife bore him Eben and also died. He brings home Abbie, his new wife, after a journey he undertakes ostensibly for religious purposes. Ephraim is seventy-six years old at the beginning of the play, but is still strong in body. He has poor eyesight, though, and does not notice what is happening around him. His mind is going a bit, and he craves the warmth of the barn rather than the house. He complains of being lonesome and the fact that no one really knows him.

Eben Cabot=

A handsome but angry and grim young man, Eben desires nothing else than the farmland that his beloved Maw worked so hard and died upon. He pays off his half brothers but is threatened by his father's new wife Abbie. They fall in love and have a son, but he comes to think she tricked him and wants the land for himself. After she kills their son as an act of love, Eben cannot deny his passion for her anymore and proclaims he will go to prison with her or for her.

Abbie Putnam=

A sensual and passionate woman of thirty-five, Abbie marries Cabot for his land and falls in love with Eben. She bears his son and is happy until Eben comes to think she was tricking him for the land. In a crazed act of love for Eben, she smothers their son. She tells Cabot how much she hates him just as Eben returns and proclaims his love for her too. She is going to prison at the end of the play.

Simeon=

One of Eben's half-brothers and son to Cabot and his first wife, Simeon is a middle-aged, hard, and squat man. He and Peter dream of California's gold fields, and accept Eben's buyout of their share of the farm so they can go seek their fortune. They are not heard from again.

Peter=

One of Eben's half-brothers and son to Cabot and his first wife, Peter is a middle-aged, hard, and squat man. He and Peter dream of California's gold fields, and accept Eben's buyout of their share of the farm so they can go seek their fortune. They are not heard from again.

Maw=

While never seen onstage because she is dead by the time of the play's action, Maw is an important character in the play nonetheless. Her presence is felt in the house, particularly

the parlor, until Eben and Abbie claim their love is vengeance for her death-by-overworking at Cabot's hands, and her presence leaves.