

Popular Mechanics Psychological Lens Character Analysis Presentation



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Story Events



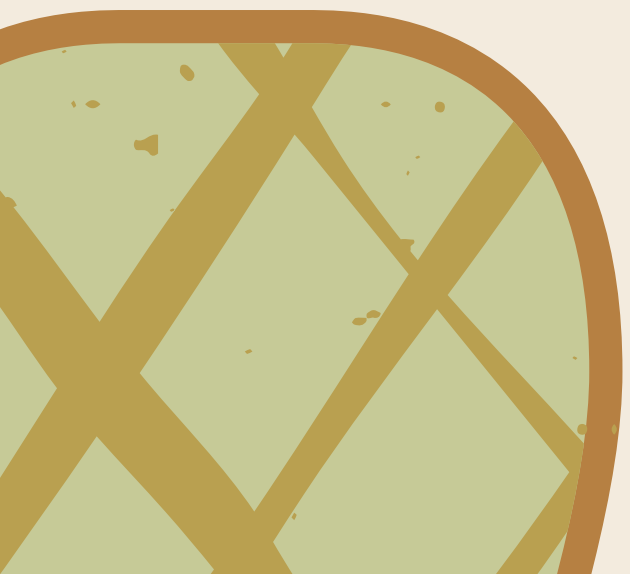
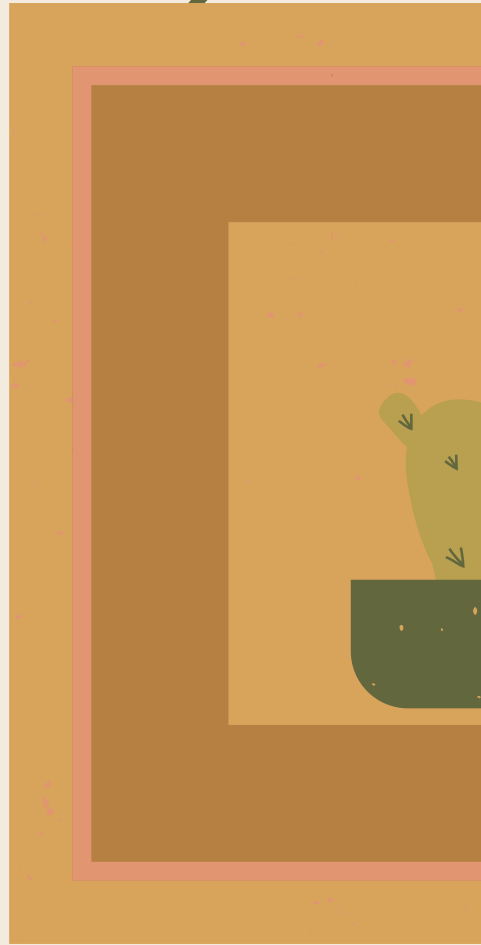
The story opens to reveal a man and woman in a verbal argument about him leaving.



The man reveals he wants to take his child with him once he leaves.



The argument turns physical as they fight to custody of the child.



Beginning

- At the beginning of the story, the woman's id can be seen by her impulsive nature. She shouts out to the man, and the father of her child, that she is "so glad [he is] leaving" instinctively because her anger has taken over her ability to think clearly before she speaks (Craver 1) .

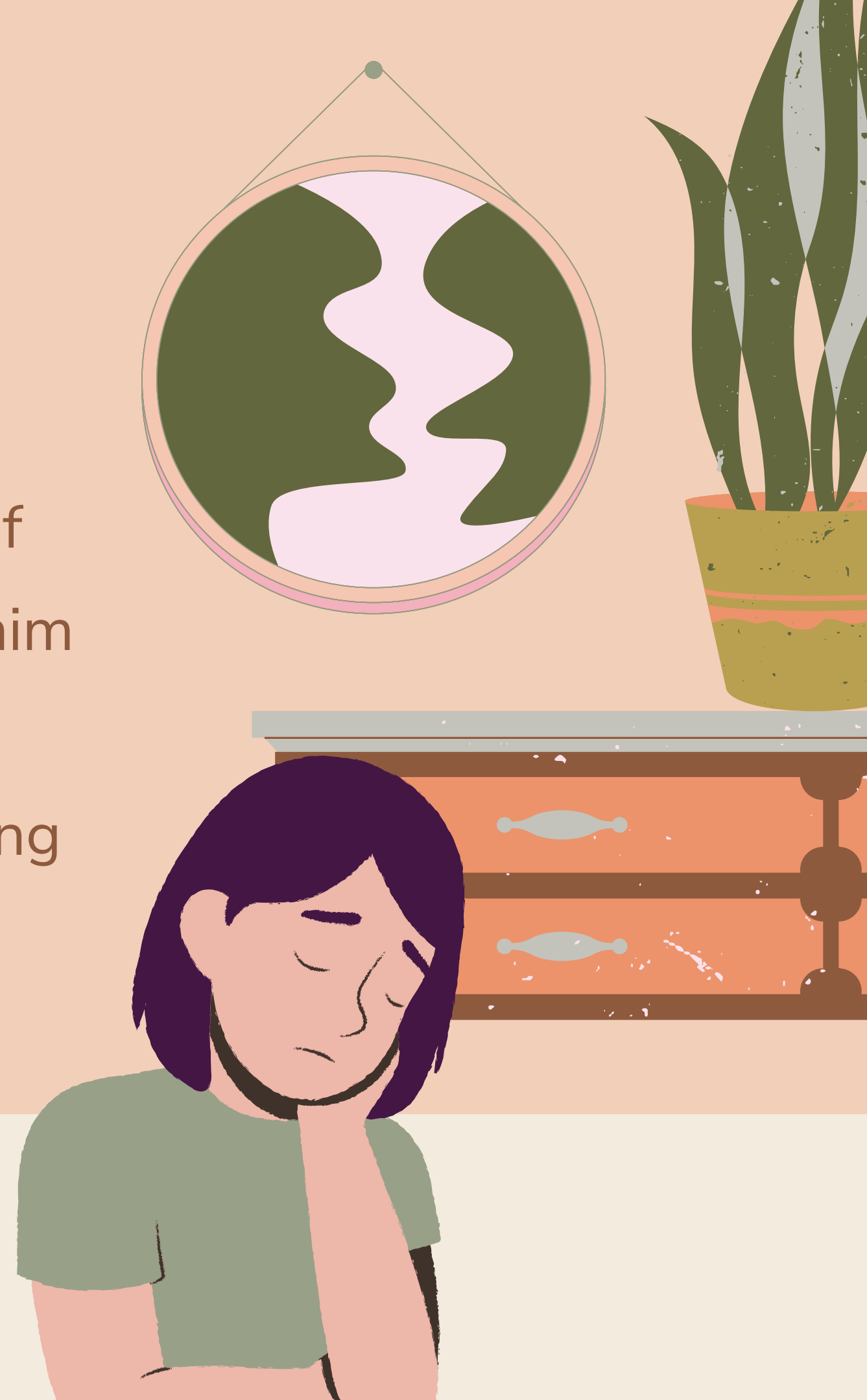
ID



Beginning

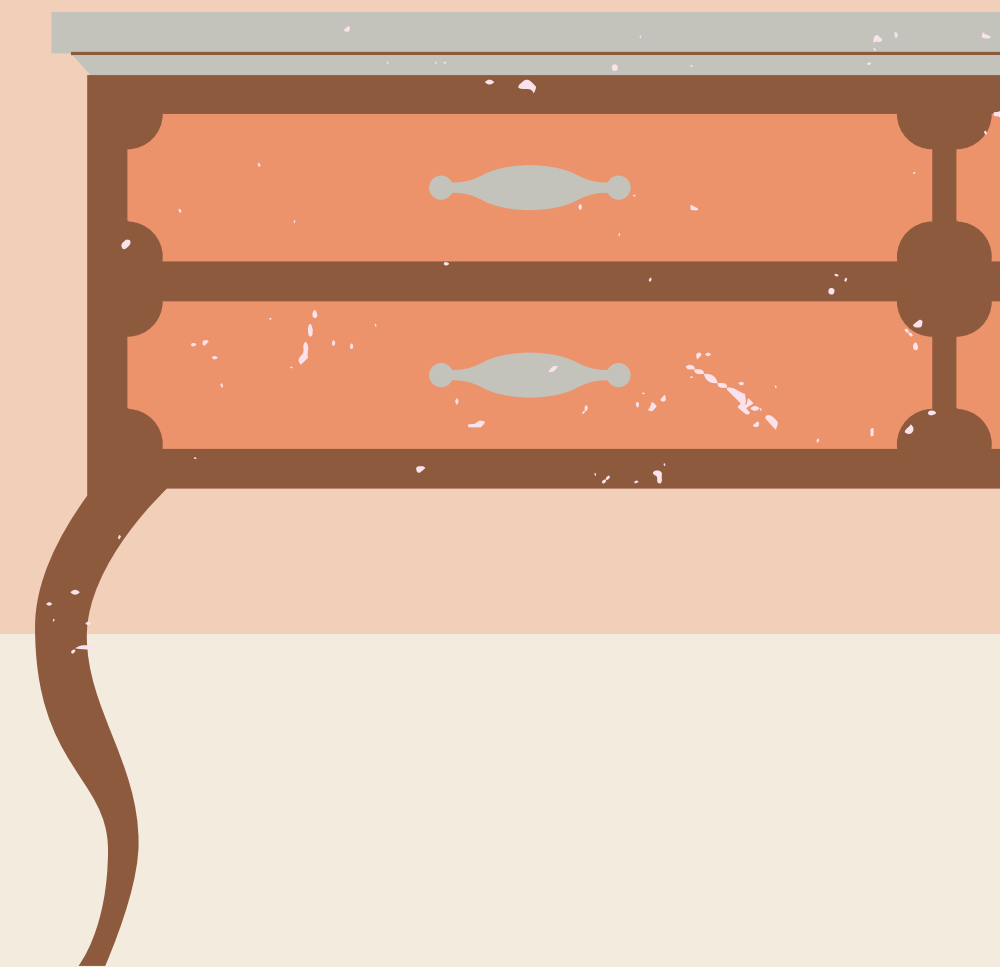
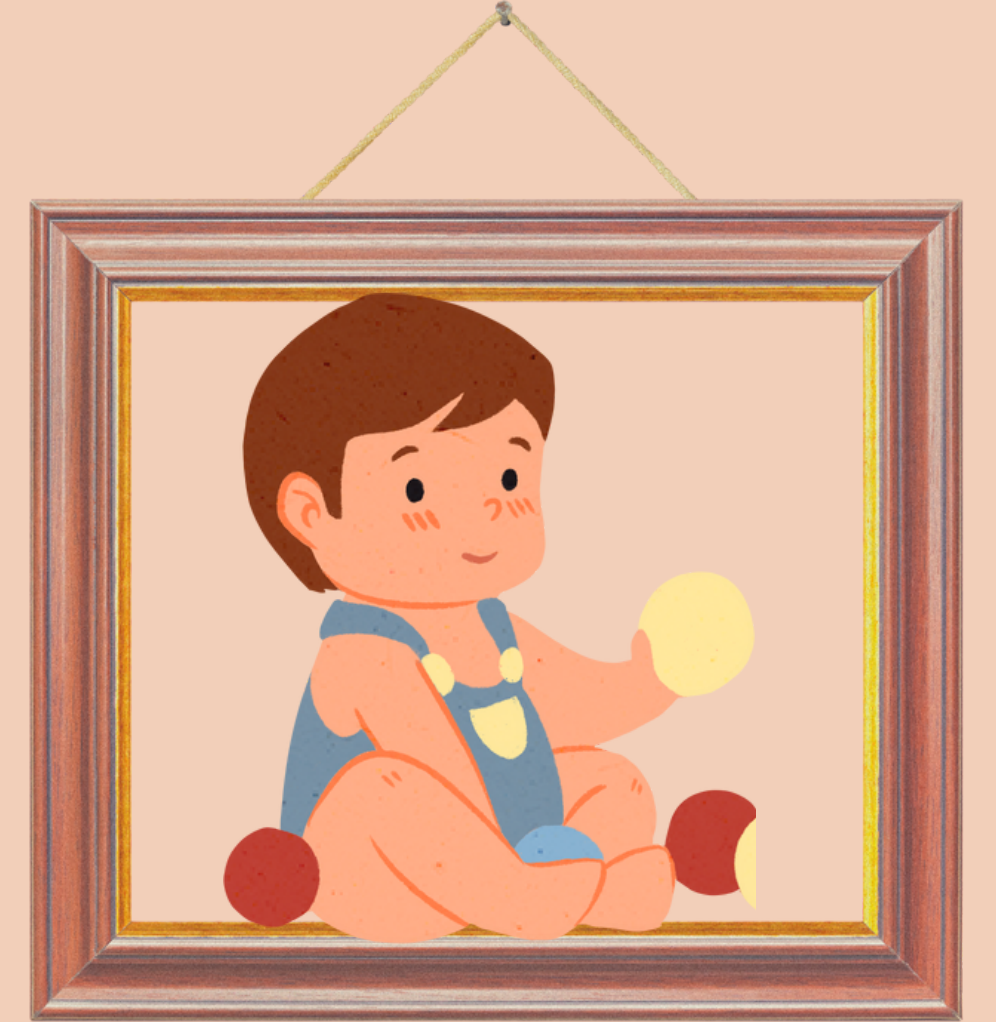
- The ego is present in the woman in the beginning of the story when "she wiped her eyes and stared at him before turning and going back to the living room" (Craver 1). This demonstrates her consciously making the decision to calm down and walk away from the argument.

EGO



Beginning

- The woman's super-ego is seen in the beginning of the story when "she noticed the baby's picture on the bed and picked it up" (Craver 1). This shows her reflecting on something other than herself and the man, her values, including being a good mother.



SUPER-EGO

Middle

- The woman's id is present in the middle of the story when she says "are you crazy?" (Craver 1). The man genuinely wants to take his child with him and she is so shocked by the situation that the only thought she can resort to is that he must be delusional.



Middle

- The woman's ego is present in the middle of the story when she steps back from the argument to deal with reality, and the real concern and underlying cause, the baby. She hears the baby cry and "[says] oh, oh.. looking at the baby" (Craver 1).



EGO

Middle

- The woman's super-ego is present in the middle of the story when "she turned and tried to hold the baby over in a corner behind the stove" (Craver 2). This is, again, her way of considering values outside of this argument and turning to protect her child and be a "good mother".

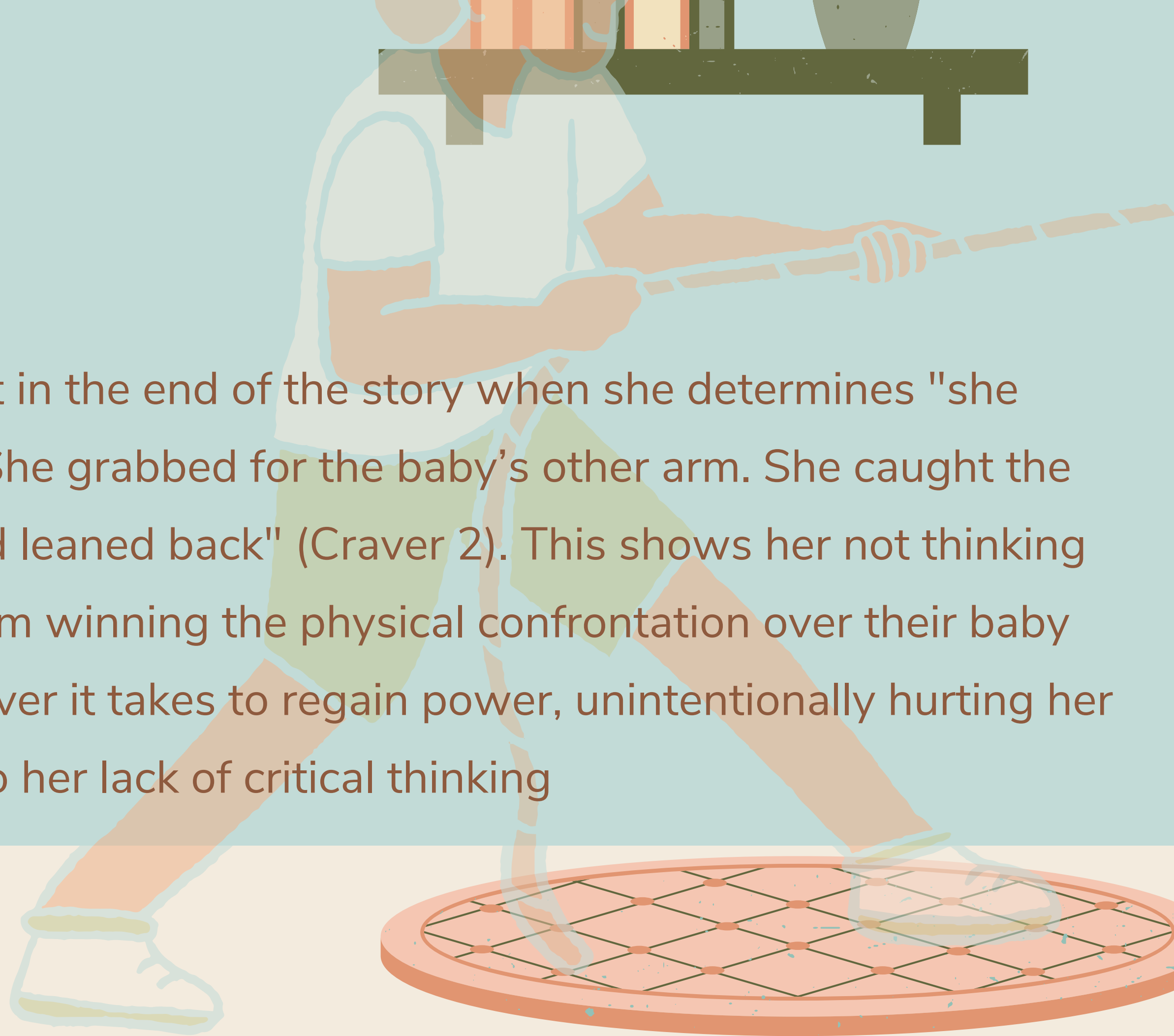
SUPER-EGO



End

- The woman's id is present in the end of the story when she determines "she would have it, this baby. She grabbed for the baby's other arm. She caught the baby around the wrist and leaned back" (Craver 2). This shows her not thinking logically, once she feels him winning the physical confrontation over their baby she attempts to do whatever it takes to regain power, unintentionally hurting her baby In the process due to her lack of critical thinking

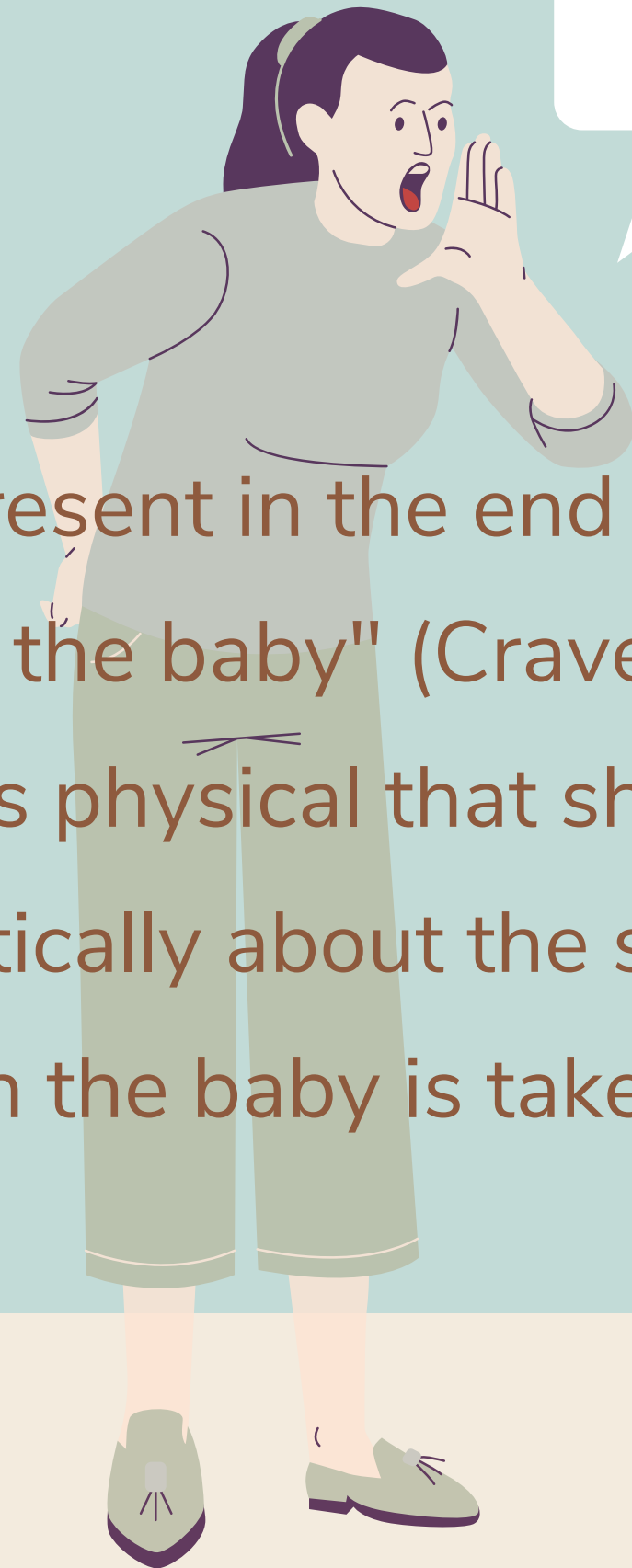
ID



End

- The woman's ego is present in the end of the story when she says "don't... You're hurting the baby" (Craver 2). This is one of the only times once the fight becomes physical that she is able to detach from her emotions and think critically about the situation and the real issue at hand, the way in which the baby is taken care of.

EGO



End

- At this point in the story, the woman's super-ego is no longer demonstrated. She shows no evidence of morality in her actions doing whatever it takes to "have it, this baby" with no regard for how she may end up injuring the baby (Craver 2).

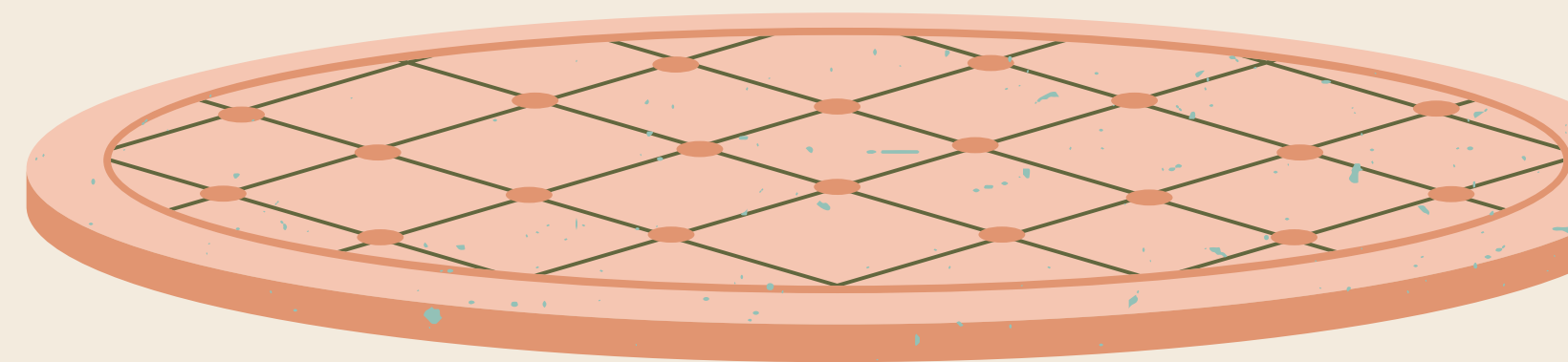
SUPER-EGO



End – Ego vs. Super-ego

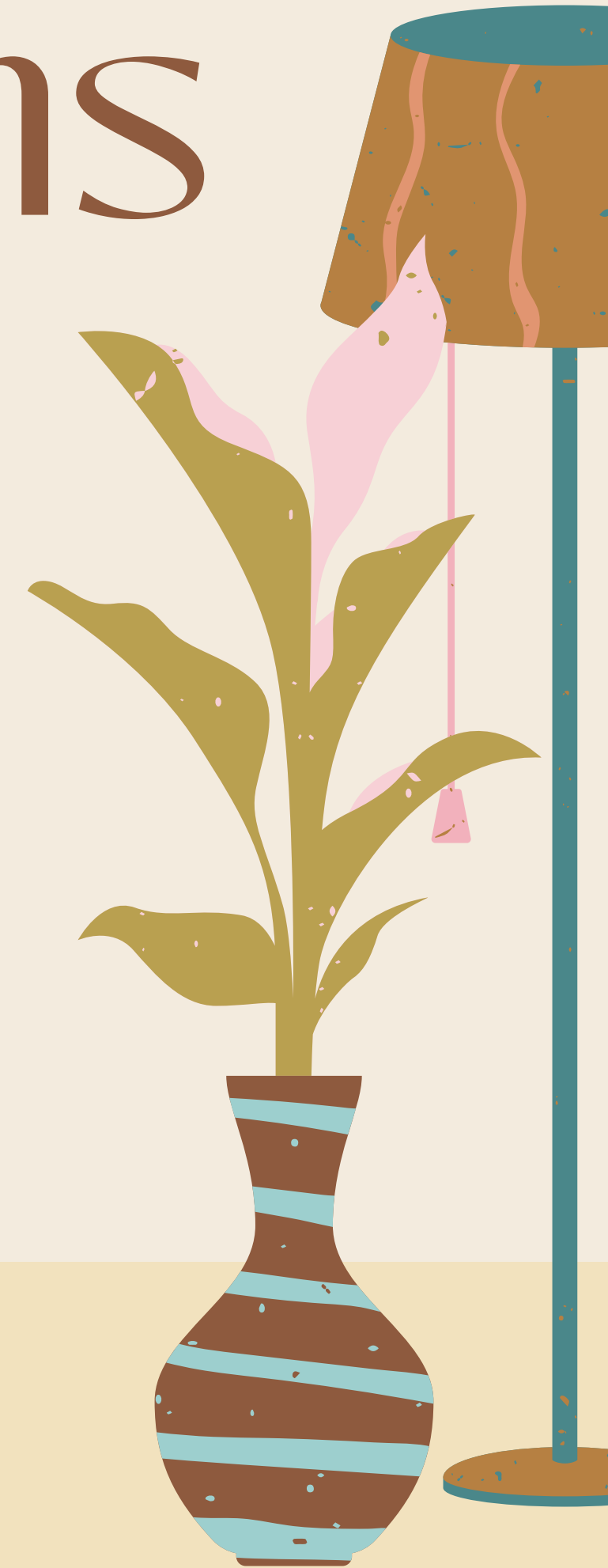
- Although it may seem as though the woman is concerned with being a good mother at the end of the story when she tells the man "don't... You're hurting the baby", this is only her ego and not her super-ego (Craver 2). The ego is concerned with achieving a satisfying end without causing harm to itself or the id. By blaming the man for hurting the baby she is able to deflect responsibility and feel as though she did her part in protecting it without having to lose the fight. Her actions during this portion of the story show no evidence of actually possessing the values of a good mother.

EGO VS. SUPER-EGO

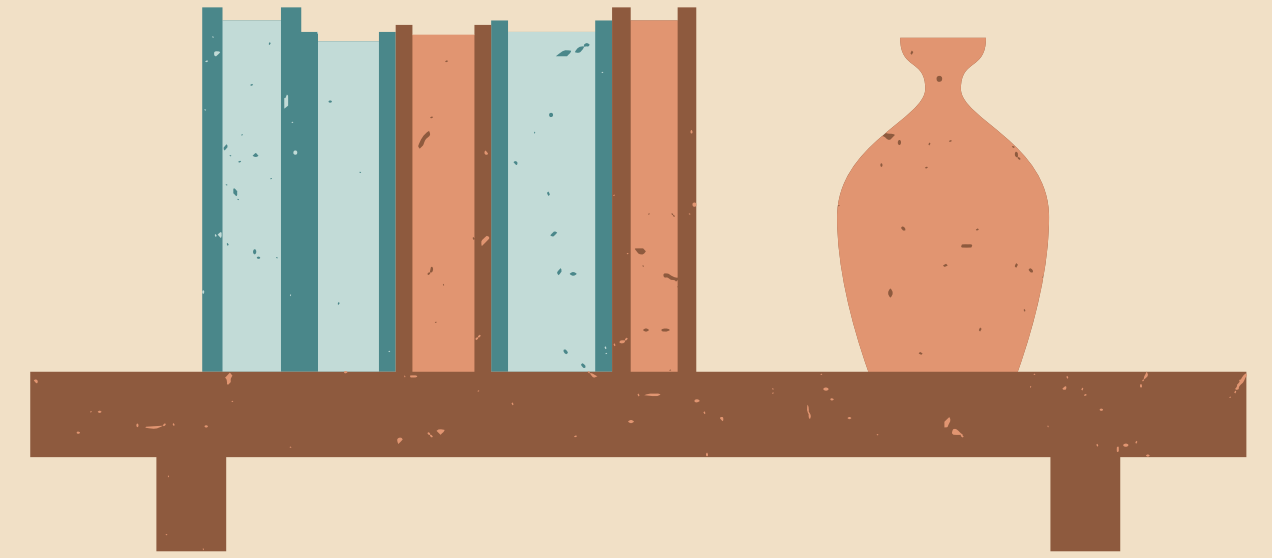


Physiological lens

The woman in this story is most affected by her id. She has a tendency to make rash, impulsive decisions. Many more examples of her id can be found throughout the story than her ego and super-ego. This is because she rarely stops to think about what the best decision in a situation is, or her personal values regarding motherhood.

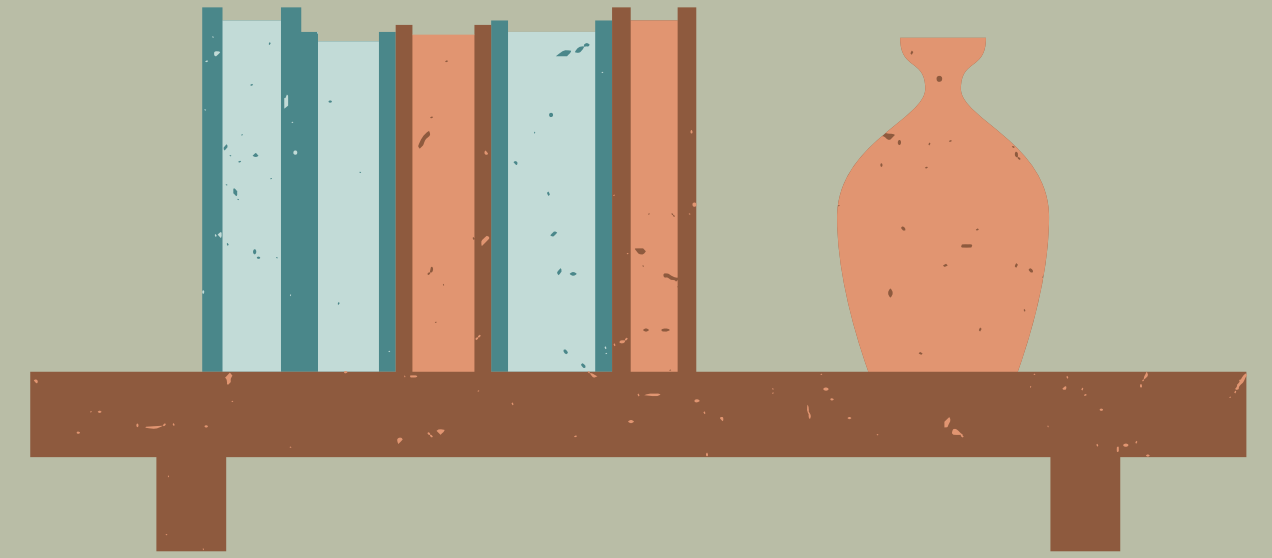


Character analysis



- The character of the woman in this story is very basic, she is static, flat, and stock. The woman does not undergo a change throughout the story, from the minute she realizes the man wants the baby her only thought is to keep him from him out of spite which carries through until the two potentially rip their child in half. In this story the woman is also flat, the reader only sees her selfish side and is not made aware of any other aspects of her personality. She is also a stock character, or an archetype, representing social norms and how common these struggles for power are in real-life family dynamics.

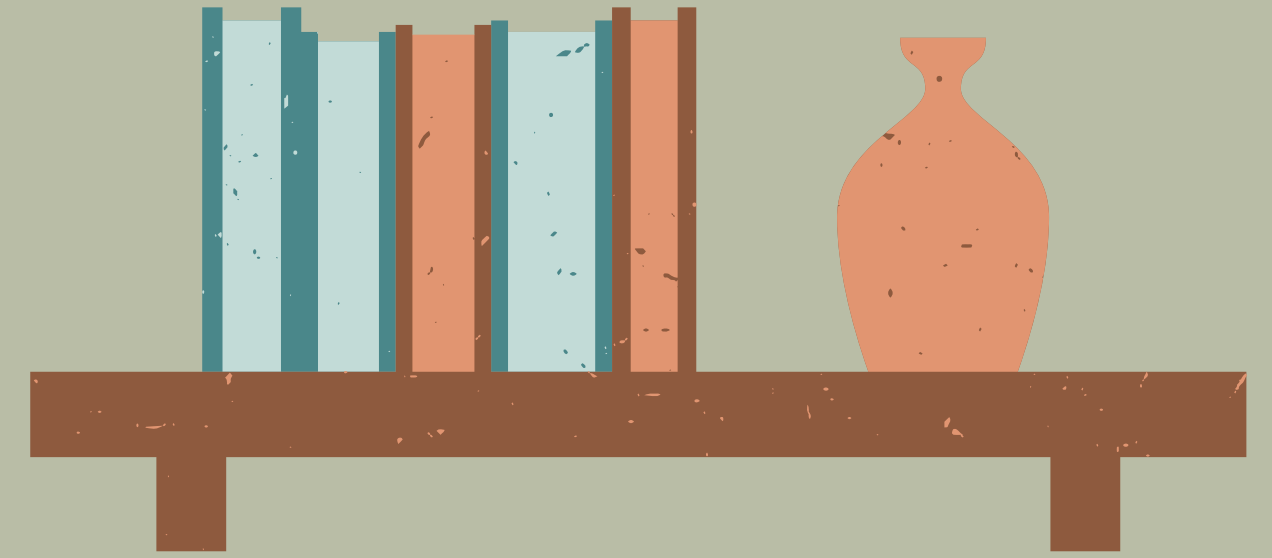
Allegory



- This short story alludes to another famous biblical story, *The Judgement of King Solomon*. The tale tells the story of two babies and two mothers living together. After one baby suffocates each mother claims the remaining child is their own, in order to solve the conflict Solomon suggests the baby be cut in half and split between both alleged mothers. One of the mothers objects to this ruling for the sake of the child, revealing her selfless intentions and gaining the label of the "true mother".



Allegory



- This biblical story juxtaposes Popular Mechanics because it goes to show that neither of Carver's characters possessed the selflessness to be a good parent. During the start of their physical struggle, the baby is referred to as "him", later changing pronouns to "it" when the mother says "She would have it, this baby" (2 Craver). This represents the parent's selfishness, no longer seeing the baby as a human, but rather, simply something to "win" in the argument.



Citations

“The Judgment of King Solomon - Bible Story Verses and Summary.” Biblestudytools.com, 27 Sept. 2022, <https://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-stories/judgment-of-king-solomon-bible-story.html>.

“Mr. Barrington's Blog.” Mr Barringtons Blog, <https://myriverside.sd43.bc.ca/pbarrington/english-12/novel-unit-identityperseverance/>.

Photos from Canva

