

**STAGES OF GRIEF EXPERIENCED BY THE MAIN
CHARACTER IN EDEET RAVEL'S *THE CAT***

THESIS

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FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI MAULANA MALIK IBRAHIM
MALANG
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CHARACTER IN EDEET RAVEL'S *THE CAT***

THESIS

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

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MALANG
2026**

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

I state that the thesis entitled *Stages of Grief Experienced by the Main Character in Edeet Ravel's The Cat* is my original work. I do not include any material previously written or published by another person, except those cited as references and written in bibliography. Hereby, if there is any objection or claim, I am the only person who is responsible for that.

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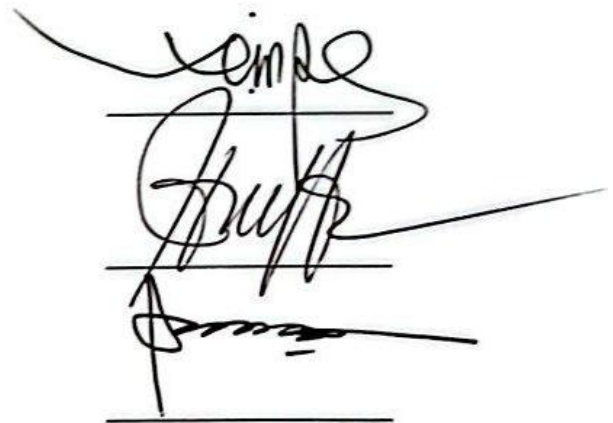
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MOTTO

“Do the best and always be grateful.

When you know you have done your best, there is no room for regret.

Do the best you can until you know better.

Then when you know better, do better.”

– Marshella –

DEDICATION

With love and gratitude, I dedicate this thesis to my beloved parents, my mother and father, for their endless support and prayers. I also dedicate this thesis to my dear brother, Danang, and my beloved grandmother, for their love and encouragement.

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Bismillahirrahmanirrahim.

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Malang, 10 May 2026

The researcher

A handwritten signature in black ink, featuring a stylized 'M' and 'W' with the name 'MARSH' visible in the middle.

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ABSTRACT

Wijayani, Marshella Dwi. 2026. *Stages of Grief Experienced by the Main Character in Edeet Ravel's The Cat*. Undergraduate Thesis, Department of English Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Advisor: Miftahul Huda, M.Pd., Ph.D.

Keywords: *Grief, stages of grief, movement pattern*

Grief is an inevitable human experience that reflects how individuals respond to loss. In literary works, this experience is often portrayed through characters and their emotional struggles. Edeet Ravel's *The Cat* presents the story of a mother coping with the death of her son, depicting a complex process of grief. This study aims to analyze the stages of grief experienced by the main character, Elise, and to examine how the movement pattern of these stages is portrayed throughout the novel. This study applies literary criticism with a psychological approach based on Elisabeth Kübler-Ross' theory of the stages of grief. The data were taken from narration and dialogue in the novel. The analysis shows that Elise experiences all five stages of grief: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. Denial is reflected through Elise's inability to fully process the reality of her son's death, while anger appears through emotional frustration, resentment and blame toward others. Bargaining is portrayed through her repeated "if only" thoughts, depression is reflected through deep sadness, withdrawal, and loss of motivation in daily life, whereas acceptance gradually appears when Elise begins to reconnect with other people and continue her daily life despite the loss. Among these stages, depression appears as the most dominant condition. However, these stages do not occur in a fixed order. Instead, the stages are portrayed in a non-linear movement pattern, in which the stages recur and overlap throughout the story. The findings indicate that grief in the novel is portrayed as a dynamic and evolving process rather than a structured progression, showing that individuals may move back and forth between stages before gradually reaching acceptance.

مستخلص البحث

ويجاياتي، مارشيلادوي (٢٠٢٦) مراحل الحزن في الشخصية الرئيسية في رواية "القط" لإيديت رافيل. البحث الجامعي، قسم الأدب الإنجليزي. كلية العلوم الإنسانية، جامعة مولانا مالك إبراهيم الإسلامية الحكومية مالانج. المشرف: الدكتور مفتاح الهدى، الماجستير

الكلمات الأساسية: الحزن، مراحل الحزن، نمط الحركة

الحزن تجربة إنسانية لا مفرّ منها، ويعكس كيفية استجابة الأفراد للفقدان. وفي الأعمال الأدبية، غالبًا ما تُصوّر هذه التجربة من خلال الشخصيات وصراعاتها العاطفية. تعرض رواية "القط" للكاتب إيديت رافيل قصة أمّ تحاول التكيف مع وفاة ابنها، مما يصوّر عملية حزن معقّدة. يهدف هذا البحث إلى تحليل مراحل الحزن في الشخصية الرئيسية "إليز"، وكيفية تصوير نمط حركة هذه المراحل عبر أحداث الرواية. اعتمد هذا البحث على النقد الأدبي بمنهج نفسي مستند إلى نظرية مراحل الحزن لإليزابيث كوبلر روس. وقد جُمعت البيانات من السرد، والحوار، والمونولوج الداخلي في الرواية. وأظهرت نتائج التحليل أن "إليز" تمرّ بالمراحل الخمس للحزن، وهي: الإنكار، والغضب، والمساومة، والاكتئاب، والتقبّل. ويتجلّى الإنكار في عجز "إليز" عن استيعاب حقيقة وفاة ابنها بصورة كاملة، بينما يظهر الغضب من خلال الإحباط العاطفي، والعداية، وإلقاء اللوم على الآخرين. أمّا المساومة فتظهر من خلال تكرار أفكار "لو أنّ فقط". ويتجلّى الاكتئاب في الحزن العميق، والانطواء، وفقدان الدافع في الحياة اليومية، في حين يبدأ التقبّل بالظهور تدريجيًا عندما تبدأ "إليز" بإعادة التواصل مع الآخرين ومواصلة حياتها اليومية رغم الفقدان. ومن بين هذه المراحل، يُعدّ الاكتئاب الحالة الأكثر هيمنة. غير أن هذه المراحل لا تحدث بترتيب ثابت، بل تُصوّر ضمن نمط حركة غير خطّي، حيث تتكرّر المراحل وتتداخل فيما بينها طوال أحداث القصة. وتشير نتائج البحث إلى أن الحزن في الرواية يُصوّر بوصفه عملية ديناميكية ومتطوّرة، لا مجرد تسلسل منظم، مما يدل على أن الأفراد قد ينتقلون ذهابًا وإيابًا بين مراحل الحزن قبل الوصول تدريجيًا إلى مرحلة التقبّل.

ABSTRAK

Wijayani, Marshella Dwi. 2026. *Tahapan Duka yang Dialami oleh Tokoh Utama dalam Novel The Cat Karya Edeet Ravel*. Skripsi, Program Studi Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Humaniora, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Pembimbing: Miftahul Huda, M.Pd., Ph.D.

Kata Kunci: *Duka, tahapan duka, pola pergerakan*

Duka merupakan respons emosional yang muncul akibat kehilangan. Dalam karya sastra, pengalaman duka sering digambarkan melalui reaksi emosional tokoh dalam menghadapi kehilangan. Novel *The Cat* karya Edeet Ravel menggambarkan proses duka yang dialami seorang ibu setelah kehilangan putranya. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis tahapan duka yang dialami tokoh utama, Elise, serta pola pergerakan dari tahapan tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan kritik sastra dengan pendekatan psikologi berdasarkan teori tahapan duka Elisabeth Kübler-Ross. Data penelitian diperoleh dari narasi, dialog, dan monolog batin dalam novel. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Elise mengalami seluruh tahapan duka, yaitu penolakan, kemarahan, tawar-menawar, depresi, dan penerimaan. Tahap penolakan digambarkan melalui ketidakmampuannya menerima kenyataan atas kematian putranya. Kemarahan digambarkan melalui luapan emosi dan kecenderungannya menyalahkan orang lain, sedangkan tahap tawar-menawar digambarkan melalui pikiran “seandainya” yang terus muncul. Depresi digambarkan melalui kesedihan mendalam dan penarikan diri secara emosional. Adapun penerimaan digambarkan ketika Elise mulai kembali menjalin hubungan dengan orang lain dan melanjutkan hidup setelah kehilangan. Di antara seluruh tahapan tersebut, depresi merupakan kondisi yang paling dominan. Namun, tahapan duka tersebut tidak berlangsung secara berurutan. Tahapan tersebut digambarkan dengan pola pergerakan non-linear melalui kemunculan kembali dan tumpang tindih antartahap sepanjang cerita.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents background of the study, problems of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, and definition of key terms.

A. Background of the Study

Grief is a response to a significant loss, particularly the death of a loved one (Worden, 2018). As a universal human experience, it is frequently represented in literary works. Through characters and narratives, authors portray various emotional responses to loss, making grief an important theme in literature.

Grief is often understood through the five-stage model proposed by Kübler-Ross (1969). This model divides the grieving process into five emotional phases: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. In its common interpretation, the model explains grief as a movement from the first stage of denial to the final stage of acceptance. This view suggests that a grieving person may move from one emotional stage to another in a sequential order, with each phase representing a different response to loss.

However, the grieving process is personal and unique for every individual. The stages do not always appear in a fixed order, and people may experience them differently (Neimeyer, 2022). The stages may overlap, recur, or appear unexpectedly rather than follow a strictly linear order. A person may move from one emotional state to another in various ways, or even experience several responses at the same time (Kübler-Ross & Kessler, 2005)

The complex emotional journey of grief can be seen in Edeet Ravel's *The Cat* (2013). This novel tells the story of Elise, a mother whose life falls apart after the sudden death of her son. After the loss, her life changes completely. She isolates herself from others and finds it difficult to continue her daily life. Memories of her son continue to affect her emotions. She feels numb, while at other times she experiences deep sadness. She also shows self-destructive behavior, such as using drugs and thinking about ending her life. However, her love for son still keeps her connected to reality. Through Elise's experience, the novel presents a deep and emotional portrayal of grief.

The novel presents a detailed and personal experience of grief from a mother's point of view. Elise's condition shows how grief affects her thoughts, feelings, and behavior. The story describes her emotional struggle in a clear and honest way, so readers can understand how difficult it is for her to cope with grief. This makes *The Cat* suitable to be analyzed through a psychological approach, especially using Kübler-Ross' stages of grief.

Previous studies on grief in literary works show that Kubler-Ross' five stages of grief are widely used to analyze characters' emotional responses to loss. Several studies reveal that all five stages appear in literary narratives. Widyaningtyas and Andayani (2023) find that Julie, the main character in *You've Reached Sam*, experiences all five stages of grief, with depression emerging as the most dominant stage. Similarly, Yuanti et al. (2023) show that Jim in *Tere Liye's Harga Sebuah Percaya* experiences the complete stages of grief after losing his lover, Nayla. Salea (2024) also finds that Jack Salmon in *The Lovely Bones*

experiences all five stages of grief in response to Susie's death. In addition, Harinda and Widayanti (2025) find that Agnes in *Hamnet* experiences all five stages of grief, with depression remaining the most prominent stage. These studies suggest that the five stages of grief are commonly represented as a complete set in literary works.

While some studies present the stages as a complete sequence, others show that certain stages may be absent or less clearly represented. Firdaus (2025), for example, finds that the character in *Tony Takitani* only experiences three stages: bargaining, depression, and acceptance. Similarly, Elroi (2024) reports that Ove in *A Man Called Ove* experiences four stages, without the bargaining stage. Wijaya et al. (2023) also find that the character in *The Shack* does not experience all stages completely. These studies suggest that the sequence of the stages of grief does not always appear in a complete form and may vary, depending on the character's psychological condition and narrative context.

Furthermore, the experience of grief is not always represented as a linear progression through the five stages. Madden (2023) shows that in *The Gathering*, the stages of grief are experienced in a non-linear pattern influenced by memory and trauma. These findings suggest that the stages of grief are flexible and do not always develop in a fixed or structured order. This indicates that the experience of grief in literary texts is flexible and does not necessarily follow a linear progression.

In addition, some studies focus on how the stages of grief are seen through the character's perspective. Gamelia and Istiani (2025) show that Morrie in *Tuesdays with Morrie* reflects the stages of grief through his thoughts and life lessons, which help him face death more calmly. Similarly, Bastomi and Anam

(2025), explain that Yuko Moriguchi in *Confessions* experiences all five stages of grief. Through this process, she undergoes emotional transformation and develops resilience in response to trauma. These studies show that the stages of grief not only describe emotions, but also influence how individuals understand and respond to loss.

These above studies collectively show that Kubler-Ross' theory has been widely used to analyze grief in literary works. However, a gap still remains. While most previous studies tend to focus only on identifying the stages of grief, without further examining how the movement pattern of these stages is portrayed in relation to the character's experience. In addition, limited scholarly attention has been given to Edeet Ravel's *The Cat* (2013), particularly in relation to grief theory. Meanwhile, this novel presents a complex experience of grief through the main character's continuous changing emotional and psychological states. Thus, the novel offers a dynamic representation of grief that is relevant for further analysis.

To address these gaps, this study analyzes grief in *The Cat* (2013) through Kübler-Ross' stages of grief. In addition to identifying the stages of grief experienced by Elise, the study examines the movement pattern of those stages throughout her grieving process. By doing so, the study seeks to provide a broader understanding of grief as a process rather than merely a series of individual emotional responses. Therefore, this study is expected to contribute to discussions of grief in literary studies and extends the application of Kübler-Ross' theory in literary analysis.

B. Problems of the Study

Based on the background of the study above, this research is designed to answer the following questions:

1. How are the stages of grief experienced by the main character, Elise, in Edeet Ravel's *The Cat*?
2. How does the novel portray the movement pattern of the stages of grief across Elise's journey toward acceptance?

C. Significance of the Study

This study is expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, it contributes to the study of literary psychology by applying Kübler-Ross' stages of grief theory to Edeet Ravel's *The Cat* (2013). Practically, this study may help readers understand grief as a complex emotional process. It may also provide reflective insight for readers, especially those who are interested in how literary works represent loss, emotional struggle, and acceptance. Furthermore, this study may enhance the researcher's understanding of the application of psychological approaches in literary analysis.

D. Scope and Limitation

This study focuses on the stages of grief experienced by Elise as the main character in Edeet Ravel's *The Cat* (2013). It also examines how the novel portrays the movement pattern of grief stages throughout Elise's journey toward acceptance. The analysis is limited to Elise's psychological experience and the application of Kübler-Ross' stages of grief theory. Therefore, the discussion focuses on Elise's

behavior, emotions, and inner thoughts as presented through narration, inner monologue, and dialogue. The study does not examine other characters in detail or discuss non-psychological aspects of the novel. As a result, the findings are limited to the representation of grief in the main character, Elise.

E. Definition of Key Terms

The definition of key terms is provided to clarify important concepts used in this study:

1. **Grief** is a natural emotional response to the loss of someone or something important. It may involve sadness, pain, emptiness, anger, or other emotional reactions as a person tries to adjust to life after loss (Kübler-Ross, 1969).
2. **Stages of grief** refers to the five emotional states that individuals may experience after a loss. The stages are denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. They describe different emotional responses that may appear as a person tries to cope with and accept loss (Kübler-Ross, 1969).
3. **Movement pattern** refers to the way an individual moves through the stages of grief. In this study, the term is used to identify whether Elise experiences the stages sequentially from one stage to another or in a more fluid and non-linear way (Kübler-Ross & Kessler, 2005).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter presents the theoretical framework and related concepts used in this study. It begins with a discussion of the relationship between psychology and literature as the general foundation for analyzing psychological issues in literary texts. The chapter then explains the concept of grief, including its definition and characteristics. After that, it discusses Kübler-Ross' stages of grief theory and the movement pattern of the stages.

A. Psychological Approach in Literature

Psychology and literature have a close relationship because both seek to understand human beings through their inner experiences. Literature depicts mental processes through characters, conflicts, and emotional representations, while psychology studies psychological symptoms and mechanisms scientifically (Minderop, 2010). This shared interest in human behavior has led to the development of the psychological approach in literature, which applies psychological concepts and theories to the interpretation of literary texts.

The psychological approach in literature focuses on the human aspects inherent in literary characters (2010). Furthermore, this approach views literary works as psychological activities, both in the process of creation and in the process of reading (Minderop, 2010). Thus, the psychological approach in literature can be understood as an approach that uses psychological concepts and theories to read, understand and interpret literary works.

Wellek and Warren (1949), identify four scopes of psychological approach in literature: (1) the psychology of the author as a type or individual, (2) the psychology of the creative process, (3) the application of psychological theories and principles to literary works, and (4) the psychology of the reader or the effects of literature on its audience. For studies that position the text as the primary focus, the most relevant scope is the third one, particularly the analysis of characters. This approach enables the researcher to uncover the psychological layers of characters that are not always explicitly stated but are embedded in their dialogues, actions, conflicts and responses to the events they experience (Ratna, 2004).

Although characters in literary works are fictional, they are crafted with psychological traits that mirror those of real humans, including motivations, trauma, desires and internal conflicts (Endraswara, 2008). In line with this idea, Wiyatmi (2011) states that one essential requirement for creating credible characters is the incorporation of convincing psychological dimensions alongside the social and physical dimensions. This psychological depth makes a character complex by giving them an inner life and internal struggles that readers can understand and empathize with. Consequently, when analyzing characters and their personalities, the researcher should ground the interpretation in psychological theories and principles that explain human behavior and character formation.

Nevertheless, psychological approach in literature must be clearly distinguished from clinical psychology because object of the study in this approach is the mental and emotional issues of fictional characters as represented in the text, not the actual psychological state of real humans (2004). Therefore, the purpose of

the analysis is not to make a clinical diagnosis, but to interpret the character's psychological conditions through textual traces. These traces can be derived from narration, dialogue, actions, symbols, and the storyline. All of which help construct a picture of the character's inner life (Endraswara, 2008).

The psychological approach in literature is important because it enables a deeper analysis of characters in literary works. This approach allows the researcher to understand the inner dynamics experienced by characters, especially in literary works that deal with psychological issues such as trauma, loss, or identity crisis (Endraswara, 2008). In many cases, fictional characters are portrayed as going through complex emotional experiences. These experiences are often expressed through internal monologues, metaphors, or interaction with other characters. These emotional experiences can be systematically analyzed using psychological theories (Minderop, 2010). For example, when a character experiences loss, the psychological responses that arise can be analyzed using psychological theories about the stages of grief. Likewise, when a character faces an inner conflict, psychological analysis can help explain the defense mechanisms used by the character to cope with such pressure.

Based on the theoretical framework above, this study uses psychological approach as the basis for interpreting the psychological dynamics of characters. This approach is used to understand how texts construct the emotional and psychological dimensions of the characters through language, narrative, and story structure. Through this approach, the study seeks to understand the motivations,

inner conflicts, and emotional experiences that underlie the actions of the characters in literary texts.

B. Grief and Its Characteristics

Kübler-Ross (1969) defines grief as an emotional response experienced by individuals after facing significant loss, which may appear in the loss of a person, a relationship, a social role, or an aspect of identity (Worden, 2018). Stroebe and Schut (2017) note that grief involves multiple dimensions simultaneously: how a person feels, thinks, behaves, and even their physical condition. Worden (2018) views grief as a process in which a person struggles to accept the reality of loss and adjust to the changes it brings. Neimeyer (2022)(2010) further argues that after a loss, a person needs to reconstruct the way they understand themselves and their life.

Grief may be felt in various aspects of life. Cognitively, individuals experiencing grief may have difficulty concentrating or feel confused in making sense of what has happened. Behaviorally, they may withdraw from their social environment. At the existential level, they may begin to question the meaning of their life (Neimeyer, 2022).

Grief has several characteristics as follows:

1. Grief is personal. Each individual experiences it differently based on their personality, life experiences, and the depth of relationship with what is lost (Worden, 2018). Its intensity and duration differ from one person to another. In some cases, grief may become prolonged or more complicated (Parkes & Prigerson., 2010). Doka (2016) introduces the concept of disenfranchised grief,

which refers to bereavement that is not recognized by the social environment. This type of loss is often considered “not significant enough” by others, leaving a person with no space to grieve openly.

2. Grief is dynamic. Individuals may fluctuate between confronting and avoiding the loss in their daily lives (Stroebe et al., 2017). This shows that responses in grief do not always occur in a fixed sequence and may appear simultaneously or repeatedly depending on the individual’s condition (Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, 1969). Individuals may move back and forth between different emotional responses throughout the grieving process. Therefore, grief develops continuously over time rather than occurring as a single emotional experience
3. Grief is reconstructive. Individuals are encouraged to reorganize their sense of meaning and identity after experiencing loss (Neimeyer, 2001). Through this process, individuals attempt to understand the impact of grief on their lives and gradually adapt to the changes caused by it. Grief can also influence how individuals view themselves, their relationships, and their future after experiencing significant emotional changes.
4. Grief is influenced by social and cultural contexts that shape how it is expressed and understood (2009). Different cultures and social environments may have different expectations, values, and ways of responding to grief. Some individuals may openly express their emotions, while others may suppress or control their emotional responses because of social or cultural norms. Therefore, grief is a varied experience for each individual.

C. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross' Stages Grief Theory

The five stages of grief theory proposed by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross is one of the most well-known models used to understand loss. In *On Death and Dying* (1969), Kübler-Ross identifies that collectively denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance as a grieving process that follows loss. Although the theory was originally developed from interviews with terminally ill patients, it has since been applied to various context of loss.

The five stages of grief are explained below:

1. Denial

Denial is a condition in which individuals refuse or are unable to fully accept the reality of loss (Kübler-Ross, 1969). It is the first natural response that often appears when individuals first face loss. In this stage, individuals may experience shock, disbelief, avoidance of painful reality, difficulty accepting the finality of death, emotional disconnection, or attempts to interpret situations in less painful ways. Denial helps individuals gradually cope with the emotional **impact of loss**.

Denial does not always mean completely rejecting reality. Individuals may partially accept the loss while still struggling to fully understand or emotionally process it. Denial can appear through disbelief, avoidance, emotional numbness, refusal to accept reality, and minimizing the significance of the loss. Some individuals may behave as though nothing has happened, continue their daily routines normally, or avoid conversations related to the loss because confronting the reality feels emotionally overwhelming. Through denial, individuals are given time to slowly adjust to the reality of the loss (Kübler-Ross, 1969).

2. Anger

Anger is a stage in which individuals begin to confront the reality of the loss and become more aware of its emotional impact. As the pain of the loss becomes clearer, feelings of frustration, resentment, and blame may emerge. Anger develops as a response to emotional suffering, helplessness, and the sense that loss is unfair. Individuals may begin to question why the loss happened and why they are the one who must endure it.

This stage may be reflected through resentment, frustration, blaming oneself or others, emotional outbursts, aggression, and questioning why the loss happened. Individuals may direct their anger toward family members, friends, themselves, circumstances, fate, or even God because they feel emotionally affected by the loss. Some individuals may also experience emotional conflict and difficulty controlling their reactions. Kübler-Ross (1969) explains that anger helps individuals express emotional pain and release feelings that emerge during the grieving process.

3. Bargaining

Bargaining is a stage of grief in which individuals attempt to negotiate emotionally in response to the loss they experience (Kübler-Ross, 1969). In this stage, individuals often think about what might have happened differently and imagine alternative outcomes. Feelings of regret, guilt, fears, and hope commonly emerge as individuals mentally revisit past events.

This stage is often marked by “*if only*” and “*what if*” thoughts. Individuals may repeatedly think about actions that could have prevented the loss or imagine different possibilities that might have changed the outcome or changes the loss. they

may also pray, make promises, or search for explanations in an attempt to reduce emotional suffering and preserve hope.

4. Depression

Depression is the stage in which individuals begin to fully recognize the reality, permanence, and emotional impact of the loss (Kübler-Ross, 1969). At this stage, individuals are no longer mainly occupied with denying or resisting the loss but begin to feel its emotional weight more deeply. As a result, feelings of sadness, hopelessness, emptiness, and emotional exhaustion may emerge.

Kübler-Ross (1969) explains that depression happens when individual become fully aware of what has been lost. This stage may be reflected through crying, silence, withdrawal from social interaction, and loss interest in daily activities. Individuals may also experience difficulty carrying out ordinary routines because the emotional burden feels overwhelming. In some cases, when the reality of loss begins to settle in, emotional pain may also appear through bodily discomfort as part of the depressive response (Kübler-Ross, 1969).

5. Acceptance

Acceptance is the stage of grief in which individuals begin to acknowledge the reality of loss and gradually adjust to life after it (Kübler-Ross, 1969). In this stage, individuals no longer struggle as intensely against the reality of what has happened, although sadness and emotional pain is still exist. According to Kübler-Ross (1969), acceptance does not mean forgetting the loss or no longer grieving. Rather, it involves learning to live with the emotional impact of the loss.

This stage may be reflected through emotional adjustment, calmness, and more realistic understanding of the situation. Individuals may begin rebuild daily routines, reconnect with other people, started to allow themselves receive emotional support, participate in meaningful activities, and become more willing to move forward with life. Some individuals also begin to think about the future again and engage with life despite still carrying grief. These responses show that individuals are gradually adapting to the reality of loss while continuing their lives.

D. Movement Pattern of the Stages of Grief

Movement pattern refers to the way individuals move through the stages of grief. It examines whether a person experiences the stages in a sequential order from one stage to the next or in a more fluid and non-linear way. Originally, the five stages of grief were widely understood as a linear progression. However, later scholarship on grief has shown that this is not always the case. Movement through the stages can take different forms, depending on the individual and the experience of loss. These possibilities can be understood through two patterns:

1. Linear Movement Pattern

A linear movement pattern occurs when a person goes through the five stages of grief according to the sequence commonly associated with Kübler-Ross' model. The sequence begins with denial, followed by anger, bargaining, depression and finally acceptance. In this pattern, each stage moves to the next stage in sequence and one direction. A person passes through stage after another toward final acceptance.

Early interpretations of this theory often understood the stages in this way. Although the time spent in each stage may vary from one person to another, grief is generally viewed as a journey that moves from denial toward acceptance. This linear understanding still commonly appears in today's popular discussions regarding grief.

2. Non-Linear Movement Pattern

A non-linear movement pattern occurs when a person goes through the stages of grief not in a fixed or regular sequence. Kübler-Ross and Kessler, in *On Grief and Grieving* (2005), clarified that the five stages were not meant to be a rigid sequence. A person may experience the stages in a different order, return to a stage that has already been experienced (recur), or experience several stages at the same time (overlap). This shows that grief does not always follow a predictable path. Therefore, the five stages may be understood later as categories or markers of emotional responses.

Modern grief researchers also support this non-linear view. Stroebe and Schut (2017), for example, explain that people naturally move back and forth between facing their loss and stepping away from it, rather than moving forward continuously. Bonanno and Mancini (2009) makes a similar point by noting that the intensity of grief changes over time and rarely follows a predictable pattern. Grief is indeed unique for each person and does not follow the same pattern for everyone. Together, these views suggest that a non-linear movement pattern is a normal part of the grieving process.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter explains the research method used in this study. It includes the research design, data source, data collection, and data analysis.

A. Research Design

This study uses literary criticism as its research method. According to Searle (1970), literary criticism is a field of study that aims to analyze and interpret literary works to understand the meaning and structure that shape the text. Since this study examines the novel as its research subject, the analysis is conducted through literary criticism.

This study applies a psychological approach by using Elisabeth Kübler-Ross' theory of the five stages of grief. This approach is used to analyze the grief experienced by Elise, the main character in Edeet Ravel's *The Cat*. Specifically, the study examines how the stages of grief is represented through Elise's experiences and how the novel portrays the movement pattern of these stages across her journey toward acceptance.

B. Data Source

This research uses Edeet Ravel's *The Cat* as the data source. The novel was first published by Penguin Canada in 2012. However, due to its availability, this study uses the 2013 edition, which consists of 221 pages. The data were taken from the dialogue and narration in the novel. These data include: words, phrases,

sentences, and passages related to the depiction of the stages of grief and the movement pattern of those stages.

C. Data Collection

The data for this research were collected through the following steps:

1. Reading Edeet Ravel's *The Cat* thoroughly to understand the storyline, characters, and narrative context.
2. Reread the novel carefully to identify data related to Elise's grieving experiences.
3. Marking relevant narration, dialogue, and passages that show the stages of grief and their movement pattern.
4. Selected the data that are most relevant to the research question.
5. Recording and compiling the selected data into a document to facilitate analysis.

D. Data Analysis

After collecting the data, the researcher conducted the analysis through several steps below:

1. Classifying the identified data based on Kübler-Ross' five stages of grief: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance.
2. Interpreting how each stage is experienced and expressed by Elise through her behavior, emotions, thoughts, and dialogue.
3. Examining how the stages move throughout Elise's grieving process, especially whether they appear in a linear or non-linear pattern.

4. Relating the findings to Kübler-Ross' stages of grief theory and the concept of non-linear grief movement.
5. Drawing a conclusion based on the analysis to answer the research questions.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the research findings and discussion based on the stages of grief proposed by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross. It explores how the stages of grief are experienced by the main character, Elise, in Edeet Ravel's *The Cat*, and how the movement pattern of these stages appears across her journey after losing her son.

A. Elise's Loss and Grief

The loss experienced by Elise in *The Cat* (2013) is the sudden death of her son in a car accident. This accident significantly affects her life and becomes turning point in the narrative. Following her son's death Elise faces various emotional and psychological difficulties that continue to influence her throughout the story.

However, loss does not necessarily lead to grief. While loss refers to the experience of being deprived of someone significant, grief involves the emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and physical responses that emerge following that loss (Worden, 2018). Therefore, before examining the stages of grief, it is necessary to establish whether Elise's responses to her son's death can be understood as grief.

Throughout the novel, Elise demonstrates various responses associated with grief. One of Elise's earliest responses after the loss can be seen through her thoughts about the world without her son:

What frightens me is this alien planet. A planet without my son. I don't know or understand this world, I've never been here or even heard of it. How can I negotiate this unknown place? How can I help but be terrified? (p. 8).

In this quotation, Elise describes the world without her son as *an “alien planet,”* suggesting that she can no longer understand or make sense of her life after his death. The loss changes the way she perceives reality and makes her feel confused and frightened about how to continue living. This response reflects the cognitive impact of the loss on Elise.

Elise also demonstrates emotional responses following the death of her son:

My pillow is wet with the tears I shed during the night (p. 8).

This quotation shows that Elise experiences continuing sadness after the loss. Even while sleeping, she continues to cry, indicating that the emotional pain remains present in her daily life.

The intensity of her emotional suffering can also be seen in the following quotation:

Even if there was nothing after death, I wanted to join my son in that nothingness. I wanted to be with him (p. 12).

Her desire to join her son in death reflects the depth of her despair and longing. The loss causes her to lose the desire to continue living and creates a strong wish to be reunited with her son. This response demonstrates the profound emotional impact of the loss.

Besides affecting her thoughts and emotions, the loss also affects Elise physically:

I was suddenly colder than I'd ever been in my life, and I felt sick to my stomach. Spasmodic shudders, similar to the reflex that sometimes jolted me pleasantly as I fell asleep, ran through me, but these shudders came in quick succession, and were as powerful as waves crashing on rocks (p. 13).

This physical reaction can be seen through her nausea, extreme coldness, and uncontrollable shudders after confronting the reality of her son's death. These reactions indicate that the impact of the loss extends beyond her thoughts and emotions and also affects her physical condition.

These quotations show that Elise experiences cognitive, emotional, and physical responses following the death of her son. The loss affects multiple aspects of her life and continues to influence her after the event itself. Therefore, her experience extends beyond the occurrence of loss and can be understood as grief.

Elise's responses also reflect several characteristics of grief. First, her grief is personal because she responds to the loss in her own way through fear, sadness, longing, and physical distress. Her strong attachment to her son shapes how she experiences the loss throughout the novel. Second, her grief is dynamic because her responses continue to change throughout the story. Rather than remaining in a single emotional state, Elise experiences different reactions as she struggles to cope with the loss and adjust to life without her son. In addition, the novel portrays the reconstructive nature of grief as Elise gradually learns to adapt to life after the loss and make adjustments to her new reality. Her experience also highlights the role of social support, as her interactions with other people become part of her process of coping with the loss and adjusting to life after her son's death.

Since the novel portrays a range of grief responses following the death of her son, Elise's experience can be further analyzed through Kübler-Ross' stages of grief. The following sections examine how these stages are represented and how their movement pattern is portrayed throughout the novel.

B. The Stages of Grief Experienced by Elise in Response to Loss

The grief experienced by Elise as the main character in *The Cat* can be understood through the five stages proposed by Kübler-Ross. These stages function as a framework to analyze Elise's responses to the loss of her son. Each stage is identified through selected textual evidence and examined based on how it is experienced and expressed by character.

1. Denial

Denial is a condition where individuals refuse or are unable to fully accept the reality of loss (Kübler-Ross, 1969). Denial helps individual to protect the mind from overwhelming pain or shock. During this stage, people may struggle to process the reality of what has happened and respond in different ways, such as minimizing the situation, reinterpreting reality in a less threatening way, emotionally distancing themselves from the loss, or temporarily avoiding painful thoughts and feelings.

Elise's denial first appears in her response to the accident. Before she knows what has happened, her mind already tries to reduce the seriousness of the situation, as shown in the following quotation:

When I heard the screeching of brakes and something else, something horrible, I ran outside, but at the same time it seemed to me that I didn't move at once, that I was slow to react. My legs were heavy, as if determined not to rush, because after all, nothing had happened, it was probably nothing, there was no need really to get up and check, though I might as well (p.10).

This quotation occurs when Elise hears the sound of brakes and a terrible noise from outside her house. Although she senses that something bad may have happened, Elise reacts slowly and tries to convince herself that the situation is

probably not serious. Her thoughts that “*nothing had happened*” and that it was “*probably nothing*” indicate that she unconsciously reduces the possibility of tragedy before knowing what actually happened.

Elise’s slow reaction and heavy legs suggest her hesitation. Physically, she moves toward the scene, but psychologically, she is not ready to face the possibility of loss. This tension between movement and hesitation shows the form of denial in Elise’s grieving process. Kübler-Ross (1969) explains that individuals in the denial stage often minimize a painful situation because they are not emotionally ready to accept the reality of loss. Therefore, Elise’s reaction reflects denial because she attempts to reduce the seriousness of the event before confronting the truth.

Elise’s denial becomes clearer when she directly sees the accident but still interprets it in a less painful way:

I didn’t associate the car on the lawn with the fact that my son was lying on the grass, curled up on his side but with his legs strangely twisted behind him. I assumed he was ill, and a passerby who happened to be a doctor had stopped to help. A Good Samaritan, I thought (p.10).

This passage occurs when Elise comes outside after hearing the crash and sees the scene of the accident. She notices a car on the lawn and her son lying on the grass in an unusual position, but she does not immediately understand what has actually happened. Instead of connecting the scene with the possibility of death, she assumes that her son is only injured and that someone has already come to help him. This shows how she reinterprets the situation into something less threatening because she is not emotionally ready to accept the reality of what has occurred. The statement “*I didn’t associate the car on the lawn with the fact that my son was lying*

on the grass” highlights the gap between what Elise sees and what she is emotionally ready to accept

Denial, according to Kübler-Ross (1969), can appear not only as rejection but also as a reinterpretation of reality. Elise still sees the accident, but she interprets it in a safer way. By doing this, she delays recognizing the reality of the loss and protects herself from emotional shock. In this case, Elise’s reaction reflects denial because she replaces the actual event with a less threatening interpretation before she is emotionally ready to confront the truth.

Denial also appears after the accident, especially when Elise’s memories make it difficult for her to accept the finality of death:

These scenes I summon, of Neil and our son reading the newspaper in the library together, or having an after-school snack at Starbucks—...sometimes I can’t grasp that it’s over and I see them there still. There are times when the finality is real, but at other times I coast. The brain can only support so much reality, it seems, before it shuts down and refuses to proceed (p.21).

In this quotation, Elise recalls memories of Neil and her son spending time together, such as reading the newspaper or having after-school snacks at Starbucks. While remembering those moments, Elise admits that she sometimes still sees them as if they are physically present living their normal lives. The statement, “*sometimes I can’t grasp that it’s over,*” suggests that Elise is still unable to completely accept the finality of their deaths. In addition, her reflection *that “the brain can only support so much reality”* indicates that her mind temporarily avoids fully processing the pain because it feels too overwhelming.

The moment does not mean that Elise completely denies the fact of death. Rather, it shows that she moves between awareness and emotional refusal. She knows that the loss is real, but her mind protects her by suspending the full meaning

of that reality. During this denial stage, individuals struggle to accept the finality of a loss because the reality feels emotionally overwhelming (Kübler-Ross, 1969). In Elise's case, her reaction reflects denial because she continues to imagine her loved ones as still present when she is unable to fully confront their death.

Elise's denial continues later when her mind temporarily pushes the reality of her son's death away from her immediate awareness:

For a few minutes, writing about Fede, I forgot that my son is gone. When I finished writing—it must have been a split-second but seemed longer—I remembered only that something huge had happened in my life. Something dramatic. My brain is pushing the death of my son to a new location (p.83).

This passage occurs when Elise is writing about her former lover. While focusing on her writing, Elise temporarily forgets about her son's death. She remembers the loss only as “*something huge*” or “*something dramatic,*” rather than directly as the death of her son. Her statement that she “*forgot*” her son was gone suggests that her mind temporarily distances itself from the painful memory. The statement “*My brain is pushing the death of my son to a new location*” further suggests that Elise unconsciously moves the painful reality away from her immediate awareness in order to cope with the emotional pain.

Kübler-Ross (1969) explains that denial may cause individuals to emotionally distance themselves from painful reality when the loss feels too overwhelming to fully process. Elise's reaction reflects this condition because her mind temporarily pushes the reality of her son's death away from her awareness. Furthermore, Elise's denial not only occurs immediately after the accident, but also continues later in her grieving process. Her denial is portrayed as a recurring response rather than a single early stage.

2. Anger

Anger appears when individuals start to confront the reality of loss. At this stage, emotional pain is often expressed as frustration, resentment, blame, and a sense of unfairness toward the situation (Kübler-Ross, 1969). In some cases, anger may be displaced and directed not only toward the source of the loss but also toward objects, people, or situation associated with the pain.

Elise's anger first appears through her reaction to the medication she takes after losing her son. Although the medicine is meant to help her cope, she responds to it with resentment, as shown in the following quotation:

The first thing I do each morning is reach out for the amber-tinted bottle of pills on my nightstand. I hold it in my hand and stare at it with hatred. The tint prevents me from seeing the chalk-blue pills inside the bottle, and this adds to my resentment. I should resent Pursie, not the potion that binds to a GABA receptor, but I direct my anger at the opaque container, with its white childproof cap (p.8).

This passage takes place in the early days after Elise loses her son. Every morning, she reaches for a bottle of medication beside her bed, but instead of feeling comforted, she reacts to it with hatred and resentment. This can be seen in the phrases “*stare it with hatred*” and “*this adds to my resentment,*” which indicate strong negative emotions. However, although she realizes that the medication is not responsible for her suffering, she still directs her anger toward it. Her hatred of the amber-tinted bottle and its white childproof cap suggests that her grief creates frustration that needs an outlet. Instead of expressing anger directly toward the reality of the loss, Elise transfers those emotions onto an ordinary object connected to her emotional pain.

Anger in grief often appear through the feelings of frustration and resentment (Kübler-Ross, 1969). Therefore, Elise's hatred toward the pill bottle reflects anger as the emotional pain of her loss is expressed through resentment. Her emotional response also demonstrates that anger may be irrational and displaced, as a grieving person seek an accessible outlet for emotional distress.

Elise's anger is also shown when she rejects another person's attempt to comfort her. The support offered by the bereavement worker does not make Elise feel understood; instead, it strengthens her sense of isolation:

I wanted to hurl those books to the floor, rip them to shreds. Books! What role could they possibly play in my life? What could they possibly tell me? I did not want to be consoled because I could not be consoled. To suggest that consolation was possible—by way of books, of all things—was to advertise the wild inability of this woman or anyone else to understand what had happened. It sealed my isolation (p.18).

This quotation occurs when a bereavement worker visits Elise and brings books to comfort her after the death of her son. Instead of appreciating the gesture, Elise reacts negatively toward the books and rejects the idea that they could help her grief. Her sharp reaction, "Books!", and her desire to "hurl those books to the floor" reflect her emotional frustration toward the idea that books could ease her pain. Elise believes that no one can truly understand the depth of her suffering, so the idea of consolation via books only makes her feel more emotionally isolated.

Anger in grief is not only directed toward the source of loss, but can also appear as a rejection of external attempts to comfort or explain the loss. Individuals in the anger stage may react negatively toward support when they feel that others cannot understand the depth of their emotional pain (Kübler-Ross, 1969). Therefore, Elise's reaction reflects the anger stage because she responds to the attempt at consolation with emotional frustration, rejection, and a deeper sense of isolation.

Elise's anger becomes more direct when she unexpectedly meets the man responsible for her son's death. Unlike the previous examples, where her anger is displaced onto objects or gestures of comfort, this moment shows her hostility toward a person directly connected to the loss:

His face filled me with undefined horror, as if I'd seen a devil, or worse. I didn't know who he was, only that I wanted to shrink away from him, or else slash a knife through his heart. Instead, I picked up a cauliflower. That was what came to hand. I picked it up and threatened him with it. Then I realized who it was. It was the man who killed my son (p.92).

The quotation shows that Elise directs her anger toward the man she considers responsible for her son's death. Her description of his face as something horrifying, "*as if I'd seen a devil,*" shows the intensity of her emotional reaction. In addition, her desire to "*slash a knife through his heart*" reflects the aggressive impulse that emerges when she confronts the man. Although she does not actually use a knife, her act of threatening him with cauliflower shows that her anger seeks physical expression. This reaction suggests that the encounter brings back the pain, shock, and injustice that she still carries after her son's death.

During the anger stage, individuals may direct their anger toward people associated with their loss because the presence of those people can intensify the pain caused by the loss (Kübler-Ross, 1969). Elise's reaction shows hostility and aggressive impulses toward the man she considers responsible for her son's death. Her anger develops from displaced resentment toward objects and consolation into direct anger toward the person connected to the tragedy.

Elise's anger continues when the man tries to explain himself. Instead of listening to his words, Elise sees his attempt to speak as a burden placed on her:

He said he needed to talk to me, he had something to tell me, something important. Something important — to whom? Not to me, that much was certain... I began to run away

from him, pushing my cart in front of me. He shouted after me, 'I was on Demerol, I don't know why it didn't show up! I was on Demerol!'... Not enough that he killed my son, he wants something from me! (p.92-93).

The quotation shows that the man who killed Elise's son tries to speak to her and explain that he was under the influence of Demerol during the incident. However, Elise does not care about his explanation. The question "*Something important — to whom?*" shows that Elise rejects the importance of his explanation because, for her, nothing he says can reduce the pain of the loss. The sentence "*Not enough that he killed my son, he wants something from me!*" further reflects her hatred toward him. She does not see him as someone seeking forgiveness, but as someone who continues to demand something from her after taking her son's life.

Elise's reaction reflects the anger stage of grief, in which individuals may direct their emotions toward the person they blame for their suffering (Kübler-Ross, 1969). Elise's refusal to listen shows that her grief is still dominated by resentment, blame, and emotional rejection. The man's explanation only strengthens her anger because it seems unable to answer the injustice of her son's death.

After this encounter, Elise's anger becomes more obsessive. As Elise is not able to confront the man directly, she redirects her anger into repeatedly returning to the accident scene and imagining what should have happened:

I've been out on the road today, to see what the child psychiatrist would have seen. Back and forth I drove, back and forth, in barely controlled fury. The road is completely flat where we live. He would have spotted my son from way off. He wanted to kill him. Some part of him wanted to kill a child. If he hadn't wanted to kill a child, he would have stayed awake at least until he passed the boy crouching in the grass. (p.94).

This quotation shows Elise's anger when thinking about the accident that killed her son. Her anger is shown through the way she repeatedly blames the man for her son's death. The phrase "*barely controlled fury*" directly reveals the

intensity of her anger. She also drives back and forth on the road while imagining the situation during the incident. Her statement “*He wanted to kill him*” shows that she no longer sees the incident simply as an accident. Instead, she interprets it as an intentional act or, at least, as something that could have been prevented. This accusation shows how grief can intensify blame. By imagining that the man “*wanted to kill a child,*” Elise turns the accident into a moral failure that has a clear person to blame.

Grief often causes individuals to search for someone to blame as a way to cope with overwhelming emotional pain and helplessness (Kübler-Ross, 1969). In Elise’s case, blaming the driver helps her make the tragedy feel more emotionally understandable. In this sense, Elise’s response reflects the anger stage because her grief is expressed by accusing and holding someone responsible for the loss.

Elise’s anger continues after she sees that the man has replaced his old car.

This situation deepens her sense of injustice:

If he dares to show up here again in his new white car, I'll get a restraining order. Was it unpleasant, Mr. Waste-of-Space Psychiatrist, driving the burgundy car, with those bloodstains on the fenders? Yes, bury it all, get a new car, get on with your miserable life, you miserable piece of slime. But what good does all this anger do? It wears me out with its futility and stupidity (p.95).

Elise sees that the man who killed her son appears to continue living normally while she remains consumed by grief. The above quotation shows that Elise feels intense anger and resentment toward the driver. Her insults, such as “*Mr. Waste-of-Space Psychiatrist*” and “*you miserable piece of slime,*” reflect emotional hostility. She is disturbed by what she sees as the unfairness of the situation: the driver can replace the car and continue his life, while her son cannot return. For

Elise, the new car becomes a symbol of erasure, as if the visible traces of the accident can be removed while her emotional wound remains.

Anger during grief may arise from the feelings of injustice and resentment toward people associated with loss (Kübler-Ross, 1969). Elise's reaction reflects the anger stage because she feels frustrated by the unfair reality that the driver can live a normal life. However, the final sentence, "*But what good does all this anger do? It wears me out with its futility and stupidity,*" also indicates Elise's awareness that her anger cannot change the loss. This moment suggests that she is getting exhausted by her anger, and that she prepares the movement toward other emotional responses in her grieving process.

3. Bargaining

Bargaining is a stage of grief in which individuals attempt to regain control by mentally negotiating with or reinterpreting the loss. This stage often appears through "*what if*" or "*if only*" thinking, attempts to reconstruct events, or efforts to find alternative explanations that could have changed the outcome (Kübler-Ross, 1969). In Elise's case, bargaining appears through her repeated imagination of different possibilities that might have prevented or reversed her son's death.

At first, Elise's bargaining appears when she mentally returns to the accident and imagines herself preventing it. Instead of accepting the event as final, she creates an alternative scene in which she could have stopped the driver:

I saw the burgundy car hitting his body again and again. I imagined myself stopping the car, shaking the driver so he'd wake up in time. Old Hiram's goat had stopped the train (p.21-22).

The quotation shows that Elise repeatedly imagines the accident. She repeatedly imagines herself stopping the driver and preventing the accident from happening. Her imagined action of “*stopping the car*” and “*shaking the driver*” reflects her desire to change the outcome of the tragedy. By imagining that she could have intervened, Elise tries to regain a sense of control over an event that made her completely powerless. The reference to Old Hiram’s goat also strengthens this idea because it suggests that if even a goat could stop a train, then something or someone should have been able to stop the accident that killed her son.

Bargaining during grief often appears through thoughts about how the loss could have been prevented (Kübler-Ross, 1969). Therefore, Elise’s response reflects the bargaining stage because she continues to think about different possibilities in an attempt to cope with the painful reality of her son’s death.

Elise’s bargaining also appears when she connects the tragedy to earlier choices in her life. She begins to imagine that a small change in the past might have created a different present:

I’d have taken my son to meet them and their children, if they had any. And then everything would have been different, and my son would not have been crouching on the grass at that moment, because if you change one thing, everything changes, and my son might still be alive (p.69).

This passage takes place when Elise reflects on her childhood friend and begins connecting those memories to her son’s death. As she recalls the past, she starts thinking about how different choices might have changed the tragic event. The statement “*if you change one thing, everything changes*” reveals her attempt to find another version of events in which the tragedy never happened. Through this thought, Elise not only imagines a different moment of the accident, but also

reconstructs a different chain of life events. This shows that her bargaining is not limited to the accident itself; it extends to the wider possibilities of her past.

In the bargaining stage, grieving individuals often dwell on regrets and possibilities that could have changed the loss. Kübler-Ross (1969) explains that this stage is commonly expressed through “*what if*” and “*if only*” thinking as people attempt to cope with emotional pain. Elise reflects this stage by continuing to imagine alternative situations in which her son could have survived.

Elise’s bargaining becomes more extreme when she imagines the possibility of bringing her son back through cloning. At this point, her bargaining is not focused only on preventing the accident, but on reversing the permanence of death itself:

His DNA—maybe one day I’ll be able to clone him from his hair, his skin! I must collect his hair! I must find whatever strands I can, on his pillow, his hairbrush—I must freeze them in a baggie—or maybe there’s a lab that will take his DNA, keep it safe. And one day, when the cloning of humans is allowed, I’ll have my son back, and not only that, I’ll have the past eleven years with him again (p.28).

The quotation shows that Elise struggles to cope with the death of her son and begins imagining impossible way to bring him back. While thinking about his belongings and DNA, she convinces herself that future technology might allow her to reunite with her son. The statement, “*I’ll have my son back,*” reflects her hope that the tragedy can still be reversed. Her desire to “*have the past eleven years with him again*” also shows that she longs to restore the life she had before the loss happened. By imagining a future in which her son can return, Elise tries to escape the painful reality of his death. This moment makes the bargaining stage more intense because her imagination moves beyond regret and enters an impossible hope of restoration.

Elise's response reflects the bargaining stage because she continues to hold onto a possibility that could change the reality of the loss. Instead of fully accepting her son's death, she imagines an alternative future in which science can return him to her. As Kübler-Ross (1969) explains, individuals in this stage often cling to imagined possibilities in order to cope with emotional pain.

4. Depression

Depression is a stage of grief in which individuals begin to recognize that the loss is real and permanent. This stage is marked by deep sadness, hopelessness, silence, withdrawal from others, loss of interest in daily life, loss of interest in activities once enjoyed, and feeling overwhelmed by the pain of the loss (Kübler-Ross, 1969). In Elise's case, depression appears through emotional despair, physical disturbance, loss of motivation, and isolation from others.

Elise's depression first appears through her desire to be reunited with her son, even if it means joining him in death:

Even if there was nothing after death, I wanted to join my son in that nothingness. I wanted to be with him (p.12).

This quotation occurs shortly after the death of Elise's son. While struggling to cope with the loss, Elise begins thinking about death and imagining reuniting with her son by dying. She experiences deep hopelessness and emotional despair after losing her son. Her words "*I wanted to join my son in that nothingness*" suggest that continuing her life with grief is unbearable for her. Instead of simply missing her son, Elise imagines death as a way to be with him again. This shows that she has begun to face the loss, but the reality is too painful for her to endure.

Elise's depression is also shown through her loss of interest in painting, an activity that once gave meaning to her life:

That part of my life no longer exists, and the shed might as well have been carried off by a tornado. There is nothing there that I need or want. I can't imagine why I ever bothered mixing paints, stretching canvases, trying to create something that was in any case never what I'd hoped it would be. Instead, I swallow a venom-green capsule, and carry the mug of coffee to my son's room (p.25).

While looking at her art studio and painting materials, she realizes that she no longer has any desire to return to painting. The quotation shows that Elise loses interest in the activity that has previously given meaning and purpose to her life. Her description of the shed as though it had been “*carried off by a tornado*” implies that her passion for art has completely disappeared. Painting, which has been once an important part of her identity, feels useless and distant now. Instead of painting, she spends her days taking medication and going to her son's room. This contrast shows that grief has replaced her creative energy with emotional numbness.

Loss of interest in activities that have previously been enjoyed is one sign of depression. After fully accepting the loss, a person often complete loss of interest and pleasure in something she once loved (Kübler-Ross, 1969). Therefore, Elise's abandonment of her studio reflects depression stage because her grief creates emotional emptiness and removes her motivation to continue the activity.

Moreover, Elise's depression not only affects her emotions but also begins to disturb her physical condition:

Everything I eat is too sweet, too salty, too bitter, too mushy, too tangy, too spicy, too tasteless, too revolting to swallow. Yet swallow I must. My stomach churns its contents too quickly, as if unable to take them seriously. I run to the toilet countless times each day (p. 38).

The quotation occurs when Elise describes the physical condition she experiences after the death of her son. As grief becomes more overwhelming, even

simple daily activities such as eating become difficult for her. Food no longer feels normal or comforting. Everything becomes too intense, tasteless, or disgusting for her to swallow. Although she forces herself to eat, her body reacts negatively, as seen in her repeated stomach discomfort and frequent trips to the toilet. These reactions show that her emotional burden is so heavy that it interferes with her basic physical functioning and daily life. This kind of physical symptoms are also part of depression because, according to Kübler-Ross (1969), when reality of loss begins to feel real, emotional pain may also appear through bodily discomfort.

Elise's depression is further shown through her inability to perform ordinary daily responsibilities. Even simple tasks become exhausting because grief has drained her energy:

I prefer sliding into the past to the Sisyphean effort of holding up the present. Paying the gas bill, for example, all but flattens me. I must rip open the envelope with unwilling, inept fingers, I must locate the bank's website on my computer. When I reach it, I find myself staring blankly at the screen. I can barely muster the energy to type in my password—or remember it. I am as slow as a turtle, as slow as the living dead, risen from an everlasting grave (p.43).

The quotation occurs when Elise describes her daily life after the death of her son. Now, managing simple daily responsibility, such as paying a gas bill, becomes physically and emotionally overwhelming. She describes everyday responsibilities as a “*Sisyphean effort*,” which means that even a simple task feels endless and unbearable. Paying a gas bill, which should require little effort, feels exhausting to her. She struggles to open the envelope, reach the bank's website, and even remember her password. Her description of herself as “*the living dead*” suggests that she feels drained of energy. These details show that her grief has weakened her ability to carry out ordinary daily activities. This situation reflects the

idea of Kübler-Ross (1969) that depression during grief may cause individuals to lose motivation, energy, and the ability to function normally in daily life.

Elise's depression also appears in her direct expression of longing and hopelessness. Her grief makes her call for her son even though she knows he will never return:

'Come back, come back, come back!' I cry out in the emptiness. I want to pull his clothes out of the closet and bury myself under them. I can't go on, I tell Pursie (p.49).

The quotation appears when Elise expresses her longing for her son. She knows her son will never return, yet she cries out in emptiness. Her wish to bury herself under his clothes also shows her desire to remain close to him through the objects he left behind. Furthermore, the statement "*I can't go on*" reflects emotional exhaustion and hopelessness. Elise's response reflects the depression stage because her grief leaves her emotionally exhausted. During grief, depression may cause individuals to feel emotionally overwhelmed and hopeless after fully realizing the permanence of the loss (Kübler-Ross, 1969).

In addition to sadness and exhaustion, Elise's depression is also reflected in her withdrawal from others. Rather than feeling comforted by people around her, she feels exposed and emotionally burdened by their attention:

I want to be left alone, that is all. Even condemned murderers are allowed to choose their last meal. And I have done nothing, or else I have committed a truly unspeakable crime, if just desserts are anything to go by. But it was as if I had signed up to be an act in a freak show (p.41).

This quotation appears when Elise reflects on the way people around her continue to observe her after her son's death. Instead of feeling comforted, she becomes increasingly uncomfortable with their presence. Her statement "*I want to be left alone*" shows that she no longer has the emotional energy to interact with

people. She feels as if other people's attention turns her grief into a spectacle, as suggested by the phrase "*an act in a freak show.*" It implies that social contact does not ease her suffering. Rather, it makes her feel more misunderstood and isolated.

As Kübler-Ross (1969) explains, depression is often characterized by withdrawal from social interaction and feelings of emotional isolation. Individuals may avoid others because the emotional pain they experience becomes too overwhelming to share. What Elise experience reflects this condition because she chooses isolation as a way to cope with the deep sadness due to the loss of her son.

Elise's isolation is getting clearer when she explains that her separation from others is not a choice, but a condition created by grief:

I would climb on the roof and shout out at my intruders: I am not being perverse! I haven't chosen to be isolated. I am isolated. The death of my son shipwrecked me on this island (p.43).

She feels frustrated because other people misunderstand her withdrawal from social life after losing her son. Her statement "*I am isolated*" emphasizes that her loneliness is not a personal choice but a consequence of her grief. In addition, the metaphor "*shipwrecked me on this island*" illustrates how the loss emotionally separates her from society and leaves her trapped in her suffering. The image of being shipwrecked suggests that Elise feels abandoned, cut off, and unable to return to ordinary life. This moment is significant because Elise's depression is marked not only by internal sadness but also by a broken connection between herself and the world around her.

5. Acceptance

Acceptance is the stage where individuals begin to acknowledge the reality of grief and gradually adjust to life after the loss. In this stage, grief and sadness do not completely disappear. However, individuals slowly learn to continue their lives while carrying the emotional impact of the loss (Kübler-Ross, 1969). In Elise's case, acceptance is shown through her gradual effort to leave isolation, receive comfort from others, participate in meaningful activities, reconnect with people, and consider future possibilities.

First and foremost, Elise's acceptance appears in her attempt to leave her isolation and go outside again. Although she still feels emotionally uneasy, she begins to face the outside world after a long period of withdrawal:

As in the old days, I have to steel myself when I go out, but the pitfalls have changed. I am no longer self-conscious, no longer afraid of stares. Overnight that pack of nonsense was dismantled, overnight it disintegrated into nothing. I change my shirt, braid my hair. Armed with sunglasses, I step outside. The light and air are like deceitful sirens, luring sailors to their doom. I make my way to the car and hope that I remember how to drive standard (p.98).

The quotation above shows that although Elise feels anxious and emotionally uncomfortable, she slowly starts retuning to daily activities. Earlier, she isolates herself and avoid social interaction. However, after a period of time, she starts becoming emotionally more stable. Elise prepares herself to leave the house by doing simple actions such as changing her shirt and braiding her hair. These actions show that she is gradually trying to reconnect with daily life. Although she still compares the outside world to “*deceitful sirens*,” Elise still chooses to step outside and continue her activity.

Acceptance does not mean individuals completely recover from grief or no longer experience sadness (Kübler-Ross, 1969). Instead, individuals gradually begin adjusting to reality and continuing their daily life despite the remaining emotional pain. Thus, Elise's willingness to go outside and face the world again reflects the early stage of acceptance because she slowly learns to live alongside her grief rather than completely withdrawing from life.

Elise's acceptance is also shown through her willingness to receive comfort from others. After rejecting consolation earlier in the narrative, she begins to allow kindness to reach her:

I let myself lose my personality in their kindness. The receptionist gave me a hug. How long since I've been hugged? A volunteer named Marmie— isn't that from Little Women? gently touched me as I lay on a chaise longue with my eyes shut. How long since someone touched my wrists? Not since Fede (p. 125).

Elise starts to allow herself to receive care from others at the Bereavement Centre. During her interaction with the staff and volunteers there, she begins receiving emotional comfort and physical affection. Previously, Elise tried to distance herself from the public. However, in this passage she accepts gesture of kindness such as hug and gentle touch.

Elise's questions, "*How long since I've been hugged?*" and "*How long since someone touched my wrists?*" suggest that she begins to realize how long she has been emotionally and physically disconnected from others. This moment shows an important shift in her grief because she no longer refuses human connection. As Kübler-Ross (1969) explains, acceptance involves the gradual ability to reconnect with life and other people. In this sense, Elise's experience may, therefore, be seen as representing the acceptance stage.

Elise's acceptance develops when she becomes involved in a meaningful activity at the Bereavement Centre. Her participation shows that she begins to use her energy not only to survive her grief, but also to contribute to others:

I've been creating a library system for the Bereavement Centre. It wasn't anything I'd planned to do, but I mentioned the confusion in the book and video room to Marmie, and she said they've been waiting for someone with a little computer know-how to organize it all. I volunteered for the task. I found a simple library program and I've been entering all the books, one by one (p.160).

The quotation illustrates that during Elise's time the Bereavement Centre, she begins to spend her time helping others. Elise gradually regains a sense of involvement in daily life. In this passage, she voluntarily participates in the meaningful work by creating library system and offers help when needed. Through this activity, she becomes involved in supporting a place that also helps other grieving people. Instead of focusing only on her own loss, Elise starts to engage in meaningful activity and reconnect with others. Her willingness to contribute suggests that she is entering into acceptance stage as she gradually adjusts to life and move forward after the loss (Kübler-Ross, 1969).

Furthermore, Elise reaches out to reconnect with people from her past. Although this step still creates fear and insecurity, she chooses to take the risk of emotional contact:

I may have found Selena. There's a Selena Blanco on Facebook whose contacts include a Sebastian Blanco, and both are Canadian, though they live in B.C. and don't mention Toronto. I can't really see her face—the profile photo is of two people on skis, both squinting under wool hats and viewed from a distance. I'm afraid to contact her. Afraid of my jealousy, afraid of not being as kind to her as she was to me, afraid of having to tell her about my son. Nevertheless, I sent her a message (p.126).

The quotation occurs when Elise thinks about contacting Selena, someone connected to her past. Although she feels afraid of rejection and emotional discomfort, she still decides to reach out. Her action can be understood as her

gradual effort to rebuilding social and emotional connections. Her repeated expression of fear shows that sadness and insecurity still remain within her. She is afraid of jealousy, emotional discomfort, and the painful possibility of talking about her son. However, despite these fears, Elise still chooses to send Selena a message. The word “*nevertheless*” shows that Elise does not wait until she is completely free from fear or grief. Instead, she acts while still carrying those emotions.

Reconnecting with others can be considered as part of acceptance (Kübler-Ross, 1969) because it shows the individual’s gradual return to life after loss. By reaching out to Selena, Elise takes a step toward rebuilding her life. She becomes more willing to share what happened to her and to reconnect with someone who matter to her. This shows that she has accepted her loss as part of her story, even though speaking about it still probably feels painful.

Finally, Elise’s acceptance is shown through her willingness to consider a future beyond her grief although it does not remove her longing for her son:

He wanted me to step into his life—a life that included two teenagers, another city, another house... Yet it was this exhaustion that was swaying me in the direction of giving in, at least for the trip to Greece. How nice it would be to have someone look after luggage, rent a car, figure out where to go and how much to tip. ‘I want my son back,’ I sobbed. ‘I want him to come with me to Greece.’ (p.220).

The quotation occurs when Elise gradually starts adjusting to life after grief. considers the possibility of entering a new relationship and traveling to Greece. Her willingness to consider the trip to Greece and stepping in another person’s life indicates that she no longer isolates herself from future possibilities. At the same time, her sobbing statement, “*I want my son back,*” reveals that the grief and longing for her son are still deeply within her. This suggests that acceptance does

not erase her sadness, but allows her to continue living while carrying the emotional pain of loss.

In acceptance, the pain does not disappear, but the person learns to carry it while engaging with life again (Kübler-Ross, 1969). In this case, Elise shows acceptance because she is able to think about the future while still grieving for her son. This moment presents acceptance not as complete healing, but as the ability to move forward without leaving the memory of the lost loved one behind.

C. The Movement Pattern of the Stages of Grief in Elise's Journey

Movement pattern refers to how an individual moves through the stages of grief. It examines whether the grieving process follows a linear order from one stage to the next, or develops in a non-linear way. How the stages move may be experienced differently among people because grief does not always follow a predictable sequence. Individuals may move between stages, experience several stages at once, or return to previous stages throughout the grieving process (Kübler-Ross & Kessler, 2005). In some cases, both recurrence and overlap may appear throughout the grieving process.

In *The Cat*, Elise's grief is portrayed as non-linear. She does not experience grief in a fixed and sequential order. Instead, her grieving process is portrayed through recurrence and overlap. Elise sometimes returns to earlier stages after experiencing one stage, and at certain moments, she gives psychological response to the grief by displaying more than one stage at the same time.

1. Recurrence

Recurrence refers to the reappearance of a stage of grief after an individual has moved into another stage. According to Kübler-Ross and Kessler (2005), people's response to grief does not follow a linear process because emotions may return repeatedly throughout the grieving journey. In *The Cat*, Elise often returns to earlier emotional stages even after experiencing different stages of grief.

The first form of recurrence can be seen in Elise's bargaining. This stage repeatedly appears through her attempts to mentally reconstruct the accident and imagine alternative outcomes that might have prevented her son's death. Bargaining first appears early in the novel when Elise reflects on several possibilities that could have changed the tragedy:

If the psychiatrist had fallen asleep a few seconds earlier, a few seconds later. If I had called my son in for a snack. If I'd been there to pull him to safety (p.9).

This quotation reflects bargaining because Elise repeatedly imagines different possibilities that could have changed the outcome of the tragedy. Her "if" statements indicate an emotional attempt to regain control over a situation that left her powerless. According to Kübler-Ross (1969), bargaining commonly appears through hypothetical thinking and attempts to reinterpret the past in order to reduce emotional suffering.

After this moment, Elise's emotion moves into depression, as shown in the following passage:

The only task was to stay alive. It would be a massive ... effort (p. 21).

At this point, Elise no longer focuses on changing the past. Instead, she struggles with hopelessness and the emotional burden of continuing her life after

her son's death. The phrase "the only task was to stay alive" shows that her grief has shifted from imagining prevention to enduring the pain of existence itself.

However, bargaining soon reappears when Elise mentally returns to the accident and imagines herself preventing it:

I imagined myself stopping the car, shaking the driver so he'd wake up in time (p. 21).

Even after experiencing depression, she returns once again to thoughts about preventing the accident. This recurrence demonstrates that her grief does not move forward in a stable direction. Instead, Elise repeatedly revisits bargaining whenever she mentally reconstructs the tragedy and searches for a different outcome.

The recurrence of bargaining appears again later in the narrative. At one point, Elise experiences denial when she imagines that her son is still alive:

In some daydreams my son is at Neil's, or at school, and will return soon (p. 60).

This quotation reflects denial because Elise temporarily refuses to fully accept the permanence of her son's death and imagines that he will eventually return home. Her daydream allows her to suspend the reality of the loss, even if only temporarily. Nevertheless, bargaining appears once again afterward:

I'd have taken my son to meet them and their children, if they had any. And then everything would have been different, and my son would not have been crouching on the grass at that moment, because if you change one thing, everything changes, and my son might still be alive (p.69).

In the above passage, Elise returns to "what if" thinking by imagining how different choices could have prevented the tragedy. Her repeated attempts to rewrite the past indicate that bargaining continues to resurface throughout her grieving process. The recurrence of bargaining throughout the novel demonstrates that stages of grief may recur throughout the grieving process rather than disappear completely after another stage emerges (Kübler-Ross & Kessler, 2005).

The second form of recurrence can be seen in Elise's depression. This stage repeatedly appears through her hopelessness, emotional exhaustion, and withdrawal after experiencing other stages of grief. Depression first appears early in the novel when Elise reflects:

Even if there was nothing after death, I wanted to join my son in that nothingness. I wanted to be with him (p.12)

This passage reflects depression because Elise feels emotionally overwhelmed by the burden of continuing her life after the death of her son. Instead of attempting to deny or change the situation, she experiences deep hopelessness and emotional exhaustion caused by the permanence of the loss. Depression, as explained by Kübler-Ross (1969), is commonly appears through overwhelming sadness, helplessness, and loss of emotional energy during the grieving process.

After experiencing depression, Elise's emotion moves into anger when the bereavement worker attempts to comfort her:

I wanted to hurl those books to the floor, rip them to shreds. Books! What role could they possibly play in my life? What could they possibly tell me? (p.18).

This quotation reflects anger as Elise responds to the attempt at consolation with resentment and emotional hostility. Her grief is expressed through frustration toward the books and the people who try to comfort her.

Shortly afterward, Elise's emotions shift into bargaining:

I imagined myself stopping the car, shaking the driver so he'd wake up in time (p.21).

Here, Elise mentally reconstructs the accident and imagines an alternative outcome in which her son's death could have been prevented. This shows that her grief does not remain in anger but moves into the other emotional response, i.e., bargaining. However, depression recurs afterward:

That part of my life no longer exists, and the shed might as well have been carried off by a tornado. There is nothing there that I need or want (p.25)

Even after experiencing anger and bargaining, Elise once again returns to feelings of emotional emptiness and hopelessness. She no longer finds meaning in the activities that previously gave purpose to her life, particularly painting. This repeated return to depression demonstrates that Elise's grieving process does not develop in a straight line. Instead, depression reappears after other stages, showing that grief in the novel is marked by recurrence rather than linear progression.

2. Overlap

Overlap occurs when several stages of grief are experienced at the same time. Individuals do not always move through one stage completely before entering another stage. Instead, different emotional responses may appear together at the same moment (Kübler-Ross & Kessler, 2005). In *The Cat*, Elise experiences multiple emotional responses at once throughout her grieving process.

The first overlap can be seen when Elise reacts to the bereavement worker who tries to comfort her. In this moment, Elise's rejection of comfort shows anger, while her sense of being inconsolable and isolated reflects depression:

She gave me two books and some printouts in a folder, and told me about the Bereavement Centre. I wanted to hurl those books to the floor, rip them to shreds. Books! What role could they possibly play in my life? What could they possibly tell me? I did not want to be consoled because I could not be consoled. To suggest that consolation was possible—by way of books, of all things—was to advertise the wild inability of this woman or anyone else to understand what had happened. It sealed my isolation (p.18).

This passage shows an overlap between anger and depression. Elise's anger appears through her violent reaction toward the books and her rejection of the bereavement worker's attempt to comfort her. The expression "*I wanted to hurl those books to the floor, rip them to shreds*" reflects frustration and resentment.

At the same time, depression is reflected through Elise's hopelessness and emotional isolation. Her statement "*I could not be consoled*" suggests emotional emptiness and despair. Her belief that nobody understands her suffering deepens her loneliness, as reflected in the sentence "*It sealed my isolation.*" Therefore, this passage demonstrates overlap because anger and depression emerge simultaneously within the same emotional experience.

Another overlap appears when Elise realizes the permanence of her son's absence while also imagining that the accident could have been prevented. In this moment, depression and bargaining appear together:

It came to me like a boxer's blow that I would never cook for him again. I could do nothing for him now. I saw the burgundy car hitting his body again and again. I imagined myself stopping the car, shaking the driver so he'd wake up in time (p. 21).

The depression appears when Elise realizes that she will "*never cook for him again.*" Her inability to do anything for the son reflects helplessness and emotional despair caused by the loss. According to Kübler-Ross (1969), depression in grief often appears through feelings of emptiness, sadness, and loss of meaning after confronting reality.

At the same time, Elise repeatedly imagines an alternative scenario in which she stops the driver before the tragedy occurs. This reflects bargaining because she mentally attempts to rewrite the event and undo the loss, covered by "*if only*" thinking and imagined alternatives to painful reality (Kübler-Ross, 1969). The presence of these two emotional responses in the same moment demonstrates the overlap between depression and bargaining.

The next overlap occurs when Elise directs resentment toward the psychiatrist while also struggling to accept the finality of her son's death. This passage shows that anger and denial appear together in one emotional moment:

Oh, child psychiatrist, whose name I try to block out of my mind, whose name does not deserve residence in my brain, what a remarkable human you have killed! These scenes I summon, of Neil and our son reading the newspaper in the library together, or having an after-school snack at Starbucks—sometimes I can't grasp that it's over and I see them there still. There are times when the finality is real, but at other times I coast (p.73).

Elise's anger is clearly directed toward the psychiatrist, whom she blames for her son's death. The sentence *"what a remarkable human you have killed"* expresses resentment and emotional hostility. Her statement that his name *"does not deserve residence"* in her mind also shows her refusal to give him emotional space, even though he remains strongly connected to her grief.

At the same time, Elise also experiences denial because she still struggles to fully accept the reality of her son's death. She admits that sometimes she *"can't grasp that it's over"* and still imagines seeing her son alive in ordinary moments. This shows her difficulty in fully accepting the reality of death. Therefore, this passage reflects overlap because anger and denial appear at the same time.

Based on the analysis above, the novel portrays the movement pattern of grief as non-linear rather than linear. Elise does not experience the stages of grief in a fixed or orderly sequence. Instead, the stages recur and overlap throughout her grieving process. Certain stages, especially bargaining and depression, recur after being interrupted by other emotional stages. Several stages also overlap simultaneously, such as anger and depression, depression and bargaining, and anger and denial. This shows that Elise's grief does not develop step by step, but moves back and forth between different emotional conditions.

This finding supports the theory proposed by Kübler-Ross and Kessler (2005), who explain that the stages of grief are not experienced in a rigid sequence because certain stages may recur while different stages may also overlap during the grieving process. Similarly, Stroebe and Schut (2017) state that grief involves continuous movement between confronting and avoiding the reality of loss. Therefore, *The Cat* portrays grief as a complex and dynamic process in which emotional stages recur and overlap throughout Elise's grieving journey.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter presents the conclusion and suggestions of the study. The conclusion summarizes the findings based on the analysis of Elise's grief in Edeet Ravel's *The Cat*. The suggestions provide recommendations for future researchers and readers who are interested in studying grief in literary works.

A. Conclusion

Based on the analysis, Elise, the main character in *The Cat*, experiences all five stages of grief proposed as by Kübler-Ross, i.e., denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. The stages appear as responses after the death of her son. *Denial* is shown through her difficulty in fully accepting the reality of the loss, especially when she minimizes the seriousness of the accident, imagines her son as still alive, and mentally distances herself from the painful truth. *Anger* appears through her resentment toward objects, rejection of consolation, and hostility toward the man responsible for her son's death. *Bargaining* is reflected in her imagination of alternative events and her desire to undo the loss. *Depression* becomes the most dominant stage as Elise repeatedly experiences deep sadness, hopelessness, emotional exhaustion, physical disturbance, loss of interest, and isolation. Finally, *acceptance* is shown through her gradual effort to return to daily life, receive care from others, participate in meaningful activity, reconnect with people, and consider future possibilities while still carrying the pain of grief.

Furthermore, the stages of grief in the novel are portrayed through a non-linear movement pattern. The stages *recur* and sometimes *overlap* throughout her grieving process. Bargaining and depression, for example, appear repeatedly after other emotional stages, showing that Elise often returns to earlier responses even after experiencing different stages. Several stages also overlap in the same moment, such as anger and depression, depression and bargaining, and anger and denial. This pattern shows that Elise's grief is not a simple movement from denial to acceptance. Rather, it is a complex emotional process in which different responses return, interact, and coexist.

B. Suggestions

This study shows that the analysis of grief in literature can still be developed further. Future researchers are encouraged to re-examine *The Cat* by applying different theories, such as Stroebe and Schut's dual process model, in order to gain new perspectives on the representation of grief in the novel.

In addition, future researchers may use other literary works to compare how grief is represented in different contexts. They are also advised to read the literary work carefully in order to understand the story, characters, and emotional conflicts before conducting the analysis. Finally, this study is expected to help students of English literature in analyzing literary works through a psychological approach related to grief and emotional experience.

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CURRICULUM VITAE



Marshella Dwi Wijayani was born on March 1, 2004, in Ngawi. She graduated from SMA Negeri 1 Kendal and continued her study in the Department of English Literature at Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. During her undergraduate years, she was actively involved in the English Letters Student Association, particularly in the Media and Communication Division for one period. In addition, she gained professional experience through an internship at Tribunnews Surya Malang, where she was engaged in writing news content, serving as a news anchor, and conducting direct field reporting. Through these activities, she developed her skills in journalism, communication, and media practice, while also gaining a deeper understanding of the working environment in the media industry. Overall, her experiences reflect her strong interest in media and journalism, as well as her ability to stay active and productive throughout her academic journey.

APPENDIX

SYNOPSIS

The Cat

The Cat tells the story of Elise, a single mother who lives happily with her eleven-year-old son. She loves him very much and spends most of her life caring for him. However, her life suddenly changes when her son dies tragically in a car accident in front of their house. The unexpected death leaves Elise emotionally destroyed and unable to accept the painful reality. She feels empty, hopeless, and believes that her life has lost its purpose.

After the tragedy, Elise struggles with deep grief and sadness. She isolates herself from other people, including her friends and family, because she does not know how to deal with her emotions. In the middle of her despair, the only thing that keeps her going is her son's beloved cat, Pursie. Elise feels responsible for taking care of the cat because it reminds her of the son and the love they shared. Although she continues to suffer emotionally, the presence of Pursie slowly helps her stay connected to life.

As time passes, Elise gradually begins to face her grief and understand that healing takes time. With the support of the people around her and her memories of her son, she slowly learns how to continue living despite the pain of loss.