

**THE MAIN CHARACTER'S POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS
DISORDER IN MITCH ALBOM'S *THE NEXT PERSON YOU
MEET IN HEAVEN***

THESIS

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**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI MAULANA MALIK
IBRAHIM MALANG
2024**

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MITCH ALBOM'S *THE NEXT PERSON YOU MEET IN HEAVEN***

THESIS

Presented to
Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang
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MALANG
2024**

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I state that the thesis entitled "*The Main Character's Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in Mitch Albom's The Next Person You Meet in Heaven*" is my original work. I do not include any materials previously written or published by another person, except those cited as references and written in the bibliography. I confirm that no portion of this work is Artificial Intelligence (AI) generated. Hereby, if there is any objections or claims, I am the only person who is responsible for that.

Malang, June 26th, 2024

The researcher



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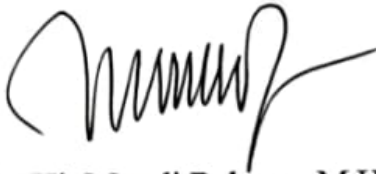
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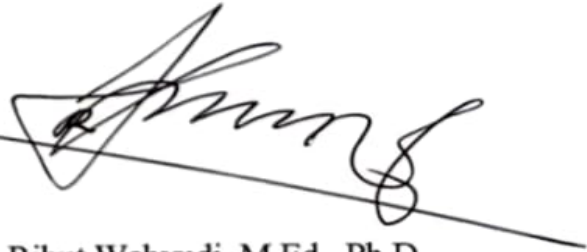
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MOTTO

Just shine like the stars above.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to:

My beloved parents, who rest in peace, M. Irfa'i and Istiani

My beloved sisters, Masnu'atul Khuluqy and Khanifatul Ghorizah

Myself, Murtafi'atul Fitriani

My dearest friends and precious people in my life who always give me support
to do this work

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Bismillahirrahmanirrahiim,

First of all, the writer wants to express her thanks to Allah SWT, because of His blessing and grace, so that the writer is completely able to finish the thesis entitled *The Main Character's Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in Mitch Albom's The Next Person You Meet in Heaven*. Good blessings and wishes may be given to the prophet Muhammad SAW, his family, friends, and followers until the end of time.

The writer realizes that the thesis would never have been successful without the help and support of the people around me. First of all, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the advisor, Dr. Hj. Mundi Rahayu, M. Hum., who has helped provide criticism and suggestions in preparing my thesis. I also thank all the English Letters Department lecturers, who have provided useful knowledge during my study in this department.

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Last, I admit this thesis is far from perfect and lacks many. Thus, criticism and suggestions are welcome to improve this work. Hopefully, this thesis will benefit other researchers and people who read it.

Malang, June 26th, 2024

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ABSTRACT

Fitriani, Murtafi'atul. 2024. *The Main Character's Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in Mitch Albom's The Next Person You Meet in Heaven*. Undergraduate Thesis. Department of English Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Advisor Dr. Hj. Mundi Rahayu, M. Hum.

Keywords: Psychological Approach, Traumatic Events, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

This research aims to analyze the post-traumatic stress disorder experienced by the main character in novel *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven* by Mitch Albom. *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven* by Mitch Albom was published in the United States of America in 2018. The novel is the main object of this research. The problem formulation in this research is: What are the traumatic events that the main character experiences in Mitch Albom's *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven*? What are the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder experienced by the main character in Mitch Albom's *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven*? This research data was obtained from the novel *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven* written by Mitch Albom using reading and note-taking techniques. To achieve the research objectives, the author uses literary criticism in analyzing the novel. Then, the author uses a psychological approach and PTSD theory by Gerald C. Davison. The results of this research show two findings in response to the problem statement. The first is Annie's traumatic events. Researcher found three traumatic events in Annie, namely threatened death, serious injury, and the threat of physical integrity. The second is Annie's symptoms of PTSD. Researcher found three symptoms in Annie: re-experience symptoms, avoidance symptoms, and hyperarousal symptoms.

مستخلص البحث

فتراني، مرتفعة. ٢٠٢٤. اضطراب ما بعد الصدمة لدى الشخصية الرئيسية في كتاب "الشخص التالي الذي تقابله في الجنة" لمؤلفه ميتش ألجوم. أطروحة بكالوريوس. قسم الأدب الإنجليزي، كلية العلوم الإنسانية، جامعة الإسلام الحكومية مولانا مالك إبراهيم مالانج. المشرف: الدكتورة حجة موندري رحايو، ماجستير في العلوم الإنسانية

الكلمات الرئيسية: النهج النفسي، الأحداث الصدمية، اضطراب ما بعد الصدمة

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل اضطراب ما بعد الصدمة الذي يعاني منه الشخصية الرئيسية في رواية "الشخص التالي الذي تقابله في الجنة" لمؤلفه ميتش ألجوم. تم نشر "الشخص التالي الذي تقابله في الجنة" لمؤلفه ميتش ألجوم في الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية في عام ٢٠١٨. هذه الرواية هي الموضوع الرئيسي لهذه الدراسة. تم إجراء هذه الأطروحة لتحليل الأحداث الصادمة وأعراض اضطراب ما بعد الصدمة عند الشخصية الرئيسية، آني. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى معرفة الأحداث الصادمة وأعراض اضطراب ما بعد الصدمة عند آني. صياغة المشكلة في هذه الدراسة هي: ما هي الأحداث الصادمة التي تعرض لها الشخصية الرئيسية في رواية "الشخص التالي الذي تقابله في الجنة" لميتش ألجوم؟ وما هي أعراض اضطراب ما بعد الصدمة التي يعاني منها الشخص الرئيسي في هذه الرواية؟ تم الحصول على بيانات هذه الدراسة من رواية "الشخص التالي الذي تقابله في الجنة" التي كتبها ميتش ألجوم باستخدام تقنيات القراءة والملاحظة. لتحقيق أهداف الدراسة، استخدم الباحث النقد الأدبي في تحليل الرواية، ثم استخدم النهج النفسي ونظرية اضطراب ما بعد الصدمة من جيرالد س. ديفيسون. نتائج هذا البحث تظهر وجود نتيجتين كإجابة على بيان المشكلة. الأولى هي الأحداث الصادمة التي تعرضت لها آني. اكتشف الباحث ثلاثة أحداث صدمة لآني، وهي التهديد بالموت، والإصابة الجسيمة، والتهديد بالسلامة الجسدية. الثانية هي أعراض اضطراب ما بعد الصدمة لدى آني. اكتشف الباحث ثلاثة أعراض لدى آني: أعراض إعادة التجربة، وأعراض التجنب، وأعراض الفرع الزائدة.

ABSTRAK

Fitriani, Murtafi'atul. 2024. *Gangguan Stres Pasca-Trauma pada Tokoh Utama dalam The Next Person You Meet in Heaven karya Mitch Albom.* Skripsi Sarjana. Jurusan Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Humaniora, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Pembimbing Dr. Hj. Mundi Rahayu, M. Hum.

Kata kunci : *Pendekatan Psikologis, Peristiwa Traumatis, Gangguan Stres Pasca Trauma (PTSD)*

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis gangguan stres pasca-trauma yang dialami oleh tokoh utama dalam novel *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven* karya Mitch Albom. *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven* karya Mitch Albom diterbitkan di Amerika Serikat pada tahun 2018. Novel ini adalah objek utama dari penelitian ini. Rumusan masalah dalam penelitian ini adalah: Apa saja peristiwa traumatis yang dialami oleh tokoh utama dalam *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven* karya Mitch Albom? Apa saja gejala gangguan stres pasca trauma yang dialami oleh tokoh utama dalam *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven* karya Mitch Albom? Data penelitian ini diperoleh dari novel *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven* yang ditulis oleh Mitch Albom dengan menggunakan teknik membaca dan pencatatan. Untuk mencapai tujuan penelitian, penulis menggunakan kritik sastra dalam menganalisis novel tersebut. Kemudian, penulis menggunakan pendekatan psikologis dan teori PTSD oleh Gerald C. Davison. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan dua temuan sebagai jawaban atas rumusan masalah. Pertama adalah peristiwa traumatis yang dialami Annie. Peneliti menemukan tiga peristiwa traumatis pada Annie, yaitu ancaman kematian, cedera serius, dan ancaman terhadap keselamatan fisik. Kedua adalah gejala PTSD pada Annie. Peneliti menemukan tiga gejala pada Annie: gejala pengalaman ulang (*re-experience symptoms*), gejala menghindar (*avoidance symptoms*), dan gejala kewaspadaan yang berlebihan (*hyperarousal symptoms*).

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher provides an introduction relevant to the study. This will include the background of the study, research questions, significance of the study, scope and limitation, and definition key of terms.

A. Background of the Study

Many people struggle with psychological problems like anxiety, dread, sadness, or depression, which are signs of the mental disorders they suffer (Satriawan & Rahayu, 2020). One of the most particular mental disorders is post-traumatic stress disorder (Atkinson et al., 1983). According to Gerald C. Davison et al. (2012), Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder – PTSD is a mental disorder that occurs because a person has experienced, witnessed, or been confronted with an event or an even, involving actual threatened death, serious injury, and threat to physical integrity to the individual or others, where he/she showed fear, extreme stress, and helplessness. PTSD is a kind of mental health that a person develops after going through some evil incidents in the past (Davison et al., 2012).

PTSD is well known to be mental health disorder that can occur in a person after he or she has experienced or been involved in a major traumatic event such as physical assault, rape, or threatened or actual serious injury or death (Bisson et al., 2015). This can be primary, where they directly form part of the materials, where the trauma occurred, or learning that the trauma occurred to a friend or family member, primary of aversive aspects of the trauma, which usually are in line with

their professional responsibilities (Carello et al., 2015). PTSD is in the Trauma and Stressor-Related Disorders class and it features reliving of the incident in the form of flashbacks, nightmares, increased fear, and thoughts that are uncontrollable (Digangi et al., 2013).

According to Davison's perspective, re-experience symptoms, avoidance symptoms, and hyperarousal symptoms are the three primary types of symptoms that indicate post-traumatic stress disorder (Davison et al., 2012).

1. **Re-experience symptoms:** This refers to the recurrence of symptoms, such as vividly recalling an unpleasant situation or experiencing the same symptoms again. The person who suffers from posttraumatic stress syndrome always feels restless after the trauma. Davison's perspective suggests that individuals with post-traumatic stress disorder may exhibit symptoms such as severe psychological distress when confronted with a symbolic or reminiscent element of a traumatic event, recurring and intrusive memories of the distressing event including images, thoughts, or ideas, nightmares involving the traumatic event, reenactment of the traumatic event through behaviors or emotions, and physiological reactions (Davison et al., 2012).
2. **Avoidance Symptoms:** Those who have been under stress always try very hard not to get in such situations anymore so as to avoid having those memories. Deliberate avoidance indicated by individuals suffering from PTSD consists primarily of efforts not to think about the

stressful situation itself but also of trying to keep away from places, objects and people which could remind them of it (Davison et al., 2012).

3. Hyperarousal Symptoms: These might have been symptoms resulting from shock. That may be called overexcitement. Patients with so-called 'post-shock syndrome' suffer not only from disturbed dreaming during their first days after the death but also from severe restlessness, irritation, deep depression, fearfulness, or unpredictable outbursts of rage. Individuals with this condition may also experience challenges in maintaining focus, displaying a lack of attention, being excessively alert, or exhibiting exaggerated responses to sudden (Davison et al., 2012).

Annie, the main character in Mitch Albom's (2018) *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven*, is an excellent illustration of someone who has been battling with traumatic events in her whole life. In the prequel, Annie is a young girl who survives an amusement park accident, which causes her to lose her left hand. Unfortunately, she cannot remember how the accident made her lose her left hand. Fortunately, her hand succeeded in the surgery case and attracted people's attention, including her father, who left her and her mother. Since then, they have moved out of that house and avoided social life. Her mother never let Annie talk or befriend anybody else; she was overprotective towards her daughter.

Annie feels that her freedom is seized and that all the mistakes she makes cause her rebellion. She runs away and lives with her boyfriend. She is desperate to

live separately from her mother and start living independently. Annie's anger towards her mother's entrapment also sets them apart from each other. Annie becomes a girl who grows up miserable and survives with the bad memories of the past. The pressure from constantly losing a particular person inflicts some unwanted symptoms. She easily feels guilty about those experiences and always blames herself for everything that happens in her life is her mistake. Those symptoms are similar to someone who suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder. When someone suffers from trauma, she will obviously experience this symptom in their life.

Davison's psychological approach to the theory of PTSD provides a structured framework for analyzing the symptoms exhibited by literary characters. PTSD can significantly impact an individual's daily functioning and quality of life. In literary works, characters experiencing PTSD provide rich opportunities for analysis, allowing readers to explore the psychological depth and emotional struggles of these individuals. By identifying and categorizing these symptoms, the researcher can generate a comprehensive understanding of the main character's PTSD. For instance, in the novel *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven*, Annie's experience of a near-fatal accident twice in her life indicates the reexperiencing symptoms. Her avoidance of the place that integrates with her traumatic events demonstrates avoidance behaviour, and her anxiety towards the accident in Ruby Pier represents the hyperarousal symptoms. Those are the reasons why the issue is particularly important to be discussed.

Also, hardly many scholars have talked about this novel. A study conducted under the title *Understanding Semantics Through Stylistics: A Study on Mitch Albom's Fiction* utilises the novel *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven* as one of the objects. Through detailed textual analysis, the author illustrates how Albom's stylistic nuances serve to convey complex semantic layers, making his fiction both accessible and philosophically rich. This comprehensive study underscores the importance of stylistics in unpacking the semantic intricacies of literature, offering valuable insights for both literary scholars and enthusiasts of Albom's poignant storytelling (Suganthi & Dhanalakshmi, 2021).

A few other researchers have reviewed the novel and analyzed its intrinsic aspects, but none have gone into further detail or depth in discussion. According to a book review site, the author, Alex Yard, reviews the narration in the novel *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven*. The “transitions” in the novel between each of the five people Annie meets feature all manner of surreal, abstract assaults on the senses. The book's ending is particularly offensive because it uses a cop-out that shamelessly removes the stakes the story had been built upon. It truly has its cake and eats it, too. The kind of convenient solutions Albom uses here are unacceptable since they deceive the reader in an effort to surprise and satisfy them (Yard, 2018). On another site, Book Reporter, the author compliments the storytelling and message of the novel. In Albom's trademark narrating brilliance, what occurs in Annie's afterlife uncovers the pieces of her lifespan that she had been missing and gives her a comprehension she had yearned for in her childhood.

*As with all of his books, *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven* acknowledges that we don't always know how much we meant to someone or the role that we played in their lives. The twists and surprises here are reminders of just how unexpected and joyous life can be. As he has done before, Albom offers hope in a magical story of life and death and life again (O'Hara, 2018).*

Therefore, based on the reviews above, this novel is the perfect object to analyze, especially for the main character, Annie.

Several studies applied the concept of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder symptoms outlined by Gerald C. Davison. In the study *Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in *The Yellow Birds*: A Case-Study in the Light of Psychoanalytical*, the researchers explore the complex psychological landscape of the protagonist, using this as a copy to complete their own depictions. Davison's theory helps readers understand this leading character's suffering and pain. The study details the key traumatic events depicted in *The Yellow Birds*, namely being exposed to combat horrors elsewhere as well as here; and the subsequent loss of comrades who had developed an important role and function out there. In a detailed examination, researchers examine the protagonist's mental pathology under Davison's four major criteria for PTSD—recurrent intrusive recollection, avoidance, lack of consolation, and irritability. Inconsistencies ever exist in the comprehensive picture offered by the authors of this case study. This analysis illustrates, as well as anything could, how widespread is the trauma of a violent age. This lens of Davison's cognitive-behavior approach offers a double advantage, not only delivering deeper insights into war-induced trauma in literature but also allowing us to think more about the story itself and its mental logic (Sagar & Shehadah, 2021).

The study entitled *Post-traumatic Stress Disorder Experienced by Said and Safeya in Ghassan Kanafani's Aid Ila Haifa Based on The Perspective of Gerald C. Davison*, the characters Said and Safeya experience post-traumatic stress disorder in Ghassan Canaan's *Aid Ila Haifa* in from a Davison-influenced viewpoint, in which the cognitive-behavioral models of that scholar were formed enough to allow readers with sufficient effort to interpret the instantly visual. The study uses Davison's cognitive-behavioral framework to disentangle the great psychological distress faced by Said and Safeya. Through Davison's theory lens, which insists that cognitive processing and behavioral reactions are central in demons with guns, sorts of pike ops, and PTSD, the work pays very close attention to details such as displacement, homelessness, and living in terror. The same method has identified all four PTSD symptoms outlined by Davison, i.e. intrusion of memories, never giving up an escape where trauma-related events take place, and anything related to aversive things or places is avoided at all costs. Dysphonia, which progressively grew worse yet, intense uneasiness about everything in human life, as well as an ever-growing negative mood, can bring the abyss down on any attempts for a happy smile from those who use their actual powers scripted in life. The researchers successfully elicit the challenges that traumatized persons meet by utilizing this conceptual framework and shed light on not only their past trauma but also mental health as it affects them as they are today. Thus, the examination of *Aid Ila Haifa* through this avenue not only lends insight into the character of PTSD within narratives at large but also provides yet another example of Davison's

approach applying to literature and trauma analysis, spotlighting detailed aspects of the characters' psychological reality (Rosyada, 2022).

Another study was carried out by Ardesis (2022) in a book titled *Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in the Stationery Shop Novel By Marjan Kamali*, whereby the author applies Gerald C. Davison's cognitive-behavioral theory to analyze the distinct psychological journey of the story's major characters. Following Davison's framework that highlights the cognitive processes and behavioral patterns as essential factors influencing the development and maintenance of PTSD, the researchers define and discuss the trauma that molds the characters' existence. Such events are political revolutions, loss of a close one, or feelings of separation in themselves. By using Davison's criteria for PTSD, the study focuses on aspects like recurrences, avoidance, changes in emotional responding, cognition and increased reactivity. Using this perspective, it is possible to consider how such traumatic events affect the characters' psychological status, as well as their actions. In addition to enhancing an academic insight of PTSD in light of *The Stationery Shop* narrative, this research contributes to a practical application of cognitive-behavioral theory formulated by Davison toward understanding characters' psychological development and a novel's portrayal of trauma (Ardesis, 2022).

Another paper entitled *A Soldier's Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in Kevin Powers' The Yellow Birds* deals with the astoundingly deep psychological effects of the warfare within the context of the novel using the cognitive behavioral

framework by Gerald C. Davison. Taking into consideration the Davison's theory elaborated on the nature of cognitive distortions and behavioural responses as the crucial aspects of PTSD continuance, the study considers the traumatic events that the protagonist goes through, including war savagery, comrades' death, and the constant feeling of mortality. Davison, in the paper, outlines some of the symptoms of PTSD that the analysis has deemed important including intrusions, avoidance, and hyperarousal. The study shows how the symptoms play out in the actions and behavior of the main character, which shows the constant fight and suffering caused by trauma. The present application of Davison's theory enhances readers' comprehension of PTSD, considering the events and characters of *The Yellow Birds*. It shows the benefits of Davison's approaches in literary trauma analysis while providing a new understanding of the major character's state and the message of the novel about the viciousness of war (Satriawan & Rahayu, 2020).

The paper entitled *The Effect of Traumatic Experience to Personality Types in the Novel Girl in Pieces* calls for the analysis of the element of trauma in the book in response to Gerald C. Davison's cognitive-behavioral framework. According to the theory of Davison, which points to high levels of determining reaction based on cognitive processes and a behavioral model of PTSD, the work carefully and thoroughly illustrates the major suffering of a protagonist, including an attempt at suicide, abandonment, and different types of abuse. According to Davison, the study focuses on the following PTSD symptoms: re-experiencing, avoidance, and hyperarousal. In this way, focusing on how these symptoms affect the nature of the protagonist, the work explores the interrelation between trauma

and the self in detail. The primary focus of this graduate work enriches the knowledge of participants and scholars about the explicit diagnosing of PTSD within the narrative of *Girl in Pieces*; moreover, it also illustrates the relevance of applying Davison's cognitive-behavioral approach within the literary context by presenting accounts of the protagonist's psychological afflictions and trauma in the novel (Oktaviani, 2021).

Building upon the past study mentioned earlier, the researcher utilizes those studies as a foundation to introduce novel findings in this current research. To explore innovative approaches that researchers have not previously employed in studying a novel, particularly in the case of *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven*. Based on the prior studies, the researcher can determine the extent of the examination carried out regarding the novel *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven* by other researchers. This facilitates the identification of new findings within this research.

The main character of the book *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven* suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder as a result of a near-fatal accident event, although this topic has not been covered in any of those studies. Thus, the distinction between this research and the related reviews above is how the application of Gerald C. Davison's perspective on PTSD to analyze the traumatic events and the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder in the novel *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven*.

Therefore, in this paper, the researcher is eager to find out the main character's post-traumatic stress disorder events and the symptoms in Mitch Albom's novel *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven* using Gerald C. Davison's perspective on post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Regarding this case, the researcher tries to fill the gap in previous research so that it can increase research to complete theories that have never been used in the novel *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven*.

B. Research Question

The research is expected to be able to address the following issues, according to the justification provided above for the study:

1. What are the traumatic events that the main character experiences in Mitch Albom's *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven*?
2. What are the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder experienced by the main character in Mitch Albom's *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven*?

C. Significances of The Study

The study can contribute in two ways, theoretically and practically. First, it can theoretically provide insights or comprehension of traumatic events and the symptoms of PTSD in the novel *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven*. Second, this study might help another researcher who aspires to analyze practically by using this research as a reference in the future.

D. Scope and Limitation

This study examines the traumatic events and symptoms of the main characters in Mitch Albom's novel *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven*. The researcher analyzes the novel using literary criticism and psychological approaches.

E. Definition Key of Terms

This section specifies the essential terms to prevent the misinterpretation of analyzing the post-traumatic stress disorder experienced by the main character in the novel *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven*. These terms are the most related to the study.

1. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder – PTSD is a mental disorder that occurs because a person has experienced, witnessed, or been confronted with an event or an even, involving actual threatened death, serious injury, and threat to physical integrity to the individual or others, where he/she showed fear, extreme stress, and helplessness. PTSD is a kind of mental health that a person develops after going through some evil incidents in the past (Davison et al., 2012).
2. Post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms are indicated by three primary types according to Davison's perspective: re-experience symptoms, avoidance symptoms, and hyperarousal symptoms (Davison et al., 2012).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW ON RELATED LITERATURE

In this chapter, the researcher provides the theories and concepts that are relevant to the study. These are psychology and literature, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

A. Psychological Approach

Psychology and literature have a close relationship. According to the book *Theory of Literature* by Rene Wellek and Austin Warren, the psychological analysis of literature encompasses various aspects such as the writer's psychology, both as a person and as a type, the creative process, the psychological kinds and laws found in literary works, and the impact of literature on its audience or readers (Wellek & Warren, 1963).

Reading literature can also help you understand yourself and other people better (Rahayu, 2020). Literature means being an audience to the thoughts and feelings of the characters, gaining relations to the characters' actions and reactions. This environment enhances empathy and fosters personal contemplation, as people get a closer look at the lives of others. In addition, based on the article by Mial and Kuiken (2002) posted in Poetics, literary analysis can bootstrap other cognitive and emotive aspects that assist in a human's psychological development and healthy mind (Mial & Kuiken, 2002). Therefore, literature is an effective tool in not only the view of the psychological aspect.

However, in another study, Miller (2019) claimed that reading literature is a mode of resilience. After all, for some people reading is just a way to turn a blind eye to what is happening around. This could be especially the case if the MG or the YA readers have had some traumatic event in their childhood or adolescence. Teenagers may be inspired to engage in the experience specialists if the characters do. The teenagers will nevertheless comprehend that they are not the only ones experiencing such issues, even if they do not. However, such literature can be found by these teenagers without any hassle. Some of the past few decades' favorite youth shows show famous characters' responses to trauma. While some of them are better and some worse, all of them are enlightening scenarios to some extent in one way or another (Miller, 2019).

Thus, it can be concluded that literature and psychology are two fields that are intertwined as they can help bring therapy and education. As Miller (2019) noted in his article, reading literature is therapeutic, especially for persons who have undergone a traumatic experience, because it helps to distract and gives the consumer a feeling of companionship with the persona in the novel (Miller, 2019). The same statement may also be aligned with Mial and Kuiken (2002), who stress that literary texts help develop a person and build psychological armor (Mial & Kuiken, 2002). This is especially so in cases of people, as the members may feel comforted and motivated by the characters with similar issues to deal with. Literature shapes one's attitude toward people and boosts self-esteem and psychological well-being by reflecting multiple aspects of life. Therefore, it is evident that literature and fiction can be therapeutic as well as an uncovering agent,

thus explaining the interconnection between people's suffering and their identity within specific conditions.

B. Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

According to Gerald C. Davison et al. (2012), Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder – PTSD is a mental disorder that occurs because a person has experienced, witnessed, or been confronted with an event or an even involving actual threatened death, serious injury, and threat to physical integrity to the individual or others, where he/she showed fear, extreme stress, and helplessness. PTSD is a kind of mental health that a person develops after going through some evil incidents in the past (Davison et al., 2012). The threatened death can be from oneself or a close one, and it can be from a direct encounter like an accident or disaster, among others. Serious injury is when the person gets or sees moderate physical violence against the body, for example, in cases of violent attacks or major accidents. A threat to physical integrity: actual or potential situations that are dangerous to the person's physical well-being; this can be observed in cases such as abuse, assaults, severe accidents, or severe medical conditions (Davison et al., 2012).

PTSD is well known to be mental health disorder that can occur in a person after he or she has experienced or been involved in a major traumatic event such as physical assault, rape, or threatened or actual serious injury or death (Bisson et al., 2015). This can be primary, where they directly form part of the materials, where the trauma occurred, or learning that the trauma occurred to a friend or family member, primary of aversive aspects of the trauma, which usually are in line with

their professional responsibilities (Carello et al., 2015). PTSD is in the Trauma and Stressor-Related Disorders class and it features reliving of the incident in the form of flashbacks, nightmares, increased fear, and thoughts that are uncontrollable (Digangi et al., 2013).

C. The Symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

According to Davison's perspective, re-experience symptoms, avoidance symptoms, and hyperarousal symptoms are the three primary types of symptoms that indicate post-traumatic stress disorder (Davison et al., 2012).

1. **Re-experience symptoms:** This refers to the recurrence of symptoms, such as vividly recalling an unpleasant situation or experiencing the same symptoms again. The person who suffers from posttraumatic stress syndrome always feels restless after the trauma. Davison's perspective suggests that individuals with post-traumatic stress disorder may exhibit symptoms such as severe psychological distress when confronted with a symbolic or reminiscent element of a traumatic event, recurring and intrusive memories of the distressing event including images, thoughts, or ideas, nightmares involving the traumatic event, reenactment of the traumatic event through behaviors or emotions, and physiological reactions (Davison et al., 2012).
2. **Avoidance Symptoms:** Those who have been under stress always try very hard not to get in such situations anymore so as to avoid having those memories. Deliberate avoidance indicated by individuals

suffering from PTSD consists primarily of efforts not to think about the stressful situation itself but also of trying to keep away from places, objects and people which could remind them of it (Davison et al., 2012).

3. Hyperarousal Symptoms: These might have been symptoms resulting from shock. That may be called overexcitement. Patients with so-called 'post-shock syndrome' suffer not only from disturbed dreaming during their first days after the death but also from severe restlessness, irritation, deep depression, fearfulness, or unpredictable outbursts of rage. Individuals with this condition may also experience challenges in maintaining focus, displaying a lack of attention, being excessively alert, or exhibiting exaggerated responses to sudden (Davison et al., 2012).

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHOD

In this chapter, the researcher highlights the research design, data and data resources, data collection, and data analysis.

A. Research Design

This study's research design applies literary criticism to describe and analyze a literary work. Gerald C. Davison's theory of PTSD will be applied to identify traumatic events and categorize the inflicted symptoms of the main character, Annie, in the novel *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven* (2018).

B. Data and Data Resources

The data resource of this research is obtained from primary data. The primary data is the object of the research, the novel *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven*. This novel was written by an American author, Mitch Albom, and published by Harper Collins Publishers in 2018. This novel was published in the United States of America, and this book's original language is English. The novel has 224 pages published in hardcover printed form and can be accessed as an e-book.

C. Data Collection

The researcher undergoes several stages in the data collection process. First, the researcher reads the novel *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven* (2018) to understand the story. Second, the researcher rereads the novel and underlines

several parts of the story that indicate traumatic events and symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder. Third, the researcher identifies Annie's traumatic events and symptoms by utilizing the theory of PTSD by Gerald C. Davison.

D. Data Analysis

The data analysis technique is a descriptive method to analyze the data through the following procedures. Firstly, the researcher tries to identify the traumatic events that are experienced by the main character. The researcher tries to identify through phrases, paragraphs, and dialogue taken directly from the novel that serve as the study's data sources (Rahayu et al., 2020). Secondly, the researcher tries to identify Annie's symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder. Those identifications utilize Gerald C. Davison's theory. Finally, the researcher draws a conclusion. The procedure is making a conclusion based on the analyzed data.

CHAPTER IV

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the researcher highlights the findings and discussion of this research, which focuses on traumatic events and the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) of the main character.

A. Annie's Traumatic Events

In this section, the researcher will the particular part is to acknowledge the traumatic events experienced by the main character, Annie, in Mitch Albom's *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven*. The traumatic events are analyzed based on Gerald C. Davison's theory, which identified into some categories, such as threatened death, serious injury, or threat to the physical integrity of self or others (Davison et al., 2012).

The threatened death can be from oneself or a close one, and it can be from a direct encounter like an accident or disaster, among others. Serious injury is when the person gets or sees moderate physical violence against the body, for example, in cases of violent attacks or major accidents. A threat to physical integrity: actual or potential situations that are dangerous to the person's physical well-being; this can be observed in cases such as abuse, assaults, severe accidents, or severe medical conditions (Davison et al., 2012).

Based on those theories, the researcher highlights three traumatic events in Annie: threatened death, serious injury, and threat to physical integrity.

1. Threatened Death

The main character of this novel, Annie, experiences a near-fatal accident. When Annie was eight years old, she and her mother went to Ruby Pier, a park near the beach in their city. Unfortunately, Annie has to experience a near-fatal accident there. There was an attraction ride called Freddy's Free Fall crash to the ground and she became one of the victims.

The fatal incident occurred when a cart came loose from a tower drop ride called Freddy's Free Fall, two hundred feet above the ground. The cart dangled like a dying leaf as riders were pulled to safety. Eddie, watching from below, realized a cable was somehow fraying. If it snapped, the cart would plummet.

"GET BACK!" he screamed.

The crowd below scattered.

But Annie, in the confusion, ran in the wrong direction. She cowered at the ride's base, too frightened to budge. The cable broke. The cart dropped. It would have crushed Annie had Eddie not dived across the platform at the last instant and shoved her out of the way. Instead, the cart landed on Eddie.

It took his life.

But it took a piece of Annie as well. Her left hand. A chunk of metal broke loose upon impact and severed that hand cleanly from the bone. Some quick-thinking workers put the bloody appendage on ice, and paramedics raced Annie to the hospital, where surgeons worked for hours to repair the tendons, nerves, and arteries, grafting skin and using plates and screws to join the hand and wrist back together.

The accident made news around the state. Journalists labeled Annie "The Little Miracle of Ruby Pier." Strangers prayed for her. Some even sought an encounter, as if, through being saved, she held a secret to immortality (Albom, 2018., p. 5-6).

The narration of the passage raised an experience when the main character Annie was almost killed. The description of the cart swinging far off from the ground and the possibility of it falling down paints the picture of risk from the earlier activities of the story. He is scrambling, trying to protect himself, and the crowd then panics even more, with Eddie screaming at the top of his lungs for them to back off. Annie's cowardliness and failure to leave the base of the ride contribute to the threat itself and heighten the risk to her life, thus forcing an impression that the falling cart could easily kill her.

The dramatic scene of the actual cart and the aftereffects on Annie – being burned with hot water and losing her left hand – are depicted. The description of what happened as cutting her hand “clean off the bone”, while the actual image of “chunk of metal” tearing through her flesh, highlights the physical pain and damage she sustained. This traumatized attack not only pried on her life but resulted in a perpetual and irreversible excision that would cause a psychological effect on her personality, leaving “a piece of Annie” all for that experience.

Another highly traumatic event is when Annie and her husband, Paulo, are exposed to a life-threatening event after falling from riding a hot air balloon. Annie witnesses the aftermath of this accident.

They continued drifting in a westward direction. The winds increased. The clouds thickened. Teddy opened a hatch, allowing hot air to escape and the balloon to go even lower, hoping to avoid the gusts. A more experienced pilot would know that doing this could increase the risk of collision with the treetops, and staying high might be the safer, if rockier, course of action. But the more experienced pilot was Tolbert, who, at that moment, was at an auto repair shop, getting a new tire. Suddenly the trees were very close. “It’s all right, no biggie,” Teddy said, “but you might want to get down, in case we scrape a branch.”

Then, as the woods drew closer, his voice intensified. “OK, get down!”

Annie and Paulo dropped inside the basket. The bottom half of the balloon smacked into high branches and the passengers were jolted to the side.

“Stay down!” Teddy yelled again. “I’m gonna land us!” He pulled the hatch even more, which caused a loud hissing sound. Looking up from her crouch, Annie glimpsed something dark and horizontal through the thick display of leaves.

Power lines.

The balloon made contact and pushed one line into another. Annie heard a sizzle. She saw a blinding flash. Sparks exploded and Teddy’s knees buckled. He hollered, “Jesus!” and the basket dropped rapidly. Annie yelled and Paulo yelled and then everything was flipping and Annie couldn’t get a straight view, trees, sky, floor, an arm, a rope, sky, shoes, fire.

They blew sideways and the basket smacked the earth, tossing the three passengers across its bottom. Annie saw flames, sky, ropes, Paulo, her elbow, blue jeans, sky, then Teddy disappeared over the side rail and the balloon began to lift again, hot air from the propane fire causing it to rise.

Suddenly, she felt Paulo’s arms hard around her ribs. “Jump, Annie!” he yelled. She saw his face for an instant, but before she could say his name, he threw her from the basket and she was falling in the air, falling and then—bang!—she hit the ground, back first.

Her vision turned to stars, a million tiny lights blocking out the sun. When she finally refocused, she watched in horror as the balloon exploded in flames, and a figure dropped towards her, growing larger as it descended, arms flailing wildly. Then Paulo, her new husband, thudded to earth. Annie screamed (Albom, 2018).

The text eloquently describes a sequence of terrifying incidents that put Annie's life in danger. There is an increasing sense of unease as the hot air balloon teeters dangerously near the treetops. Teddy tells Annie and Paulo to "get down" and "stay down" in the basket. As the balloon hits the high branches and they are shaken violently, Teddy's more urgent demands emphasize how serious the situation is.

When the balloon comes into touch with power lines, there is a sudden and dramatic increase in intensity, with a "sizzle," "blinding flash," and "sparks exploding." As the basket quickly falls toward the ground, Annie's instinctive response—"she yelled and Paulo yelled and then everything was flipping and Annie could not get a straight view"—highlights the absolute dread of the situation. The fact that the basket is described as "smacking the earth" and that Annie sees "flames, sky, ropes, Paulo, her elbow, blue jeans, sky" only highlights her severe danger.

The peak of the threatened death experience comes when Paulo physically throws Annie out of the basket, shouting "Jump, Annie!" as the balloon begins to lift again. Her panicked fall through the air—an image of "falling and then—bang!—she hit the ground, back first" — was meant to be an immediate threat to life. Too late for that, we are kept in suspense with a horrified Annie "staring in horror" at the flames bursting from the still-airborne balloon and realizing that now indeed, she is doomed "the figure had been growing larger as it descended, arms flailing wildly." This heightens the traumatic sense of the whole thing and left the

imagination on how terrible it must have felt for Annie to have survived while Paulo did not.

2. Serious Injury

As stated in the section before, Annie experiences a near-fatal accident in the novel. When Annie was eight years old, she and her mother went to Ruby Pier, a park near the beach in their city. Unfortunately, Annie has to experience a near-fatal accident there. There was an attraction ride called Freddy's Free Fall crash to the ground and she became one of the victims.

The fatal incident occurred when a cart came loose from a tower drop ride called Freddy's Free Fall, two hundred feet above the ground. The cart dangled like a dying leaf as riders were pulled to safety. Eddie, watching from below, realized a cable was somehow fraying. If it snapped, the cart would plummet.

...

But it took a piece of Annie as well. Her left hand. A chunk of metal broke loose upon impact and severed that hand cleanly from the bone. Some quick-thinking workers put the bloody appendage on ice, and paramedics raced Annie to the hospital, where surgeons worked for hours to repair the tendons, nerves, and arteries, grafting skin and using plates and screws to join the hand and wrist back together.

The accident made news around the state. Journalists labeled Annie "The Little Miracle of Ruby Pier." Strangers prayed for her. Some even sought an encounter, as if, through being saved, she held a secret to immortality (Albom, 2018., p. 5-6).

The passage vividly depicts the severe physical trauma experienced by the character Annie in the aftermath of the incident. The "chunk of metal" that shot from the window and severed her hand "cleanly from the bone" is a brutal, shocking description of some horrific injury she must have sustained. The vision of her hand lying on the ground and the level of medical detail – "The surgeons worked for hours to repair the tendons, nerves, and arteries, grafting skin and using plates and screws to join the hand and wrist back together" – once again reinforces not just

how bad an incident this must have been, but also how much horrific pain she must have gone through.

Another event happens after the accident of falling from the hot air balloon.

Annie has to witness her husband's critical condition from that.

The fall had left Annie bruised and sore, but Paulo, who dropped from forty-one feet in the air, had smashed bones, severed tendons, and damaged several vital organs. His legs, pelvis, jaw, and right shoulder were all fractured from the blunt force, but his lungs had suffered the most damage; they were lacerated and bleeding from the crushing of his chest wall. A breathing tube was inserted to keep him going, but the images showed that neither lung could be sustained. He would need a new one to live. The doctors whispered about national registries and transplant lists and who could be called on such short notice. Which was when Annie, her mouth agape throughout the conversation, abruptly spoke up (Albom, 2018).

The passage vividly describes the catastrophic injuries sustained by Annie's husband, Paulo, after he falls from the hot air balloon. The graphic depiction of his broken bones, severed tendons, and damaged vital organs paints a harrowing picture of the severe physical trauma he endured. The specific details, such as his fractured legs, pelvis, jaw, and right shoulder, as well as the laceration and bleeding of his lungs from the "crushing of his chest wall," underscore the life-threatening nature of his injuries.

It went on to underscore the seriousness of Paulo's state of health by saying a tube had been left in place "to help him breathe, sparked grave concern that the damage his lungs suffered might be too severe". The fact that he is considered to be in a state where he would even require a lung transplant simply to stay alive demonstrates both the extent of his injuries and just how close to death he lies. This has clearly put Paulo's very presence in danger, and it is up to Annie and the hospital staff to save his life. Now, the description of every bone in Paulo's body broken by

the prognosis by doctors grim of conveys to us a deep sense of Annie's agony and her terror at this terrifying injury.

3. Threat to Physical Integrity

A threat to physical integrity: actual or potential situations that are dangerous to the person's physical well-being; this can be observed in cases such as abuse, assaults, severe accidents, or severe medical conditions (Davison et al., 2012).

The first event that Annie experiences is abuse from her father. This type of abuse often involves physical, emotional, or psychological harm, where the parent uses their position of authority to exert control and inflict harm on the child. At that time, Annie is only four years old. Her parents argue before her, so she takes the chocolate to make them reconcile in the fridge. After Annie succeeds in getting the chocolate, her father slaps her several times because she takes it from the fridge even though he forbade her before.

She steps back to watch the freezer door close—and is jerked up violently by two large hands.

“You stupid brat!” her father yells, as the Hershey’s bar drops. “I told you not to do that!”

Annie feels a slap across her face and her eyes shut and the world goes black.

Another slap. Tears ooze. Another. She cries so loudly her ears hurt.

“Stop it, Jerry!” her mother hollers.

“When I say no, I mean no!”

“Stop it!”

Another slap. Annie is getting dizzy.

“JERRY!” (Albom, 2018., p. 27-28)

It describes an appalling event in which physical harm was inflicted upon Annie and the essence of her identity as a person was threatened. The graphic violence of the attack, beginning with Annie being "jerked up violently by two large

hands," sets the tone for the sense of danger and violation. The angry reaction of her father, calling her a "stupid brat," highlights or simply further confirms how abusive and hostile this condition.

The repeated hits with Annie crying out, "her ears hurt," reinforce the relentless and overpowering attack. Annie is disoriented in the passages, and the short, staccato sentences heighten the sense of her panic and desperation as she gets dizzier from the blows. The insertion of her mother's cries to save only highlights Annie's vulnerability and physical peril as the object of almost wrathful anger from her accusing father. All of this paints a picture of an adolescent having her bodily and emotional autonomy violently assaulted, which, as a direct result, has thrown her into an abyss of helplessness and distress. This traumatic experience is likely to have lasting effects on Annie's sense of safety, trust, and bodily autonomy.

Another traumatic event is coming from her mother's restrictions. After the accident that happened in Ruby Pier, her mother took Annie to move out of the house. It indicates that the entrapment is also one of the threats to physical integrity. Annie has to experience the feeling of being entrapped by her mother. Her mother never allowed Annie to socialize with strangers, even if it was from their surroundings, such as people in their new neighborhood or her friends at school.

After that, they moved to a trailer. It sat on large blocks in a treeless park, alongside other trailers. They slept, ate, bathed, and washed their clothes inside. Their only contacts with the outside world were visits to a supermarket, the local library (to get Annie books), and a nearby hospital, where Annie had her bandages replaced and her splints adjusted. Annie still could not use her left hand; sometimes she couldn't feel the tips of her fingers. She wondered if for the rest of her life she would have to do what she was doing now, carrying everything one-handed, using her elbow to hold things open.

Meanwhile, the rules of life had battened down. Annie was not allowed in the park alone. She was not allowed to walk in socks (lest she slip). A skateboard was deemed too dangerous, as was tree climbing and most playground equipment. Alone much of the time, Annie read her library books, wedging them into her weakened left hand and turning the pages with her right.

...

She never got an answer. Instead, months passed at the trailer park and Annie grew miserable. It was always hot in Arizona and the people in the park were old and boring. Lorraine did not talk to the neighbors. She told Annie not to, either. At night, Annie heard her mother crying in her bedroom. It made Annie angry (Albom, 2018).

Many of the traumatic events described in this passage are some of the threats to Annie's physical integrity. Annie becomes largely immobile and dependent on her surroundings once she makes the move to the trailer park. She is not permitted to leave the trailer on her own, ride a skateboard, climb trees, or play on playground equipment. That shows a huge infringement on the freedom to do what she wants according to her body and her daily routine.

Also, it states that Annie can only partially use her left hand and some of her fingertips are numb. This implies that her hand has been hurt to some extent, from the same trauma incident that was severe enough for her to be now band and templed with splints. These continued physical limitations and possible long-term impairment resulting from this injury pose a new threat to Annie's physical autonomy. Throughout the passage, it gives off a sense of this little girl who was brutally traumatized and has been tucked away in her mind for so long, trying to bounce back.

B. Annie's Symptoms of PTSD

The symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder will be analyzed with the application of a theory by Gerald C. Davison. There are three symptoms that lead to PTSD: re-experience symptoms, avoidance symptoms, and hyperarousal symptoms.

1. Re-experience Symptoms

Re-experience symptoms include feeling repeated distress about experiencing familiar traumatic events, which is also reflected in Annie's life in the novel. Throughout the novel, Annie exhibits several symptoms of re-experiencing the traumatic event she endured at Ruby Pier. One of the most prominent is the way she experiences intrusive, fragmented memories and flashbacks of the incident. It is depicted when Annie remembers her accident at Ruby Pier in middle school.

At the end of the week, the students were asked to report their findings. Annie rose and recited her meager facts, then quickly sat, glad that it was over. She gazed out the window, drifting, until she heard Megan, the girl who had ruined everything with Paulo, ending her report by saying, "Also, I used a computer, and I found out that Annie's 'accident' was in an amusement park and that someone died because of her."

Students gasped. One yelled, "What?" Annie flushed with chills. She began to cough. She couldn't find her breath. Her mind was racing between the faces staring at her and that day at Ruby Pier, replaying fragments, the train ride, her mother taking off with Bob. She felt woozy. Her arm slid off the desk.

"Annie, are you all right?" the teacher said. "Come here, come here, let's go . . ."

She rushed Annie out the classroom door (Albom, 2018).

Megan tells the story about how Annie had an "accident" in the classroom, leading to Annie being bombarded with painful memories. It said that her mind raced between the interested faces and that day at Ruby Pier and they were snatches, she riding on a train, her mother running off with some guy named Bob. The re-

experiencing symptoms featured in PTSD reflect this unintended recall of sensory events and discontinuous memories.

Annie has physical reactions where she feels dizzy and her temperature rises upon encountering triggers of the trauma. There is no ambiguity after Megan reveals the truth, when Annie begins to hack "her lungs out" and "fight for breath," all aboard her body shift into hyperarousal. These physical, somatic symptoms of a traumatic memory responses suggests that for Annie, the event is still being relived.

In general, Annie is portrayed in the book as being caught in a vicious loop of bothersome recollections, flashbacks, and bodily reactions that keep her from understanding and getting over the traumatic experience at Ruby Pier. These symptoms of reliving the event emphasize the incident's long-lasting psychological effects on her.

2. Avoidance Symptoms

Avoidance symptoms, as defined by Gerald C. Davidson, include efforts to avoid distressing memories, thoughts, feelings, or external reminders of the traumatic event. It is depicted in the first time when reporters find out the location of Annie's house and want to interview her as the survivor of the accident in Ruby Pier. Once the reporter finds them, Annie gets shut by her mother to talk about the accident that she has experienced.

*She hears something from downstairs. A knocking at the door. Strange. People usually ring the bell. Annie walks down the steps and hears the knocking again, soft, tentative. She turns the knob.
A woman is standing on the porch. She wears a bright red blazer, lip gloss, and thick pancake makeup that makes her skin a single shade.*

“Oh, wow,” the woman says. “You’re Annie, right?”

Annie nods.

“How’re you doing, sweetheart?”

“OK,” Annie mumbles.

“We’ve been worried about you.”

“Why?”

The woman, who keeps smiling, is motioning behind her back, as if pushing the air forward.

“Do you know how lucky you are?” she says.

“I don’t feel lucky,” Annie says.

“You don’t? Well. That’s understandable. Does your arm still hurt? Say, my friend is coming. Can you tell him—and me—about what happened?”

Annie is confused. She sees a man hurrying their way, carrying a large camera on his shoulders. She sees others behind him, running.

“Start with what you remember,” the woman says. “You went to Ruby Pier and—”

Annie steps back. All these people are on the porch, pushing cameras and microphones at her face. Suddenly, she feels a jerk on her shirt. Her mother steps in front of her, pushing Annie back. Annie smells the cigarette smoke on her mother’s clothes.

“Leave us alone!” her mother yells. “I’ll call the police! I swear I will!”

She slams the door shut. She turns her angry face towards Annie (Albom, 2018).

After the unpleasant event, Annie grows to hate the accident that caused her loss of hand. She ignores it and never wants to know about that near-fatal accident anymore.

Her mother tears up. Annie runs upstairs and slams her bedroom door. This is how it is now. Every day, one of them is crying. Annie hates it. She hates her hand. She hates her bandages. She hates the way people are acting towards her. She hates whatever happened at Ruby Pier, something she can’t even remember (Albom, 2018).

Annie, according to the passage, is demonstrating PTSD-associated avoidance symptoms which she experienced at Ruby Pier. As the woman on the porch questions Annie about what happened, even before the details are out of her mouth, Annie takes a step back and looks bewildered, crestfallen, and disabled. By avoiding this behavior, she is actively trying to avoid talking or remembering and reliving the incident.

In addition, when a crowd of people with cameras and microphones starts pushing in on her, Annie’s reaction becomes even more obvious: she actually tries

to physically retreat from them; her mother has to step in and aggressively tell the people to leave us alone. This strong physical repugnance for the reporters and their probing questions also implies that Annie is deeply distressed and don't-want-to-be-reminded-about-it — just after the trauma it seems only natural that you would avoid discussing what happened to you or even thinking about it.

Similarly, Annie displays explicit avoidance when she exhibits strong avoidance behaviors in response to the traumatic event she has experienced at Ruby Pier. When her mother starts to cry, for example, Annie runs away immediately: “Annie started running up the stairs and slammed her bedroom door.” Avoidance is one of the hallmarks of PTSD, and such a sudden and complete withdrawal from people and situations that arouse distressing trauma-related emotions or memories is a typical way of displaying avoidance. Moreover, Annie hates so many things about what she is currently experiencing – her hand, how people are treating her, the bandages. She even claims to hate whatever it was that happened, but cannot remember doing so (and eventually decides she “detests” being asked about it). This of course shows that Annie avoids everything related to the trauma itself in order not to experience a distressing reaction.

Another avoidance symptom inflicted after spending her life living with entrapment by her mother, Annie decides to seize the freedom that she has not had since she was little. She finds a way to escape from her mother's restrictions by having a boyfriend. She plans to run away from her mother and live with her boyfriend after the high school graduation ceremony.

The change in schools made Annie more determined to escape Lorraine's restrictions. By senior year, she found a way to circumvent them altogether. A boyfriend with a car.

...

Annie did. She walked off the stage and went straight to the parking lot, where Walt was waiting by his green Nissan coupe.

"Yay, you're done," he deadpanned.

"Thank God," Annie said.

"Where do you want to go?"

"Anywhere."

"You need to call your mom?"

"I told her not to come. She probably came anyhow."

"She's still in the audience?"

"I guess."

Walt looked over her shoulder. "Guess again."

Annie turned to see her mother, in a turquoise skirt and blazer, a cloche hat on her head, wobbling across the school's front lawn, her high heels catching in the grass. She waved her arms and yelled, "Annie! What are you doing?" The wind was blowing and she grabbed her hat to hold it down.

"Let's go," Annie mumbled.

"You don't want to wait?"

"I said, let's go."

She got in the car and slammed the door shut. Walt started the engine. They drove off, leaving Lorraine, hand on her hat, watching them zoom past a sign that read CONGRATULATIONS, GRADUATES!

Annie didn't speak to her for a year (Albom, 2018).

Annie behaves as one with the avoidance symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder; she does not want to stick around or face her mother Lorraine, an overbearing and overpowering woman who has made Annie's life miserable since she learned to speak and walk. One the graduation day, Annie dashes into her boyfriend's car immediately after the ceremony so that she isn't there when her mother comes out to avoid being together with this woman.

In addition, the passage reveals that after this incident, Annie did not speak to her for a year-marking a year-long break from communication as well as caring for her mother. The continued avoidance of Lorraine, her mother, is a result of Annie using this as a symptom to get away from the actual source of her pain and turmoil - her mother can be controlling and overbearing. Physically eschewing

Lorraine, Annie spares herself emotionally as well. Here Annie makes a bid for the last vestige of independence stolen from her by how she was raised.

3. Hyperarousal Symptoms

The first event is when she and her husband, Paulo, experience an accident while riding the hot air balloon. Because of that, Paulo is in critical condition, and Annie feels she has to take responsibility.

...A breathing tube was inserted to keep him going, but the images showed that neither lung could be sustained. He would need a new one to live. The doctors whispered about national registries and transplant lists and who could be called on such short notice. Which was when Annie, her mouth agape throughout the conversation, abruptly spoke up.

“Take mine.”

“What?”

“My lung. You have to take it.”

“Annie, it’s not an option—”

“Yes, it is. It can save him!”

A debate quickly followed, as her uncle and others tried to convince Annie this was wrong. But she was screaming and resolute, and as a nurse she was versed in the minimum requirements for transplants, like blood type (which Annie and Paulo shared) and relative body sizes (they were the same height). She kept looking at Paulo through the doors of an operating room, surrounded by nurses and machinery. Paulo, who had saved her. Paulo, who was dying because of her.

“Annie, there’s a risk—”

“I don’t care—”

“Things can go wrong.”

“I don’t care!”

“He’s in bad shape. Even if we succeed, he may not . . .”

“What?”

“Live.”

Annie swallowed. “If he doesn’t, I don’t want to.”

“Don’t say that—”

“I mean it! Please, Uncle Dennis!”

She had been crying so much, she didn’t think there were any tears left. But she remembered how happy she and Paulo had been two hours ago. Two hours? How can life change this much in two hours? She repeated what Paulo had said in the back of the limousine, the words he had used to reassure her (Albom, 2018).

This passage would indicate that Annie is having significant hyperarousal symptoms to the trauma surrounding Paulo, who is critically ill. The doctors are talking to each other about Paulo's eminent need for a lung transplant when Annie suddenly jumps from her seat and interrupts them, insisting that she donate one of

her own lungs. But this kind of behaviour, the product of an over-sensitized state and a marked absence of emotional regulation, is all too common among those of us with PTSD.

She demonstrates her hyperarousal continued screaming and determination about the donation of lungs despite being told to stop. She seems actually to have no conception of the risks whatsoever and is fervidly determined to save Paulo from death. This strong sense of urgency, born of the hypervigilance and urgency that is often accompanied by PTSD, as a sudden and pressing need to do something about it, that they must take action to effect a resolution or to create an entirely new state in which they can be secure and safe from danger. The way Annie says that she does not care if the procedure fails and if Paulo dies then she does not want to survive demonstrates just how emotionally dysregulated and desperate she is, which has fuelled this hyperarousal response at the time.

The next symptom also occurs when Annie is showing signs of hyperventilating and suffocating after learning about the accident that she had in the past. One day in her junior high school, everyone had to present their background to the class. As a transferred student, she only knows that she moved to the new school because she had a terrible accident. Yet, she did not know the details of it. Then, one of her classmates found the accident she intended to and said it out loud in the class.

At the end of the week, the students were asked to report their findings. Annie rose and recited her meager facts, then quickly sat, glad that it was over. She gazed out the window, drifting, until she heard Megan, the girl who had ruined everything with Paulo, ending her report by saying, "Also, I used a computer, and I found out

that Annie's 'accident' was in an amusement park and that someone died because of her."

Students gasped. One yelled, "What?" Annie flushed with chills. She began to cough. She couldn't find her breath. Her mind was racing between the faces staring at her and that day at Ruby Pier, replaying fragments, the train ride, her mother taking off with Bob. She felt woozy. Her arm slid off the desk.

"Annie, are you all right?" the teacher said. "Come here, come here, let's go . . ."

."

She rushed Annie out the classroom door (Albom, 2018).

This passage exemplifies Annie's most evident hyperarousal symptoms due to the traumatic event that occurred at Ruby Pier. The second Megan admits to Annie that, it was details about the "accident," and that somebody died. A sudden strike of physiological stress response kicks in for Annie. She is unable to breathe, overcome by a fit of coughing, her mind filled with incoherent flashes and recollections of the horrible things she experienced.

The combination of a great deal of disturbing information and trauma reminders flooding in at once has stimulated an over-reactive state for Annie called something like an 'acute stress response' where her whole self, mind and body, has gone into high-arousal, dysregulation. These symptoms, comically depicted by her red face, woozy feeling, and arm slipping from the desk, display her autonomic nervous system in overdrive and Annie losing control of her own body. This physiological and cognitive process dysregulation in the presence of trauma-related stimuli reflects one symptom cluster - hyperarousal - of what would appear to be PTSD for Annie, as well as in this excerpt.

Another symptom is that Annie rages at her mother because she feels entrapped. One moment is when Annie has enough of the restrictions from her

mother and wants to escape from them. Yet, her mother figured it out, and the restrictions got more intense.

It was always hot in Arizona and the people in the park were old and boring. Lorraine did not talk to the neighbors. She told Annie not to, either. At night, Annie heard her mother crying in her bedroom. It made Annie angry.

I'm the one who got hurt, she thought.

This was the start of a silent resentment. It made Annie feel more alone, which only increased her bitterness. The more Lorraine cried, the less Annie could think of to say to her.

For a while, the two of them barely spoke. Emboldened by her anger, Annie began defying the rules, slipping out when Lorraine was gone. She had read in a library book that you could grow new flowers by planting a leaf off an old one. So Annie snuck scissors under her T-shirt and snipped leaves from a neighbor's garden. She put them in small holes and poured Dixie cups of water over the top of them. She did this for weeks, looking for any sign of life. If she heard a car approaching, she would duck back into the trailer.

But one afternoon, she moved too slowly. Her mother, coming home from work, saw Annie pulling the trailer door shut.

The next day, it was locked from the outside (Albom, 2018).

According to the paragraph, Annie appears to be more emotionally reactive and arousable than usual, which are signs of hyperarousal associated with PTSD. According to the text, Annie's regular nighttime crying due to her mother Lorraine causes her to grow more and more "angry". Even though Annie was the one who was physically "hurt" in the traumatic occurrence, her fury seems to be a hyperarousal response as she harbors hatred and animosity towards her mother's emotional pain.

Following this increased emotional state, Annie feels "emboldened by her anger" and starts to slip out of the trailer, disobeying Lorraine's rules and limitations. She also exemplifies the hypervigilance and increased level of arousal that are sometimes associated with PTSD by her rapid back-tracking when she hears Lorraine's car coming. Annie's defiant and impulsive activities, motivated by her emotional hyperarousal, have resulted in more restraints and punishments, as the

paragraph indicates when Lorraine eventually catches Annie in the act and says that Annie is "locked from the outside" the next day.

Annie's anxiety also remains there after years. After she engages with Paulo, they agree to plan on wedding. Yet, Annie is still anxious because of the past events.

Annie was happy at first. But as the wedding approached, she grew anxious. She began losing sleep. "Whenever I plan things, they don't work out," she told Paulo. He put his arm around her shoulders and reminded her that she didn't "plan" to bump into him that day at the hospital, right? Annie raised her eyebrows. "How do you know?" Paulo laughed. "There's the Annie I'm gonna marry!" But her worry remained (Albom, 2018).

According to the passage, Annie's symptoms of hyperarousal and increased anxiety are getting worse as her wedding gets closer. The statement "losing sleep" implies that she is experiencing irregular sleep cycles and circadian rhythms, which is a typical physiological sign of hyperarousal associated with PTSD.

Annie also tells Paulo that she is generally anxious and nervous about the impending wedding, saying, "Whenever I plan things, they don't work out." Another sign of the hyperarousal associated with post-traumatic stress disorder is Annie's cognitive hypervigilance, in which she is watching out for bad things to happen and concentrating on probable risks. She further demonstrates her inability to control her heightened emotional and physiological arousal in response to the hectic wedding arrangements with her raised eyebrows and mistrust when Paulo tries to comfort her. The sentence mentions that Annie's "worry remained" in spite of Paulo's playful attempt to settle her down, implying that her hyperarousal symptoms are still present and interfere with her ability to relax. As Annie approaches this significant life event, the text largely depicts her as being stuck in

a state of hypervigilance and worry, emphasizing the invasive and crippling nature of her PTSD-related hyperarousal.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This chapter contains the conclusion related to the analysis from the previous chapter and suggestions for this study for future researchers who use the same theory or subject.

A. Conclusion

Based on the researcher's analysis, this study's research findings are that applying Gerald C. Davidson's theory to analyze Annie's experiences in *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven* reveals a nuanced portrayal of PTSD and its profound impact on an individual's life. Mitch Albom skillfully illustrates Annie's traumatic memories, such as Annie having to experience serious injury and threatened death from the accident in Ruby Pier and riding a hot air balloon. Also, she had to go through the power abuse by her parents and entrapment from her mother as a threat to her physical integrity.

Those traumatic events inflict some symptoms of Annie's PTSD and their lingering effects through vivid descriptions of her avoidance behaviors and emotional turmoil. Annie experienced the re-experience and avoidance symptoms because of the accident in the past. The hyperarousal symptoms were also inflicted after the acknowledgment of her accident and over-restrictions from her mother.

These qualities alone correspond fully to the symptomatology described in medical terms as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), but also show just what complexity such trauma can involve. By mapping specific events in Annie's life to

Davison's symptoms of PTSD, it becomes evident that her character embodies the struggle of coping with unresolved trauma, highlighting the pervasive and often debilitating nature of PTSD.

B. Suggestion

This study uses Gerald C. Davison's theory to identify traumatic events and symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder experienced by Annie, the main character in the novel *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven*. Nevertheless, the researcher delivers the expectation to the future study that uses *The Next Person You Meet in Heaven* novel as research data, obtain other perspectives to give the completion in this study.

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CURRICULUM VITAE



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