ZEENA AND MATTIE'S CHARACTERISATION

They're created by CONTRAST, so a character influences teh other one.

Name: The name Zenobia represents her power in the house, indeed the word come from the Greek language *Zeno+bios. Zeno* is the greek spelling for Zeus (god of gods), whereas *bios* refers to life. However Zenobia is an old and tradional name differently from Mattie which has a sweeter sound, but is also very common in the beginning of the 20th century. So these names are linked to the way Ethan judges his women. In addition also surnames are important in order to understand these characters. Matties's surname is Silver, which underlines again her cheerful personlity and the attraction she has on Ethan. Instead Zeena's nubile surname isn't quoted; this choice suggests one of the most important themes of the novel: CONDITION OF WOMEN. As a matter of facts Zeena has to submit to the husband, moreover the lack of her nubile surname means you won't know anything about her family. Furthemore the reader doesn't know an important element of Zenobia's background, and feels, for this reason, less empathic: you don't know events as they really are but judje negatively Zenobia because of the sad life the main character is forced to live with her.

Profession: Zenobia is a nurse and a housewife, exactly the same job Mattie has to do because of Zeena's sickness. However Mattie, who was born in a rich family in a great misfortune, is a terrible housekeeper differently from Zeena. Because of this Ethan is even more attracted by Mattie (he feels useful helping her) increasing Zeena's jealousy. At the end of the novel roles are inverted: Mattie is the sick one, whereas Zeena is the nurse. The inverted roles are symbol of the social and moral power Zeena has in the house.

Physical appearence: whereas Mattie is young and pretty Zenobia is described as a woman who seems older than her age. However characters are described only by Ethan's point of view, so they are again a personal judgement. Indeed, Zenobia is described only one time in the novel, instead Ethan continously refers to Matties's physical apperanece. In addtition Mattie is often linked to the RED color, which symbolizes passion and her lively personality. Here is highighted the them of OLD AGE.

Ations: Zenobia's actions are always linked to the house and to her sickness, instead Mattie is free to partecipate to parties and balls. So there is another connection to the PURITAN VALUES and to the CONDITION OF WOMEN: first of all balls are always at church and in addition Zenobia isn't free to have fun because it in't a behaviour suitable to a married woman. So Zeena attitude is commonly more sharp and selfish because she feels shut in a stereotype which made her sad and for this reason she's jealous of Mattie's freedom.