

**ANALYSIS THE IMPACT OF TRAUMA ON NICA'S SOCIAL
RELATIONSHIP IN *THE TEARSMITH* BY ERIN DOOM**

THESIS

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**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI MAULANA MALIK IBRAHIM MALANG
2025**

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THESIS

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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of *Sarjana Sastra* (S. S.)

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2025**

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

I state that the thesis entitled **Analysis the Impact of Trauma on Nica's Social Relationship in *The Tearsmith* By Erin Doom** 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. Hereby, if there is any objection or claim, I am the only person who is responsible for that.

Malang, 24 June 2025

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APPROVAL SHEET

This is to certify that Anisa Rodiaismi's thesis entitled **Analysis the Impact of Trauma on Nica's Social Relationship in *The Tearsmith* By Erin Doom** has been approved for thesis examination at Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, as one of the requirements for the degree of Sarjana Sastra (S. S.).

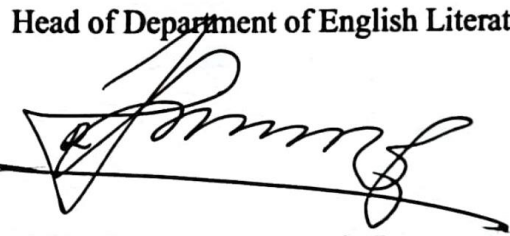
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MOTTO

"You are not your illness. You have an individual story to tell. You have a name, a history, a personality. Staying yourself is part of the battle."

(Julian Seifter)

وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَنْتُمْ أَلَا عَلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

"So do not weaken and do not grieve, and you will be superior if you are [true] believers."

(Surah Ali Imran: 139)

DEDICATION

There is no most beautiful sheet in this thesis report except the dedication sheet, here the researcher dedicates this thesis to est and dearest people, namely:

1. To my deepest beloved mother Farihah, thank you for all the great sacrifices you have dedicated to me, thank you for every sacrifice of energy, thought, strength, patience and prayers that you always pray for me. Thank you for fighting for me and providing encouragement and motivation until finally this thesis is completed very well.
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8. Thanks to my beloved alma mater, UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang.
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I pray that you will always be under His protection, Aamiin. This research can be completed with the title **Analysis the Impact of Trauma on Nica's Social Relationship in *The Tearsmith* By Erin Doom.** *Shalawat and salam* may remain poured out to our Great Prophet Muhammad SAW who has guided us from darkness to a brightly lit path, namely Ad-Diinul Islam.

The researcher realizes that the preparation of this thesis will not be successful without the guidance and contribution of thoughts from various parties. On this occasion the researcher expresses his deepest gratitude to those who have helped complete this thesis. My gratitude goes to:

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2. Dr. M. Faisol, M. Ag., as Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang.
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Wallahul Muwaffieq Ilaa Aqwamith Thorieq

Wassalamu'alaikum Warahmatullah Wabarakatuh

Malang, 24 June 2025

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anisa Rodiaismi', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Anisa Rodiaismi

ABSTRACT

Rodiaismi, Anisa (2025) Analysis the Impact of Trauma on Nica's Social Relationship in *The Tearsmith* By Erin Doom. Undergraduate Thesis. Department of English Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Advisor Dr. Ahmad Ghazi, M. A.

Keywords: Trauma, Childhood Trauma, Social Relationship, Judith Herman's Trauma Theory

This study examines the effects of trauma on the social life of the main character, Nica Dover, in Erin Doom's novel *The Tearsmith*. *The Tearsmith* was published in 2021 in Italian and has been translated into English. It tells the story of an orphaned woman who suffered severe abuse while living in an orphanage, resulting in deep trauma that affects the main character's social interactions. The research aims to identify the trauma experienced by the main character and its transmission to other characters in the novel during and after the trauma. The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative analysis with a trauma psychology literary criticism approach by Judith Herman. The research focuses on three main aspects and three stages of trauma recovery: Hyperarousal – Establishing Safety, Intrusion – Remembrance & Mourning, and Constriction – Reconnection. The results of this analysis reveal that: (1) an unhealthy environment and bad past experiences can cause trauma in Nica, as can be seen from several descriptions of trauma symptoms in the narrative of the novel. (2) The trust she received from her environment built a sense of security and led the main character to achieve healthy social relationships. Although trauma is difficult to recover from, it does not mean that it cannot be healed at all. The main character in the story is proof that trauma can be healed by fixing several things that the sufferer needs to be able to rise from their depression and foster a desire to recover from the crisis.

ثحبلا صلتسم

رضي اسمي، أنيسا (2025) تحليل أثر الصدمة في علاقة نيكاجا الاجتماعية على رواية "The Tearsmith" لإيرين دوم. بحث علمي. قسم الأدب الإنجليزي، كلية الآداب والعلوم الإنسانية، جامعة مولانا مالك إبراهيم الإسلامية الحكومية بمالانج. تحت إشراف الدكتور أحمد غازي الماجستيرز

الكلمات المفتاحية: الصدمة، صدمة الطفولة، العلاقة الاجتماعية، نظرية الصدمة لجوديث هيرمان

يبحث هذا البحث العلمي في آثار الصدمة على الحياة الاجتماعية للشخصية الرئيسية، نيكاجا دوفر، في رواية إيرين دوم *The Tearsmith*. طبعت رواية *The Tearsmith* في عام 2021 باللغة الإيطالية وترجمت إلى اللغة الإنجليزية. حكيت في الرواية قصة امرأة يتيمة أصيبت إساءة مؤلمة شديدة أثناء إقامتها في دار الأيتام، حتى أصابها صدمة عميقة أثرت على حياتها الاجتماعية. يهدف البحث إلى تحديد الصدمة التي أصابها وانتقالها إلى الشخصيات الأخرى في الرواية أثناء الصدمة وبعدها. الطريقة المستخدمة في هذا البحث هي التحليل النوعي الوصفي مع نهج النقد الأدبي لعلم الصدمة النفسي الذي وضعه جوديث هيرمان. يركز البحث على ثلاثة جوانب الرئيسية وثلاث مراحل المهمة للتعافي من الصدمة: فرط الاستثارة - تأسيس الأمان، التسلسل - الذكرى والحزن، والتقلص - إعادة الاتصال. تكشف نتائج هذا التحليل ما يلي: (1) يمكن تأثير البيئة السيئة والخبرة السيئة في صدمة نيكاجا يتضح من عدة أوصاف لأعراض الصدمة في سرد الرواية. (2) أدت الثقة التي أخذتها من بيئتها إلى شعور الأمان ودفعت الشخصية الرئيسية إلى تحقيق العلاقة الاجتماعية الصحيحة. على الرغم من أن التعافي من الصدمة صعبة، فإن هذا لا يعني أنه لا يمكن شفاؤها على الإطلاق. الشخصية الرئيسية في هذه القصة دليل على أن الصدمة يمكن شفاؤها من خلال إصلاح عدة أمور يحتاجها المصاب ليتمكن من الخروج من اكتئابها وتعزيز رغبتها في التعافي من أزمته.

ABSTRAK

Rodiaismi, Anisa (2025) Analisis Pengaruh Trauma pada Hubungan Sosial Nica dalam Novel *The Tearsmith* Karya Erin Doom. Skripsi Sarjana. Jurusan Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Adab dan Humaniora, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Dosen Pembimbing Dr. Ahmad Ghozi, M. A.

Kata kunci : Trauma, Trauma masa kanak-kanak, Hubungan Sosial, Teori Trauma Judith Herman

Skripsi ini mengkaji efek trauma dalam kehidupan sosial tokoh utama, Nica Dover, dalam novel *The Tearsmith* karya Erin Doom. Novel *The Tearsmith* diterbitkan pada tahun 2021 dalam bahasa Italia yang telah diterjemahkan ke versi bahasa Inggris. Novel ini menceritakan kehidupan seorang wanita yatim piatu yang mengalami banyak penyiksaan selama tinggal di panti asuhan, mengakibatkan munculnya efek trauma yang mendalam sehingga mempengaruhi pola hidup tokoh utama dalam berhubungan sosial. Penelitian bertujuan untuk menemukan gambaran trauma yang dialami oleh tokoh utama serta transmisi hubungannya dengan tokoh lain dalam novel di masa trauma dan pasca traumanya. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian adalah analisis kualitatif deskriptif dengan pendekatan kritik sastra psikologi trauma Judith Herman. Penelitian berfokus pada tiga aspek utama dan tiga tahapan pemulihan trauma; Hyperarousal – Establishing Safety, Intrusion – Remembrance & Mourning, and Constriction – Reconnection. Hasil analisis ini mengungkapkan bahwa; (1) pengaruh lingkungan yang tidak sehat dan pengalaman masa lalu yang buruk dapat membentuk trauma pada Nica sehingga dapat dilihat dari beberapa gambaran gejala-gejala trauma dalam narasi cerita di novel. (2) kepercayaan yang diterima dari lingkungannya membangun rasa aman serta membawa tokoh utama mencapai hubungan sosial yang sehat. Meskipun trauma sulit untuk dipulihkan tetapi bukan berarti sama sekali tidak dapat disembuhkan. Tokoh utama dalam cerita menjadi bukti bahwa bagaimana trauma dapat disembuhkan dengan memperbaiki beberapa hal yang dibutuhkan penderita untuk dapat bangkit dari rasa terpuruknya dan menumbuhkan rasa ingin pulih dari krisis tersebut.

TABLE OF CONTENT

THESIS COVER.....	i
STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP	iii
APPROVAL SHEET	iv
LEGITIMATION SHEET.....	v
MOTTO	vi
DEDICATION	vii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	ix
ABSTRACT	xi
تحبلا صلختسم	xii
ABSTRAK	xiii
TABLE OF CONTENT	xiv
CHAPTER I.....	1
INTRODUCTION.....	1
A. Background of the Study.....	1
B. Problem of the Study.....	5
C. Significance of the Study	5
D. Scope and Limitation	6
E. Definition of the Key Terms.....	6
CHAPTER II	9
REVIEW ON RELATED LITERATURE	9
A. Psychology of Literature.....	9
B. Trauma	10
1. Physical Violence	11
2. Emotional Manipulation.....	12
C. Judith Herman's Trauma Theory	13
D. Three Main Aspects of Response to Trauma	15
E. Three Stages of Trauma Recovery.....	16
1. Stage one: Establishing Safety	16
2. Stage Two: Remembrance and Mourning.....	17

3. Stage Three: Reconnection	17
CHAPTER III.....	21
RESEARCH METHOD	21
A. Research Design.....	21
B. Data Source	21
C. Data Collection.....	22
D. Data Analysis	22
CHAPTER IV.....	24
FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS	24
A. The Symphoms of Trauma on Nica's Experience	24
B. The Effect of Trauma on Nica's Social Relationship	34
CHAPTER V	49
CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION.....	49
A. Conclusion.....	49
B. Suggestion.....	50
BIBLIOGRAPHY	52
CURRICULUM VITAE	56

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The first chapter of the study is the introduction, providing a general overview related to the title. The researcher organizes the study into five chapters, which include the background of the study, research questions, significance of the study, scope and limitations, and the definition of key terms.

A. Background of the Study

In the social world, humans are social creatures who need other creatures to perfect their role on earth. Humans cannot thrive in isolation; they require social connections to meet their needs and achieve life goals (Iffah & Yasni, 2022). Interaction by a person indicates that there is life happening and without this, humans cannot be called perfect in their role in a place. Social interactions foster cooperation and mutual support, essential for communal happiness and survival (Kurniawan, 2018). Therefore, the role of individuals is to form an interaction group in society, meaning building relationships with other people according to their respective roles and characters to create diverse and balanced social relationships.

Social interactions are essential for survival, particularly in urban settings where life demands are high (Watun, 2022). Social relations can form a social structure where people shape their characteristics according to the area they live in. The relational aspect of identity is emphasized, where individuals are seen as embedded within a network of social connections that shape their actions and perceptions (Guareschi, 2019). This shows that individuals often try to maintain

their good image in accordance with the culture or character of the surrounding population.

Trauma or unfavorable past experiences often cause problems in a person, in terms of trust, acceptance, and security (Herman, 1992). Support from family, relatives, friends and the environment supports the development of an individual with good character and self-confidence (Astutik et al., 2020). A sense of security will help individuals develop well, especially in terms of getting along with the people around them. Adolescents explore their identity through relationships, societal roles, and personal values, often facing conflicting messages from their environment (Coyne-Beasley et al., 2024). The situation of adolescents who do not grow in the above support will lead to feelings of dissatisfaction with themselves, especially feelings of being unwanted. This is often a factor in the emergence of excessive actions in maintaining a good reputation to be accepted in the social environment.

Establishing good social relationships, being well accepted, being wanted by everyone, getting lots of love, trust and living well is everyone's dream. It is no exception for those who are disadvantaged and burdened with trauma from their previous social environment. Likewise, the protagonist, Nica Dover in *The Tearsmith* shows the vulnerability of her relationship with Margaret Stoker, her caregiver at the orphanage (*The Grave*), where she has lived for years. She yearns for the love and acceptance of her adoptive parents who take turns coming to the home where she has endured so much trauma, hurt and torment over the course of her life. However, no one came to pick her up until she was 17 years old. At this

age, Nica did not have as much hope as before because she thought no one wanted her, until the parents who wanted to adopt her (*the Milligan family*) came along. From here, she has hope to feel freedom and tries to build a new identity that looks good and perfect in order to be accepted by them.

The English novel *The Tearsmith* translated by Eleanor Chapman is a fairly popular Italian novel with the title *Fabbricante Di Lacrime* by Erin Doom, published on May 27, 2021. This novel is a contemporary novel in which the researcher focuses on the protagonist's efforts to build relationships through interactions with several characters in the story despite her trauma, especially with a family who adopted her (*the Milligan's*). How Nica's character tries to maintain her past identity and tries to build a good relationship in order to be accepted by her parents during the trial adoption period. In this case, the researcher uses Judith Herman's trauma theory to see how trauma affects the protagonist's life and builds her social relationships.

The trauma theory proposed by Judith Lewis Herman provides a relevant framework for understanding individual development in the context of the trauma phase. Herman identified three stages of trauma recovery that include psychosocial challenges that individuals must face in the end phase after healing the trauma (Herman, 1992). The focus of this research is on the trauma effects in all the three stages which are particularly relevant in analyzing the protagonist's behavior in *The Tearsmith*. Thus, the character attempt to determine the end of her story by trying to get success out of her problems.

Here are some previous studies that discuss trauma and its symptoms in the protagonist through the 3 main symptoms of trauma (*Hyperarousal, Intrusion, Constriction*) described by Judith Lewis Herman. Hou & Jiang (2024), Liu (2024), Sarungu & Andayani (2023), Mazhar & Idris (2024), Xu (2023). Based on the results of the study, it shows that the symptoms shown are the result of trauma experienced by the protagonist in the past, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Research that focuses on the 3 phases of trauma recovery (*Safety, Remembrance & Mourning, Reconnecting*) from Judith Lewis Herman's recovery theory as follows. (Qazi & Saeed, 2024), Supriya & Jayakanth (2024), (Khan & Waasfa, 2025), Akbar (2024), Swetha et al. (2024). The research shows that the three stages of trauma recovery are a sequence of trauma problem solving faced by the protagonist in processing her thoughts to get out of the feelings of trauma she suffered.

All of the above research discusses how the effect of trauma in building social relationships of the protagonist and the challenges they face in the process of achieving themselves and healing their trauma. This research is relevant to previous studies that both discuss trauma in literary work, but the object of study is different. The researcher highlights how the protagonist in *The Tearsmith* struggles to escape the shackles of trauma caused by bad experiences in the past and her efforts to rebuild social relationships in the midst of trauma.

The research relates it to the three stages of trauma recovery by Judith Herman's theory. This research explores the process and results of the protagonist's struggle through these three stages, both in healing trauma and in building social relations

in the midst of psychological conflict. With this analysis, it is hoped that the research can provide an overview of trauma in psychology and its development in the stages of trauma recovery of the protagonist in a trauma situation, as well as a reference for future studies that want to analyze similar novels using Judith Herman's theory.

B. Problem of the Study

Following the background description, the researcher aims to answer the study problem presented below.

1. How are the symptoms of trauma manifested in Nica's character in *The Tearsmith* By Erin Doom?
2. How do these traumas affect Nica's ability to form and maintain social relationships in *The Tearsmith*?

C. Significance of the Study

This research is expected to provide benefits both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this research enriches the understanding of the application of Judith Herman's theory on trauma's relationship with the characters in literary works. This research can also add references in the study of literary trauma for further research. This research also shows that trauma theories can be applied in the analysis of literary works, thus opening up opportunities for interdisciplinary studies between literature and psychology.

Practically, this research can be a reflection for readers to understand the importance of the healing process, honesty, and trust in building healthy relationships. Through the protagonist's experience, readers can see how support

from the surrounding environment such as family and friends plays a big role in helping someone recover and feel accepted. Thus, this study not only provides theoretical insights, but also encourages emotional awareness in everyday life.

D. Scope and Limitation

This research only focuses on analyzing the female protagonist in Erin Doom's *The Tearsmith* (2021) and her efforts to build relationships with people around in the trauma she suffered. This research focuses on Nica's trauma in building social relationships in the midst of her perceived trauma and identity crisis, as well as the character's mental development in an effort to build new and better relationships with her family, friends, and partner. The research focuses on the symptoms of trauma and protagonist condition in the phase of trauma effect until the healing process using Judith Herman's trauma theory.

E. Definition of the Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding, here the researcher wants to define some definitions of the key terms.

1. Trauma: a condition that limits a person's actions due to unpleasant experiences felt in the past (Surianti, 2022).
2. Social Relationship: bonds built from relationships between individuals, usually occurring with many parties such as groups of friends, families to society to achieve healthy relationships (Azzahra et al., 2021).
3. *The Tearsmith*: a popular Italian novel in 2022 with the title *Fabbricante Di Lacrime* published in 2021 by Erin Doom and has an English translated version by Eleanor Chapman.

4. Protagonist: the central character in a story, usually the central focus of analysis (Praptiwi, 2017). In this research, the protagonist mentioned is Nica in the novel *The Tearsmith*.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW ON RELATED LITERATURE

In this chapter, the researcher discusses the theories and approaches that used in the research. The research explains several things as follows, psychology of Literature, Trauma, Judith Herman's Trauma Theory, Three Main Aspects of Response to Trauma, and Three Stages of Trauma Recovery.

A. Psychology of Literature

Literary psychology is an interesting field to study and explore how human behavior and literary works relate or intersect. In conclusion, literature is a distinct form of expression that explores the complexities of human life and experiences through unique language and style, setting it apart from other forms of communication (Ghozi, 2013). Psychology plays a crucial role in literature, influencing human behavior and emotions through fictional characters, as emphasized by historical and theoretical perspectives (Rakhmatulloyevna & Uktamovna, 2024). Literature serves as a mirror reflecting psychological phenomena, enabling readers to connect emotionally with characters (Shahnaz, 2023).

Rizq connects literature and psychoanalysis, showing how fiction can deepen the understanding of psychoanalytic ideas (Rizq, 2022). Psychologists often gain insight into the complex ways in which the human mind responds to and interprets various forms of literature. The interconnectedness of literary psychology is also used to explore deep emotions and thoughts that humans are often unaware of.

Reading fosters empathy by encouraging readers to reflect on their emotions and connect with characters, deepening their understanding of human behavior (Alatawi & Harshan, 2023). Healing of psychological disorders can also be mediated through reading literature in order that it can provide a safe space for sufferers to explore physical, mental and emotional conditions that cannot be channeled properly. Literature is increasingly utilized as a therapeutic tool, where creative writing can facilitate emotional exploration and healing in psychotherapy (Shahnaz, 2023). A person is able to make sense of their past experiences by recalling memories that have accumulated in the brain and using literature as an aid in the process. This can help individuals to better develop healthier coping mechanisms in the face of future obstacles.

B. Trauma

A person who receives mistreatment in the form of physical violence or emotional manipulation at a vulnerable age can impact depression in the highest possible way opening up opportunities to leave traumatizing effects for the sufferer (Syifa' et al., 2025). Research shows that individuals exposed to physical violence, bullying, or sexual abuse during vulnerable age are at higher risk of depression and trauma (Khaliza et al., 2021). Many traumatized individuals have experienced these adverse experiences at an early age or are vulnerable to emotional manipulation. These childhood experiences will affect emotional conditions and behavior in adulthood (Surianti, 2022).

Trauma not only ruins lives, it can mean a crucial time for victims who experience it. Herman (1992) implies that childhood trauma can interfere with

growth in order that victims carry developmental wounds into adulthood. She also explains that trauma can result in dissociation, loss of self-narrative, and damage to the identity of the victim who suffers it (Herman, 1992). This usually results not only in a loss of security but instead in the inability to trust others and oneself (Astutik et al., 2020). The following are 2 forms of violence that usually have a major influence in traumatizing a person to the point of disrupting their adulthood.

1. Physical Violence

Violent conflicts or traumatic events most often cause deep trauma for victims. Impacts that usually arise such as increased heart rate accompanied by sweating that can cause sleep disturbances for sufferers (Ariani & Asih, 2022; Telehala et al., 2023). This can have long-term effects that can affect future perceptions and reactions (Prakoso et al., 2022). People who are affected by psychological trauma are usually more sensitive to their surroundings, especially themselves when they get something that can trigger past trauma that has been experienced (Herman, 1992). This can also have an impact of cognitive trauma on the way they are thinking about many things.

Some changes in a person's character and actions that are quite different can be because they are in a heavy situation due to memories of painful things that have been experienced in the past. People with certain traumas tend to be more quiet, not confident, act aggressively, get anxious and angry, often feel scared, and change their mood erratically and quickly (Ariani & Asih, 2022). These psychological wounds cause a child to grow up feeling lonely or unwanted, which can limit their interactions with people around them. As a result, a situation arises where they feel

afraid of socializing, interacting in the form of communication and light physical touch with friends and other people is also affected.

2. Emotional Manipulation

Trauma does not only come from physical violence, but can also arise from emotional manipulation crimes against victims (Aseleo et al., 2024). Although it is usually accompanied by physical violence in order that the victim gets two pressures that have a greater effect on subverting their common sense. Emotional manipulation is usually done to make the victim doubt their perceptions, feelings or thoughts, in order that they can control the actions of the person they are manipulating (Penttinen, 2023). Although not all can be exposed to this technique, it is different if the words or sentences of manipulation are thrown to children or adolescents.

At an age when they are still unstable and searching for broader meaning, they will easily be affected by emotional manipulation if they still have not really found the meaning of self-discovery in their lives (Ovshieva, 2022). Someone who experiences it usually does not realize they are being manipulated and will often refrain from their natural desires (Penttinen, 2023). A major influence comes from feeling constrained by rules and actions made by someone that occur repeatedly, especially from those who emotionally manipulate them. The fear of acting carelessly, speaking out, and interacting will also be disrupted if this is not resolved.

Victims of emotional abuse often experience mental health problems comparable to those resulting from physical abuse (Gossmann & Fegert, 2024). Emotional abuse can cause long-term impairments in social functioning and self-

esteem, affecting relationships and overall well-being. Emotional manipulation involves tactics that make victims doubt their perceptions and feelings, often leading to confusion and a reduced sense of self (Penttinen, 2023). That's why emotional wellness is so important in maintaining patterns of interaction with others in the wider community.

C. Judith Herman's Trauma Theory

Judith Lewis Herman is a professor of psychiatry, author and researcher who discusses the study of psychological trauma. She was born in New York City, United States in 1942 and was educated at Harvard Medical School and then managed to publish her research book entitled *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence - from Domestic Abuse to Political Terror* which deeply discusses the symptoms of trauma and the stages of the trauma recovery process. Herman (1992) views trauma as a process that is not permanent and can be understood how to treat it. Psychological and social factors significantly influence mental health outcomes, including stress, coping strategies, and social support (Dixon et al., 2024).

Trauma is an experience that destroys a person's sense of security, trust, and social connections in their life (Herman, 1992). Mental conditions are usually closely related to the environment in which a person lives and develops. Community-level factors, such as engagement and collaborative research, are essential for improving health and well-being (De Klerk & Du Toit, 2023). The environment in question is in the form of individual circumstances with support or not from family, friends, and the surrounding community (Herman, 1992). This can

cause trauma and feelings of deep social pressure on a person. Traumatic environments, particularly during childhood, can lead to long-term psychological issues, including mood disorders and self-injurious behavior (Amorim-Gaudêncio et al., 2023).

Herman (1992) discussed psychosocial concepts in her book entitled *Trauma and Recovery* which introduced the various symptoms that arise due to trauma and the three stages of human recovery from trauma. Each stage discusses the development of healing from a trauma felt by the sufferer. She explained the 3 stages of trauma healing as establishing safety, remembrance & mourning, and reconnection. It also discusses the three main aspects of trauma symptoms, which, if progressing well, will enter the trauma recovery process. A crisis that can lead to positive or negative outcomes, influencing overall psychological health (Jones & Waite-Stupiansky, 2022). The paradigm Herman (1992) of the trauma healing process is contained in a discussion of three stages, each step of which showed the results of what was sought, namely success in resolving trauma in the life of someone who felt it.

Herman (1992) states that trauma can come through several causes, including trauma due to major accidents, tense wars, oppression by the authorities and politics, to social violence by the community in an environment. Van der Kolk (1996) emphasizes that trauma reflects actual history, not just pathology based on misinterpretation or illusion (Soesilo, 2014). Recovery by the individual themselves requires the role of a supportive society, including the environment that trauma sufferers live in needs to be healthy and supportive (Andarmoyo, 2024). This

explains the influence of social support and interpersonal relationships with others will foster a sense of security for sufferers so as to foster a sense of discovery of new meaning for the experiences they live in their lives (Coyne-Beasley et al., 2024). It is also part of the discovery and formation of identity for the individual themselves.

D. Three Main Aspects of Response to Trauma

Traumatizing events usually involve verbal or nonverbal violence that threatens the life of the sufferer (Herman, 1992). The effects that arise are also some forms of symptoms that are common to specific to some individuals who receive these unpleasant actions. There are three main forms of trauma symptoms that are often experienced by a person, including the following.

1. Hyperarousal

A state in which a person experiences a state of heightened alertness to a threat. Symptoms are usually characterized by excessive anxiety, difficulty falling asleep, easily startled, difficulty concentrating and intense emotional responses to the trauma triggers faced (Herman, 1992). According to Herman, this is a form of *"permanent alert system"* created by the body and mind of victims who do not feel truly safe.

2. Intrusion

A situation where a person feels as if the traumatic event is happening again, causing deep distress to the individual experiencing it. Symptoms that usually occur in this aspect are nightmares, flashbacks about all forms of torture or bad things that

have been seen and experienced, and many disturbing thoughts or images appear (Herman, 1992). Herman (1992) refers to it as the "*unbidden return of the trauma*." This is a form of memory that is not normally integrated.

3. Constriction

This is the opposite response to intrusion, where the victim becomes emotionally numb (Herman, 1992). A situation where a person forces themselves to survive in order that he unconsciously forms a self-defense mechanism. Symptoms arising from this aspect are withdrawing from the outside world, experiencing emotional numbness, losing interest in social life, and also trying to avoid all situations related to the trauma (Herman, 1992). This often leads to a state of social isolation and difficulty building relationships with others. Herman (1992) describes this as "*numbing and withdrawal*," a survival strategy when the pain is too great to deal with.

E. Three Stages of Trauma Recovery

There are three stages of human trauma recovery according to Judith Lewis Herman in her book: *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence - from Domestic Abuse to Political Terror*, that need to be understood in the recovery stages of trauma theory, as follows.

1. Stage one: Establishing Safety

At this stage, a person must start trying to find and create a sense of security both physically and emotionally (Herman, 1992). Herman (1992) explains that although the traumatic event has been passed, victims sometimes still do not find a

sense of security. Of course, this involve the people around them to help in creating a sense of security for the sufferer and have a good effect on convincing the individual to feel confident to build a sense of security in his daily life.

2. Stage Two: Remembrance and Mourning

In this stage, Herman (1992) state that a person begins to face and reprocess the traumatic experiences they have experienced. This phase explains how the individual tries to reflect on the bad things in the past to remember and understand the impact of the trauma they have experienced so far. Usually they will begin to remember and then mourn the loss or injury that has happened to them. This process is painful because it opens old wounds, but with therapeutic support and validation of the experience, victims can begin to understand the event as part of a real and lived history (Herman, 1992). This is also a way of therapy for the sufferer to be more able to face a new life after being released from the shackles of past fears.

3. Stage Three: Reconnection

At this stage, a person begins to re-engage in a meaningful community and life without being distracted by past traumatic experiences. This means that the survivor begins to learn and move for change in their life (Herman, 1992). In this phase, they begin to reconstruct their life and identity. Individuals begin to find new meaning in life that previously caused the victim's disconnection from society and then finally dare to start rebuilding their social relationships with the people or society around them (Herman, 1992).

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter explains the research methods and techniques used to collect and analyze data in this study. The researcher divides this chapter into four parts: research design, data sources, data collection, and data analysis. Thus, the reader will understand how this research was conducted.

A. Research Design

This research is categorized as a study of literary criticism where the researcher tries to criticize a literary work. The researcher uses trauma theory by Judith Lewis Herman with a qualitative descriptive approach method in analyzing the object of study in the form of primary data from the novel *The Tearsmith* by Erin Doom. Data is obtained from the text in the novel to examine the symptoms and the effect of trauma on the protagonist in her social relationship. The 3 aspect and stages of trauma recovery used as a reference in analyzing the phenomena that occur in this novel.

B. Data Source

The main data source in this research is the novel *The Tearsmith* by Erin Doom which has been translated into English as the object of the researcher's current analysis. This novel is a popular Italian novel in 2022 entitled *Fabbricante Di Lacrime* which was published on May 27, 2021. Then translated into English by Eleanor Chapman into *The Tearsmith* in 2023, with a novel thickness of 624 pages and arranged in 38 chapters. The data is taken from every word or phrase, sentence,

and paragraph that reflects the protagonist's behavior based on the effect of her past trauma and the results of social relationships experienced by the protagonist in the story.

C. Data Collection

Data collection in the research process is carried out through several steps as follows, (a) reading the novel thoroughly using the close-reading method, (b) marking the data found such as moments that show a symptom and the effect of trauma by highlighting related data, (c) looking for research references from various sources that have relevance to the research being studied, (d) the researcher then classifies the relationship between the formulation of the problems and the data used as a reference for data collection according to Judith Herman's trauma theory, (e) finally the researcher analyzes the study data using the data that has been found to answer the questions asked in this study.

D. Data Analysis

The data that has been collected is analyzed systematically and structured using a narrative analysis approach, in which the researcher analyzed the storyline and the protagonist from every word or phrase, sentence or paragraph to understand how trauma affects the protagonist in the context of the narrative. This includes observing the cognitive trauma of the character and the state of the social relationships that she manages to go through. The researcher tried to analyze some of the components of the discussion in the review of *The Tearsmith* by looking at each paragraph that brought up data related to Judith Herman's trauma theory. Then the researcher conducts a more in-depth analysis by looking at data that is matched

with previous research based on the theory used, in order that the researcher can get the desired results in accordance with the formulation of the problem and research objectives, to the conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This part of the chapter shows the answer of the problem of the study. What are the symptoms of trauma and how the effect on the protagonist's experienced to form and maintain social relationships in *The Tearsmith*. The emotional and psychological stress becomes an important point in the discussion, how the protagonist go through the trauma and recovery phase in Judith Herman's trauma theory.

A. The Symphoms of Trauma on Nica's Experience

Trauma is a condition that occurs in individuals that causes problems in mental health which sometimes affects a person's physical condition (Khaliza et al., 2021). This situation usually causes symptoms of unstable emotions, lack of communication skills, lack of courage in interacting, nightmares, and many other things. Various causes of emergence can include seeing death, accidents, experiencing difficult and threatening situations, receiving physical or verbal violence, being ostracized, and so on (Herman, 1992).

This analysis discusses the manifestation of trauma in Nica's behavior, thoughts, and emotions based on Judith Lewis Herman's three main categories of trauma. What the researcher includes here are narratives and dialogues that the protagonist shows in the story that illustrate how trauma affects her life in the story. How she resolves and responds to her relationship with her adoptive family, friends and her partner. Trauma, which is not only in the form of physical violence but also

emotional manipulation committed against Nica in the story, has an effect on the way she views things. Here are some data that researcher can attach.

1. Hyperarousal

The following are some creative writings that explain the onset of trauma experienced by Nica. The orphanage was called "*The Grave*" because of the crimes and injustices committed by an irresponsible caretaker.

What the children call the orphanage: *"The institute was called Sunnycreek Home. It stood at the end of a decrepit, dead-end road, in the forgotten outskirts of a little town in the south of the state. It housed unfortunate children like me, none of whom I ever heard call it by its real name. Everyone called it The Grave, and it didn't take long for me to understand why: everyone who ended up there seemed condemned to a fate of decrepit dead-ends, just like the road that led to it. I felt like I was living behind bars in The Grave." (p.13)*

Remembering the source of the trauma: *"And how old were you when Mrs. Fridge arrived?" 'Twelve.' I heard the answer as if it hadn't been me who voiced it. It was as if I wasn't there, everything was amplified, all I could feel was my body on the brink of explosion. Then came the sweat, the anxiety, the rasping, the tearing at my heart, the terror that took my breath away. I withdrew, withheld, and swallowed, begging that someone would make everything stop,..." (p.269)*

The protagonist's initial trauma comes from being in an orphanage run by two different matrons who share the same evil nature. Bad experiences are the most common form of trauma (Surianti, 2022). In the creative writing fragment above, it describes Nica's situation in reacting to everything related to the scary things that have happened to her. The painful experience is not only felt by the protagonist, Nica, but also by the children who are in the institute. As a result of all the physical and emotional abuse, as well as the rules that were forced to bind them, they named the place "*The Grave*". The name describes how spooky, dark, damp, and full of fear the environment is.

Trauma is caused not only by physical violence but also emotional violence. The following creative writing shows the emotional damage suffered by the

protagonist. This creative writing explains how cruelty affects Nica's mind and body.

Symptoms and causes of trauma: *"I was sweating. Your temples were throbbing. The room was small, stuffy, suffocating...And it was dark. It was always dark. ... - "My bad dreams had come back. Well, in truth they'd never gone away. A new bed wasn't enough to drive them away." (p.46)*

Nightmares: *"I had been awake all night, trying to keep my nightmares at bay, and it showed on my face. The darkness was unrelenting. A few nights, I had tried leaving the bedside lamp on, but Anna had noticed and, thinking I had just forgotten, came in to turn it off. I didn't have the courage to tell her that I would have preferred to sleep with a nightlight on like a little girl." (p.120)*

Belt symptoms: *"My palms were sweaty, my heart was so tight it felt as if it was about to burst, and all I wanted was to be unseen." (p.120)*

The ribbon that entangles the hand: *"I was shaking violently as I tore the ribbon off me, gasping so desperately I couldn't breathe. My blood pouded in my temples and my mind flooded with vivid nightmares, interspersed with fragments of darkness and memories of a closed door and a flaking ceiling." (p.206)*

Bad memories of past torture: *"The bed shook with the clanging of the woven steel. My legs were shaking and the darkness fell like a curtain around me. The belts around my wrists creaked as I thrashed and flailed, feverishly scratching at the leather." (p.282)*

One of the symptoms mentioned by Judith Herman (1992) in her theory is having nightmares. The narrative above showed how trauma affects the sleeping pattern of the protagonist, Nica. Memories and images of the past that torment her produce a sense of alertness especially in a dark space (Aini et al., 2023). The symptoms that appear are also the result of the scars that Nica received during her time at the orphanage. This proves that the symptoms of difficulty sleeping, fear of the dark, nightmares are included in Judith Herman's theory that explains the symptoms of trauma.

Flashback: *"Anxiety tightly wound itself around me. I was used to sudden, unwarranted reactions like this. I was often overcome by excessive worries that ate away at my most fragile and childlike self. It always happened when I thought back to that". (p.120)*

Fear of Rigel's attitude: *"Panic came over me in waves, my thundering heartbeat clouded my mind, bringing back a faint, distant memory..." (p.141)*

Mom's teachings on tenderness: *"I wished I could tell her that I'd always remembered, even when the warmth of her hands had disappeared and mine were covered in Band-Aids, the only*

color left in my life.-But in that moment...I just wanted to tell Mom that sometimes tenderness wasn't enough." (p.171)

In the excerpt of the trauma narrative above, at the age of 17 Nica is an illustration of the impact of the treatment of people in an unhealthy environment. This trauma is a sign that Nica's growth is not well developed from within. Nica's physical state continues to develop but the emotional pressure she has received makes her mindset different and more complicated. This trauma has several effects and signs that appear from Nica's condition in some of the creative writing above, such as body trembling, dilated pupils, difficulty thinking and speaking to breathing, difficulty controlling her brain control reflexes, having bad dreams, fear of dark spaces and worry about many things (Herman, 1992).

Herman (1992) in her book *Trauma and Recovery* states that one of the effects of trauma is the loss of identity in a person and the disruption of the process of attachment to the social or community around them. This opinion is in line with the situation of the protagonist, Nica, in her recovery process in adolescence and early adulthood who accepts the impact of the trauma she experienced. This means that Nica grows up with many doubts in her life and her fear of building social relationships is the result of her previous trauma.

The brutality of the matron's torture of Nica: *"She was breaking something inside of me, something that instead of growing up, would stay small forever. Fragile, childlike and ruined. Something desperate and naive that would make me look for the good in everyone, just so I would not have to see their bad side." (p.286)*

Interrogation of Margaret (Rigel's point of view): *"Rigel saw Nica, at the end of the line, trembling more than all the others. He knew that belts terrified her. Something scratched inside him as he watched her, like fingernails scraping against his skin. He realized his heart had frozen and his palms were sweating." (p.434)*

An outlet for Margaret's anger: *"And Margaret was too angry. When she was this angry, someone always had to suffer the consequences. - She wanted to inflict pain. She wanted to beat them. Not because she was sick, or disturbed. But just because she wanted to." (p.434)*

In the creative writing above, Nica is told through Rigel's point of view. He witnessed Margaret's harsh treatment of the orphanage children, including Nica. How the warden's punishment of Nica and the others left them physically scarred and deeply traumatized. Giving each one the gift of terror throughout her life.

The body's response is the most important thing to pay attention to in psychology. In Nica's case, it is clear that her relationship with matron Margaret was not good. During her school years, Nica received many types of physical and verbal abuse from the matron. The most frequently mentioned in the novel are some fragments of the creative writing that the researcher listed above in the form of belt swats, hand punches, and swear words and reproaches that can cause feelings of inferiority and emotional disturbance for the children there, including the protagonist, Nica.

Nica shook with fear as she saw the belt that Margaret removed from her skirt to use as punishment for those she thought had done wrong. Nica was traumatized by the whipping Margaret gave her every night in the basement, which made her feel terrified and often had difficulty falling asleep at night. Nica is one illustration of the fear and trauma experienced by other children. Nica was often blamed and punished by the warden for mistakes she didn't even make.

Dinner invitation for Adeline: *"My heart would have said yes if my thoughts hadn't betrayed me. Sometimes inside me was still burning from the last time we had seen each other (talk about Adeline admiring Rigel). On the one hand, hearing her say she felt nothing for Rigel had reassured me, but on the other, I feared this was not the truth. I had chosen to believe her, but the doubt still nagged at me." (p.414)*

Feeling invisible and afraid of being replaced Asia: *"She didn't even blink. Her eyes stayed so motionless that I started to feel uneasy. I felt like a butterfly on display, pierced by invisible pins. Asia turned to Anna. She looked at her as if she were her mom, her gaze hiding some need." (p.215)*

This paragraph shows how intimate feelings make the mind work sometimes become pessimistic, suspicious of others and fear of being abandoned (Larasati, 2017). Nica thinks and reacts to keep something she considers valuable as shown in the paragraph above. In this case, what is valuable to Nica is her new family and her lover, Rigel. The context of love for a partner is deeper than for family or friends. Nica's feelings of fear of losing a loved one made her think of losing the love and good relationship she had worked so hard for. What led Nica to think this was also because her sense of belonging and the intimate relationship she had built with Rigel and Anna over the years made her afraid of losing them. The fear of being abandoned again by the people she loves makes her feel doubtful and suspicious.

This shows how Nica tries to form and maintain her deep relationship with her mother and partners other than her friends. It is because of this desire to protect her that makes her develop deep feelings of suspicion and fear towards someone, including Adeline or Asia, who has been her best friend since she was in the orphanage and Asia who had been her acquaintance for some time now. Another cause is also due to Nica's bad experience of losing a protective and loving figure who looked after her. This showed how this symptom fosters a sense of attachment and vigilance from a sense of abandonment in a previous experience.

2. Intrusion

Trauma towards certain objects due to physical abuse suffered from childhood to adolescence. The following creative writing describes the situation and its effects

on the protagonist as she enters adolescence. Here are some data that showed the symptoms that arise from trauma.

Nica's fears are narrow and dark spaces: *"I thought about what scared me. And a dark basement came to mind. I thought about what terrified me. And She came to mind."* (p.45)

Fear with a belt: *"Uncontrollable anxiety coursed through me, making me feel wrong, small, disgusting and guilty. My heart was pumping furiously, and I fell at breakneck speed into my fears, trying desperately to hold Anna's gaze."* (p.101)

Clothes belt trauma: *"I realized only too late that she was holding a belt. She put it around me, but my arms were still dangling at my sides so the leather brushed against my skin. It all happened very quickly. I felt it on my flesh. I felt it chafing. I felt it pressing, squeezing, closing around me, constraining me..."* (p.100)

Ribbon trauma at Lionel's house: *"My arms got caught in the ribbon, and I was overcome by a visceral terror. I was suffocating. My body twisted, my heart reared up and my fear burst out with a terrible scream."* (p.206)

Fear of the torture she has experienced in the past can lead to impulsive actions. Some severe forms of impulsive actions are not shown from the protagonist, it's just that she does several things that are used to hide her identity or the truth about her trauma condition. One of them mentioned in the creative writing above is telling lies to cover up the truth.

Nica in the quote shows a reaction to the familiar trauma memories in the situation she is facing, responding to the pain in her body and soul. This shows that the "belt" is mentioned as one of the objects influential in eliciting the reaction of excessive fear to the trauma experienced by Nica. This trauma lasted until she was an early adult, 17 years old. Nica's lie in the quote above is also her way of protecting herself. Caring about how someone perceives her will not change. Nica tries as hard as possible to cover up what she considers to be damaged in herself so as not to be used as an excuse to be hated, abandoned and considered strange.

Feeling invisible and afraid of being replaced: *"She didn't even blink. Her eyes stayed so motionless that I started to feel uneasy. I felt like a butterfly on display, pierced by invisible pins. Asia turned to Anna. She looked at her as if she were her mom, her gaze hiding some need."* (p.215)

Fear dumped Anna: *"What if she realized she had made a mistake? If she had seen how dull, strange and broken I was? My temples throbbed. Irrational fears crawled over my skin and my mind tormented me with images of The Grave, the gates sliding open again for me. -I'll be good, I'll be good, I'll be good...I swear." (p.229)*

The desire to showed her perfect side: *"I had to hide them. Hide myself. Anna and Norman would only keep choosing me if I appeared perfect. That was the only way I could escape from the past, the only way I could have a family, the only way I'd get another chance..." (p.230)*

This explains how these symptoms cause a person to fear getting close to others (Astutik et al., 2020). They are prone to thinking that they have to keep their distance, keep their attitude to look perfect, and do not want to be replaced, which is a normal response of someone who experienced severe trauma at that time (Herman, 1992). Nica in the narrative above tries to look perfect, fears that she will be replaced with Asia and feels inferior when she is abandoned. This is the effect of the flashbacks they remember when they encountered the same thing in the past. This makes Nica try her hardest to stay in her position so as not to return to the terrifying institute of The Grave.

3. Constriction

A feeling of inferiority: *"Something inside me had broken long ago, and remained small, childlike, innocent and frightened. I had stopped growing. And I knew...I knew I wasn't like the others, because as I grew up, that broken part of me stayed a child-I was like a butterfly in chains." (p.119)*

Shutting herself off from her desires: *"After Dinner, Anna and Norman suggested a walk around the block, but I declined. I wouldn't have been able to enjoy their company, nor behave as cheerful and carefree as I wanted to, so I watched them leave with a hint of melancholy." (p.140)*

The data above is a description of how the protagonist feels some things that hold back her emotional feelings in the process of building her social relationships with others. Nica is a adolescent who thinks a lot about others and unconsciously forgets about herself who lags far behind them. She is still stuck in the past, bound by the trauma that ruined her life. Below shows how Nica shows her deepest side

in wanting a normal life like any other person. Certainly within the scope of Judith Lewis Herman's (1992) trauma theory.

The desire to forget painful things: *"If I'd had my way... If I'd had my way, I'd have forgotten him forever, along with The Grave, with Mrs. Fridge, and the pain that had marred my entire childhood. I didn't want to end up in the same family as him. It was a catastrophe for me. It felt as if I had been condemned to bear the burden of my past, as if I would never truly be free."* (p.22)

Fear of abandonment: *"I knew I was overly attached, but seeing them leave gave me a strange sense of abandonment that made me feel like a little girl again."* (p.143)

Feeling empty: *"I wished I had words to explain how I was feeling. To pluck them from inside me and arrange them on the floor like pieces of a mosaic that might somehow fit together. I felt empty."* (p.147)

Nica showed a pent-up emotion, an emotion that she often hides and keeps to herself. She rarely expresses her emotions or feelings to be heard. This is a symptom of the effects of her trauma when the matron and others did not hear and heed her words. This situation is a show of disempowerment to showed her wishes (Herman, 1992). This phase, if successfully passed, will find a sense of security in building social relationships, especially building trust in yourself and others.

The effect of Nica's trauma that created a sense of identity crisis was one of them is forgetting her emotions. She is confused about how to express her emotions, when to show them, and to whom she has the right to show them. Some parts of those circumstances are listed below.

Confused emotions: *"It didn't matter how much I got hurt. I could not hate... try as hard as I might. And yet I had been taught hatred. The matron had imprinted it on my skin in a way that I would never be able to forget. She had broken me, stamped on me, deformed me. Pummeled me and cracked me. She had bent me so far that I would always be like that, warped and fragile like a child. That was what she had left me. A faulty heart, that looked in others for the goodness it couldn't find in Her. A moth that pursued the light in everything, even if it meant getting burnt."* (p.429)

Fragility and the desire to fly creative: *"I felt his desperation as if it was my own. I was also unable to fly, I also wanted to escape, I was also fragile and powerless. We were the same. Small and defenceless against the world."* (p.37)

Isolated: *"No one would come to save me. No one would answer my screams. My temples tjrobbed, my throat burned, my skin cracked under the leater, and I was alone...alone... Alone..."* (p.119)

A sense of disappointment with her disappointing life: *"Some wounds never stop bleeding. Some days, they burst open and Band-Aids aren't enough to make them heal. For me, these were wee moments when I realized I was just as naive, childlike and fragile as I used to be."* (p.207)

Loss of identity is something that can unconsciously damage a person from within (Hou & Jiang, 2024). Disrupting brain development in interacting with others is one of the consequences of this condition. Fighting all the bad things she received with the positive things her parents taught, made her feelings or emotions mixed. She felt a lot of physical and mental abuse at a very young age until her adolescent years. At the age of 17, Nica still finds it difficult to decide her own will properly due to the effects of bad experiences that she should not have received at that age. This makes a difference in the way she views the world, herself and others. The trauma has made it quite overwhelming for her to adapt to her surroundings, so she often pushes herself to look good and be the perfect person to be accepted by everyone who sees her.

The trauma experienced by the protagonist did not arise solely from sudden bad experiences such as accidents. Rather, most of the trauma stems from various forms of abuse she suffered from childhood to adolescence (Khaliza et al., 2021). The physical reactions experienced by Nica are a response to the trauma that surfaces when her mind cannot reconcile with her body, which is familiar with painful sensations. Due to this condition, the protagonist endures a difficult daily life, constrained by trauma and a lack of self-confidence in building social relationships in her new environment. This situation intensifies during her adolescent years. This is the effect that emerges when someone is in a phase of confusion about their role in relation to others and themselves (Herman, 1992).

Based on the analysis of the novel *The Tearsmith* by Erin Doom, the researcher shows how the protagonist is in the trauma and trauma recovery phase of Herman's trauma theory. The relationship between trauma in both phases illustrates and explains how trauma is one of the influences on the creation of a sense of crisis in the form of role/identity confusion and also feelings of isolation (Surianti, 2022). In the analysis conducted, the researcher found a lot of data that showed Nica's different way of thinking compared to her peers who grew up with people in a supportive environment.

B. The Effect of Trauma on Nica's Social Relationship

This analysis explores the impact of trauma symptoms on Nica's social relationships, examined through Judith Lewis Herman's three phases of trauma recovery. Trauma usually has an intense effect on the sufferer (Herman, 1992). Childhood is a golden period for a child to grow well in a comfortable environment that supports them. However, the protagonist's bitter experience did not help her grow up with the support, trust and love of her matron. This makes her grow up with sharp thoughts about herself, her life and the confidence to dare to build relationships with people around her. The following data are listed by the researcher.

1. Establishing Safety

This stage is the first stage of the victim's phase of growing a sense of security, gaining support, and trusting those around them (Herman, 1992). In this stage, the data provided is a description of the protagonist who is trying or in her efforts to get and feel a sense of security for herself from the environment he currently lives in. Here are some data that showed the safety phase in Judith Herman's theory.

Nica's bad experiences made her grow up feeling insecure and needs a sense of security and safety from others outside the institute. Crisis of confidence shows at this stage, where she couldn't trust herself or others. Here are some of the creative writing that were found.

The desire to have a family: *"I had always wanted a family, more than anything else in the world. I had prayed that there was someone out there for me, ready to come and take me away with them, to give me the chances that I had never had. It was too good to be true." (p.8)*

"I spent every day longing for someone to come and take me away. For someone to look me in the eyes and choose me, over all the other children. For someone to want me as I was, even though I wasn't all that much. But no one had ever chosen me. No one had ever wanted me, or even noticed me. I had always been invisible." (p.13)

Can't believe anyone asked to adopt her: *"No one wanted teenagers. No one wanted older children, never, not under any circumstances... It was a proven fact. It was like in the dog shelter - everyone wanted a puppy, because they were cute, innocent, and easy to train. No one wanted a dog that had been there its whole life. This had been a difficult truth for me to accept, having grown up under that roof." (p.3)*

Nica has a sense of self-doubt due to the experiences she has received in the past. Is she really wanted? How should she exchange the kindness that will be given to her in the future? What if she will finally be abandoned? and so on. This response is an illustration of one of the effects of trauma that disturbs the mental health, especially in the phase of adolescence. The obstacles in finding her identity are still not resolved in this situation, because since she was in the orphanage that did not give her a sense of security and trust. Nica became a person who questioned herself a lot, always yearning to have someone who wanted her, then hoping that someone would take her out of that suffocating place.

Nica often thinks all her hopes are uncertainties and impossibilities that will eventually hurt her if she believes in them too much. Until someone came for her, the Milligan family, she still couldn't believe what luck was on her side. Because according to her, no one would want a child at the age of 17. Therefore, Nica

thought she didn't deserve such a good thing. Here, she still doesn't fully feel like she belongs because the distrust hasn't been established in her and she remembers that she could be thrown away at any time while still in the trial adoption period. This explains how her crisis of identity and self trust is lived here.

As clarified by (Coyne-Beasley et al., 2024) that at the adolescent stage, a person needs good support from their environment, forming a cultural identity and creating healthy growth. In this case, Nica, who lives an unhealthy life dynamic in *The Grave*, leads her to think that the role she plays in this life does not necessarily support her path to progress and develop physically and mentally. Nica's physical development, which continues to progress but is not under the healthy control of her unstable emotions, illustrates how the stages of development prior to this point are crucial to overcome in order to establish healthy relationships. In her case, Nica faces internal conflicts that are too overwhelming, affecting her thought processes and resulting in poor social interactions. Thus, it can be said that emotional support greatly influences a person's psychological development, shaping their confidence to bond with someone they desire (Wahyuni, 2023).

Brad adapted to the experience of friendship: *"Billie helped me settle in. - I tried not to be too clingy and weigh her down, but she said that she was actually happy to keep me company. My heart soars like never before." (p.25)*

Billie's invitation to lunch: *"I always felt the stinging fear that I was too much, that everyone wanted to be rid of me, that deep down they didn't really want me to be there." (p.75)*

The novel excerpt above showed how the protagonist's situation in interpreting her life is different from the past. The unpleasant experiences she received in the past made her often feel inferior, insecure and did not want to make any mistakes to people so as not to be shunned. The quote explains that Nica lives her new life while still carrying the influence of her life at the orphanage. She doesn't dare to

demand anything, doesn't dare to be too confident, doesn't want to be seen as a burden to her friends and adopted family. Although in the world of family and friendship, this is normal and natural. Here, Nica is still trying to find a sense of security by setting boundaries for herself and others.

With the data above, in accordance with what is mentioned by (Herman, 1992), this showed that a person's vulnerability is usually based on the attitude received towards them not according to the expectations of the victim. This is shown by how Nica tries to keep her distance and maintain her position in this situation so as not to be eliminated. This is part of maintaining safety for herself in order that she can survive into the future.

In the school hallway: *"I was trying to keep up with her chattering and, at the same time, trying not to bump into other people. I wasn't used to such bustling crowds, but Billie seemed oblivious- she kept rattling on, bumping into people all over the place." (p.23)*

An invitation to Billie's grandmother's house: *"You... you're sure?" I asked uncertainty as we left the classroom. I didn't know what to say. I always felt the stinging fear that I was too much, that everyone wanted to be rid of me, that deep down they didn't really want me to be there. But Billie was kind, waved her hand and smiled at me." (p.75)*

First introduced to Billie's grandmother: *"Billie introduced me as her grandma started the engine. I lifted a hand shyly, and she looked at me in the rear-view mirror. The instinctive fear of not being liked pierced my heart. I was worried that I wouldn't live up to her expectations, whatever they might be." (p.80)*

"I ate until I was fit to burst, and discovered that Billie's grandmother, underneath her slightly grouchy demeanor, was actually a deeply affectionate, caring and maternal person." (p.80)

In these narrations, Nica always shows how, in her heart, her greatest desire is to have a good relationship with everyone she meets in her new life. This makes her harbor a lot of fears about the failure of her efforts. In the form of building relationships, of course one feels the fear of acceptance or rejection that one will receive. In this case, Nica thought she might disappoint Billie's grandmother, fearing that she might not be liked by her because she appeared as someone who might not fulfill the old woman's expectations. It is because of this sense of wanting

to be loved that builds the suspicion and misunderstanding, the uncertainty that arises in Nica at this adolescent age.

During Nica's isolation in the orphanage, she often wondered if life outside was really this perfect, or if it was not so different from the fake love she saw in Margaret at the institute. She always thought that love did not exist for her, which made her feel that love was only for the lucky few and she was not one of them. Finally, it was from there that Nica discovered how love existed so beautifully between the two humans in front of her. She felt that there was still sincerity that she could feel from others outside the Sunnycreek Home *"The Grave"* institute that scarred her. With all the pressure and rules that damaged her emotionally since childhood, Nica grew up with all the small and common things that made her feel constantly amazed and finally had a better picture of the future for herself.

Pretend: *"It was nice to pretend I was normal. No institutes, no matrons, no mattresses with springs poking through. Just...Nica." (p.135)*

Nica's heart and mind whisper: *"You're watching him too much, my heart murmured. You've always watched him too much, but he destroys and he scratches and ensnares. He's the Tearsmith, he's the ink the tale's written in. You shouldn't, you shouldn't." (p.139)*

Lies and doubts: *"I felt that I had to be good. I looked up to meet her eyes, then gave her an artificial smile. 'It's all okay, Anna. Sometimes I can't sleep. There's nothing to worry about.'" (p.271)*

The cautious attitude shown by Nica is an illustration of this stage, where she still has vigilance instead of keeping her best distance to protect her safety. (Herman, 1992) says that this stage focuses on stabilizing the victim's emotions, controlling their body and daily life, and protecting themselves from an environment that is creative and free from past violence. This showed Nica's efforts to maintain her sense and source of safety. Nica does not show her deepest feelings, does not show her true emotions especially she does not feel close enough to show

her true desires. But this is her attempt to maintain a realm of safety for her and for others.

In Nica's case, she has grown quite differently than her peers. She acts like a person who is much more mature than her age. She always thinks of something that suppresses her instinctive emotions so as not to mess up certain situations in her new relationship here, although at first Nica seemed to have trouble adapting to her new environment. This reflects how the sense of security, identity crisis, and trust in oneself and others at her age did not go as well as adolescents in general (Liu, 2024). This condition is also explained in Herman's theory in her book entitled *Trauma and Recovery* (1992) in discussing how a person is affected by trauma so as to foster symptoms that complicate a person in finding their role in an environment due to supporting factors around them.

Feeling safe fosters trust: *"...When she spoke to me so familiarly, I felt less strange and different. I managed to feel normal. And it was wonderful." (p.51)*

Trust grew: *"She was a real mom, and even though I wasn't brave enough to tell her, she was becoming as dear to me as my own mom. ... How could I avoid losing it all?" (p.60)*

"She trusted me, she was measured and easy-going. She worried a lot, but her concern wasn't suffocating - she respected my freedom in a way that was very important to me." (p.76)

"I got back home a few minutes later. The warmth of the entrance hall embraced me like it always did. I felt held, enveloped, safe." (p.128)

Dispelling any doubts about Anna's sincerity: *"Her laughter caught me by surprise. My heart leapt in wonder and I stared at her, my chest constricting. When her bright eyes looked at me and I realized the reason for my sudden joy, a burning love replaced my incredulity. I wanted to make her laugh again, I wanted to feel her gaze on me every day, I wanted to let my heart feast on it." (p.246)*

A sense of security comes from how the environment gives it (Herman, 1992). This means that the family Nica entered was the right decision for her. She who previously had difficulty trusting and always questioned all the kindness she received whether it was something natural or sincere became convinced of

everything. Nica began to get a sense of security from the people closest to her. This experience fosters integration that is good for the physical and mental growth of the victim who feels it.

In line with what is explained by Judith Lewis Herman (1992), she once mentioned the opinion of Erikson (1950) who said that the adolescent phase is the closest thing to an identity crisis. This makes the process of healing trauma often difficult to heal completely (Herman, 1992). This situation often leads adolescents to dig deeper into the meaning of life and the reason for their presence in that place. This is also the case with Nica's adolescent phase, where her unstable condition and lack of self-confidence make it difficult for her to decide what is appropriate for her life. Her fear of arguing with Anna and Norman about things that make her comfortable and not, inevitably makes her force herself to be able to adapt to this. The progress of Nica's thinking at this age is also trying to form better with the obstacles she faces from her trauma.

2. Remembrance and Mourning

This stage is a flashback of the experience that happened to the victim to find the meaning of everything that happened. This is captured in Nica's journey to rediscover herself and build her identity. Nica's thoughts about comparing herself to insects, which are usually portrayed as weak creatures. However, she began to build her self-identity with a different perspective on the matter. It can be seen as written below.

The result of emotional doctrine from childhood: *"I had never been good at hating. Not even when I had good reason for it." (p.35)*

Matron's threat: *"I shouldn't let myself be seen.-'You know what will happen if you tell anyone about this?' I wanted to scream, but my throat closed up and I couldn't utter a word." (p.206)*

A teaching he's held since The Grave: *"Good children don't cry. Good children don't talk. Good children hide their bruises and only lie when they're told to. I was no longer a child, but some part of me still spoke in the same, childish voice."* (p.271)

Sometimes Nica knew what was broken in her, what had been taken away from her life, her personality and even her emotions. Nica felt everything eating away at her body and mind in order that she felt trapped in the past even though she was far away from the place that damaged her. the doctrine delivered by the matron took away a large part of her identity. She became fragile, fear filled her in order that often Nica found it difficult to accept reality and was full of worries from the process of building her relationships with family, friends and partners in her current life.

Make peace with what she is: *"Not fear, nor the knot in my throat. Nothing could stop me, because.... Because, I, after all... had a moth's heart. And I always would have... wouldn't understand the consequences of this decision until it was too late."* (p.462)

Determining the path that she decided for herself: *"It was true that I had a moth-like heart. It was true that I pursued the light until I got burnt, because what I had gone through as a child had broken me, beyond repair. But even though the most ruined parts of my soul tried to persuade my eyes to meet his, nothing could convince me to forgive him. He had torn away half of my soul."* (p.497)

Nica shows quite good progress despite the many obstacles that make her struggle from a sense of identity crisis that goes up and down. In this creative writing, Nica shows how the crisis was overcome. This led Nica to a slight development of self-confidence and no fear of abandonment. She began to dare to make decisions in her life, express her deepest opinions, and so on. How Nica said that she used to be very uncomfortable when she heard the term moth, with time, she began to understand and accept herself who was gentle like a small and delicate moth.

The example shown in the creative writing, although Nica knows how much Lionel has done wrong to her. No matter how painful the wounds and trauma that

Lionel has scratched her. Nica is still Nica, she will always be a gentle figure like a butterfly. A woman who always emphasizes gentleness, and who will sow kindness to everyone who meets her. On the verge of realization, she tried to stop the fight between the two. She was indeed born with kindness, even though her kindness sometimes hurt her.

Actually, Nica had long lost her identity at that time, she was too naive, unsure, always afraid to admit that she was something valuable, deserved protection, had the right to make her own decisions and wanted to be recognized in the world around her. At this point, Nica is finally able to let out other emotions, although she looks confused by the reaction she gives Lionel. How she was used to always forgiving and letting the bad things that happened to her pass, even though they were not forgotten by her. However, this time, she began to make peace, accepting what she should have accepted and decided. Nica finally escaped the snare of the title pinned on her, a fragile butterfly whose only instinct was to land anywhere with her tenderness.

Nica feels inferior about the good things that might happen to her. She is experiencing a crisis of self-confidence, feeling worthless and unable to find happiness. It can be seen as the creative writing contained in the text below.

The difference in treatment from the matron: *"She adored him so much that she taught him to play the piano. She would sit with him for hours, with patience that never extended to the rest of us,..." (p.14)*

Nica's self-confidence: *"She would throw me away. She'd throw me out with the garbage because that's what I deserved. That's where I belonged. That's where people like me ended up. I would never have my fairy tale. I would never have my happy ending. There were no princesses in this story. There were no fairies, or mermaids. There was just a little girl... Who had never been good enough." (p.101)*

Nica's self-destructive matronly doctrine: *"Good children don't cry. Good children don't talk. Good children hide their bruises and only lie when they're told to. I was no longer a child, but part of me still spoke in the same, childish voice." (p.271)*

Nica's life was largely destroyed during her time at the orphanage. Her lack of self-confidence is an illustration of how she has not yet found her role in the identity she is forming in her new environment. Threatening remarks can also cause emotional trauma to the person receiving them. This applies to Nica in her adolescent years, who often feels confusion in deciding things including hating, forgiving and demanding are still Nica's difficulties while in a new environment. This affected her activities during the initial trial period of adoption.

At Sunnycreek Home, she was subjected to constant doctrine, as well as the merciless punishments of caning and belt ties that hurt her body and mentally from the age of 5 until her adolescent years of 17. The effects of violence experienced from a young age are likely to change a person's mentality until they are older. That is why a sense of hopelessness often arises in Nica's mind, self-distrust and self-deprecation are other effects of the trauma she felt in this adolescent phase. This also made her once think that other people out there were similar to the evil matron.

Matron Margaret's crime: *"Margaret had not only committed a heinous crime, she had done it many times over several years, with extreme cruelty, causing lasting psychological damage. It didn't matter how many years had passed. She had abused, humiliated and beaten the children in her care, and not even time could erase what she had done."* (p.574)

Nica's trauma was reduced but not completely gone: *"I was still going to the psychologist. My fears had diminished, but they hadn't gone away. I still couldn't wear belts. The feeling of leather nauseated me. And in some situations, my terrors came back like monsters gnawing at my soul."* (p.575)

Nica's determination to face the source of her trauma in court: *"None of us wanted to see her again. None of us wanted to face her again. But we all carried the same scars. The same desperate desire. To close that nightmare forever."* (p.575)

The data shown above shows that flashbacks of a horrific past can still affect a person's mental state. Seen in the narrative, how Nica recounts the feelings she feels including the symptoms that arise as a result of remembering or dealing directly with the source of the problem that formed her trauma. In this case, even though

Nica looks very shaky, frightened, sweating, and many more attracts as much influence in her life. Here, Nica tried to get out of her protection zone and dared to fight the crimes she had received in court. Although fear affected her, it didn't stop her from fighting for justice for herself and the other children who were tortured in *The Grave*.

The symptoms of trauma were still just as strong when it came to the matron: *"I wrung my hands, trying to memorize her words, but I had the unpleasant feeling that I had already forgotten all her advice. I had to speak candidly before an audience about something that, despite how much time had passed, still twisted my stomach. I tried to remind myself why I was there, why I was doing this, and summoned my courage."* (p.577)

The most terrible nightmare: *"Something within me shrieked, writhed, threatened to choke me. I had resisted those feelings, forcing myself to stay present, to not throw to the winds all the efforts I had made with my psychologist. We had confronted the matron many times in my imagination, but having her there before me was a nightmare turned into reality."* (p.580)

The trauma shown disrupts the protagonist's cognitive in several ways such as thinking at her age, interaction in the form of unskilled communication, and excessive vigilance in terms of building relationships with her surroundings. Trauma can manifest as acute stress disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, and adjustment disorder, affecting the character's thoughts, emotions, and behavior (Muslikhah, 2024). Some of the forms of trauma experienced by the protagonist include fear of dark rooms, difficulty falling asleep, nightmares about past experiences, avoidance of belts, ribbons and any type of entrapment (Herman, 1992). That's what eventually left a mark, making it quite difficult for her to adapt to other people in her environment.

3. Reconnection

In this phase, Nica tries to build deeper relationships with people around her, building such feelings of love, affection that are only given to certain people closest to them, such as family, friends and partners. Nica also finally got the courage to

start a closer relationship with her adopted family, friends and partner at the age of 17. At this phase, Nica's efforts in building relationships are seen in several dialogs and narratives shown in the story. Her emotional upheaval, thoughts and efforts are highlighted in several parts. Some of the ones that the researcher pinned are as follows.

Dalma's gift dress, self-respect: *"It was wonderful. I would never get used to seeing myself like that. To always smelling nice, to wearing clean clothes every day. To being able to take a shower whenever I wanted, to taking as long as I needed to warm up, to seeing myself in a mirror without cracks. To feeling that sensation on my skin, as if I was something beautiful and worthy of admiration."* (p.422)

Nica receives a dress from one of her parent's best friends, Dalma. Nica's crisis distrust shows how different her situation was at the orphanage and after living with the Milligan family. She feels appreciated, taken care of and loved like any other person by them. She began to want to believe that all can experience good things in the world, that there is still hope for her to have a family, a family name, and so on. Nica who sees everything as precious, that other children should be able to get, but for her, just getting those things makes her feel special and appreciated. Getting a dress, being able to bathe in clean water at any time, seeing her reflection in the mirror clearly and many other things.

In this phase, Nica tries to build deeper relationships with people around her, building such feelings of love, affection that are only given to certain people closest to them, such as family, friends and partners. Nica also finally got the courage to start a closer relationship with her adopted family, friends and partner at the age of 17. At this phase, Nica's efforts in building relationships are seen in several dialogs and narratives shown in the story. Her emotional upheaval, thoughts and efforts are

highlighted in several parts. Some of the ones that the researcher pinned are as follows.

Nica's love for Anna: *"In moments like those, I couldn't work out what hurt me the most. What I felt inside, or having to hide from her what I couldn't tell a soul. Anna's eyes were understanding. But she was the last person in the world I could confess my feelings to." (p.438)*

Nica's confession to Anna: *"I didn't know how to show you that lying to you broke my heart. You're the most wonderful thing that has ever happened to me... I was scared of losing you. - 'My heart was torn in two. I waited for you for so long, Anna, longer than you can imagine, but Rigel... Rigel is everything I have. Everything. And now he...'" (p.499)*

The long creative writing printed above is a detailed description of how Nica finally ventured to reveal something she had been hiding to Anna. Trying to strengthen her relationship with the Milligan family, especially Anna. Nica finally revealed her feelings of love that she had been hiding because she felt inappropriate to say it to Anna who was very kind and sincere to her at that time. She was too embarrassed to believe that her relationship with Anna and Norman was far enough to have the right to say things that smelled of intimacy with the family. This is how intimacy developed in Nica's relationship with her adoptive family.

The greater the love that grows, the tighter the bond, but it will also be one of the things that brings the greatest fear of loss in Nica's life. Nica, who has long concealed the truth about her relationship with Rigel, again makes her have to think about choosing one of the two, finally starting to dare to reveal it to Anna. But Anna's response was beyond her expectations, making Nica believe even more that she had sincere love for Anna. Anna accepts her confession well, hugging Nica, without judgment, without criticism, without words, but feels sincere and warm. This is a picture of how someone grows in healing their trauma to reconnect with their life and social.

Started to open up with Anna: *"I'm sorry," I interrupted her with an exhausted sigh. Anna stopped talking. She watched me, mouth open, and I couldn't manage to hold her gaze. I felt empty, broken and flawed. I felt destroyed. 'I wanted to be perfect,' I confessed. 'For you. For Norman.' I wanted to be like the others. That was the Truth." (p.289-290)*

Finding herself desirable in Anna's eyes: *"In Anna's gaze there was no blame or condemnation. There was just me. And in that moment, for the first time, I realized that Anna's eyes were the color of the sky. - There was the sky I'd always been looking for. It was in Anna's eyes." (p.290)*

Successfully building trust and strong bonding with Anna again: *"Do you still want me?" I whispered, frightened. I needed to know, but I was afraid to hear the answer. I would never see my dreams in the same way without her. Anna inclined her head, distraught. Then she clutched me to her with all her strength. 'Of course,' she admonished me. I loved her even more madly." (p.292)*

Her relationship with the Milligan family, especially Anna, whom Nica considers her own mother. She found warmth, trust, sincerity and care from the woman she called Anna during this adoption period. The fear of being ignored and abandoned disappeared from her because it was replaced and filled with a deep sense of love with her family. In Judith Herman's theory in her book *Trauma and Recovery* (1992) which discusses this trauma, it showed results in a positive direction. It also showed that the statement that trauma is something that can be understood and sought healing (Herman, 1992).

Building more trust in Miki and Billie: *"One day, I would tell them that not all stories are contained in books. That there are invisible, silent and hidden tales that live in secret and die unheard. Fairy tales without an ending, destined to always be unfinished. Maybe, one day, I would tell her ours." (p.494)*

Improved relationship with Asia (conversation at the hospital): *"We haven't had much chance to get to know each other. But, it's always been clear you have no idea what it means to give up. You never stopped trying to build a relationship with me... even though I always pushed you away and treated you like an obstacle. Even... even though I didn't know you well, it didn't take much to realize that you don't know how to give up. - 'But look at you now. You've stopped fighting.'" (p.505)*

Having loyal friends: *"Billie and Miki came often to see how I was doing, and Adeline was there every day, taking care of me and braiding my hair as she had done when we were girls." (p.505)*

Intimacy relationships can also exist with friends. How relationships can be formed with mutual trust and support for each other. Nica's relationship is getting

better with her friends she met in the old and new environment to illustrate how Nica managed to go through this phase better than before. Some relationships that had been involved in misunderstandings were eventually resolved well by each of them. Nica managed to turn over a new leaf, reduce suspicion, live life with less trauma, and build much better communication with those closest to her.

In the phase of rebuilding social relationships, love relationships are also part of it. Nica tries to repair her fragile self to become more strong in order that she can be a strengthener for the people around her who she loves too. This is reflected in some of the data below.

Feelings for Rigel who understood her: *"Rigel was reading my soul. He knew what drove my most shining desires. He knew my dreams, my torments, my fears. I had been a fool to think he hadn't realized. I could not hide. Not from him. - His gaze was the condemnation I had never stopped dreaming of. His voice was a wound that I would carry inside forever. But his scent was like music. And in his eyes, I found my salvation. I was his. In a strange, mad, painful and complicated way. I was his. 'I chose you...!'" (p.443)*

Convincing Rigel of her feelings: *"There are some things you can't fix, Nica. And I'm one of them. I'm a disaster. And I always will be. 'I don't care,' I whispered sincerely." (p.442)*

"'I chose you...' - 'Over everything else... I chose you, Rigel. You'll never understand it, because you only see things in black and white. I always wanted a family, that's true,' I stressed in a whisper 'But I chose you because we belong together. Don't push me away... Don't keep me at a distance. You're not a price to pay. You're what makes me happy...' - 'I want to come in... even if you're a path of thorns inside.'" (p.444)

The creative writing above explains how deep trust is the basis for building a perfect relationship. How Nica tried to convince her feelings for Rigel that everything would go smoothly and be fine. Nica wants to believe that, and with Rigel, Nica sacrifices the things she can do for her love. Sacrifice in love is also included in the high intimacy stage that Nica has successfully achieved. The form of Nica's sacrifice in the text above is the way she patiently deals with Rigel's illness that is similar to hers, convincing that she can accept Rigel as he is, and so on. Even

when she had just found all the answers to her healing process, Nica dared to pave the way to heal Rigel's trauma and self-doubt as well.

Successfully escaping trauma, the effort helped Rigel to heal like herself: *"Because I had learned that I couldn't demand answers when I knocked on the door to his soul. I had to enter slowly, sit carefully in that crystal rose garden and wait patiently."* (p.456)

"I love you, Rigel," - "I love you like loving freedom from a dark cellar. Like loving a caress, after years of bruises and punches... I love you more than I've ever lived any color in all my life... and I love you... as I can love only you, you who hurt me and heals me more than anything else, you who are light and dark, the universe and the stars. I love you as I can love only you, you're my Tearsmith..." (p. 517)

Nica came to the happy ending she dreamed of, getting married to Rigel: *"He took from his pocket one of the Band-Aids that I had left at his apartment, opened it and put it around my fingers. Like a ring. 'This is all I've got to give you. And if one day you'll marry me, Nica... Everyone will see that you're mine, that you have been, silently, since the beginning.'"* (p. 614)

"A little girl was curled up asleep on the couch in front of the fireplace, totally blissful, her little face resting on the chest of a handsome man. A strong forearm was loosely wrapped around her. Rigel's head was tilted to one side; his eyes were closed - At thirty-four years old, he was even more attractive than ever before...." (p. 617)

For her past and her journey in finding the cure. Nica finally understood and knew how to help Rigel find his way too, just like how she found hers, slowly and with gentleness. She found it in the people who believed in her, who supported her, who touched her heart and soul with gentleness and without force. Nica eventually grew into a braver and stronger woman, and she wanted to give the same to her beloved Rigel. Giving trust in order that Rigel would also want to know more about the world, get to know the environment and people in healthy social relationships.

Nica managed to reach a point where all her sacrifices and patience paid off. Nica was blessed with a beautiful daughter named Rose, who was equally capable of giving love to Rigel as well. She managed to find her true self, her identity and also her intimacy with her partner, family and friends. The tables were turned today, as Nica found all the answers she had been wondering about all her life. Nica, found

her happiness, the fairytale ending she believes in for her and her loved ones, a happy ending. Nica managed to get through her crisis in her traumatized phase.

Previously, there were several narratives that showed how Nica had feelings of isolation. This feeling describes the trauma phase that made her almost completely isolated if she did not manage to get out of the orphanage, which inflicted many horrors on Nica. Herman (1992) states rebuilding identity and improving social relationships are the most meaningful stages for victims in finding their way out of feelings of more trauma. Likewise, the protagonist is trying to gather and form her identity with the results of interactions with other people she meets.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

A. Conclusion

Psychosocial growth refers to the way individuals develop and transform through their interactions with others and their understanding of themselves across the lifespan. The growth that occurs in the development of social psychology in this study found that the biggest factor that most influences is the state of the environment that is lived in. The process of growth that occurs in humans not only focuses physically but also mentally and also behaviorally. This can result in both positive and negative reactions depending on how quickly the situation can be corrected. Inappropriate environmental conditions can trigger the wrong psychological growth, causing negative patterns of thought and behavior. Trust is the most needed thing from a good relationship that is built. This is the case with the protagonist Nica in *The Tearsmith*.

Based on the results of the analysis, it can be concluded that an individual's trauma recovery development is strongly influenced by the environmental conditions in which she grows up, as illustrated through the character Nica in the novel *The Tearsmith*. The trauma she experienced caused several symptoms, such as difficulty sleeping with the lights on, fear of small, dark rooms, use of belts and ribbons, low self-esteem, and difficulty trusting her partner, adoptive family, and friends. Unsupportive environments, such as the Sunnycreek Home orphanage, became a source of childhood trauma that shaped Nica's personality and triggered

an identity crisis and difficulties in building social relationships. But over time and through various complex emotional processes, Nica shows significant development in each trauma recovery stage, until she is finally able to overcome trauma and establish healthy relationships with those around her.

Although a fictional character, Nica's journey reflects the realities that some people experience in real life, especially those who grow up in less supportive environments. This research shows that untreated trauma can have a lasting impact on one's emotional and social relationships, but it also emphasizes that recovery and growth are possible if individuals have strong intentions and support from their surroundings. Therefore, this novel can serve as an important reflection on how past trauma affects psychosocial development and how struggling with it can lead to positive outcomes.

B. Suggestion

This research is especially aimed at the researchers themselves, adolescents and someone who is facing the same crisis to be able to find the courage to step through tough phases like the protagonist in the study. The researcher suggests that readers take Nica's story in *The Tearsmith* as a reflection on various life experiences, especially related to self-discovery, past trauma, and the struggle to rebuild self-confidence and social relationships. Nica's long journey illustrates the reality that many people may experience in real life, especially those who have felt doubts, loneliness, or inner wounds since childhood. The researcher hopes that readers not only see this story as fiction, but also as a form of motivation to face personal crises and find new hope.

Then for academics, literary researchers and social psychology activists who are interested in reading and making this research as a reference for discussions that need to be raised to be discussed more perfectly. The future researchers can analyze the main male character, Rigel, in the novel *The Tearsmith*. It is also hoped that readers can reflect back on personal experiences without fear, as a step to realizing that every wound can be healed with perseverance and strong intentions. For a deeper understanding, the researcher also suggests that readers read the novel *The Tearsmith* directly, because it contains many emotional and psychological lessons that may not be fully revealed in this study.

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