

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this chapter, the writer would analyze the transition process of Einar Wegener goes through when transforming into Lili Elbe in *The Danish Girl* novel. It would be analyze with Sally Hines' Transgender Theory also Butler's Performativity.

4.1. The Transgendered Transition Of Einar Wegener

In the process of transitioning, a transgender would experience some important phases in the transition process before calling themselves as a transgender. They would feel dissatisfy with their identity before the transition, their desire for coming out to the public would emerge, and they would experience a significant moment in the transition process (Hines, 2007:83-84). In the novel, Einar goes through four phases in transitioning his gender identity. When experience the phases he has to deal with his desire and the reality and the stigma that is formed by the society.

1. Pre Transition Identity

Before Transgender individuals transition into their new gender and live in the other sex outwardly, they have experiences from when they first recognize that they are different from others which later shape their identity. Lili Elbe is a Danish transgender woman and one of the first identifiable recipients of sex reassignment surgery. In recollections of pre-transition identities, Lili Elbe, the main character, before transitioning is known Einar Wegener who is a landscape artist in

Copenhagen in the early 20th. Einar Wegener lives in a small village named Bluetooth.

A. Childhood

In the early childhood, children get cues early on from parents about appropriate behavior, and internalize them. For example MTF (male to female) transsexuals have gotten the message from parents that it wasn't ok for them to play dolls with their sisters or neighbors, and that they were expected to do "boy" things – like rough and tumble play. Children of this age start to get the idea that there is a part of them that must remain hidden.

During his early childhood, Einar acquires his gender identity's knowledge from the observation he has done on people surround him. Butler stated that performativity is separated by kinds of cultural repetition that performed by oneself to perform the gender identity (1999:xv). Einar performs his gender identity by imitates the behavior from his father and grandmother. However, because of the lack of affection from a maternal figure, Einar seeks the affection he needs from his father, the last parental figure in his life. From this Einar forms an attachment to his father. Even when Einar forms an attachment to his father, Einar cannot shake the feeling of neglect the experiences when both his father and grandmother make him to tend to himself. Even so Einar keeps trying to get the affection from his family, especially his father.

When Einar's father is sick, Einar takes care of him. Einar's attachment to his father makes him admires his father while still soaking up all the attention he can have from his father.

Einar would tiptoe forward, reaching to touch his father's golden curls. Einar had always wanted hair like that, so thick a silver comb could sit in it as prettily as tinsel on a Christmas tree. But even lovelier than his hair was his illness, the mysterious malady that bled away his energy and caused his egg-shaped eyes to turn milky and soft, his fingers yellow and frail. (Ebershoff, 2000:19)

For Einar, his father is beautiful and even more beautiful because of his illness. His father is just like a man confounded by a body that no longer worked for him. Other than admiration, Einar also feels jealous to his father and those who get his father's affection more than him. In retaliation, he would try to imitate every behavior others did to make his father shower his affection to him. Einar would also perform a role which will fulfill his father's expectation that a boy should do activities suits for a boy. Butler states that gender proves to be performative which represents the identity by doing what called the "fact" that is pretend to be (1999:25). It indicates in order to Einar to be accepted by his father, he will have to perform what his birth designated gender has.

Clothes are identified as a key signifier of gender identity. By wearing woman clothing, it indicate that Einar's desire is different from another boys. It just indicates that this is what Einar desire. It is because certain kinds of "gender identity" fail to conform to those norms of cultural ease of understanding. They appear only as developmental failures of logical impossibilities from within that domain (Butler, 1999:14). Einar is a child that would have been labeled as "gender failure" by his parents as he exposes his desire which cannot be accepted by the cultural apparatus.

When Einar is seven years old, he finds out that he loves wearing women clothing, whether it is a necklace or a scarf. This behavior is missed by Einar's father because while nurturing parents should be sensitive to all the things happen to their children, with Einar it is not like that at all. The illness of Einar's father makes him and Einar's grandmother unaware about Einar's behavior. Thus makes them failed to recognize obvious developing signs of transgender activity. Both of them think that Einar is normal and his behavior is just like every boy at his age.

According to American Psychiatrist Association (2006) around the age of seven until thirteen, children with transgender will experience desire to play with cross gender toys and play which are the obvious developing signs of transgender activity which parents failed to recognize beforehand.

One day when he [Einar's father] returned from an hour of chat at the neighbor's kitchen table, he found Einar, small at age seven, in the drawers, the amber beads twisted around his throat, a yellow deck-scarf on his head like long, beautiful hair. His father's face turned red, and his eyes seemed to sink into his skull. Einar could hear the angry rattle of his father's breath in his throat. "You can't do that!" his father said. "Little boys can't do that!" And little Einar replied, "But why not?" (Ebershoff, 2000:19)

In Einar's mind there is nothing wrong by playing dress up with women's clothing, he loves the feeling of the fabrics against his skin and the clothes make him look pretty. Gender roles in childhood are determined from the selection of clothes, activities and toys (Hines, 2007:52). This indicates Einar choose to be an opposite gender even when he is a child. However, Einar's father thinks otherwise. He thinks that Einar should play with toys that are appropriate for his age and gender also expects Einar's to follow the norm that is a girl wear dress and a boy wear pants.

When Einar is thirteen years old, his desire to play with opposite gender play appears. That time, Einar has a friend who is two years older than him known as Hans Axgil. While Hans quickly becomes Einar's role model, Einar also has crush on Hans.

...they [Einar and Hans] had been in the fields most of the morning, and suddenly Hans touched Einar's wrist and said, "Einar, dear, what's for dinner?" [...] Then, more vaguely, his gravelly voice suddenly smooth: "Einar. Let's pretend." Hans found Einar's grandmother's apron with the cottongrass strings hanging limply next to the stovepipe. He brought it to Einar and cautiously tied it around his waist. Hans touched the nape of Einar's neck, as if there were a panel of hair he needed to lift aside. "You never played this game?" (Ebershoff, 2000:17)

Einar is asked by Hans to play a role playing game which a game that is usually played by girls around his age. Einar who always identify himself a "pretty" which is a term that is used to identify females and femininity, agrees to play. Again Einar's father finds out and kicks Hans out from the house. Once again another sign of transgender activity that Einar's family failed to notice until it happens.

B. Adulthood

Einar Wegener grows up to a shy, loner man. After the last members of his family died, Einar decided to follow his dream to become a painter. Although being shy and being considered as a loner, Einar grows up to be a renowned landscape painter who loves to pain scenes of a bog in his hometown, Bluetooth. He works at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen as a professor.

When he first meets his wife, Greta Waud, at the Academy, she thinks that Einar is a "pretty man" (Ebershoff, 2000:9). He later married Greta and lives in an

apartment called the Widow House. One day, when Greta asks Einar to pose for her unfinished painting of an Opera Singer which later makes Einar goes through a gender identity crisis.

Einar's wife request is simple; just pose with wearing pairs of women shoes and stockings. However, it evokes a feeling that Einar feels a long time ago. The feeling is disrupting his stable life and making him questioning his gender identity.

Einar began to feel dizzy and warm. He looked down at his shins, the silk smooth except for a few hairs bursting through like the tiny hard fuzz on a bean. The yellow shoes looked too dainty to support him, but his feet felt natural arched up, as if he was stretching a long-unused muscle. (Ebershoff, 2000:3)

The more he ponders about the feeling that appears from just wearing the shoes, the more he feels uncomfortable. Then his wife offers him the dress to complete the look. Even though Einar refuses vehemently, he eventually agrees. The addition of the dress makes Einar fully thinks that he becomes someone else and in somewhere else entirely. Someplace that reminds him of his time as a young boy who wears his late mother's dress.

Greta involuntarily makes Einar goes through a gender identity crisis. He begins to question who he really is as Einar's long lost feeling keeps popping up. Lost in his thought, Einar does not realize that Anna, Greta's client has come and then both she and his wife nicknamed him Lili when he is wearing a dress. Ashamed that he has been caught enjoying the dress and being nicknamed as a girl, Einar cannot do anything but stay silent.

Not long after the painting is finished, Einar's life returns to normal, until he begins to wonder about his female counterpart, Lili. He wants to be Lili again. He has developed a behavior which is being a cross dresser. Einar and Greta both agree that Lili is just a character that Einar played as a cross-dresser.

She didn't think of it again, and it was as if Lili were nothing more than a character in a play they had seen at the Folketeatret (Ebershoff, 2000:10).

Cross-dressing is the wearing of clothing that does not belong to one's birth-designated sex (Gilbert, 2004:48). While a cross dresser is a term used to describe a person who regularly takes on appearance of the opposite sexing order to satisfy a deep personal need. People who *cross-dress* wear clothing that is traditionally or stereotypically worn by another gender in their culture. They vary in how completely they cross-dress, from one article of clothing to fully cross-dressing. Those who cross-dress are usually comfortable with their assigned sex and do not wish to change it.

After agreeing with his wife, Lili appears for the first time since the painting. They play the game for awhile, Lili popping in and out of the apartment. Sometimes Greta sees Lili, sometimes it is just Lili's scent left at the apartment while Einar is painting. Since then Einar keeps cross dressing as Lili, until his desire to come out as Lili increases. Einar cross dressing game continues as Lili keeps pop in and out of the apartment. Once Einar tells Greta that he does not want to go to the ball. Greta convinces him to go as Lili instead. Einar still does not convince about it, until Greta tells him that it will be like fooling the public

with their game of pretend. While Einar does not want to go, Lili does and very excited to go.

But I won't know anyone at the ball. Do you really think I should go? Is it fair to leave Einar behind? Won't he mind? And once: I don't think I'm pretty enough. Please advise.(Lili's notes; Ebershoff, 2000:13).

These notes are Lili's way to communicate. While Einar is shy, Lili's personality is even shyer than Einar. Each time Einar cross dressed into Lili, Lili develops more personality. Unconsciously each time Einar's cross dressed, his desire to come out also increase.

When the day of the ball arrives, Einar who cross-dress as Lili is nervous. He feels like he is holding the greatest secret while still fooling the whole city by dressing as Lili and to him there is no one that capable to help him to do that except his wife, Greta as she is the one who encourages him and provides him with the necessities he needs to cross dressed as Lili.

At the ball, Lili meets another painter named HenrikSandahl who is curious about Lili. Lili describes the man is just like Einar's father, beautiful and intriguing that Lili feels like to get to know him.

Even though she was sitting next to the man, she couldn't believe he had noticed her. It felt to her as if no one could see her. She hardly felt real. (Ebershoff, 2000:25)

Lili is invisible and only exists when Einar put on a dress. So knowing that there is someone else who sees Lili as Lili not as Einar is a wonderful yet strange feeling for Lili. For the first time Einar feels he can fool the rest of the world just by dressing up and become someone else entirely.

It was the first time that Einar sensed how he was turning the world on its head by dressing as Lili. He could eliminate himself by pulling the camisole with the scallop-lace hem over his head. Einar could duck out of society by lifting his elbows and clasping the triple strand of Spanish pearls around his neck. He could comb his long soft hair around his face, and then tilt his head like an eager adolescent girl (Ebershoff, 2000:26).

Henrik's reaction after seeing is like a confirmation to Einar that he can be whatever he wants to be. That he can be a girl without anyone noticing it, it will be just like there is another girl among them not a man dress up to be like a woman. The confirmation is what Einar has been searching for.

2. The Desire to Come Out

Coming out is the act of informing someone when one is either transgendered, gay, bisexual, or whatever secret one keeps about oneself (APA:2006). It is a big moment in the life of a transgendered person – cross-dresser, transsexual, etc. Coming out is a life-changing but important step in a person's acceptance of whom and what they are, and represents a change in the trust relationship with those they care about. No matter how much transvestite men feel like women when dressed in women's clothing, they still remain aware that in reality it is not so. Einar's desire to come out starts after he is already cross-dressed as Lili for several times. Einar feels this way so he decides he would seek help to be who he really is, Lili.

When Henrik talks to Lili, Einar realizes that how much Einar and Lili are different to one another. While they are sharing the same body, they are different in the head, like two halves of walnut.

Einar was becoming cold, too—but only as you become cold by watching a coatless person struggle against the chill. He realized that Lili and he shared something: a pair of oyster-blue lungs; a chugging heart; their eyes, often rimmed pink with fatigue. But in the

skull it was almost as if there were two brains, a walnut halved: his and hers (Ebershoff, 2000:27).

Lili continues to develop her own personality, with her own thoughts and memories separate from Einar's. Einar's game of cross-dressing leaves Einar wondering how deep he knows about himself. It is almost nothing. However, deep down Einar knows about his condition and starts to acknowledge it.

Einar's desire to come out finally happens after the kiss Lili and Henrik share at the party. Lili likes it and Einar also realizes how different Einar and Lili are even when they share the same body but in the head there is two halves of brain: Einar's and Lili's. After their kiss Lili starts to feel strange and realizes she has a nosebleed.

With each drop she felt more cleansed, empty but cleansed (Ebershoff, 2000:28). Lili feels that her nosebleed as an unexpected cleansing ritual that cleans the confusion in Einar and Lili's body. It makes Einar starts to acknowledge his real identity. After seeing Greta scares Henrik away, Lili watches him leaves and it feels like a rejection set in as the feeling is the same one just like when Einar's father finds out about pretend game Einar used to play as a child.

Since the ball Einar keeps cross dressed as Lili then goes to public places. This desire is also driven with the notion of more meetings with Henrik. Lili's fondness of Henrik drives her to meet him albeit in a secretive way and time. Greta thinks it is a bad idea "to deceive him like this" (Ebershoff, 2000:33), deceiving him by continuing to meet him as Lili not Einar.

Disregarding Greta's wishes Lili, continues meeting with Henrik, even though Lili knows at the end of the day Lili will have to come back to Greta and the apartment at Widow House. Lili has to come back and becomes Einar.

She [Lili] knew she should return to the Widow House, but something in her wanted to stay out forever (Ebershoff, 2000:33).

Einar thinks that the Widow House as a place where he should be hiding his true self – Lili – as it is a place where Einar Wegener lives with his wife and his painting is where the marriage between Einar and Greta exists.

Einar tries to come out as Lili to Henrik. One evening, Einar dressed up as Lili decides to confess the truth to Henrik:

"I have something to tell you", she [Lili] says. Henrik took her hand and kissed it and then held it against his chest. "Oh, Lili—don't say any more," he said. "I already know. Don't worry about anything, but I already know" (Ebershoff, 2000:37).

But before Lili can reveal the truth, Henrik tells her that he knows everything. She wants to tell him all about hers and Einar's condition. However after listening Henrik's response, Lili has no idea if he knows what she thinks he couldn't possibly know, which is Lili is Einar in a dress and he is flirting with a man. Lili finally decides that she can't see him anymore and then retreats to the apartment where Greta is waiting.

In Paris, Einar cross dressed into Lili even more frequent. Even when both Greta and Einar decide to meet Hans, Lili is present not Einar. Einar also becomes his wife's muse. As Lili's painting – *Lili Thrice* – become a huge hits, it makes Greta wants to paint Lili more. She begs Einar to transform to Lili.

He [Einar] didn't long for Lili just then. He felt as if Greta was forcing him to choose (Ebershoff, 2000:40)

Einar does not want to transform into Lili. He does not want to neglect his painting any longer and the process to Einar is too tiring. Einar also is not ready to be Lili, there are still unfinished businesses that he needs to take care of. However, he relented and he tucks himself, dons a dress, and dabs on some makeup and inside him, he feels like he change into Lili and come out as Lili with all her personality. This is one of the symptoms of gender dysphoria (transgenderism) which is a strong desire to hide or be rid of the physical signs of the birth's designated sex, such as breasts, body hair or muscle definition (APA:2006). In Einar's case is that he tucks his penis in between his legs so that he has a smooth vagina like area.

Something made him feel as if his soul were trapped in a wrought-iron cage: his heart nudging its nose against his ribs, Lili stirring from within, shaking herself awake, and rubbing her side against the bars of Einar's body (Ebershoff, 2000:40).

The process makes Einar feels like he is trapped inside a wrong body every time he dressed up as Lili. The image of wrongembodiment describes most effectively the experience of pre-transition (dis)embodiment: the feeling of a sexed body dysphoria profoundly and subjectively experienced (Posser, 1998:69, Hines, 2007:67). That is why Einar wants to come out from the "cage" he traps himself in and becomes Lili his true identity.

The clothes and the rouge were important, but the transformation was really about descending that inner tunnel with something like a dinner bell and waking Lili. She always liked the sound of crystal tinkling. It was about climbing out with her dewy hand in Einar's, reassuring her that the bright clattering world was hers [...] Once again there were two. The walnut halved, the oyster shucked open (Ebershoff, 2000:41).

Clothes will indicate the gender identity of the wearer. Like when a woman wearing a dress to show her gender identity or when a man is showing his

masculinity by the way he walks, talks or even behave, it means that they are performing something that called “normal” in the society. These kinds of things are what indicating the gender identity. Thus the clothes, for Einar, are important in transforming into Lili. He will need something to state his real identity with. When Einar transform into Lili, it is like waking another person inside his mind then he becomes someone else, Lili with her own personality and behavior, different from Einar’s.

In Paris, Einar also visits a peep show at Madame Jasmin-Carton's place, though Einar visits not for sexual pleasure but to "examine women" (Ebershoff, 2000:58) and learn how to better be one himself. One day, Einar visits Madame Jasmin-Carton's for a special show where he watches a man and a woman have sex. Einar wants to find a man who will do that to Lili, and he is so aroused that he stains his pants. After leaving the place, in his anxiety Einar decides to give him one year: If he hasn't figured out his identity by then, he will kill himself. This behavior is usually occurred with what people who identify themselves as a transgender.

Einar keeps returning to Madame Jasmin-Carton's place, however once he decides he won't open the window which leads to a woman, instead he picks the one with a man on the other side. While watching the man on the other side of the window, he watches another patron of Madame Jasmin-Carton is watching him. When he strips out of his clothes, he realizes that he now is both Lili and Einar, part of woman and part of man.

As if something inside Einar had snapped, like the canvas window shade, and told him, more plainly than ever before, that this was who he was: Einar was a guise. [...] He knew this; he had known this. Einar had eleven months. His year was slipping away.(Ebershoff, 2000:69)

In this moment Einar's desire is at the peak and at the very same moment Einar convince now that he and Lili is the same person but Einar is not the real identity between the two of them. It is Lili, Einar's real identity and Einar is just a disguise, a role that Lili played since he was a child until the moment his wife asks him to wear women's clothing. Now that he knows, his time as Einar will be over soon and Einar will disappear and Lili will take Einar's place as the owner of their body. This is what drives him to really want to be Lili. Then Einar starts to research about his gender identity, no longer afraid to walk out only at night and ready to live fully as he wants to be.

In the end, the main reason Einar starts living as Lili without much difficulty, though, is his wife, Greta. Greta is one hundred percent supportive of Einar's transformation into Lili. Her brother – Carlisle – is also supportive, as is Einar's childhood friend – Hans. Everyone is supportive and these people save Einar's life because he plans to kill himself if he cannot become Lili. Einar just doesn't want to live a lie; he wants to live fully, which for him, means living as Lili.

3. The Significant Moments He Experienced

A shift in the established routine of work or family life is a significant theme in many participants' narratives of developing a transgender identity (Hines, 2007:55). As well as acting as a significant factor in

the decisions about when to transition, occupation also impacts upon life experiences through and beyond transition.

In this Einar's work as a painter stops when he cross-dressed as Lili and the more he becomes Lili the less time he spends painting his landscapes painting of the bog. When Einar fully becomes Lili, he cannot paint anymore, so he chooses to work as a sales lady at a perfume counter.

He was born on a bog. A little girl born as a boy on the bog. (Ebershoff, 2000:96).

To Einar, his paintings of the bog represent himself. He was born in a bog. He acknowledges that he is born with a wrong body. Since Einar was a little boy, he identified himself as "pretty". No matter how much his father tried to force his habit to wear women clothes out of him, Einar keeps identify himself – even though slowly – as a female. Thus makes Einar's identity is muddles and murky just like a bog. When Einar decides he wants to just be Lili, he stops painting the bog:

"I'm having a hard time imagining the bog," he'd call from his studio, where his canvases and his paints were kept tidy (Ebershoff, 2000:62).

As Einar fully becomes Lili, his internal murkiness subsides and the waters become clear.

At his wife insistence, Einar must always dress up like Lili. Greta makes Lili as her inspiration for her painting which is proven by the Lili Thrice which is sold immediately.

“But Lili can’t come every day,” Einar protested. “I don’t think you understand how hard it is, sending Einar away and asking Lili in. It’s too much to ask every day.” [...] “I love it. I love her. But it’s hard.” “I need to paint Lili every day,” Greta said. “I need your help.” (Ebershoff, 2000:46)

Einar is tired of always becoming Lili. To Einar the process to become Lili by pushing Einar away just so Lili can come is tiring. Einar also has nosebleed even more than before. Frightened by Einar’s condition, Greta asks Einar to go to see a doctor.

In Rungsted, Einar meets Dr. Hexler. In his office Dr. Hexler starts his examination on Einar by poking and prodding around his abdomen before deciding to do an X-Ray.

Einar didn’t know why, but he suddenly wanted to believe Dr. Hexler would understand; that if he were to tell Hexler about the tunnel that led to Lili’s lair, that if Einar were to admit Lili wasn’t really him but someone else, Hexler would tap a pencil against his lips and say, “Ah, yes. No need to worry. I’ve seen this before.”(Ebershoff, 2000:51)

Einar then starts to pray that Dr. Hexler will understand about Einar’s situation. That he will believe what Einar says and he can help him. This is one way of gaining social recognitionis through the sanction of the ‘expert’ (Hines, 2007:63). Thus the construction of atransgender identity frequently relies upon medical discourse andpractice and access to medical intervention.Einar wants to have a social recognition from the expert that he is not sick and what has happened is normal for him.

However, the more examinations Einar goes through the more nervous he is by the examination itself. During the X-ray, Dr. Hexler’s assistance, Vlademar, says to Greta that the X-Ray will find what's wrong with Einar:

"And if it's the devil your husband's got in him [...] I'll zap it out"(Ebershoff, 2000:54).

This response shows that Vlademar, the assistant thinks that what Einar has is nothing more than an abnormal situation that against what the norm has and it should be exterminated by using the X-ray. Alas even after the vigorous examination, the result come back negative. Then Dr. Hexler has some advice for Greta to stop encourage Einar to dress like a woman as by doing so will only encourage the demon within. Somehow, Greta realizes that by bringing Einar here won't help anything; it will just make the situation even worse.

While staying in Paris, Einar visits Madame Jasmin-Carton's place. He comes at first to learn how to behave like a woman until one day he a different room this time – the one where a man strips instead of a woman. Though he is not paying any attention to the show, his attention is on the man who has watching Einar for sometimes from across the room. Then the mysterious man decide to visit Einar and they almost have an intercourse however it stops as Madame Jasmin-Carton find out and ban them from her place. This experience makes Einar wants to find more information on sexual fluidity. He conducts his own research by reading books about gender development and convinces himself that he possesses female organs.

After the failed meeting with Dr. Hexler and the information he gets from his own research, Einar, with Greta and people who care about him, meets more experts to figure out what is wrong with Einar. First, an American psychiatrist named Dr. McBride, who thinks Einar is a homosexual and that Einar needs to fight his desires. Second, Dr. Christophe Mai, is pleasant, but wants Einar committed to a hospital for people with schizophrenia. Third, Einar meets Dr.

Buson who seems helpful at first. He says that Einar can definitely choose who he wants to be until he says all Einar has to do is have a lobotomy.

In discussing emerging self-validation, participants frequently relate to the importance of naming their feelings, which in turn brings the awareness that there are others with similar gender experiences (Hines, 2007:63). After failed attempts on finding what is wrong with him, Einar feels hopeless until Greta asks him to meet Professor Alfred Bolk, who runs a Women's Clinic in Dresden. He doesn't think Einar is insane or a danger because Bolk has met someone like Einar before: a man who thought he was a woman.

"I've met another man like him," Professor Bolk said. "A tram conductor. A young man, handsome enough, pretty even, slender, pale of course, a bit light on his feet. Nervous man, but who could blame him for that, what with his situation? [...] But I agreed to, and one afternoon—I'll never forget it—I discovered he was both male and female." (Ebershoff, 2000:75)

In fact, Bolk has invented a procedure that physically changes a man into a woman. However because of the patient run out before the actual surgery can be done, the procedure has never actually been performed. Even after Bolk tells this, Greta is sure that he is the one that can help Einar and Lili.

4. Bodily Transformation

To align the physical body with the experienced sense of self, usually as an integral part of social transition away from the sex assigned at birth, transsexuals and some other individuals require medical services (for example, hormone replacement, facial electrolysis, or surgical and other procedures, as appropriate to the individual). Bodily transformations can be seen to reconcile self-identity

and social identity (Goffman, 1979 in Hines, 2007:74). It is also can increase the level of safety and emotional ease as it appearance and gender identity meets to confer with normative assumptions around the gendered body (Hines, 2007:74).

Gender reassignment surgery involves altering the physical aspects of a person to match their gender identity. Converting male to female anatomy requires removal of the penis, reshaping genital tissue to appear more female, and constructing a vagina. A vagina can be successfully formed from a skin graft or an isolated loop of intestine. Following the surgery, female hormones (estrogen) will reshape the body's contours and stimulate the growth of satisfactory breasts.

As Einar's desire to come out as Lili increases, he decides to give himself one year time to figure out his gender identity and if he cannot he will kill himself. His wife worry about Einar's condition decides he will get help. After series of failed attempts to find doctors and experts who know and understand what is happening to Einar, Greta meets Professor Alfred Bolk. He has the experience in dealing with men with the same problem as Einar. Bolk even has invented the procedure that can help Einar to become Lili physically although the procedure never has been performed before.

Even though there is a hesitation, Einar finally agrees to have the procedure, although he asks his wife to let him go to Bolk's clinic alone. He needs to do this on his own. There he is examined by Dr. Bolk, who wants to talk to Einar later that night. Dr. Bolk tells Einar about the first man, the man he was going to perform surgery on before he ran away. He thinks Einar is the perfect

candidate for the surgery, but he wants Einar to move into the clinic first to gain weight and build up his health. The day after Einar arrives at the clinic as Lili. When asked for her name, she says "Lili Elbe" (Ebershoff, 2000:107). This is her first time revealing her last name which indicates her new identity. Even more than before because of the last name that she chooses represents the validation of her new identity.

Lili goes through the first stage of the sex rearrangement surgery which is to remove the male testicles. The procedure is later known as an orchiectomy involves the surgical removal of one or both testicles.

Professor Alfred Bolk, Einar Wegener had passed from man into woman, two testicles scooped from the pruned hammock of his scrotum, and now Lili Elbe slipped into unconsciousness for three days and nights (Ebershoff, 2000:111)

Lili wakes up in extreme pain, she passes right back out and Lili remains unconscious for three whole days. The first stage of the procedure is complete, Lili wake up as a part woman for the first time. Professor Bolk has made a discovery which is Einar had ovaries inside his abdomen, which might explain the mysterious hemorrhaging. This discovery also makes Einar an intersex. A variety of conditions that leads to atypical development of physical sex characteristics is collectively referred to as *intersex conditions* (APA:2006). These conditions can involve abnormalities of the external genitals, internal reproductive organs, sex chromosomes or sex-related hormones. Einar has an underdeveloped ovaries tangled with his intestines. Bolk wants to try another surgery to graft tissue from healthy ovaries onto Lili's. The second surgery is to transplant tissues of ovaries into Einar's underdeveloped ovaries. The third surgery is to remove Einar's penis

and to make a vagina transplant or vaginoplasty for Lili so that she can be a fully woman. The process of vaginoplasty is a reconstructive plastic surgery and cosmetic procedure for the vaginal canal and its mucous membranes. After the third surgery, Lili takes more times to recover this surgery. Lili takes morphine tablets to reduce her post surgery pains.

Lili is in Copenhagen with Greta, when Professor Bolk wants to perform another surgery to Lili. This time is Bolk wants to transplant a uterus into Lili so she might be able to have kids. With the rekindled relationship with Henrik, Lili immediately agrees. However, Greta does not.

“Nobody can make a man pregnant. That’s what he’s promising to do. It’ll never happen. Not to you or to anyone. Something like that was never meant to be.” (Ebershoff, 2000:138).

Greta thinks that there is no one who is able to make a man pregnant. Deep down she also does not want to lose the last reminding of Einar, her husband. Lili reminds Greta that they thought it was impossible for a man to become a woman, but Greta still refuses to go. Greta’s rejection hurts Lili but it does not discourage.

Lili goes alone to Professor Bolk, in hopes that the surgery is a success so that she can be a mother. However, the final surgery did not go well. Lili has been in extreme pain and bleeding for six weeks. All surgery carries the risks of infection, bleeding, and a need to return for repairs. The risks that are associated with any surgical procedure are present in gender reassignment surgery. These include infection, postoperative pain, and dissatisfaction with anticipated results. Lili feels a lot of pain from the post-surgical infection. Lili knows that she is

dying. Lili dies while she is watching Elbe River, after three sex reassignment surgeries to turn her into a woman.

4.2. Greta Wegener's Role in Einar's Transition

Greta Wegener has an important role in Einar's decision to undergo a transgendered transition. Before becoming a husband and wife, Greta Wegener is known as Greta Waud, an heiress of an orange plantation in Pasadena, California. Greta meets Einar for the first time at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen. The first time she sees him she thinks Einar as a small shy and easily embarrassed man, so much different than Greta's tall broad stature.

Six years into the marriage, Greta asks Einar to do something for her, posing as a woman to her unfinished painting.

His wife knew first.(Ebershoff, 2000:1)

This indicates that Greta sees the potential for Lili within Einar before Einar even does. So she asks Einar to wear the stockings and women's shoes.

"You're a whore," the sailor below called tenderly. "You're one hell of a beautiful whore." From downstairs, the silence implied a forgiving kiss.(Ebershoff, 2000:6)

The exclamations of the sailor and his wife represent the hidden thought of Greta and Einar. This is what Greta thinks of Einar when he wears the dress. Greta is the main reason why Einar starts to question his gender identity.

After the painting, Einar starts to wonder about Lili and wants to cross-dress in order to satisfy his desire. Greta encourages it to happen, thinking it is just a game and Lili is the character that Einar is playing. After Einar seeks

permission from Greta, Einar almost immediately change into Lili. Greta, at first does not recognize Lili.

When she opened the door, she found a girl sitting in the rope-bottom chair, and at first Greta couldn't think who she was. [...]The girl—did Greta know her?—smelled of mint and milk. The sailor below was yelling at his wife, and each time the word “whore” came through the floorboards, the girl's neck would blush. And then it would fade. “*Luder*,” the man yelled over and over, and so rose and fell the flush in the girl's throat (Ebershoff, 2000:11).

The sailor's yell represents Greta's unspoken thought of Lili, when she sees Lili at the apartment. She does not realize who the girl is, and thinks that she is indeed a whore. When she finally realizes who Lili is, she calm down although still does not know how to act.

Greta is the main supporter of Einar's transition into Lili. She would do anything to make Einar happy even encourages Einar to live as Lili. She is also the person who debuting Lili for the first time to the public. When Einar does not want to go to the Artists Ball, she persuades Einar to go out as Lili by saying that when Einar is cross-dressing it will be like fooling the public with their game of pretend. While Einar does not want to go, Lili does and very excited to go.

Lili inspires Greta. Lili is a living work of art, and a true artist knows a work of art when she sees it. As Greta starts to paint Lili and actually success in selling the painting, the Lili Thrice, Greta starts to demand Lili to appear more and more.

“I need to see Lili every day,” Greta said to him. [...] “I need to paint Lili every day,” Greta said. “I need your help.” (Ebershoff, 2000:46)

Greta's need to see Lili even more frequently pushes Einar further to try to find out, how a woman behave which flares to Einar's desire to come out even more. It is because when someone constructs their gender identity, he will do it

based on the cultural repetition that he gets from the society to make his gender identity as natural as possible. Thus makes Einar after cross-dressing more and more into Lili as Greta's demand, he will construct his new gender identity based on the repetition he gets when he become Lili, how she behave, her gesture or even from the clothing she choose. This behavior constructs how Einar perform his performance as Lili to construct his new gender identity, Lili.

Another reason why Greta has a huge role in Einar's transgendered transition is because Greta knows what it feels like to desperately want her own identity. Both she and Einar want to be their own person. Greta, who grew up in California, feels stifled, so she moves to Denmark, a country smaller than the state of California: "Greta agreed that it didn't make sense, but this was how she felt" (Ebershoff, 2000:18) She needed to get out, to find new space to be herself in. The setting of the time, 1925 – 1931, doesn't make sense for a man to want to be a woman—there aren't the social understandings of gender and trans identities that exists now—but Greta is able to identify with her husband because she has felt similarly, albeit without the need to shift her gender presentation.

In the end Greta deserves credit for creating Lili herself. It's Greta who puts the dress on Einar; it's Greta who names her Lili; it's Greta who encourages Lili to come out. And it's Greta who finds Professor Bolk to perform the surgery on Einar, helping alter his body so he can better live as Lili all the time.

4.3. The Discussion on Einar's Transition

The view of gender is performative search to show what people take as an internal essence of gender which construct by keeping up sets of acts that posited

through the stylization of the body (Butler, 1999:xv). It showed by looking at Einar's acts to get his father's attention and his behavior in public. Gender is performing several behaviors that appropriate in society. The performance based on the universal agreements that constructs the appearance as natural as possible. The desire to stylization of one body did not connected with another as one person's desire is different to one another and to the society, that desire is considered queer. The psychological also named that desire as gender dysphoria or transgender. The term of transgender is just a term to help people like Einar to realize their desire. Transgender or Gender Dysphoria makes trans people do not feel the judgment and help them to gain the knowledge about being a transgender.

Einar Wegener is one of the people who experienced significant dysphoria after posing as a woman for his wife's painting. After that he tries to find out his real identity by cross dressed as a girl who is named by his wife's chosen name Lili. In his transition process, his wife and best friends are supporting him, even when he is anxious and confused on his gender identity. His transformation includes changing into a woman by sex reassignment surgery which in the end help Einar get his desire to be a woman happens. According to Butler this desire is not a queer thing, it happens naturally. Gender is always a doing though not a doing by subject who might be said to pre-exist the deed (Butler, 1999:33). Meaning, even when Einar as a child who play dress up with his late mother's dress and he as a cross-dresser later in life, he was doing what he always wants to be a girl. Einar performs what the society deems appropriate as a man.

The distress that Einar feels happens because the abandonment issue he gets from his father and grandmother. They are either too sick or busy to tend to Einar. Then later in life when Einar is adult, unconsciously he still tries to find a maternal figure which he finds in his wife, Greta. When she put him on a dress, it makes Einar question his gender identity. Then when the game of pretend which Einar is posing as a female cross-dresser becomes too dangerous for Einar's gender identity and Lili becomes Greta's painting inspiration makes Lili (Einar's cross-dressed character) develop more personality the more frequent Einar becomes Lili and soon it will make Einar completely disappears and Lili will take his place in the society.

Einar's acceptance to his gender identity affected his life and others, especially his wife. He starts to visits Madame Jasmin-Carton's place to examine how woman behave, talk and how to move just like a woman. In Madame Jasmin-Carton's place, Einar also realizes there are not much times left for Einar's existence as Lili is starting to take over the body. Since he already accepts his gender identity and his wife and friends are supporting him, he will start the process of changing himself into Lili's. Their support to Einar's transition to Lili makes his transition goes smoothly and Greta's sacrifice for her husband's happiness is worth it in the end as Lili accepts her death happily as she dies as a woman, her true identity. In the end, when Einar starts to question his birth assigned gender identity then later construct a new gender identity as Lili, he performs the cultural repetition from the society of how women should behave in order to make his new gender identity, Lili as natural as possible. In another word,

Einar is trapped on the social construction that the society has built in order to create unspoken rules of how women and men should behave in accordance of their gender identity.