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Masculine Crisis in Ian McEwan's *Enduring Love*

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ABSTRACT

Masculine crisis has always been with men and presented in masculine studies, but it becomes popular in the post modern era after crucial events such as feminism, the world wars, economical problems, etc. The issue of masculinity and masculine crisis exists in works of Ian McEwan and this study applies masculine crisis on his *Enduring Love* (1994). Most of McEwan's characters are men who seek to find their places in post modern era. Thus this paper focuses on masculine crisis which emerges in Joe Rose, the male protagonist of this novel, when the shattering moments in the beginning of the novel threaten his power and authority which is very important in masculinity of men. There is another factor (homophobia) in the novel that leads him toward masculine crisis as well. All through the novel the male character tries to regain his lost authority and power. At the end of the novel, he somehow overcomes masculine crisis. This paper uses Butler's theory of gender and other critics of masculine studies.

1. INTRODUCTION

Judith Butler in her *Gender Trouble* separates gender and sex. Sex is identification as male or female, the biological entity of a person which a person is born, but gender is a person's behavior which is independent of anatomy. It is socially, culturally, historically constructed. Gender is something attained rather than something inborn or innate. She says that, "gender is neither the causal result of sex nor as seemingly fixed as sex. The unity of the subject is thus already potentially contested by the distinction that permits of gender as a multiple interpretation of sex" (2006, p. 8). In addition Butler mentions gender as the notion of performativity:

In this sense, *gender* is not a noun, but neither is it a set of free-floating attributes, for we have seen that the substantive effect of gender is performatively produced and compelled by the regulatory practices of gender coherence. Hence, within the inherited discourse of the metaphysics of substance, gender proves to be performative—that is, constituting the identity it is purported to be. In this sense, gender is always a doing, though not a doing by a subject who might be said to preexist the deed. (2006, p. 34)

She also explains that, "Genders can be neither true nor false, neither real nor apparent, neither original nor derived. As credible bearers of those attributes, however, genders can also be rendered thoroughly and radically incredible" (2006, p. 193).

There is an inclination that gender subjects and problems are related to women because the majority of discussions have always been on women and how they have been suppressed all through history and how they have tried to change and rebuild their position in society, family, culture, and even politics. So looking for masculine gender may seem odd at first because it seems that masculinity has an obvious meaning and men are the ones who are in power. Todd W. Reeser in his *Masculinities in Theory* states:

Masculinity seems like an obvious thing, something we can and do take for granted. We know what it is when we see it: it is commonsensical, produced by testosterone or by nature. We can easily ascribe a series of

characteristics to masculinity: "muscular," "strong," "hard," "brave," and "in control" are words that come to mind. We know that it is the opposite of femininity. We can also make a list of adjectives that do not describe masculinity, such as "weak," "soft and "emotional". (2010, p. 1)

Women and feminists are the ones who talked about gender damaged and inequalities all over the centuries as a weaker gender, but recently having masculine gender can be harmful as well for men; it is not really a promotion to have a masculine identity. Until men suppressed women, dominated them, and there existed a clear difference between two sexes men enjoyed their power, but from the time women started to want their rights and independencies, men's masculinity as a sole ruler in family and society vanished. Men's masculinity went under crisis. As a matter of fact, gender contains not only femininity but also masculinity within it. Masculinity as a gender identity is not a biological and inborn, but a constructed one, so it is not fixed. Michael Kimmel and Aronson in *Men and Masculinities* say that, "Masculinity refers to the social roles and behaviors. It emphasizes gender not biological sex. ... Although we experience gender to be an internal facet of identity, the concept of masculinity is produced within the institutions of society and through our daily interactions." (2003, p. 503). Gender studies can discuss men and their troubles as well as women; this paper focuses on masculinity and its crisis because when masculinity becomes troublesome, the masculine crisis is on its way to capture men. Horrocks in his *Masculine Crisis* states that, "Masculinity is a crisis for men today - that the masculine gender is a precarious and dangerous achievement and is highly damaging to men. ... They feel abused, unrecognized by modern society. While manhood offers compensations and prizes, it can also bring with it emotional autism, emptiness and despair" (1994, p. 1).

When men are not powerful as they used to be, their masculinities go under threat. Men are in fear and anxiety of losing their masculinities; the things that put men in fear of losing their masculinity lead them toward masculine crisis. "Men's anxieties about challenges to or loss of their manhood have been variably characterized as 'crises' or 'unease' in which men must deal with the 'problem' and 'contradictions' that may 'imperil' their manliness" (qtd. in Cornwall and Lindisfarne 1994, p. 2). Masculine crisis heightened toward the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of twenty first century. There are some turning points in masculine history. George L. Mosse in his *The Image of Man* writes that there were certain turning points in the history which affect on men although not fundamentally: such as the fin de siècle, when women began to demand their rights and did not accept their traditional places anymore. The movement for women's right threatened masculine gender and led toward the construction of modern masculinity. (1996, p. 78) A new way of life, technology, economy, etc are all the factors that has influenced masculinity. In addition to these factors, homosexuals wanted equal right as well which were problematic for masculine men because being a homosexual gave an effeminate face to men; therefore, they could be labeled as an outsider which is not accepted for men who wanted to be masculine. (Mosse 1996, p. 83) The events and situation at the fin de siècle led to the crisis of masculinity. "The masculine ideal was in crisis at the fin de siècle even when its basic contours remained intact" (Mosse 1996, p. 98). The feminist movement and homosexuality were the anxiety of males even after the world wars. These factors caused crisis in masculinity, but crisis and masculine crisis are not just bound to these elements. "Crisis is used extensively to refer to a wide range of different things. Even within the tighter parameters of discussions about masculinity the term is polymorphous" (Godfrey 2010, p. 11). The World Wars also had a great role in changing the way masculinity used to be. Men went to war and women remained and had to cope with the problems. Beynon declares that. "The two world wars transformed the lives of both men and women" (2002, p. 13). Women in the absence of men entered into the industrial world; men returned from the war and wanted their places back and searched for jobs. Men were both traumatized by the war and they also could not find a job because of economical crisis. The year 1929 was a Great Depression for the world of work, "throughout the bleak 1930s millions of men were unemployed" (Beynon 2002, p. 14). So men could not fulfill their role as a breadwinner for their families any longer. After World War II (1939-1945), people looked for a way to come out of their miseries because of the poor economy. These economical poverty and changes in the role of societies led men toward crisis. Feminist movements after the wars,

deeply affected men and their position as masculine ones. Connell states that, the feminist wave of the 1970s changed the gender norms and men were introduced as gendered beings like women.

Ian McEwan in his first works uses stereotypes for his characters, for example the father of the family in *The Cement Garden* (1978) is a dominant and harsh person whereas the mother is submissive and soft. But the male characters of his later fictions look for the position of having supremacy over the society while women are powerful. This shows that gender issue penetrate in his works when he shows the traditional use of masculinity and femininity in his works explicitly or implicitly. This paper utilizes one of his later novels, *Enduring Love* (1997), to explore how the male protagonist's masculinity goes under crisis and what the end result of this crisis is within the parameters of gender criticism and masculine studies.

The path is already ready for masculine crisis in *Enduring Love* because it is after the world wars and the society, politics, ruling, education, etc are not just belong to men. Hence, men cannot prove their masculinity with being the only ones who act in society; women also have positions in society. Clarissa, Joe Rose's lover, is a scholar of Romantic literature and Keats expert who has a good condition in society which is a danger for the masculinity of Joe Rose. "McEwan's hero could be diagnosed as suffering from an onslaught of feminization, which not only emasculates him but moreover threatens to dissolve the very foundations of the self" (Lea and Schoene 2003, p. 115). The novel begins with a falling balloon which is the turning point in Joe Rose's masculinity and continues with the danger of homosexuality for him. This paper indicates the masculine crisis on the male protagonist and at the same time the narrator of the novel, Joe Rose. Crisis is present everywhere in masculine studies and in this paper masculine crisis comes along with the concepts of power and homophobia.

2. THE ROLE OF POWER IN MASCULINE CRISIS

The important reason that pushes men toward masculine crisis is the fear of becoming emasculated. Webster's gives two definitions of the word (emasculatation): "to castrate; and to deprive of masculine strength or vigor" (qtd. in Flood et al. 2007, p. 171). The fear of the deprivation of power exists through the novel with the protagonist, Joe Rose after the initial event. This lack of power has lots of dimensions which comes to a unique point, losing one's masculinity because masculinity considers being equal with power. "Other expressions for losing masculine strength include weakening of masculinity, effeminate and being unmanly. Emasculation is normally used as a negative characterization of other men for not being masculine enough ... if they are stripped of their powers and authority. In both cases, masculinity is equated with power" (Flood et al. 2007, p. 171).

Masculine critics such as Reeser, Beynon, Connell, etc all agree in the field that lack of power and authority pushes men toward crisis. Therefore, power is an important factor in masculinity. "Power is the crucial factor in masculinity and resistance ensures that many sites are ones of ideological struggle for contested senses of masculinity" (Beynon 2002, p. 16). The offspring of this powerlessness comes from so many things such as feminist movement, homosexuality, industrial revolution, world wars, and so on which deprive masculine power. Clive Bloom thinks industrialization and feminist power have emasculated the self-confident male. Men are in crisis from then on since they are not the only ones who rule the world and women. Men of late nineteenth, twentieth century, and also twentieth first century are in crisis as well, due to the fact that they are bewildered in this new world, wondering what is the meaning of man?, how should they treat?, what happened to the traditional man?, where is the stereotypes of masculinity?, where is their absolute power? As men become perplexed about all of these, masculinity goes under the crisis. "That men are today confused about what it means to be a 'real man'- that masculinity is in crisis- has become a cultural commonplace staring down at us from every magazine rack and television talk show in the country" (Kimmel, *History* 2005, p. 125).

The novel starts with a falling balloon and Joe Rose says that "The beginning is simple to mark" (1997, p. 1). The balloon accident is just a starting point of masculine crisis and there exists something more deep. As McEwan himself in an interview says, "the story of the balloon was not

the genesis of the book, but a device to bring disparate people together to explore issues he had been researching” (qtd. in Childs 2007, p. 4). Also the balloon accident is not the aim of this novel, but it is the starting moment of that aim. “The novel begins with the major character’s narration of a balloon incident, which has served as the starting point for the fragmentation and dispersion of the protagonist, Joe, whom looking back at the incident, is now trying to put the fragments together to reconstruct his shattered identity” (Ramin and Marandi 2012, p. 78). Again Joe talks about the accident as the beginning and at the same time the end, it is a starting for all the problems of Joe and the end of his true maleness. In Morrison’s word, “the novel opens up with symbolic emasculation of its protagonist, his heroic impulses immediately revealed as banal and redundant in a bungled attempt to save a child from a ballooning accident” (qtd. in Miša 2010, p. 18).

Joe in this accident runs toward the falling balloon with four other men in order to help a boy trapped in the balloon’s basket. Here Joe instead of acting as a hero and saving the boy, he lets go of the rope after a gusty wind and causes the death of one of those men, John Logan. He loses his power as a hero and as a matter of fact his masculinity ends up in crisis. Joe talks about their identity which bends into new forms after the incident. (1997, p. 3) “In his account, all the would-be rescuers, faced with a crisis” (Greenberg 2007, p. 101). His identity as a masculine man after the trauma through his lack of power and courage goes under threat. Middleton articulates that, “traumatic experience poses an existential threat to the construction of a secure and stable masculine self” (qtd. in Lea and Schoene 2003, p. 111). Joe wants to see the events differently to be able to create new version of events, new ending and acting as a hero and savior. “the hero glorifies the male body as a phallic weapon. He thus articulates a purified masculine identity achieved through courageous acceptance of risk” (Kimmel and Anderson 2003, p. 380). Joe narrates and says that he was the second one who caught the rope; that if he was the leader, the trauma would not happened. He continuously tries to show himself as a masculine man, but unfortunately the tragedy has occurred and there is no time for that anymore. (1997, p. 11) He says, “let me freeze the frame – there’s a security in stillness” (1997, p. 12). He needs to stay in that point of time to be secure away from the danger causes his masculine crisis. He continuously justifies himself of what happened to John Logan by asserting that he was not the first one who left the rope. It is not only the accident itself but the aftermath of which is important. Joe wants to slow down and be secure in the place where he was before the accident far from the crisis. After the accident he acts as a leader. He tries to prove himself as a strong man when he claims that he was the first person who was able to talk or call emergency operator.

His relationship with Clarissa falls apart. Joe begins to treat Clarissa as a stereotypical woman and he, as an unemotional man, explains everything with logic. He is a scientific person who wants to alter his fate, but Clarissa is a soft and sensitive woman who wants to lie quietly in soapy hot water, and she is so easy to wound. He uses clichéd words for men and women. (1997, p. 84) Childs says that, “His response to this is arguably to turn to clichés of masculine behavior, especially those drawn from popular culture. In particular, the paradigm of masculinity the book engages is that of the man of action who saves or destroys, rescues or fights” (2007, p. 66). His behavior with Clarissa especially after the appearance of Jed Parry as a homosexual man, which is going to be discussed in this study, totally changes. Clarissa claims that, “Nothing like that had ever happened between us” (1997, p. 217).

While Joe plays a role of a hero, in his way to reach to the corpse, the feeling of mania catches him so that he wants to turn back and call for Clarissa but he cannot because the people were watching him and he is mostly afraid of being humiliated. (1997, p. 21) Because men are most afraid of being humiliated. “In one survey, women and men were asked what they were most afraid of. Women responded that they were most afraid of being raped and murdered. Men responded that they were most afraid of being laughed at” (Kimmel, *The Gender* 2005, p. 37). He goes toward Logan’s corpse just to show off and persuade others that he is a real man, but he himself is aware of his masculine crisis. Other men watch Joe while he goes toward the corpse, so he cannot turn back and continues despite his fear. “We are under the constant careful scrutiny of other men. Other men watch us, rank us, gram our acceptance into the realm of manhood. Manhood is demonstrated for

other men's approval. It is other men who evaluate the performance" (Kimmel, 1994, p. 63). He is anxious and frightened, but he tries to do something, to act, to make himself released. He wants to excrete the thoughts and feelings of being emasculated by somehow urinating against a tree trunk near the corpse of Logan and later by the unreliable urge to crap. Joe tries to do anything in order to overcome his masculine crisis.

3. HOMOPHOBIA IN MASCULINE CRISIS

Joe acts as a leader, a superhero and captures the control of the situation after the balloon accident, but Jed Parry, who falls in love with Joe, comes to the stage and breaks all that Joe has built. Joe is actually aware of Parry as a threat. Green in an essay called *"Up There with Black Holes and Darwin, Almost Bigger than Dinosaurs": The Mind and McEwan's Enduring Love* says, "He becomes aware of Jed Parry watching him. Parry, like the balloon, represents environmental randomness and will prove a threat to Joe's survival: he will become an intrusive object of Joe's consciousness" (2001, p. 447). Even before Jed opens his mouth to say anything, Joe feels that any moment Jed could touch him. (1997, p. 26) Jed becomes a bigger threat for Joe's masculinity as a homosexual man. "Patriarchal culture has a simple interpretation of gay men: they lack masculinity" (Connell 2005, p. 143). Jed Parry's phone call after the accident, after the danger for being emasculated, becomes a double threat for Joe's masculine identity. Feeling of becoming an object of affection for another man endangers his masculinity which is already threatened by the balloon accident. Joe is afraid of being loved by a man and being called a homosexual. "The most important case in contemporary European/ American society is the dominance of heterosexual men and the subordination of homosexual men. This is much more than a cultural stigmatization of homosexuality or gay identity. Gay men are subordinated to straight men by an array of quite material practices" (Connell 2005, p. 78).

This fear from the affection of the same sex is homophobia. "Homophobia is the fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against homosexuality or homosexuals. It is the hatred, hostility, or disapproval of homosexual people" (Ottosn 2009, p. 4). Homophobia was coined by George Weinberg in mid-1960s for somehow a therapeutic aims, "Weinberg used it to refer to an irrational fear of homosexuality, particularly the dread of being in close quarters with homosexuals" (Mason 2002, p. 6). Wienberg says that, "I would never consider a patient healthy unless he had overcome his prejudice against homosexuality" (qtd. in Bullough 2008, p. 351). Weinberg was a psychotherapist who worked on the people who were so phobic about homosexuals and saw them as sick ones. "In 1967, he began calling them homophobes, labeling their behavior homophobic" (Bullough 2008, p. 353). Nichols says that, Weinberg sympathizes with homosexuals who confessed that they live so alone, so hopeless, feeling so unwanted. (Bullough 2008, p. 354) They, as male heterosexuals, expel them from male community, so there exists fear of being an exile, and being humiliated by other men.

Connell and Anderson agree that, "boys and men are compelled to construct their masculinity in opposition to femininity and homosexuality. In this zeitgeist, homophobia is the most important tool for policing masculinities" (qtd. in McCormack and Anderson 2013, p. 5). Being loved by a man is some kind of feminization and emasculation of a man and traditional masculinity sees the penetrated man as weak. "The extreme form of this [male] fear of "feminization" is the homophobic's paranoia about homosexual rape . . . a fear of violation of the masculine body that, in a heterosexual economy, sees itself as inviolable, as hard and sealed off rather than soft or opened, as the penetrator rather than the penetrable" (Byers 1995, p. 15). Joe is the one who uses the word sex in the first place, "You keep using the word love. Are we talking about sex? Is that what you want?" (1997, p. 66) Joe as a masculine man is afraid of having sex with another man and losing his position as a penetrator. Joe does not want to be even touched by Jed. (1997, p. 129) "The fear of homosexuality that seems intrinsic to normative masculinity has another explanation - that passive anal intercourse is seen as disturbingly feminizing" (MacKinnon 2003, p. 7). In the aftermath of this threat, Joe starts treating Jed badly in a defeating and overestimating manner. "Moreover, those men who were found to hold more negative attitudes toward homosexuality exaggerated their reactions

to the presence of a homosexually-labeled man” (Franklin 1984, p. 167). He thinks about being two times emasculated by being considered as a homosexual, thus he has an acute and mad reaction toward Jed Parry as a source of this feeling. “Empirical research more strongly indicates that anger and disgust are central to heterosexuals’ negative emotional responses to homosexuality” (Herek 2004, p 10). Joe does not want to be called an inadequate male by others, even if he knows that he is not a gay man, but he is afraid of being named one. “It may be fear of being labeled homosexual rather than fear of homosexuals per se” (qtd. in Herek 2004, p. 10). Actually, Joe is obsessed with Jed more than Jed is obsess with him because Jed’s existence is the biggest threat for his masculinity and he must get rid of Jed to be a masculine man again.

Clarissa tells Joe not to take Jed seriously because he is not the problem. But Joe treats him like he is confused and agitated. Clarissa says, “He’s not the cause of your agitation, he’s a symptom” (1997, p. 84) and “You were so intense about him as soon as you met him. It’s like you invented him” (1997, p. 86). Jed as a homosexual man is a symptom to reveal Joe’s masculine crisis, so Jed is a threat for his maleness and this is the reason for Joe’s unusual and disturbed treatment. Clarissa is surprised of Joe’s disturbed reaction toward Parry which is like a joke for her. Clarissa knows that the problem is deeper than Parry and Logan, something that Joe is afraid to talk about. She says that, “You’re so alone in all this, even when you speak to me about it. I feel you’re shutting me out. There’s something you’re not telling me. You’re not speaking from the heart” (1997, p. 103). Clarissa blames Joe about their broken relation that he is the one who brought Jed into their lives by making him big in his mind. Clarissa says Joe is the one who starts this. “Are you really saying this had nothing to do with Parry? That same evening you stormed out of the flat, slamming the door on me. ... You became more and more agitated and obsessed” (1997, p. 217).

Homophobia comes from the norms of gender which is approved by society. Weinberg and other early popularizers of homophobia also believe that, “homophobia derived from society’s construction of gender” (qtd. in Herek 2004, p. 10). A masculine man should have power and not be humiliated by anyone especially by a woman. When Joe finally talks about Jed with Clarissa, she says, “You didn’t tell me. You were embarrassed?” (1997, p. 56) and again she says, “A secret gay love affair with a Jesus freak! I can’t wait to tell your science friends” (1997, p. 57). Being gay is humiliated even by Clarissa as a woman, so it becomes a strong source of fear for Joe who is in danger of losing his masculinity.

Joe finally chooses a word for his feeling of emasculation that is apprehension which has an ambiguous meaning, both fear and understanding. He knows the situation of his masculinity and the feeling of homophobia inside himself. He is scared of the future because he has an apprehension of his disposition and he does not want it to be continued in future, so he insists on controlling the future and doing anything to get rid of the feeling of emasculation. The fear is all along with him, he says that, he was afraid of his fear, the things this fear could have done to him, and what it could make him do. (1997, p. 44) “Our fear is the fear of humiliation. We are ashamed to be afraid” (Kimmel 1994, p. 65). This is the fear of emasculation which is in the air, the fear of homosexuality, it is homophobia. Joe knows that he should do something; otherwise he is going to lose his masculinity. Kimmel argues that, “The fear-sometimes conscious, sometimes not-that others might perceive us as homosexual propels men to enact all manner of exaggerated masculine behaviors and attitudes to make sure that no one could possibly get the wrong idea about us” (1994, p. 66). He has always been scared of being unseen by others, not being in an authorial position to take the attentions, be powerless, not be a real man. “Homophobia is the fear that other men will unmask us, emasculate, reveal to us and the world that we do not measure up, that we are not real men” (Kimmel 1994, p. 65).

Joe knows that Jed Parry is not the one who really Joe cared and is scared, but the cause of something bigger, cause of Joe’s being called homosexual, and the cause of his masculine crisis. It is not about being called a gay; it is more about what gayness brings for men. “By all normative accounts, gay men are failed men” (Walsh 2010, p. 84). Gayness somehow quashes men from the dominant position and reduces their power and authority, so men’s masculinity goes under threat and crisis. In order to be a real man, they should run from homosexuality. “Homophobia is more

than the irrational fear of gay men more than the fear that we might be perceived as gay” (Kimmel, 1994, p. 65). Clarissa says that he behaves odd right from the start even before he knows anything about Parry. It is because he feels the threat right from the balloon accident, his masculinity is in danger from then on and his masculine crisis reaches the peak by Jed Parry as a homosexual man.

4. COPING WITH MASCULINE CRISIS

Now Joe should defend his masculinity both as a man who is powerful and a man who is not homosexual. After the accident, Joe is in panic and afraid of emasculation and willing to do anything to absolve himself. Tim Edwards explicates that, “discourses of crisis inevitably incorporate a sense of panic or anxiety about that which has either happened already or may come to pass in the near future” (qtd. in Godfrey 2010, p. 1). Joe’s awareness of his masculinity in crisis comes from his feeling of homophobia and lack of power which put him in the position of anxiety and fear.

Joe tries to find ways to soothe him by making himself busy by writing, and going to the library. In that time he does not want to do anything except work. Joe says that, “Working was an evasion- I didn’t doubt it at the time” (1997, p. 48). He thinks that making himself busy is the best way to get off the thoughts and somehow a kind of medication. Rutherford clarifies, “the spectacle of the male body in action is the central signifier of the attempted recuperation of a humiliation and defeated masculine identity” (1992, pp. 187-8). Familiarity soothes him too and strangeness frightens him. He finds the familiarities which he declares as a relief, what existed until now before the accident and before Parry and before the sense of emasculation, is somehow comforting for Joe. Being with Clarissa as familiarity is good for him in order to run away this emasculation. Joe is in panic about Jed and he wants to talk with Clarissa and tell her about Jed, about his emotion toward him, about the apprehension, about the comprehension, and at the same time his fear of the existence of homosexuality. “He has desire for Clarissa’s help in decoding the threats from Parry” (Greenberg 2007, p. 109). But he cannot keep their relationship in peace.

He does not see himself as powerful and wants to find a way to change the situation and be a different person. “Throughout the novel, too, characters make up stories to explain things, to justify themselves, to make life bearable” (Malcolm 2002, p. 180). Justification is a choice. Joe attempts to do anything in order to justify himself of emasculation both in the case of the balloon accident and Jed Parry. “In the novel, the protagonist is primarily obsessed with the guilt of letting go of the rope, and he starts out with this sense of guilt, although delaying and digressing from the main point as much as he can, but somehow tries to find justification, to come to peace with himself with the incident” (Ramin and Marandi 2012, p. 83). He creates a high-walled infinite prison of directed thought for himself far from the recent memory of accidents, so he does not have to defend himself from the accusation of emasculation. He is protected in the place where he builds for himself, thus he is happy in that time and he does not need to urinate in order to put those damn thoughts and feelings away. (1997, p. 48) But he cannot stay in the cell he creates for himself, the thoughts of John Logan as a ghost and his children are there in his cell and the thoughts that who first let go of the rope? And he loudly, just like he wants to hear it, responds to himself: not me. Not me. The thoughts do not leave him alone even in that cell. “My cell, my guilt?” (1997, p. 56)

Describing sub-stories of Jean Logan and Clarissa’s brother’s love affair make him relieved. In order to secure himself from Jed Parry’s threat, Joe decides to buy a gun and tell another sub-story about a family in which two men start fighting each other for power and Joe leaves there without helping. (1997, p. 201) Joe’s justification of himself continued by somehow blaming Clarissa for what happened to Logan. He sees himself as someone who always looks after Clarissa when she needs it. He is a protector, a real masculine. (1997, p. 80) He also accuses Clarissa of betrayal. Although he knows that it is junk and cannot be true, but he continues making it in his mind. He thinks that what if Clarissa was using Parry in order to leave him, what if she wants to break up with him, what if she has met someone, and it is the easier way for Clarissa to convince herself that there is something between Joe and Jed? (1997, p. 103-4) he just goes to her workroom and mixes her stuff in order to persuade himself. There is no excuse for Joe to do such things with

Clarissa. He somehow wants to show that Clarissa is the one who causes all the problems and mistreatments. There is no problem with him and with his masculinity and he has an authority which allows him to do anything, even inspecting Clarissa's letters. Some sort of justification for accusing others. Joe is only concerned about making Clarissa guilty about what happened between them two. He also tries to justify himself by feeling sorry for Jed Parry. Joe wants to feel sorrow for him and sees him as a poor guy who cannot bother him at any given way even his masculinity and this makes him relieved. (1997, p. 91) Then he attributes a psychological problem, *De Clerambault's syndrome*, to Jed and introduces him as a sick person in order that keeps his own masculinity unharmed. Joe depicts De Clerambault syndrome which was coined after a French woman who goes to England shortly after the Great War and is certain that King George the Fifth is in love with her and she loves him in return although they have never met before. She stands outside of the Palace in order to catch the movement of the curtains in the windows of Buckingham Palace and considers it as a communication. (1997, p. 123-4) Joe regards Jed as a mad man who is obsessed with him just like that French woman in order to run from homosexuality. "Homophobia is the effort to suppress that desire, to purify all relationships with other men, with women, with children of its taint, and to ensure that no one could possibly ever mistake one for a homosexual" (Kimmel 1994, p. 64).

All these accusations of Clarissa, Jed Parry, and others are useless. Joe knows that he could be relieved by these just for a while, but then the feeling of emasculation is there and he must do something to destroy it completely. Joe understands that he is the only one who should make things right but not by accusing others. Joe knows that he starts this quarrel by being weak in the balloon accident and in facing with Jed, now he is the one who should make it right. Joe says that, "The task of getting us back to where we were was going to be mine alone" (1997, p. 161). The accident in the restaurant is a chance for Joe to act as a hero, but he does not have anything to defend himself and again puts himself in the position of self-love. "My first impulse was simple and self-protective" (1997, p. 172). Self-love stops him from being a hero. Joe needs something to be powerful in order to get rid of his fear; he knows that his actions would have consequences until he will be powerful enough to control everything. So he decides to buy a gun which gives him power.

In the beginning, Joe tries to play the role of a hero, but he himself says there is no time for this. The accident happened and one man died because of their cowardliness. Joe's masculinity is in crisis and all through the novel he does a lot to run from it, but now when Jed intrudes on their house and captures Clarissa, there is chance and time to act as a hero and be a savior both for Clarissa and more importantly for his masculinity. He has a gun and he uses it in order to undo Jed's thoughts and deeds. Joe shoots Jed Parry and injures him and saves Clarissa as a superhero. Lea and Schoene declare that, "After the trauma of the ballooning accident, Joe's previously mundane life is whisked out of control. It also becomes suspiciously likely that Joe creates the dramatic situation at the end of the novel so he can play the role of a god-like heroic figure" (2003, p. 117). He recaptures his power by being a hero, coping with his homophobia by showing Jed Parry as a sick person, and finally proves that he is a masculine man. "A persistent cultural belief is that there is an almost unbreakable relationship between men and violence" (MacKinnon 2003, p. 11). Joe then thinks about rebuilding their lives right from where he shoots Jed, right from where he puts an end to his masculine crisis. (1997, p. 213) He proves his masculinity by being a superhero and savior, so he could rebuild his masculinity which is in crisis until then. "With Joe it is exactly such an assumed pose of heroic self-management that keeps him going and his feelings of powerlessness at bay" (Lea and Schoene 2003, p. 111). In spite of all horror, Joe talks about joy which is not easily earned. "Those moments of joyful release from terror are not so easily had" (1997, p. 213). Joe endures so many things to come to this point. This is the joy of being successful in being a hero and overcoming masculine crisis. Actually, Jed's intrusion into their house is a chance for Joe to get rid of what he goes through, an opportunity to be a real man again and to feel like a masculine man. Although Clarissa blames Joe about their broken relation that he is the one who brought Jed into their lives by making him big in his mind, their relationship has been recovered. They even successfully adopt a child.

5. CONCLUSION

Masculine crisis has always existed in men's lives especially in postmodern era. The most important cause of emasculation is lack of power and authority which is always belong to males as masculine men. The beginning of Joe's masculine crisis is signed with the random balloon accident which could be any other accident that reduces the power and authority and then continues more powerfully by the appearance of Jed Parry as a gay man, who is responsible for Joe's homophobia. Joe behaves unusually right from the start because he is first afraid of losing power and then homophobia in which the threat becomes double for him, so he behaves in a way he never had before. Joe tries to put the blame on others and claims that if he goes the entire road lonely, it is Clarissa's and the police's fault for leaving him alone. He does a lot and accuses others to run from this emasculation, but they were useless. Joe, all through the novel, tries to show himself as a real man and runs from the masculine crisis. "What the reader is to witness in *Enduring Love* are the projections of one man, Joe Rose, insisting on his own authority, sovereignty and influence" (Lea and Schoene 2003, p. 109). At the end by being a superhero and proving that Jed is sick and that he is right all through the novel succeeds in recapturing his lost masculinity and becomes a real man once more in his mind. But it does not mean that this masculine crisis would not happen anymore, it is probable at any given time and by any other events. Men continuously have to prove their masculinity all through their lives. "It (masculinity) must be proved, and no sooner is it proved that it is again questioned and must be proved again" (Kimmel, *The Gender* 2005, p. 122). Therefore, masculine crisis exists with men all through their lives and men unceasingly must be aware of this crisis and try hard to remain masculine men. "To be a man it is not simply enough to be: a man must do, display, prove. ... for their 'masculine' endeavours – those that incorporate a display of daring and courage." (Macdonald 2001, pp. 103-4).

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