MOTHER-DAUGHTER ATTACHMENT IN JESSICA AU'S *COLD ENOUGH FOR SNOW*

THESIS

By:

Ahmad Zaki Aulia

NIM 220302110013

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI MAULANA MALIK IBRAHIM

MALANG

2026

MOTHER-DAUGHTER ATTACHMENT IN JESSICA AU'S *COLD ENOUGH FOR SNOW*

THESIS

Presented to
Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of *Sarjana Sastra (S.S)*

By:

Ahmad Zaki Aulia

NIM 220302110013

Advisor:

Muhammad Edy Thoyib, M.A.

NIP 198410282015031007

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI MAULANA MALIK IBRAHIM

MALANG

2026

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

I state that the thesis entitled *Mother-Daughter Attachment in Jessica Au's Cold Enough for Snow* is my original work. I do not include any materials previously written or published by another person, except those cited as references and written in the bibliography. Hereby, if there is any objection or claim, I am the only person who is responsible for that.

Malang, 26th October 2026

The researcher



Ahmad Zaki Aulia

NIM 220302110013

APPROVAL SHEET

This is to certify that Ahmad Zaki Aulia's thesis entitled *Mother-Daughter Attachment in Jessica Au's Cold Enough for Snow* has been approved for thesis examination at the Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, as one of the requirements for the degree of *Sarjana Sastra* (S.S.).

Malang, 26th October 2026

Approved by

Advisor,	Head of Department of English Literature,
Muhammad Edy Thoyib, M.A.	Dr. Agwin Degaf. M.A.
NIP 198410282015031007	NIP 198805232015031004

Acknowledged by

Dean,

Prof. Dr. M. Faisol, M.Ag.

NIP 197411012003121003

LEGITIMATION SHEET

This is to certify that Ahmad Zaki Aulia's thesis entitled *Mother-Daughter Attachment in Jessica Au's Cold Enough for Snow* has been approved by the Board of Examiners as one of the requirements for the degree of *Sarjana Sastra* (S.S.) in the Department of English Literature.

Malang, 26th October 2026

Board of Examiners		Signatures
Sri Muniroch, M.Hum. NIP 196905032003122001	(Main Examiner)	
Miftahul Huda, M.Pd., Ph.D. NIP 198403292011011009	(Second Examiner)	
Muhammad Edy Thoyib, M.A. NIP 198410282015031007	(Advisor)	

Approved by

Dean of the Faculty of Humanities

Prof. Dr. M. Faisol, M.Ag.
NIP 197411012003121003

MOTTO

"No need to hurry. No need to sparkle. No need to be anybody but oneself."

- Virginia Woolf

DEDICATION

With all my humility and endless love, I present this thesis to:
The definition of an angel and my reason to keep going,
My beloved mother, Inayatillah,
My beloved siblings, Ahmad Zaim Islahi,
Aisha Putri Amaniy and Ahmad Zian Avicena,
My professional extraordinary advisor, Mr. Muhammad Edy Thoyib, M.A.
All my friends always provide motivation and support,
And for myself, Ahmad Zaki Aulia

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim. The researcher expresses all praise and gratitude to Allah SWT, the Most Gracious and the Most Merciful. Prayers and peace are also delivered to the Prophet Muhammad SAW, who has guided humanity from darkness to the light of life.

This thesis, entitled *Mother-Daughter Attachment in Jessica Au's Cold Enough for Snow*, was written to fulfill one of the requirements for obtaining the degree of *Sarjana Sastra* (S.S.) in the Department of English Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Its completion would not have been possible without the support of many people. Therefore, the researcher would like to express gratitude and appreciation to the following parties:

1. The Rector of Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Prof. Dr. Ilfi Nur Diana, M.Si.
2. The Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Prof. Dr. M. Faisol, M.Ag.
3. The Head of the Department of English Literature, Dr. Agwin Degaf, M.A.
4. The researcher's advisor, Muhammad Edy Thoyib, M.A., who dedicated his time, attention, and patience during the process of completing this thesis.

5. The dearest part of my life, Bunda Inayatillah. Thank you for all the sacrifices, prayers, love, and support you have given throughout my life and during the completion of this thesis. Thank you for always believing in me, even during the difficult days. Because of you, I choose to keep going and never give up, knowing that there is still light in this world. Everything I have achieved would not have been possible without your prayers, patience, and endless support. Thank you for everything that I can never fully repay. May you always be given good health, a long life, and the opportunity to witness many more achievements in the future.

6. The researcher's beloved siblings, Ahmad Zaim Islahi, Aisha Putri Amaniy, and Ahmad Zian Avicena. Thank you for the support, encouragement, prayers, and everything you have given throughout this journey. Thank you for being there and for believing in the researcher until this thesis could finally be completed.

7. My best friend, Mukhammad Raihan Al Hakim; my friends from the English Letters Student Association UIN Malang, Marshella Dwi Wijaya and Vincilya Fildania; the members of the communities "Haji Furoda" and "Berkumpul Berserikat," whom I cannot mention individually but consider as a second family; Raushan Fikri Syaikhu, Kurniawan Agus Fiqih Budiman, Shandyka Naraya Sukma, and Marsha Khanisa Lubis, my friends who have guided, encouraged, and motivated me throughout this journey; and all my other friends whose names I cannot mention individually. Thank

you for being a source of laughter during my tiring days, for giving me advice without judgment, and for sharing your time with me throughout this journey. May blessings always be with all of you.

8. Last but not least, I want to thank me. I want to thank me for believing in me, I want to thank me for doing all this hard work, I want to thank me for having no days off. I want to thank me for never quitting, I want to thank me for always being a giver and try to give more than I receive. I want to thank me for try to do more right than wrong, I want to thank me for just being me at all times.

The researcher realized that many shortcomings still need to be corrected and improved in preparing this thesis. For that, the researcher hopes that there will be input for this thesis and further research appropriate to the issue or object of this thesis. The researcher hopes this thesis may benefit the researcher, family, and the wider community.

Malang, 26th October 2026

The researcher



Ahmad Zaki Aulia

NIM 220302110013

ABSTRACT

Aulia, Ahmad Zaki (2026). *Mother-Daughter Attachment in Jessica Au's Cold Enough for Snow.* Undergraduate Thesis. Department of English Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Advisor: Muhammad Edy Thoyib, M.A.

Keywords: Attachment, mother-daughter relationship, John Bowlby, attachment theory, Cold Enough for Snow

It focuses on the relationship between the narrator and her mother during their journey through Japan. The study applies literary criticism and uses John Bowlby's Attachment Theory (1982) to analyze the relationship through four concepts: proximity-seeking, separation and separation anxiety, secure base, and working models. The data consist of words, phrases, and sentences from the novel portraying relationship through interactions, conversations, memories, reflections, and shared experiences. The finding show that the mother-daughter attachment is portrayed through their interactions, shared experiences, moments of distance, and the narrator's reflections on their relationship. Proximity-seeking appears through staying close, waiting, searching, sharing experiences, and paying attention to each other's need. Separation and separation anxiety appear through worry, irritation, searching, waiting, and reunion. The secure base is reflected in the narrator's ability to explore while maintaining her connection with her mother, while working models appear through memories and past experiences that shape her present understanding of her mother. The study concludes that their attachment is portrayed as an enduring emotional bond in which closeness and independence coexist.

مستخلص البحث

أولياء، أحمد ذكي (2026). *التعلّق بين الأم وابنتها في رواية بارد بما يكفي لتساقط الثلوج لجيسيكا أو*. بحث جامعي، قسم الأدب الإنجليزي، كلية العلوم الإنسانية، جامعة مولانا مالك إبراهيم الإسلامية الحكومية مالانج. المشرف. محمد إيدي طيب، ماجستير في الآداب.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التعلّق، العلاقة بين الأم وابنتها، جون بولبي، نظرية التعلّق، بارد بما يكفي لتساقط الثلوج

تركز هذه الدراسة على العلاقة بين الراوية ووالدتها خلال رحلتهما في اليابان. وتستخدم الدراسة النقد الأدبي، وتعتمد على نظرية التعلق لجون بولبي (1982) لتحليل العلاقة من خلال أربعة مفاهيم، وهي: السعي إلى القرب، والانفصال وقلق الانفصال، والقاعدة الآمنة، ونماذج العمل الداخلية. وتتكون البيانات من كلمات وعبارات وجمل من الرواية تصور العلاقة من خلال التفاعلات والمحادثات والذكريات والتأملات والتجارب المشتركة. وتُظهر النتائج أن التعلق بين الأم وابنتها يتجلى من خلال تفاعلاتهما وتجاربهما المشتركة ولحظات التباعد بينهما وتأملات الراوية في علاقتهما. ويظهر السعي إلى القرب من خلال البقاء بالقرب من بعضهما، والانتظار، والبحث، ومشاركة التجارب، والاهتمام باحتياجات كل منهما. أما الانفصال وقلق الانفصال فيظهران من خلال القلق والانزعاج والبحث والانتظار واللقاء مجددًا. وتتجلى القاعدة الآمنة في قدرة الراوية على الاستكشاف مع الحفاظ على ارتباطها بوالدتها، بينما تظهر نماذج العمل الداخلية من خلال الذكريات والتجارب السابقة التي تشكل فهم الراوية الحالي لوالدتها. وتخلص الدراسة إلى أن التعلق بين الأم وابنتها يُصوَّر بوصفه رابطة عاطفية مستمرة يتعايش فيها التقارب والاستقلال.

ABSTRAK

Aulia, Ahmad Zaki (2026). *Attachment Ibu-Anak Perempuan dalam Cold Enough for Snow karya Jessica Au*. Skripsi, Jurusan Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Humaniora, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Dosen Pembimbing: Muhammad Edy Thoyib, M.A.

Kata kunci: Attachment, hubungan ibu-anak perempuan, John Bowlby, teori attachment, Cold Enough for Snow

Penelitian ini berfokus pada hubungan antara narator dan ibunya selama perjalanan mereka di Jepang. Penelitian ini menggunakan kritik sastra dan Teori Attachment John Bowlby (1982) untuk menganalisis hubungan tersebut melalui empat konsep, yaitu proximity-seeking, separation and separation anxiety, secure base, dan working models. Data penelitian terdiri atas kata, frasa, dan kalimat dari novel yang menggambarkan hubungan mereka melalui interaksi, percakapan, kenangan, refleksi, dan pengalaman bersama. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa attachment ibu dan anak perempuan digambarkan melalui interaksi, pengalaman bersama, momen-momen ketika mereka berjarak, serta refleksi narator terhadap hubungan mereka. Proximity-seeking terlihat melalui tindakan tetap berada di dekat satu sama lain, menunggu, mencari, berbagi pengalaman, dan memperhatikan kebutuhan masing-masing. Separation and separation anxiety terlihat melalui kekhawatiran, kejengkelan, tindakan mencari, menunggu, dan pertemuan kembali. Secure base tercermin dalam kemampuan narator untuk menjelajahi lingkungan sekitarnya sambil tetap mempertahankan hubungannya dengan sang ibu, sedangkan working models terlihat melalui kenangan dan pengalaman masa lalu yang membentuk pemahaman narator terhadap ibunya pada masa kini. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa attachment mereka digambarkan sebagai ikatan emosional yang bertahan lama, di mana kedekatan dan kemandirian dapat berjalan berdampingan.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP ..... **ii**
APPROVAL SHEET ..... **iii**
LEGITIMATION SHEET ..... **iv**
MOTTO ..... **v**
DEDICATION ..... **vi**
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ..... **vii**
ABSTRACT ..... **x**
مستخلص البحث ..... **xi**
ABSTRAK ..... **xii**
TABLE OF CONTENTS ..... **xiii**
CHAPTER I **1**
INTRODUCTION **1**
A. Background of the Study 1
B. Research Question 7
C. Significance of the Study 7
D. Scope and Limitation of the Study 8
E. Definition of Key Terms 8
CHAPTER II **9**
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE **9**
A. Psychology of Literature 9
B. Attachment Theory 10
1. Proximity-Seeking 14
2. Separation and Separation Anxiety 16
3. Secure Base 18
4. Working Models 19
CHAPTER III **22**
RESEARCH METHOD **22**
A. Research Design 22
B. Data Source 22
C. Data Collection 23
D. Data Analysis 23
CHAPTER IV **24**
FINDING AND DISCUSSION **24**
A. Proximity-Seeking 24
B. Separation and Separation Anxiety 33

C. Secure Base 41
D. Working Models 46
CHAPTER V 59
A. Conclusion 59
B. Suggestion 61
BIBLIOGRAPHY 62
CURRICULUM VITAE 65

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Literature reflects various aspects of human life, including emotions, experiences, and interpersonal relationships. The characters and struggles depicted by an author can represent conflicts related to psychosocial realities and human experiences (Abrams, 1999). Through literary works, readers can observe how individuals deal with different situations, both in their relationships with others and with themselves. According to Wellek and Warren (1956), literature reflects human experiences and provides insight into human thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. Literary works provide a way to explore psychological and emotional experiences through the interactions and relationships between characters.

One of the themes frequently explored in literature is family relationships. Literary works often portray family ties through emotional experiences, memories, conflicts, and interactions between family members (Manoranjani and Sripadmadevi, 2024). The relationship between parents and children forms an important emotional bond that can influence psychological and personal development (Bakaraki *et al*., 2024). In literary narratives, family relationships are often represented through the ways characters communicate, remember shared experiences, respond to one another, and develop their understanding of themselves and their family members. These representations make family relationships an important aspect of psychological analysis in literary studies.

Among various family relationships, the mother-daughter relationship can

involve complex emotional dynamics throughout different stages of life. Such relationships may involve affection, emotional dependence, conflict, and difficulties in communication (Baker, 2026; Leath *et al*., 2025). Huri *et al*., (2024) explain that the mother-daughter relationship in literary narratives can reflect emotional attachment between family members and its influence on personal identity and psychological development. Therefore, examining the mother-daughter relationship can provide an understanding of how emotional bonds are represented and experienced through literary characters.

One literary work that portrays a mother-daughter relationship is *Cold Enough for Snow by* Jessica Au. The novel follows a daughter who accompanies her mother on a journey to Japan. Throughout their journey, the narrator recalls memories, family experiences, and moments from her relationship with her mother. Their relationship is portrayed through quiet conversations, shared experiences, observations, and reflections on their past. Rather than expressing their emotions directly, the characters often communicate through subtle actions and everyday interactions. These elements create a portrayal of the emotional bond between the narrator and her mother throughout the narrative.

The emotional bond between the narrator and her mother can be examined through John Bowlby's Attachment Theory. Bowlby (1982) defines attachment as a deep and enduring emotional bond between an individual and an attachment figure. Attachment is reflected through behaviors that enable individuals to maintain proximity to an attachment figure, particularly when they experience distress, uncertainty, or a need for protection and comfort. Through attachment

relationships, individuals develop expectations and patterns of interaction that influence how they respond to and understand others. Therefore, Bowlby's Attachment Theory provides a framework for examining how emotional bonds are formed and expressed through interactions between individuals.

Attachment Theory has been applied in previous literary studies to examine emotional bonds and relationships between characters. Several studies have examined parent-child relationships and found that attachment plays a role in characters' emotional and psychological development. Najeeb *et al*. (2024), for instance, examined the relationship between Jack and his mother, Ma, in Emma Donoghue's *Room* using John Bowlby's Attachment Theory. Jack's psychological development, especially his recovery from trauma and his adjustment to life outside isolation, rooted in his bond with his mother. Rahman *et al*. (2025) trace a comparable dynamic in Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*, reading the father-son relationship through Attachment Theory. The father-son bond gives Cormac's characters the hope and motivation to survive. Attachment between parent and child, in both novels, functions as the engine of psychological resilience.

Attachment theory has also been used to understand emotional bonds beyond the conventional relationship between parent and child. Jamal *et al*. (2025) applied Bowlby's Attachment Theory to read the bond between Josie and her artificial companion Klara in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun,* showing that this bond becomes a source of comfort especially when Josie's loneliness or lack of emotional closeness with her caregivers leaves that need unmet. The study found that their emotional bond provides comfort and support, particularly when Josie

experiences loneliness or lacks sufficient emotional connection with her caregivers. In another study, Putri and Prautomo (2023) examined the influence of childhood maltreatment on attachment and interpersonal relationships in Deirdre Sullivan's *Needlework*. Their findings indicate that negative childhood experiences influence the protagonist's emotional responses and the way she develops interpersonal relationships. These studies demonstrate that Attachment Theory can be used to examine how emotional bonds and previous relational experiences influence the psychological and interpersonal experiences of literary characters.

Beyond literary studies, empirical research has also examined the functions and development of attachment in interpersonal relationships. Heffernan *et al*. (2012) examined attachment features and functions in adult romantic relationships and found that attachment functions develop from proximity-seeking to safe haven and secure base. Their findings demonstrate that attachment functions remain relevant in adult relationships as individuals seek closeness, comfort, and security from attachment figures. Similarly, Carli *et al*. (2023) examined attachment networks among young adults and found that parents, particularly mothers, remained important attachment figures, especially in providing a secure base. The study also indicates that attachment relationships continue to develop in young adulthood as individuals form relationships with friends and romantic partners. These findings provide further support for the relevance of attachment functions in understanding emotional bonds beyond childhood and across different types of relationships.

In addition to attachment functions, Johnson *et al*. (2010) examined the role

of internal working models of attachment in infancy. Through three visual habituation studies, they found that infants developed different expectations regarding caregiver responses according to their attachment experiences. Secure infants expected caregivers to provide comfort, while insecure-resistant and insecure-avoidant infants showed different expectations regarding caregiver responsiveness. These findings support Bowlby's concept of working models, which suggests that individuals develop expectations about attachment relationships based on their previous experiences with caregivers. Together, these empirical studies strengthen the theoretical basis for examining attachment through attachment functions and working models, which are relevant to understanding how individuals experience and respond to their attachment relationships.

Research has also examined attachment and emotional relationships through other perspectives. Gusthafo (2024) analyzed the attachment of the main characters in the Korean drama *Our Beloved Summer* (2021), while Wiliyani *et al*. (2024) examine parent-child attachment and its role in emotional, social, and cognitive development through a literature review. These studies emphasize the importance of emotional bonds, parental responsiveness, and interpersonal experiences in the development of relationships. However, their focus differs from the present study in terms of the literary work, relationship examined, and theoretical focus.

Taken together, the studies reviewed above leave three gaps. First, literary applications of Attachment Theory have mostly examined a child or a dependent figure in relation to apparent, a caregiver, or a companion (Najeeb *et al*., 2024; Rahman *et al*., 2025; Jamal *et al*., 2025; Putri and Prautomo, 2023), while the

relationship between and adult daughter while the relationship between an adult daughter and her mother remains underexplored. Second, empirical research shows that attachment functions remain relevant in adulthood (Heffernan *et al*., 2012; Carli *et al*., 2023), but these findings come from psychology and have not been used to read how adult attachment is represented in a literary text. Third, to the researcher's knowledge, *Cold Enough for Snow* has not been examined through Bowlby's concepts of proximity-seeking, separation and separation anxiety, secure base, and working models. This study therefore offers a new contribution by reading attachment in a novel where it is expressed not through open declarations of affection but through quiet, everyday behavior between an adult narrator and her mother, and by applying Bowlby's claim that attachment continues beyond childhood to a literary mother-daughter relationship.

In addition to studies on attachment, Jessica Au's *Cold Enough for Snow* has also been examined from a different perspective. Shirm (2023) analyzed the novel through the concept of "wound writing," focusing on how delicate emotional experiences and memories are expressed through quiet reflection, fragmented memories, and simple conversations between the narrator and her mother. The study highlights the emotional complexity of the novel and the way experiences are represented through its narrative form. However, the study primarily focuses on the representation of trauma and emotional experience rather than examining the relationship between the narrator and her mother through Attachment Theory.

Attachment Theory has shaped readings of parent-child bonds across literary narratives. Mother-daughter attachment in Jessica Au's *Cold Enough for*

Snow has yet to receive that attention. Shirm (2023) reads the novel's emotional experiences and memories but stops short of the mother-daughter bond itself. Using Bowlby's Attachment Theory as its framework, this study examines the model directly.

B. Research Question

Based on the research background above, the research problem is:

How is mother-daughter attachment portrayed in Jessica Au's *Cold Enough for Snow*?

C. Significance of the Study

Theoretically, this study applies Bowlby's Attachment Theory to mother-daughter relationships within literary analysis. By examining the bond between the narrator and her mother in Jessica Au's *Cold Enough for Snow*, the study presents a clear picture of how literary narratives depict attachment and emotional bonds. Furthermore, this study may contribute to the application of psychological approaches in literary analysis, particularly in examining interpersonal relationships between characters.

Practically, this study is expected to help readers understand how attachment and emotional bonds are portrayed in mother-daughter relationships in literary works. It may also provide a reference for students and future researchers who are interested in applying Bowlby's Attachment Theory to analyze emotional relationships and attachment in literary works.

D. Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study analyzes Jessica Au's novel *Cold Enough for Snow* by focusing on the emotional relationship between the narrator and her mother as portrayed throughout the story. This study is limited to examining the mother-daughter attachment represented through efforts to maintain closeness, responses to temporary separation, independent exploration, and the influence of past experiences on the narrator's understanding of her mother. The analysis employs John Bowlby's Attachment Theory (1982) to understand how the emotional bond between the narrator and her mother is portrayed. Therefore, this study is confined to the portrayal of mother-daughter attachment represented in *Cold Enough for Snow*.

E. Definition of Key Terms

The researcher explains some important terms in this study to avoid any misconceptions in understanding what is discussed in the study:

1. Attachment: Attachment is a strong and enduring emotional bond between an individual and an attachment figure that motivates the individual to seek and maintain proximity to the attachment figure, particularly in situations of distress or uncertainty (Bowlby, 1982).
2. Cold Enough for Snow: *Cold Enough for Snow* is a novel written by Jessica Au that portrays the journey of a daughter and her mother in Japan, while exploring their memories, interactions, and emotional relationship.

CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A. Psychology of Literature

Psychology of literature is a field of study that examines literature using psychological theories to analyze literary works and understand the emotional and mental states depicted within them. Creatures and events of a narrative discuss human experiences, sentiments, passions as well as experiences by fictional characters. As literature depicts different facets of human life, psychological frameworks have the potential for researchers to analyze characters' inner states and actions in literary narratives (Abrams, 1999).

Literary theory has long considered the nexus between psychology and literature. Wellek and Warren (1956) describe how psychology can inform literary studies; it allows one to consider characters' personalities, motivations for actions and emotional responses. Psychological analysis in literature can cover such areas as the psychological condition of the characters; their mental or emotional processes of literary creation; and psychological influence on readers. According to this view, literature has become a reference for human psychological experiences.

Psychology of literature is often used in modern literary studies to analyze the emotional dynamics and interpersonal relationships depicted in narratives. Psychological approaches are often used to explore how characters respond to certain situations and how their emotional experiences influence their behavior and relationships with others, as literary characters often experience psychological struggles, emotional conflicts, and identity development similar to human

experiences in real life (Putri and Prautomo, 2023).

From recent research, the psychological narratives of emotional bonds and attachment relations in a literary piece can be subjected to analysis as well. These psychological theories enable a better interpretation of literary narratives regarding how emotional relationships, trauma, and growth are depicted in characters. Therefore, this method allows literary experts to explore how psychological patterns influence social relationships in literary works (Rahman *et al*., 2025).

Literary studies, according to psychology of literature, are an important method for revealing the psychological aspects of characters and the emotional meanings inherent in literary works. This study examines *Cold Enough for Snow by* Jessica *Au* through the psychological approach in order to analyze the relationships between the narrator and her mother. In this particular study, attachment theory is applied to analyze how attachment is portrayed in the mother-daughter bond.

B. Attachment Theory

Attachment Theory was developed by John Bowlby to explain the emotional bond formed between individuals, particularly between a child and an attachment figure. Bowlby (1982) views attachment as a behavioral system through which an individual maintains a relationship with an attachment figure. The attachment relationship is particularly important because the attachment figure may provide protection and a sense of security. When the attachment system is activated, an individual may engage in behaviors that increase or maintain proximity to the

attachment figure.

According to Bowlby (1982), attachment should be understood as a system of behavior rather than simply as a feeling of affection toward another person. The attachment system regulates behaviors that enable an individual to maintain a relationship with an attachment figure. The activation of this system may occur when an individual experiences circumstances that increase the need for security. In such situations, the individual may attempt to approach, follow, contact, or otherwise remain close to the attachment figure. The relationship between the individual and the attachment figure is expressed through emotional feelings, observable behaviors, and responses.

Bowlby (1982) also emphasizes that attachment behavior serves an important biological function, namely protecting the mobile infant and growing child from danger. For this reason, he rejects the traditional view that treats attachment behavior as an irrelevant, infantile characteristic or as a by-product of dependency.

Bowlby (1982) explains attachment behavior through the concept of a behavioral control system. The attachment system continuously monitors two kinds of information: signs of potential danger or stress, and the whereabouts and accessibility of the attachment figure. When these appraisals indicate that security is threatened, the individual acts to increase proximity, and these actions continue until the situation changes and the individual feels comforted and secure. Because the system aims at a goal, namely proximity or accessibility, rather than at any single movement, different behaviors such as following, calling, or waiting can

serve the same function.

Bowlby (1982) explains that attachment behavior can take various forms, including approaching, following, calling, and maintaining physical contact with an attachment figure. These behaviors function to maintain or restore proximity between the individual and the attachment figure. Proximity matters because access to the attachment figure gives the individual a sense of security. Accessibility breeds confidence in facing the surrounding environment; distance or absence, by contrast, triggers attachment-related behaviors.

Attachment behavior does not require continuous physical closeness. A securely attached individual uses the attachment figure as a base, venturing out to explore while still holding the relationship intact. Proximity-seeking and exploration work together this way: security at the base frees the individual to move away from it. The ability to explore therefore does not necessarily indicate a weakening of attachment. Instead, exploration may occur because the individual has confidence in the availability of the attachment figure.

Attachment relationships are also influenced by experiences with attachment figures. Through interaction with the environment and attachment figures, individuals develop working models that help them understand their surroundings, their own capabilities, and the behavior of others. These models influence how individuals interpret situations and develop expectations concerning relationships. Interactions with attachment figures contribute to the development and modification of an individual's internal working models, shaping how the individual understands relationships.

Bowlby (1982) further notes that attachment is one half of a shared dyadic bond, the other half being caregiving, so that the bond is better described as one of attachment-caregiving. In most such relationships, notably that of child and parent, the roles do not change, but continuity of role is not inevitable: role change can occur, for example, when a grown son or daughter cares for a parent in old age. This distinction is relevant to the present study because the narrator and her mother are both adults, and the direction of care between them may shift.

Bowlby (1982) also makes clear that attachment is not limited to infancy. He observes that for most individuals the bond to parents continues into adult life and affects behavior in countless ways, and that “the bond between adult daughter and mother plays a great part in social life”. He further argues that labelling adult attachment behavior as "regressive" overlooks the vital role it plays in human life “from the cradle to the grave” (Bowlby, 1982: 208). Attachment in adulthood is therefore not a pathological return to childhood but a continuation of the same system, whose expression changes as the figures involved and the means of seeking closeness change. This view makes it possible to examine the relationship between an adult narrator and her mother through the same concepts.

Bowlby (1982) further observes that, during adolescence and adult life, attachment behavior is commonly directed not only toward persons outside the family but also toward groups and institutions, such as a school, a work group, or a religious group. Such groups may come to constitute “a subordinate attachment-‘figure’, and for some people a principal attachment-‘figure’” (Bowlby, 1982: 207). Bowlby adds that attachment to a group is likely to be mediated, at least initially,

by attachment to a person who holds a prominent position within it. This shows that attachment figures in adulthood are not limited to a single person and may differ in importance. For the present study, this distinction matters because it allows the narrator's mother to be examined as an attachment figure in adulthood without assuming that she is the only one.

Based on Bowlby's Attachment Theory, this study focuses on four key concepts relevant to the analysis of the mother-daughter relationship in Jessica Au's *Cold Enough for Snow*: proximity-seeking, separation and separation anxiety, secure base, and working models. These concepts are used to identify how the attachment relationship between the narrator and her mother is portrayed through their interactions, behaviors, experiences, and memories. Each concept provides a different perspective for examining the relationship. Proximity-seeking focuses on behaviors that maintain or restore closeness, separation and separation anxiety focus on responses to distance or absence, secure base concerns the relationship between attachment and exploration, while working models concern the influence of previous experiences on an individual's understanding of relationships.

1. Proximity-Seeking

Proximity-seeking refers to behaviors through which an individual attempts to maintain or restore closeness to an attachment figure. Bowlby (1982) discusses proximity-seeking in relation to attachment behavior and the maintenance of proximity between an individual and an attachment figure. Proximity to the attachment figure allows the individual to seek comfort and protection when

experiencing distress or insecurity. When the attachment system is activated, the individual is more likely to engage in behaviors directed toward maintaining or restoring closeness with the attachment figure.

Such behaviors may include approaching, following, calling, moving toward the attachment figure, or attempting to remain physically close to the attachment figure. These behaviors can occur when an individual perceives distance or circumstances that increase the need to maintain contact. Proximity-seeking can be observed when an individual moves closer to the attachment figure or attempts to maintain physical contact during situations of distress or insecurity. The individual's behavior is directed toward preserving or re-establishing closeness with a person who is important to their sense of security.

Proximity-seeking does not necessarily mean that an individual must remain physically close to an attachment figure at all times. Bowlby (1982) explains that attachment behavior varies according to circumstances. When the individual feels secure and the attachment figure is available, the individual may move away from the attachment figure and explore the environment. However, when circumstances increase the need for security, the individual may return to or seek closeness with the attachment figure. Proximity-seeking is therefore closely connected to the changing activation of the attachment system.

In the context of the mother-daughter relationship, proximity-seeking can be represented through behaviors that indicate a desire to remain connected with the other person. The behavior does not necessarily have to involve direct physical contact. Attempts to approach, remain together, maintain interaction, or restore

closeness after distance can also indicate proximity-seeking. Therefore, the concept can be applied to both physical and relational situations portrayed in the novel.

Therefore, in this study, proximity-seeking is identified through actions, interactions, or behaviors that indicate an attempt by the narrator or her mother to maintain, approach, or restore closeness with one another. Particular attention is given to moments in which one character demonstrates a tendency to remain connected to, approach, or return to the other. These moments are analyzed as evidence of how the attachment relationship is maintained within the narrative.

2. Separation and Separation Anxiety

Separation refers to the condition in which an individual is physically apart from an attachment figure, whereas separation anxiety refers to the disquiet that arises when proximity to the attachment figure cannot be maintained, or when separation is threatened (Bowlby 1982). Bowlby (1982) explains that separation is closely related to attachment behavior because the absence or unavailability of an attachment figure may activate attachment-related responses. Within attachment relationships, separation can increase an individual's need for security when an attachment figure is physically absent or perceived as unavailable, which may also influence subsequent behavior.

Bowlby (1982) distinguishes separation anxiety from fear of strangers and discusses separation anxiety as a response associated with the absence of an attachment figure. Separation anxiety is associated with the individual's attachment to a familiar figure rather than with unfamiliar people. The absence of the

attachment figure may create uncertainty and lead the individual to seek the figure's return or attempt to restore proximity.

Separation anxiety may be expressed through distress, protest, or attempts to restore proximity to the attachment figure. These responses indicate that the attachment figure continues to provide a sense of security even when the figure is not physically present. The individual's reaction to separation can therefore provide an indication of the importance of the attachment relationship. The response may vary depending on the circumstances and the individual's perception of the availability of the attachment figure.

Separation anxiety affects attachment relationships through both physical distance and the individual's response to the absence of the attachment figure. Temporary physical distance does not necessarily indicate the absence of attachment. Instead, the response to such distance can reveal how the relationship operates. An individual may tolerate temporary separation while continuing to maintain an emotional connection with the attachment figure.

In the mother-daughter relationship, separation can occur through physical distance, temporary absence, or circumstances that create the possibility of being apart. The narrator's emotional response reveals the state of that attachment. Her concern over her mother's absence and her attempts to stay close signal a connection that persists.

This study looks at separation and separation anxiety wherever the narrator and her mother face physical distance, the threat of being apart, or the emotional weight of temporary absence. It tracks how separation occurs and how the

characters respond to it. Those responses matter: they reveal whether distance strains the characters' need for connection, and how the characters work to hold the relationship together despite it.

3. Secure Base

Bowlby (1982) defines the secure base as the attachment figure's function in anchoring exploration. Bowlby explains that an attachment figure can function as a secure base from which an individual explores the surrounding environment. The concept demonstrates that attachment and exploration are not necessarily opposing behaviors. An individual may explore the environment while maintaining confidence in the availability of the attachment figure.

In his discussion of infant development, Bowlby (1982) notes that an infant begins to use the mother as a secure base from which to explore. The child can make exploratory movements away from the mother and subsequently return to her. The attachment figure therefore provides a point of security that enables the individual to engage with the surrounding environment without completely losing the sense of connection with the attachment figure.

The secure base function allows individuals to explore their environment while maintaining a sense of security through the availability of the attachment figure. The concept is also important because it demonstrates that attachment does not necessarily result in dependence or restriction. A secure attachment relationship can allow an individual to engage in activities outside the immediate presence of the attachment figure. The individual's ability to explore can occur alongside the

continuing attachment relationship. Thus, physical distance during exploration should not automatically be interpreted as a lack of attachment.

In the context of the mother-daughter relationship, the secure base concept can be used to examine how the presence or perceived availability of the mother supports the narrator's ability to engage with experiences outside their immediate relationship. The concept can also be considered in relation to situations in which the narrator and her mother participate in activities, travel, or explore unfamiliar environments while continuing to maintain their relational connection.

In this study, secure base is used to examine situations in which the narrator or her mother is able to engage in activities, travel, or explore their surroundings while maintaining confidence in the availability and presence of the other. When security is present in the attachment relationship, the narrator and her mother can move past physical proximity and still keep their emotional connection intact.

4. Working Models

Bowlby (1982) discusses working models as mental models that individuals develop through their interaction with the environment and their own experiences. Bowlby explains that individuals require a working model of their environment as well as knowledge of their own capabilities in order to make effective plans. He refers to these as the environmental model and the organismic model. These models enable individuals to organize information concerning the environment and themselves.

The environmental model concerns an individual's understanding of the

surrounding environment, including the conditions in which the individual acts and the possible consequences of different actions. The organismic model, meanwhile, concerns the individual's understanding of their own capabilities and behavioral possibilities. Both models are relevant because individuals need to understand both their circumstances and their own capacities when responding to situations and making plans.

Working models enable individuals to organize information about their environment and themselves and to make predictions about how situations may develop. They are not necessarily fixed representations. Bowlby explains that working models can be updated or revised as individuals experience changes in their environment and in themselves. Consequently, an individual's understanding of a relationship may develop through continuing experiences and interactions.

Working models are particularly relevant to understanding how individuals interpret experiences involving attachment figures. Previous interactions may contribute to the way an individual understands another person's behavior and anticipates future interactions. Experiences accumulated over time can therefore remain relevant even when the immediate situation has changed. The individual's present interpretation may be connected to representations developed from earlier experiences.

This aspect is particularly relevant to the analysis of the narrator in *Cold Enough for Snow* because her relationships with her mother are shaped by present interactions, memories, and reflections on the past. The narrator's recollection of previous experiences can provide evidence of how her understanding of her mother

and their relationship has developed over time. Memories can therefore be examined as part of the narrative representation of the relationship and its continuing influence on the narrator's perspective.

In this study, working models are used to examine how the narrator's previous experiences with her mother influence her understanding, expectations, and interpretations of their relationship in the present. The narrator's memories and reflections are therefore considered as evidence of how experiences from the past remain connected to her present understanding of her mother and their relationship. Through this concept, the analysis considers how the relationship portrayed in the novel extends beyond immediate interactions and is also represented through the narrator's continuing interpretation of shared experiences.

CHAPTER III
RESEARCH METHOD

A. Research Design

This study employs literary criticism as its research methodology. According to Abrams (1999), literary criticism is the analysis, interpretation, and evaluation of literary works to understand their meaning, structure, and artistic quality. Through literary criticism, the researcher examines elements within a literary text to interpret how meaning is constructed, conveyed, and represented. Since this study examines a novel as its object, literary criticism is employed to analyze and interpret the relationship between the narrator and her mother as portrayed in the text.

This study employs John Bowlby's Attachment Theory (1982) as the theoretical framework to analyze the mother-daughter attachment portrayed in Jessica Au's *Cold Enough for Snow*. The theory is used to examine the emotional bond between the narrator and her mother through their interactions, conversations, memories, reflections, and shared experiences. The analysis focuses on attachment-related behaviors and other relevant concepts of Bowlby's theory that are reflected in the relationship between the two characters. Through this framework, the study examines how the mother-daughter attachment is portrayed throughout the novel.

B. Data Source

The data source of this study is Jessica Au's *Cold Enough for Snow* (2022), a novel published by Fitzcarraldo Editions. The data consists of direct quotes from

the novel, including words, phrases, and sentences that depict the bond between the narrator and her mother. This data serves as textual evidence to analyze how the mother-daughter is portrayed throughout the novel.

C. Data Collection

Data collection begins with a close reading of Jessica Au's *Cold Enough for Snow* to understand the story and relationship between the narrator and her mother. The researcher marks passages depicting attachment between the two characters, drawn from efforts to maintain closeness, responses to temporary separation, independent exploration, and the influence of past experiences on the narrator's understanding of her mother, and records each quotation with its page number and context. The resulting data are then analyzed based on Bowlby's attachment theory.

D. Data Analysis

This study analyzes the collected data using Bowlby's Attachment Theory (1982) as its framework. It starts by examining each quotation for signs of attachment in the narrator and her mother's efforts to maintain closeness, responses to temporary separation, independent exploration, and the influence of past experiences on the narrator's understanding of her mother, then maps onto Bowlby's core concepts The resulting findings explain how *Cold Enough for Snow* handles mother-daughter attachment and answers the research question.

CHAPTER IV
FINDING AND DISCUSSION

A. Proximity-Seeking

Proximity-seeking shows up in how the mother and daughter work to stay physically and emotionally close during their trip. Bowlby (1982) ties this behavior to the tendency to maintain or restore closeness to an attachment figure, especially when circumstances threaten to break contact: staying close, following, approaching, waiting, or returning to that figure. This plays out repeatedly between the narrator and her mother in *Cold Enough for Snow*, less through anything they say about their affection than through small actions that reveal how aware they stay of each other and how much they work to hold that closeness.

This surfaces early on, when the narrator and her mother arrive in Japan and move through a crowded environment. The narrator describes her mother's behavior by stating,

> *All the while, my mother stayed close to me, as if she felt that the flow of the crowd was a current, and that if we were separated, we would not be able to make our way back to each other* (Au, p. 11).

The phrase “stayed close to me” shows the mother keeping physical proximity to her daughter. The mother stays close to the narrator because the risk of getting separated increased due to the crowd around them. According to Bowlby (1982), attachment behaviors can be reinforced by threats to closeness with the person they are attached to. The mother’s action in this situation is a clear example of that kind of response, not just a way to avoid the crowd. It is more of a seeking-proximity behavior than an attempt to dodge people. Being separated in the middle

of a crowd could mean losing contact altogether, and the story told by the narrator shows that only physical closeness can keep the bond intact. People will try to close the distance as it grows wider.

Although she has the ability to live independently, the mother still chooses to live with her daughter. Not because she cannot live independently, but because of the emotional need to be close. Bowlby (1982) distinguishes attachment behaviors from behaviors influenced by physical dependence. When the attachment figure is absent or unreachable, people engage in attachment behaviors to maintain or regain closeness. In this case, the mother does not need the narrator to guide her through the crowd; instead, she stays close to her daughter because losing contact with her is significant. Even when two people are completely independent, this emotional bond remains into adulthood. Throughout the story, the novel portrays the mother-daughter bond in different ways, using small actions rather than expressing affection verbally.

The narrator feels the same pull toward physical closeness with her mother:

> *We had never really been away together as adults, but I was beginning to feel that it was important* (Au, p. 12).

This statement locates proximity in the narrator's internal recognition, not the mother's physical behavior seen earlier. "Important" signals that togetherness carries weight beyond the act of traveling itself, a closeness the narrator finds missing from the rest of their adult relationship. From Bowlby's perspective, attachment shows up in the effort to keep a relationship with an attachment figure alive. The narrator's sense that being away together matters, then, means physical togetherness carries weight for her. Proximity here goes beyond sharing the same

physical location; it becomes how she sustains her relationship with her mother

The narrator's wish to share experiences with her mother reinforces the same pull toward closeness. During the trip, she states:

I had wanted to share some of this with my mother (Au, p. 13).

Through that brief statement, the narrator shows that she sees this journey as something to go through together, not something to face alone. She wants her mother present in what she sees and discovers. Bowlby (1982) explains this kind of sharing as an attachment behavior directed toward a figure who provides emotional security; in this instance, the narrator's desire to share the travel experience casts the mother in that role as a companion with whom the experience is shared. Including her mother this way widens what closeness means, covering physical proximity and emotional connection.

This tendency becomes clearer when the narrator considers her mother while planning their activities. She describes herself as

thinking all the while of what she might like to see (Au, p. 16).

The narrator considers her mother's preferences when deciding what to do during the trip, demonstrating that closeness does not always require physical touch or constant conversation. Attachment surfaces just as much through attentiveness to the other person's interest and needs. Bowlby (1982) argues that attachment relationships shape how individuals respond to and interact with their attachment figures. The narrator thinks of her mother before acting, letting that awareness guide her decisions. When she imagines what her mother might enjoy, she includes her mother in her experiences, rather than leaving her out. She stays close to her mother,

whether physically or through this constant attention, which Bowlby describes as proximity-maintaining behavior.

The narrator further states that she was:

> *wanting to make the most of our time here* (Au, p. 16).

*"*Our*"* frames the trip as something shared, not a journey she takes alone. The narrator's awareness that their time together is limited makes their shared moments more meaningful. According to Bowlby (1982), attachment involves a continuing concern with maintaining connection to a person who provides emotional security. The narrator's desire to make the most of their time together can therefore be understood as an effort to preserve and maximize their opportunity for connection. The narrator's awareness that their time together is limited makes their shared time more meaningful, even though she and her mother do not always express their feelings directly.

The narrator also repeatedly turns toward her mother when she encounters something that excites or interests her. At one point, she describes how she:

> *turned around to relay this excitedly to my mother* (Au, p. 17).

The action of turning around is simple, but its relational meaning is important. The narrator immediately wants to communicate her experience to her mother. Instead of keeping the experience to herself, she seeks her mother's participation in it. This can be interpreted as another form of maintaining relational proximity because the narrator repeatedly brings her mother into her experiences. According to Bowlby (1982), attachment behavior does not require every attachment-related action to be an overt attempt to obtain physical contact. The

broader attachment relationship can influence the individual's tendency to orient toward the attachment figure. The narrator's immediate desire to share an exciting experience with her mother demonstrates such orientation. Her mother functions as an important person toward whom the narrator naturally directs her attention.

Proximity-seeking becomes more explicit when the narrator and her mother begin to explore different parts of a place Before the narrator and her mother separate spatially, the narrator keeps track of her mother's movements. She explains,

> *I had been aware of my mother behind me, pausing where I paused, or moving quickly along when I did* (Au, pp. 18-19).

Here, both mother and daughter track each other's movement. The narrator stays conscious of her mother as she moves through the place. She monitors where her mother is and notices how her movements correspond to her own. Bowlby (1982) explains that attachment behavior is concerned with maintaining proximity to an attachment figure. The narrator's awareness of her mother's location demonstrates that proximity remains psychologically relevant even when they are not directly interacting. Her attention is repeatedly oriented toward whether her mother is nearby.

The narrator becomes more aware of her attachment to her mother when she loses sight of her. She states,

> *But soon, I lost sight of her. I waited briefly in the last room on the ground floor to see if she might reappear* (Au, pp. 18-19).

Losing sight of her mother, after being so aware of her, shifts how the narrator behaves. Rather than moving on without concern, she waits, leaving room for her mother to reappear in a direct move to restore or maintain proximity. Bowlby

(1982) explains that when contact with an attachment figure cannot be maintained, attachment behavior activates, pushing the individual to search or strive to regain that contact. Her mother's disappearance from view is what prompts this response: the narrator treats the separation as something worth reacting to, and waiting is how she holds onto a sense of knowing where her mother is.

The narrator continues to wait for her mother while exploring the place. She states,

> *I walked along the pieces many times and waited in the room for my mother* (Au, p. 19).

The repeated word “waited” shows the narrator refusing to move on without her mother. She could explore alone, but she waits for her mother’s return, expecting her to come back. Bowlby (1982) links this to efforts at restoring proximity after a period of lost contact. Independence and connection coexist here without tension. She goes about her day while watching for a chance to reconnect. Understanding this is key to reading the relationships in the novel. The connection here is more about being alongside each other with autonomy rather than a permanent physical dependence.

The eventual reunion shows that the temporary separation does not weaken their emotional connection. The narrator states that she:

> *found her waiting for me outside* (Au, p. 19).

The mother is also waiting rather than simply continuing her journey independently. The fact that both characters wait for one another creates a reciprocal representation of attachment. The narrator waits for the mother, while the mother is also waiting for the narrator. Bowlby (1982) describes attachment as

a relationship in which proximity to a significant person is maintained or restored. The scene shows this process through both characters' behavior. Their reunion restores the physical proximity that had been interrupted. The mother-daughter relationship is therefore portrayed not as a one-sided attachment in which only the daughter seeks the mother, but as a relationship in which both characters demonstrate awareness of maintaining contact.

After finding her mother, the narrator immediately asks whether her mother has seen the fabrics. Separate exploration does not leave them emotionally disconnected. The narrator comes back to her mother and starts sharing what each of them saw apart. Their time apart folds into the relationship itself, not a break in it. Bowlby (1982) frames this movement away and back as part of attachment behavior itself. The relationship stays alive after separation.

Practical cooperation offers another expression of proximity. When the narrator and her mother eat together, the narrator explains that she:

> *needed her help more often than not with characters I did not understand or had forgotten and together we managed to find the right dishes* (Au, p. 20).

The phrase "together we managed" describes the cooperation between a mother and her daughter in the same situation. The narrator turns to her mother for help, and she is helping her understand the menu. Attachment relationships are related to a sense of security and support, especially in uncertain situations (Bowlby, 1982). The unfamiliar menu made the narrator feel uncertain and dependent on her mother's help. This scene shows the proximity between the daughter and her mother, as well as the daughter's tendency to ask her mother for

help when needed.

The narrator notices her mother's emotional response to being able to help. She states,

> *I could sense that she was relieved, finally, to be able to offer some help* (Au, p. 20). *This observation demonstrates the narrator's sensitivity toward her mother's feelings.*

The mother's happiness when helping her daughter makes the attachment reciprocal. The narrator notices how her mother feels about giving that help, not just what she receives. This shows that they have a mutual emotional response to each other. According to Bowlby (1982), attachment figures provide support and a sense of security. In this situation, this type of support continues in the mother-daughter relationship into adulthood, and is expressed through subtle and practical ways.

While they were doing various activities, the narrator always considered her mother's preferences and physical condition. She asked what her mother wanted to see and made sure she still had the energy to go on. At the point, she said,

> *I said that if she still had the energy, there was one more gallery that I would like us to see, not far, but just a few stations away* (Au, p. 31).

"If she still had energy" shows the narrator weighs between her desire to keep exploring and her mother's condition. Daily decisions in this case are also influenced by emotional bonds. The narrator does not just see her mother as a travel companion, but also asks whether she is okay with the activity. According to Bowlby (1982), attachment is linked to paying attention to the condition and availability of significant figures. This is clearly shown by the narrator's care for her mother, which keeps their relationship strong.

Towards the end of the journey, direct physical contact shows the narrator's attempt to reconnect. When she sees her mother standing near a large rock, she approaches her and prepares to take a photo. Then she states,

> *Then I took her hand in mine and clicked the shutter with the other* (Au, p. 95).

One of the most direct ways to show physical closeness in the chosen dataset is by holding her mother's hand, erasing all the distance between them. Bowlby (1982) links physical contact to attachment because proximity to an attachment figure provides a sense of security and connection. Here, the narrator chooses to close that distance by reaching for her mother's hand. The photo captures that closeness in place.

The narrator gives a different interpretation of the moment of seeing the photo. She describes it as:

> *weary, surprised and somehow very alike* (Au, p. 95).

The photo captures the moment they were together and their physical resemblance. Seeing this resemblance connects the overall history of their relationship. Holding her mother's hand is more than just a gesture; it is part of how the narrator understands her mother. In this novel, proximity grows from merely being physically present to something that is known and felt by the narrator.

Overall, proximity-seeking in *Cold Enough for Snow* is portrayed through repeated efforts to maintain, restore, and experience closeness. The mother stays near the narrator in a crowded environment, while the narrator waits when she loses sight of her mother, shares experiences with her, considers her preferences, and eventually takes her hand. These behaviors correspond to Bowlby's (1982)

explanation that attachment can be observed through behaviors directed toward maintaining or restoring proximity. Importantly, the novel does not portray proximity as constant dependence. The mother and daughter can function independently, but they repeatedly orient themselves toward one another when closeness becomes emotionally meaningful. Proximity therefore becomes one of the clearest ways through which their continuing attachment is represented.

B. Separation and Separation Anxiety

Separation and separation anxiety are portrayed through temporary moments in which the narrator and her mother become physically distant and through the emotional awareness that accompanies such distance. Bowlby (1982) distinguishes separation anxiety from other forms of fear and explains that when required proximity to an attachment figure cannot be maintained, the resulting search, striving, or disquiet may become associated with separation. In *Cold Enough for Snow*, separation is not represented as permanent loss. Instead, it occurs during ordinary situations such as moving through a crowded station, exploring different spaces, traveling, or spending time apart. These moments show how physical distance makes the narrator and her mother more aware of each other and their relationship.

For Bowlby (1982), separation anxiety is the disquiet that accompanies searching and striving when proximity to an attachment figure cannot be maintained, and also when loss is threatened. He treats it as distinct from fear of strangers, which is why the analysis below looks not for fear of unfamiliar people

but for responses to the mother's absence or possible absence.

The relationship between separation and attachment is already established at the beginning of the journey when the mother fears becoming separated from the narrator in the crowd. The narrator explains that her mother stayed close because she felt that if they were separated,

> *we would not be able to make our way back to each other* (Au, p. 11).

Although the quotation is also relevant to proximity-seeking, it introduces separation as the condition that activates the mother's desire to remain close. Bowlby (1982) explains that when proximity cannot be maintained, attachment-related responses may emerge. The mother's concern reflects her emotional response to the possibility of being separated from her daughter. Physical distance from her mother triggers the narrator's fear of losing their connection. Bowlby (1982) identifies sheer distance, elapsed time, and alarming or unfamiliar situations among the conditions that activate attachment behavior, which makes a crowded, unfamiliar station an apt setting for this response.

At the train station, the narrator leaves her mother with their bags to buy tickets. She writes:

> *I asked my mother to wait with our bags and went quickly to one of the ticket machines at the other end of the platform* (Au, p. 46).

The narrator steps away to buy the tickets, still tracking how her mother might feel:

> *I knew my mother would be slightly worried to be separated during this moment of transit, that behind her calmness she would be willing me to hurry* (Au, p. 46).

She names her mother's fear of separation directly. Bowlby (1982) explains

that the separation, or even its threat, stirs unease and pushes a person to restore proximity. The mother's calm appearance, then, may mask real concern rather than confirm its absence. The narrator reads that calm as hiding a wish for the separation to end soon.

What matters here is the narrator's grasp of her mother's emotional state. She does not just leave her at the station and turn to the ticket; she stays tuned to her mother's position even mid-task. Separation, then, touches both characters, even when the distance is brief and necessary. Bowlby (1982) ties attachment-related responses to moments when proximity comes under threat. The narrator's awareness of her mother's worry shows just that: physical separation carries real emotional weight in their relationship. This attentiveness resembles what Bowlby (1982) describes as the attachment system's continuous monitoring of the whereabouts and accessibility of the attachment figure, and the alertness to a figure's whereabouts and anticipation of her departure that he traces in older children.

When the train approaches, the narrator's response restores that proximity again. She states:

> *I grabbed these and ran back toward my mother, who waved her hands as if to urge me excitedly on, just as the train was pulling into the platform* (Au, p. 47).

The narrator runs back toward her mother instead of staying at the ticket machine, and the mother gestures back to her at the same moment. Both move toward each other in response to the brief separation. Bowlby (1982) calls this searching and returning attachment behavior, triggered when proximity breaks

down. Both mother and daughter orient toward reunion, which keeps the separation temporary. In Bowlby's (1982) account, attachment behavior is terminated by the sight, sound, or touch of the attachment figure, and greeting the figure on her return is among the signs of attachment he reports.

The same pattern surfaces again inside the building, where the narrator and her mother wander separately. She writes:

> *I was worried that she would still want to be close to me, given her earlier fear at the station* (Au, pp. 17-18).

This statement links the mother's constant desire for physical closeness to her previous experiences at the station. According to the narrator, that expectation changed because of separation. Attachment behavior patterns are shaped by past experiences of separation (Bowlby, 1982). In this case, how the narrator interprets her mother's behavior in the following years is influenced by her past fears. Relationships are made up of interconnected moments, not isolated events.

Separation does not always lead to distress. Even as the narrator wanders off alone, the mother grows comfortable enough to enter another room. The narrator watches her mother:

> *seemed calmed by the space and its easy confines and went into the next room* (Au, pp. 17-18).

Taking this step is really important because her mother, who was initially worried about being apart, can now accept the physical distance. Bowlby (1982) argues that attachment does not depend on constant proximity; it shifts with the situation. When a familiar presence is nearby and no threat is present, a person can tolerate distance and explore freely. When the mother moves to another room, the novel treats separation as temporary, not as an absolute threat. Bowlby (1982)

similarly observes that a child can remain content at some distance from the mother when she is still within earshot.

As an additional example of this pattern, the narrator says:

> *But soon, I lost sight of her. I waited briefly in the last room on the ground floor to see if she might reappear* (Au, pp. 18-19).

The narrator says that waiting is an immediate reaction to losing contact. This kind of searching behavior is linked to situations where closeness cannot be maintained (Bowlby, 1982). Waiting for her mother instead of continuing to search is a natural response for her character. The novel shows separation anxiety through subtle signs, like worry, waiting, searching efforts, and the desire to reunite with familiar people. Bowlby (1982) notes that even a contentedly occupied child periodically checks where the mother is, which he treats as attachment behavior activated at low intensity; the narrator's brief waiting and looking can be read in the same way, which explains why the anxiety in the novel remains subtle rather than constant.

The narrator finally went alone when her mother did not show up right away, this detail keeps the relationship from looking like full-on dependency. When her mother goes out, she can do activities by herself. However, she still hopes her mom comes back to talk to her. Bowlby (1982) accommodates this dynamic, stating that attachment behavior is not always active. When circumstances allow, a person explores, but when they feel safety is threatened, they turn to look closer. This novel does not oppose attachment as something contrary, but blends the two.

When the narrator decides to walk down that trail alone, the same pattern shows up. She tells her mother:

> *I said to her that instead, if she did not mind, I would walk the trail alone, which would separate us for one day and one night* (Au, p. 63).

The narrator realizes that her decision separates them, but she does not see the separation as a threat to their relationship, as shown by the phrase "separate us". She continues her own life while maintaining her mother-daughter relationship. According to Bowlby (1982), being away from an attachment figure does not get rid of the attachment itself; exploratory and attachment behaviors just show up alternately depending on the situation. The decision made by the narrator marks a more mature farewell, where they accept the distance but do not let go of their emotional ties.

This decision was also influenced by the narrator's mother's condition. Before deciding to go hiking alone, she realized that her mother's physical condition had changed, and she realized that forcing her to go would be an act that:

> *almost cruel* (Au, p. 63).

The narrator's response ties separation to more than a wish for independence: it reflects her recognition that her mother has her own physical limits. The narrator adjusts her behavior accordingly, showing her concern for her mother while respecting her condition and giving her space. Bowlby's (1982) theory emphasizes the importance of attachment figures as significant relational partners, and the narrator's decision shows that her concern for her mother continues even when she chooses to separate physically.

Another separation occurs when the narrator cannot find her mother at the inn. She explains,

> *At the inn, my mother was not in our room. I asked at the reception ... For some reason, this irritated me, and I felt this show itself in the tone*

of my reply (Au, p. 89).

The narrator's irritation reflects her emotional response to her mother's absence. There is no immediate danger, and the mother is simply not in the room, yet the narrator reacts negatively to not knowing where she is. Bowlby (1982) explains that the unavailability of an attachment figure can activate attachment-related responses. In this scene, irritation rather than overt fear becomes the emotional expression of the narrator's response to her mother's temporary absence. The response demonstrates that attachment-related emotions can appear in different forms depending on the situation. Bowlby's (1982) account of how the attachment system appraises threats mentions feelings such as unease, insecurity, and anxiety; irritation is therefore read here as an interpretive extension of that account rather than a feeling Bowlby names directly.

The mother's return then restores the emotional balance of the scene. The narrator describes her mother's appearance and writes,

> *When she recognized me her face broke out with warmth. 'Here you are,' she said, as if we had merely missed each other by minutes, as if she were welcoming me into her home. 'Come and eat'* (Au, pp. 89-90).

The mother's warm greeting transforms the previous absence into reunion. Bowlby (1982) explains that after separation, reunion with an attachment figure can reduce the disquiet associated with distance. The mother's response is therefore important because it re-establishes their emotional connection immediately after the temporary absence. Her attitude and words showed acknowledgement and excitement, inspiring us to join in activities together again. The mother's return leads to an ordinary shared meal:

> *My mother unpacked the curry and rice for us and we ate together* (Au, p. 90).

The simplicity of scenes like that is really important when a novel deals with emotional relationships. Rebuilding proximity does not require grand declarations when meeting again; just going through everyday household routines is enough. According to Bowlby (1982), the pattern of seeking proximity and re-establishing bonds after being apart is a manifestation of attachment; this helps explain why seemingly ordinary events end up having significant meaning. After eating together, their relationship went back to normal.

The train scene where a mother and daughter share a phone and read horoscopes together shows the relationship between parting and meeting again. The mother

> *passed me her phone and I read out our horoscopes* (Au, p. 90).

After earlier moments of physical separation, the two return to a shared activity. This repeated movement from distance to togetherness contributes to the novel's broader portrayal of attachment. The relationship does not depend on permanent physical closeness, but separation is repeatedly followed by renewed interaction.

The final part of the journey further illustrates this pattern when the narrator loses sight of her mother in a shop. She states,

> *When I had finished paying, I turned to look for my mother but could not see her in any of the sections. After a few minutes I found her waiting for me at the entrance* (Au, p. 96).

The narrator's first response to the mother's absence is to look for her. This is another form of searching after proximity has been interrupted. Bowlby (1982)

discusses searching and striving as responses that may occur when an attachment figure is lost from view or when proximity cannot be maintained. The narrator's search therefore represents an attachment-related response in a subtle adult form. Although she remains calm, the narrator notices her mother's absence and actively tries to determine where her mother is.

The discovery that the mother is waiting at the entrance completes the pattern of separation and reunion. The narrator searches, while the mother waits. Their behaviors meet at the point of reunion. The scene demonstrates that both characters maintain an expectation of one another's presence even while temporarily occupying different spaces. Their attachment is therefore represented through an ongoing orientation toward reunion.

Taken together, the selected scenes show that separation and separation anxiety in *Cold Enough for Snow* are expressed through temporary distance, worry, irritation, searching, waiting, and reunion. Separation anxiety in the novel is subtle, not constant or extreme, surfacing only when the mother or daughter is briefly unavailable. Bowlby (1982) views these small responses as part of the attachment system, where threatened or interrupted proximity pushes a person to restore contact. Even when physical distance separates them, the relationship still means something to both.

C. Secure Base

The secure base shows up through attachment and independence existing side by side. Bowlby (1982) describes the attachment figure directly as a "secure

base from which to explore," meaning attachment does not demand constant physical closeness. Besides allowing exploration, this "base" also serves as a source of security. This is more evident in *Cold Enough for Snow* than through acts of distancing proximity-seeking. The novel never explicitly states that the narrator explores because they feel safe with their mother. Therefore, we have to pay attention to the evidence of this secure base especially in scenes where the mother and daughter are in different places doing their own things, but still close to each other.

This pattern shows up again when the narrator and her mother begin exploring different parts of a place. At first, the narrator worries her mother might still want to stay close after what happened at the station, but she observes that her mother:

> *seemed calmed by the space and its easy confines and went into the next room* (Au, pp. 17-18).

When the mother moves into another room and the narrator stays elsewhere, the narrator holds onto her sense of security even with the distance between them. Bowlby (1982) explains that an attachment figure works as a secure base, one that makes exploration possible. Here, they stay physically apart yet hold onto their sense of security in the relationship, proof that attachment does not need constant physical contact.

The narrator's own exploration marks another sign of autonomy in the relationship. After losing sight of her mother, she keeps exploring the rest of the house alone, walking through unknown places without needing her mother besides her. According to Bowlby (1982), discussion of secure base connects attachment

with the capacity to explore. The attachment figure provides a relational foundation, while exploration allows the individual to engage with the environment. In the novel, the narrator's continued exploration therefore suggests that her relationship with her mother does not prevent independence. Instead, the two forms of behavior coexist.

The relationship between exploration and attachment becomes clearer when the narrator decides to walk the trail alone. She says,

> *I said to her that instead, if she did not mind, I would walk the trail alone, which would separate us for one day and one night* (Au, p. 63).

The narrator chooses to undertake an activity without her mother, even though the trip initially serves as a shared experience. Her choice suggests that she is comfortable having experiences on her own rather than feeling the need to do everything together. Bowlby (1982) explains that the attachment system and exploratory behavior are not necessarily in conflict. When security is sufficiently established, an individual can move away from the attachment figure and explore. The narrator's choice to hike alone can therefore be interpreted as an expression of autonomy within an ongoing attachment relationship.

However, the scene should not be interpreted too strongly as proof of a secure-base relationship. In the novel, it is not explicitly mentioned that the narrator climbs alone because of the belief that her mother is always there for her; the facts only show that their bond is not broken by distance. In this context, the concept of a secure-base helps explain how attachment and independence can work together, even though this is not the most prominent kind of evidence the novel. Sticking to the actual text is way more important than forcing a theory to fit.

The narrator's mother's health condition adds understanding of how attachment and independence are correlated here. She notices that her mother did not bring the right hiking shoes and realizes that forcing her to go would be

> *almost cruel* (Au, p. 63)

because her face has changed since the narrator last saw her. The narrator does not see independence as rejecting her mother; rather, she adjusts her plans to her mother's situation. According to Bowlby (1982), attachment is a relationship system where someone explores on their own while remaining responsive to important figures in their life. We can see this balance here: she explores independently while still paying attention to her mother's well-being.

When she got involved in activities together, like exploring galleries and appreciating art, and still keeping in mind things her mother might like, the narrator shows the same independence. Her statement that she was:

> *thinking all the while of what she might like to see* (Au, p. 16).

This shows that exploring does not remove the mother's role. According to Bowlby (1982), the concept of a secure base is relevant: exploration should come with a consistent attachment relationship. There's no obligation for the narrator to choose between independence or connection. She takes in her surroundings while keeping her mother somewhere in view.

The same balance appears when the mother explores on her own, entering another room with her pamphlet while the narrator stays elsewhere. Both have enough autonomy to go their separate ways, yet the separation stays temporary. They return to each other before long. The relationship therefore provides space for

individual exploration without becoming emotionally disconnected.

Because adults are involved, this balance becomes even more important. Childhood relationships usually revolve around caregivers providing direct protection while the child explores, but in this case, the relationship has already developed into an adult relationship where the child makes their own decisions and the mother leads an independent life. So, it is important to remember that the concept of a secure-base requires special consideration since the narrator is not a little kid needing their mother's physical presence to explore. Instead, this idea shows how individual freedom to live independently can still coexist with existing bonds.

In this novel, independence does not get in the way of each other. When the narrator asks whether her mother still has the energy to visit another gallery, she takes her mother's condition into account while also thinking about her own desire to keep exploring. She goes through the same process before starting a climb on her own to make sure her mother can join safely. Autonomy and care for others go hand in hand here. According to Bowlby (1982), behavior is shaped by attachment even without direct efforts for proximity-seeking. The narrator's relationship with her mother continues to influence her independent decisions in this context.

How the narrator deals with temporary absence while showing elements of a secure-base. The narrator waits until her mother is seen inside the house. The narrator experiences a day-long farewell while walking alone along the trail. The narrator feels sad when her mother is not at her lodging, but starts talking again when she returns. These examples show different levels of tolerance for physical

distance; the consistent statements.

Even so, independence has its limits. She waited for her mother, who had lost sight of her, and when she did not find her at the guesthouse, she started getting angry, and when she did not see her in the shop, she started looking for her. Overall, this reaction shows that losing an emotional connection does not mean becoming more independent. According to Bowlby (1982), explanation about attachment, which says that exploration and attachment go hand in hand, is relevant.

The secure base in *Cold Enough for Snow*, then, supports the mother-daughter relationship rather than defining it. The narrator and her mother explore, decide, and spend time apart without losing their emotional connection, holding independence and mutual awareness together. The novel never names the mother's availability directly as the reason for the narrator's confidence while exploring, so the evidence here falls short of definitive proof for a secure-base function. What the selected scenes do show is attachment and independence coexisting, matching Bowlby's (1982) view of the attachment figure as a base for exploration.

D. Working Models

The narrator's working model shows up in how she keeps reading her present relationship with her mother through memories of the past. Bowlby (1982) explains that people build internal representations from their relationships with significant others, and those representations then shape how they understand relationships going forwards. Ordinary objects, habits, stories, physical characteristics, and familiar actions cause her to remember earlier experiences with

her mother. Proximity-seeking and separation show up in behavior; working models, by contrast, live mainly in the narrator's reflections and interpretations.

One instance comes when the narrator looks at her mother's appearance and connects it to childhood at once. She writes about:

> *thinking of her careful dress and how she had always perfectly repaired and adjusted all of our clothing when we were young* (Au, p. 17).

The present observation of her mother's clothing leads the narrator back to memories of her mother's care during childhood. This shift from present to past means the narrator sees her mother as more than the person traveling beside her now: accumulated memories shape that understanding too. Bowlby's (1982) concept of working models is relevant because previous interactions with attachment figures contribute to how individuals understand and interpret present relationships. The narrator's memory of her mother repairing clothing shows how earlier attachment still shapes her now.

The narrator again links the present to her mother's childhood. She reflects:

> *I thought about how vaguely familiar this scene was to me ... because it was not my childhood, but my mother's childhood that I was thinking of* (Au, p. 23).

Here, the narrator tries to understand her mother by recalling her own childhood and her mother's past. When she starts realizing that her mother had her own life before getting married, her perception of her becomes more complex. Seen through the lens of the working model, this shows that the narrator keeps trying to understand the figure she anchors herself to; she uses previous information and experiences to identify her mother's current identity.

This reflection continues when the narrator compares the mother's

childhood experiences with the things her mother used to give her. She states:

> *Or it was like the sweets she used to buy for me, which no doubt were the sweets her mother used to buy for her. It was strange at once to be so familiar and yet so separated* (Au, p. 23).

The narrator links three generations through a simple memory of sweets, reading her mother's behavior toward her through the mother's own relationship with her grandmother. Understanding her mother, then, means tracing a past that stretches across generations. According to Bowlby (1982), the working model concept fits here: relationships with significant others shape how a person reads relationships later on. For the narrator, understanding her mother draws on a whole network of remembered relationships, not just what is between them now.

"So familiar and yet so separated" captures how the narrator sees her relationship with her mother: close in feeling, yet distant from her mother's earlier life. This tension captures how complicated their attachment really is. She feels tied to her mother through inherited habits, yet aware that her mother holds a personal history she can never fully reach. Working models let the narrator hold both continuity and difference in the same relationship, attachment to her mother and recognition of her mother's individuality side by side.

Childhood stories also contribute to the narrator's working model of her mother. She recalls:

> *Throughout my childhood, my mother had told me a version of this story many times, just as she had told me other stories, of poverty and family and war* (Au, p. 52).

The repeated storytelling settles into the narrator's memory of her mother, carrying more than family information: it becomes part of the relational history between mother and daughter. Bowlby (1982) explains that repeated interaction

with attachment figures shape how a person understands the relationship. The mother's repeated stories, then, shape how the narrator sees who her mother is and what their shared history means.

The narrator still carries these memories into adulthood. She states:

> *Once, as an adult, I asked her again about my uncle, and to show me the pictures she had once spoken of in such detail* (Au, p. 52).

The phrase "as an adult" shows that a person's understanding of their childhood does not disappear over time; on the contrary, the narrator looks back on those stories and tries to learn more about them. How someone interprets meaningful relationships over time is shaped by working models (Bowlby, 1982). The narrator's ongoing curiosity about her mother's past shows just how important that relationship is to her.

The mother's stories about her family and early life feed into how the narrator comes to know her as a person. Later, the narrator reflects on:

> *my mother's stories—whatever she had, or had not told us about my uncle, or her early days in a new country* (Au, p. 92).

There are some parts of her mother's life that she knows, but others are still hard to access. The various memories and stories available to her shape her understanding of her mother. According to Bowlby (1982), working models provide the basis for her understanding of relationships through this collection of memories.

Working models also show up in how the narrator notices her own habits echoing her mother's. She states:

> *what I had not said was that it was her frugalness, not mine, that I was repeating* (Au, p. 91).

This observation is really important because the narrator realizes the influence her mother had on her own behavior, she remembers her mother's actions and notices traits in herself that she picked up from her. According to Bowlby (1982), the idea of a working model is relevant: how someone sees themselves and the people close to them is shaped by attachment. The narrator's awareness of her mother's influence shows that this relationship is now reflected in her behavior and perspective.

The same thing happens when a present object brings back the narrator's childhood. She writes that something:

> *reminded me of the very same cups she used to buy for my sister and me when we were young, which she let us eat sitting in the playground while she did the shopping* (Au, pp. 90-91).

Although the cups are just ordinary objects, they bring to life special memories of mother's love, connecting the present with the past through something simple. Bowlby (1982) helps explain why small details like that can hold so much meaning: the way someone interacts with their attachment figure affects how they see themselves. Those cups become important because they recall a moment with the mother.

The narrator's perception of her mother's habits, too, ties the present to the past. She notices that her mother:

> *had kept, I knew, all the tickets, brochures and guides we had been given to take home, as if she would take them out later to read as one reads a novel* (Au, p. 91).

The narrator reads this behavior through what she already knows of her mother's personality and habits. The objects carry more than souvenir value; they become evidence of how the mother relates to the world around her. Recognizing

and interpreting these habits, the narrator draws on years of observation and interaction to understand her mother now. Bowlby (1982) frames working models exactly this way: representations built up through repeated contact with an attachment figure.

The mother's movements also remind her of her childhood. Watching her use chopsticks takes the narrator back to when she was a kid. This connection shows how memories of early identification processes shape a daughter's perception of her mother at that time. Her movements feel familiar because the narrator was raised in an environment always filled with these habits. According to Bowlby (1982), the concept of working models is relevant: repeated interactions with important people influence how someone views that person in her mind. The narrator sees her mother's actions as part of a larger history rather than isolated events.

Another important representation of working models occurs when the narrator notices the difference between her mother as she appears in the present and the mother she remembers from childhood. She states:

> *I would look at her profile, her face when it was tired or resting, and realize that she was now a grandmother. Then, just as quickly, I would forget this again, seeing only the same image of her as I had throughout my childhood* (Au, p. 63).

Present perception and past representations interact here. When the narrator realizes that her mother is old and has become a grandmother, she still imagines her mother from her childhood. This tension is explained by Bowlby's (1982) idea of working models, which says that representations formed through early attachment continue to influence how the present looks. Although her appearance has changed, there is still the narrator's childhood shadow of her mother

This part shows that this working model does not really mirror the current situation. Intellectually, the narrator knows that her mother is now a grandmother, but emotionally, she still sees her as the familiar figure from her childhood. This kind of perception is shaped by attachment history: the narrator's relationship with her mother is based on the person she saw before and the image formed through years of communication.

The narrator's wish for greater mutual understanding points to the same lasting pull between them. She states:

> *I wanted more of those moments, to feel fluency running through me, to know someone and to have them know me* (Au, pp. 91-92).

She then thought about how far English she used herself different from her mother's native language, Cantonese. For the narrator, just being near her mother was not enough; she preferred to have a better understanding of each other. Here, the idea of working models by Bowlby (1982) is relevant: a person's expectations about relationships are shaped by previous interaction. The narrator's desire to really understand her mother shows their closeness and boundaries that have developed between them over the years.

The language difference also points to a gap in the narrator's understanding of her mother. Their long-shared history does not give them identical ways of experiencing or expressing things, and that gap sits between familiarity and distance. Years together have taught the narrator much about her mother, yet parts of her mother's identity stay out of reach. Working models do not close that gap; they simply give the narrator a way to keep working at it.

Memories of the narrator's mother's childhood help the narrator understand

herself. The mother said that when she discovered a Japanese stringed instrument, also called a zither, it reminded her of the Chinese instrument she used to play when she was little. In this moment, the narrator gained a new understanding of her mother's past. The mother's reaction to the music is connected to old memories from her travels, showing that she brings her personal story into the present. When the narrator realizes these experiences, she becomes more aware of her mother as a person with a life story that goes beyond her role as a mother. This relates to Bowlby's idea of working models (1982), which states that a person's perspective on meaningful relationships is influenced by past experiences.

Besides that, even though they had known each other for years, the narrator found that her mother had knowledge about ritual practices in the temple. Although her mother was still familiar to her, there were some things she had not fully understood. This aligns with the novel's exploration of the working models, where the narrator has a past image of her mother that has changed and expanded with the current circumstances. Such models arise from experience and shape a person's expectations and interpretations of relationships (Bowlby, 1982). The surprise felt by the narrator shows that she is still open to new information about her mother.

Working models and present interaction meet again in the mother's interest in the narrator's life. At dinner:

> *my mother had asked about my own life* (Au, p. 26).

Simple as it looks, this action feeds the narrator's growing sense of her mother as someone invested in her adult life. The mother's attention reaches beyond childhood memories into her daughter's current identity. Through this, the

narrator's image of her mother comes to include her present role too, a mother still curious about her growth.

The narrator and her mother keep talking through personal matters, opinions, and interests. The narrator recalls that they discussed important things while:

> *cooking dinner or walking to the shops or making coffee* (Au, p. 26).

And that they discussed these matters:

> *over and over* (Au, p. 26).

These repeated interactions show a relationship built from everyday moments, accumulated over time. According to Bowlby (1982), working models develop through repeated interactions, and these ordinary conversations are exactly that kind of repetition, the everyday material from which the narrator builds her understanding of her mother.

The mother turns to the narrator's opinion too when choosing gifts. The narrator states:

> *She held each one up to me as if I were a mirror and asked what I thought* (Au, p. 27).

This interaction shows mutual recognition: the mother values the narrator's response, while the narrator watches and reads her mother's reactions in turn. Their relationship has shifted from a simple caregiver-child arrangement into something more reciprocal, an adult bond that now shapes the narrator's working model of her mother.

The narrator's recognition of her mother's emotions points to accumulated knowledge shaping how she reads her. She says:

I could tell my mother was pleased (Au, p. 27).

The narrator does not need a direct explanation from her mother about her emotional state; instead, she feels she can understand it through observation and the empathy built over years of communication. This relates to Bowlby's (1982) concept of working models, which suggests that a person's perspective on meaningful relationships is influenced by past experiences. The narrator uses her past experiences to make sense of the subtlest behaviors by carefully observing her mother's emotional responses

The same familiarity shows up when the narrator reassures her mother about sharing an opinion. Over the meal, she asks what her mother thought of the artwork and tells her she can answer honestly. The mother reacts with panic at first, but the narrator talks her through it. Here, the daughter knows how her mother tends to react and shapes her own behavior around that knowledge, building the relationship through what they have learned about each other.

The narrator's care for her mother near the end of the trip points to a relationship that has grown more reciprocal. She tells her mother to:

be careful, to watch her step (Au, p. 94).

The daughter now takes a caring role toward her mother, reversing the direction the relationship once ran: no longer only the mother caring for the child. The narrator has grown into an adult who notices and responds to her mother's physical needs. According to Bowlby (1982), attachment theory can be applied here to show that attachment relationships continue to influence behavior beyond childhood, although the form of care may change. Bowlby (1982) likewise notes

that roles within attachment-caregiving relationships can change when a grown son or daughter cares for a parent in old age.

The final interaction involving the mother's shoe offers one more instance of reciprocal care. The mother asks:

> *Could you help me with this?* (Au, p. 96)

and the narrator kneels down and helps her put on her shoe. The daughter responds immediately to the mother's needs. The scene reverses the conventional image of a mother caring for a dependent child. Here, the adult daughter becomes the person who provides practical assistance. This does not mean that the relationship is gone or completely reversed. Instead, it shows how a strong relationship can grow as we get older. Bowlby's (1982) theory emphasizes how important lasting attachment relationships are during development; the novel shows that the expression of that attachment can be mutual.

Therefore, the narrator's memories and observations show that the mother-daughter relationship is formed through a long period of time spent together. Although she sees her mother as she is now, the narrator also recalls her mother as she was in the past, when she sewed the clothes, told stories, bought mugs, read Japanese folktales, and took care of children. These memories shape the narrator's understanding of her mother as an adult. At the same time, the narrator continues to discover new aspects of her mother's personality, history, and behavior. Consequently, the patterns employed in this novel are not static; they connect past experiences with present interpretations.

Overall, working models are one of the strongest ways in which *Cold*

Enough for Snow represents the lasting nature of mother-daughter attachment. Memories, habits, stories, objects, similarities, and hopes are all part of relationships that are formed not only through physical closeness. The working model theory developed by Bowlby (1982) explains how a person's understanding of relationships is shaped by previous experiences with significant others. In the novel, the narrator's and her mother's past repeatedly reshapes their perceptions of one another. This demonstrates that emotional bonds retain psychological significance even after the circumstances of their childhood have changed

In *Cold Enough for Snow*, the four ideas discussed in this chapter reveal how the narrator's relationship with her mother evolves through various types of connections and interactions. The mother and daughter's efforts to stay close to one another, return to each other's side, and share experiences demonstrates their efforts to foster closeness. Anxiety and separation lead to temporary distance, worry, searching, waiting, and reunions. The ability to act independently while maintaining a strong bond provides a clearer picture of the concept of a secure-base. Working models are particularly evident in the narrator's memories and reflections, which show how her childhood experiences shaped her understanding of her mother well into adulthood.

These concepts indicate that the mother-daughter relationship in the novel is not portrayed as constant physical dependence. Instead, attachment is represented as a continuing emotional bond that allows closeness and independence to exist at the same time. The mother and her daughter may drift apart, make their own decisions, and spend time physically apart, but they still think of each other and

eventually reconnect. The memories and experiences they have accumulated throughout their lives also strengthen the bond they share. The novel explores how the expression of that bond changes over time while retaining its deep emotional significance.

The relationship has also become increasingly reciprocal. The mother remains close to her daughter, waiting for her, sharing experiences, and showing concern while her daughter pays attention to her mother's well-being, considers her mother's wishes, reaches out to her when she is away, and provides practical help. Since both are adults, this dynamic is very clear. The daughter is not only the recipient of her mother's love but also someone capable of caring for her mother. Thus, the relationship they have built with each other has evolved into one characterized by mutual care and consideration.

Mother-daughter attachment in *Cold Enough for Snow* is portrayed through the continuing negotiation between closeness and distance. When separation feels profound, the characters seek proximity, show tolerance for distance when circumstances allow them to be independent, and bring their shared history into their present experiences. Through these patterns, Jessica Au portrays emotional bonds as enduring ties that take various forms and continue to shape the way the narrator and her mother view, act toward, and understand one another.

CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

A. Conclusion

This study examines how mother-daughter attachment is portrayed in Jessica Au's *Cold Enough for Snow* through Bowlby's Attachment Theory (1982). The findings show that the attachment between the narrator and her mother is portrayed through proximity-seeking, separation and separation anxiety, secure base, and working models. These aspects appear through efforts to maintain closeness, responses to temporary separation, independent exploration, and the influence of past experiences on the narrator's understanding of her mother.

The first aspect, proximity-seeking, is portrayed through the efforts of the narrator and her mother to maintain closeness and awareness of each other. Their attachment is reflected when they stay close in unfamiliar places, look for each other after becoming separated, share experiences, and consider each other's preferences. These behaviors correspond to Bowlby's (1982) explanation of attachment behavior as behavior that promotes proximity to an attachment figure. In the novel, proximity is expressed through physical presence as well as communication, attention, and shared activities. Thus, proximity-seeking reflects their efforts to maintain closeness through physical presence, communication, attention, and shared activities.

The second aspect, separation and separation anxiety, is portrayed through moments of temporary distance and concern between the narrator and her mother. The narrator waits for her mother after losing sight of her, notices her mother's

concern during their journey, and responds when her mother experiences uncertainty. Separation activates the narrator's awareness of the relationship and pushes her toward restoring contact. This matches Bowlby's (1982) view that separation from an attachment figure activates attachment behavior, particularly under uncertainty or distress. These responses to temporary separation reflect the narrator and her mother's concern for each other and their awareness of their attachment.

The third aspect, secure base, is portrayed through the narrator's independent exploration of unfamiliar surroundings while maintaining her emotional connection with her mother. During their trip, they participate in activities together and also engage in different activities according to their individual interests and abilities. The narrator explores unfamiliar places while staying aware of her mother, making her own decisions without losing that connection. Bowlby (1982) describes the attachment figure as a secure base for exploration. Her movement through new environments carries this out directly, tethered to her mother even at a distance.

The fourth aspect, the working model, is represented by the narrator's memories and thoughts about her mother. Family stories, food, clothing, and various shared experiences shape the narrator's current understanding of her mother. These memories connect her to her mother in the past and present. According to Bowlby (1982), the way a person views themselves, attachment figures, and the relationship itself is influenced by the working model formed by their experiences within the attachment relationship. The narrator's reflections

show how past experiences and memories influence her present understanding of her mother and their relationship.

Cold Enough for Snow portrays the mother-daughter relationship as an enduring bond built through shared memories, exploration, closeness, and responses to separation. With constant attention to one another, the narrator and her mother remain attuned to each other's need and presence. The novel presents this bond as a consistent thread that runs through various situations and phases of life, drawing on the four concepts of Bowlby's Attachment Theory.

B. Suggestion

Further research could explore the mother-daughter relationship in *Cold Enough for Snow* from other psychological or literary perspectives. The novel's treatment of memory, identity, and emotional distance also provides opportunities to examine how past experiences shape the way family relationships are understood. Researchers may also compare Au's representation of mother-daughter attachment with similar relationships in other literary works or cultural contexts. Such studies could provide broader perspectives on how family relationships, memory, and emotional connection are represented in literature.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abrams, M. H. (1999). *A Glossary of Literary Terms, Seventh Edition*.

Au, J. (2022). *Cold Enough for Snow.* Fitzcarraldo Editions.

Bakaraki, M. P., Dourbois, T., & Kosiva, A. (2024). Attachment theory across cultures: An examination of cross-cultural perspectives and alloparenting practices (Mini-Review). *Brazilian Journal of Science*, *3*(8), 36-42. https://doi.org/10.14295/bjs.v3i8.616

Baker, B. A. (2026). The Black Mother-Daughter Developmental Model: A Life Course Framework for Understanding Matrescence, Identity, and Attachment in Black Family Systems. *Family Process*, *65*(1). https://doi.org/10.1111/famp.70108

Bowlby, J. (1982). *Attachment and loss. Volume I. Attachment (2nd ed.)*. Basic Books.

Cassidy, E., Davis, A. K., & Rao, S. (2026). A critical literature review of research on attachment and psychedelics: Synergies and research implications. *Psychedelics*, 3, 100007. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psyche.2025.100007

Carli, L. L., Alì, P. A., Anzelmo, E., Caprin, C., Crippa, F., Gallucci, M., Moioli, L., Traficante, D., & Feeney, J. A. (2023). Attachment networks in young adults. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *14*. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1321185

Gusthafo, C. B. (2024). The characters' attachment style in Our Beloved Summer (2021). *Litera Kultura: Journal of Literary and Cultural Studies*, 12(3), 61-70.

Heffernan, M. E., Fraley, R. C., Vicary, A. M., & Brumbaugh, C. C. (2012). Attachment features and functions in adult romantic relationships. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, *29*(5), 671-693. https://doi.org/10.1177/0265407512443435

Huri, Y., Attar-Schwartz, S., & Landau, R. (2024). Emerging Ideas: Personal identity and mother-child relationship: Experiences of young adults raised by single mothers by choice. *Family Relations*, *73*(4), 2333-2348. https://doi.org/10.1111/fare.13033

Jamal, M., Rasheed, Q., & Sabir, M. (2025). Emotional interdependence between lifted children and artificial friends in Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun*: An exploration through attachment theory. *Advance Social Science Archive*

Journal, 4(2), 2554-2576.

Johnson, S. C., Dweck, C. S., Chen, F. S., Stern, H. L., Ok, S. J., & Barth, M. (2010). At the intersection of social and cognitive development: Internal working models of attachment in infancy. *Cognitive Science*, *34*(5), 807-825. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1551-6709.2010.01112.x

Leath, S., Bryant, L., Johnson, K., Pitts, J. B., Omole, T., & Butler-Barnes, S. T. (2025). An Intergenerational Exploration of Discipline, Attachment, and Black Mother-Daughter Relationships Across the Lifespan. *Behavioral Sciences*, *15*(7). https://doi.org/10.3390/bs15070887

Manoranjani, K. K., & Sripadmadevi, J. (2024). Unmasking the Insecure Attachments in Gone Girl and The Silent Patient. *Shanlax International Journal of Arts, Science and Humanities*, *11*(S2-March), 37-41. https://doi.org/10.34293/sijash.v11is2-march.7505

Mikulincer, M., & Shaver, P. R. (2016). *Attachment in Adulthood: Structure, Dynamics, and Change* (2nd ed.). Guilford Press.

Najeeb, Z., Bashir, S., & Saleem, F. (2024). Attachment as a Key in the Development of Personality: A Psychoanalytical Interpretation of Emma Donoghue's Room. *Journal of Development and Social Sciences*, *5*(II). https://doi.org/10.47205/jdss.2024(5-ii)43

Putri, D. R., & Prautomo, A. (2023). The Influence of Child Maltreatment on Young Adult Attachment Style in the Novel Needlework by Deirdre Sullivan. *Online) Prologue: Journal on Language and Literature*, *9*(1). https://prologue.sastra.uniba-bpn.ac.id/index.php/jurnal_prologue

Rahman, A., Siddiqui, S., & Yousaf Khan, S. (2025). Carrying the fire: Attachment and resilience in Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*. *Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review*, 3(3). https://llrjournal.com/index.php/11

Rohmah, L., Purwanta, E., & Sugito. (2023). Why should children have secure attachments? Literature review of the importance of attachment in child development. *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research*, 767.

Shirm, G. (2023). The Myth of 'Wound' Writing: The Multiple Surfaces of Jessica Au's *Cold Enough for Snow*. *Life Writing*, 22(1), 105-121. https://doi.org/10.1080/14484528.2023.2257903

Wellek, R., & Warren, A. (1956). *Theory of literature*. Harcourt, Brace & Company.

Wiliyani, L., Berutu, R. E., S, S. O., & Sihotang, E. G. W. (2024). A secure base: parent-child attachment and healthy human development. *Choice Reviews Online*, *26*(08), 26-4750-26-4750. https://doi.org/10.5860/choice.26-4750