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PSYCHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS IN NOVEL "YOU'VE REACHED SAM" BY DUSTIN THAO

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Abstract

This analysis delves into the psychological traits of the characters in Dustin Thao's novel, "You've Reached Sam. " Employing a literary psychology approach, the author artfully reveals the nuances of his characters. Our research will utilize a descriptive analysis grounded in Sigmund Freud's theories, aiming to uncover the deeper meanings embedded within the narrative. To achieve this, we will employ a qualitative descriptive method, which aligns seamlessly with our analytical objectives. By examining the characters in "You've Reached Sam," we hope to enhance public awareness regarding the significance of mental health, the importance of accepting life's circumstances, and the ability to manage emotions in social interactions. Ultimately, the primary goal of this analysis is to explore the development and transformations of each character, as well as to uncover the psychological depth present in "You've Reached Sam. "

Keywords: *Characterization, Mental Health, Psychology*

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A. INTRODUCTION

Art is beauty, literature is one of those beauties. In his collection of essays, *Consciousness and the Novel*, David Lodge elucidates the significance of literature by stating, "... literature is a record of human consciousness, the richest and most comprehensive we have" (Aras 2015). In literature, the components of beauty can be seen from the aesthetics of the language, the choice of characters, the problems that flow within it, the philosophy of the story, etc. It is in literature that the author expresses his feelings. Other aspects of such as sociology, culture, anthropology etc (Kurniati et al., 2023). Psychology is also included in this aspect. Character analysis is carried out using psychology, psychology is the science of the mental and behavior of characters (Budiman n.d.). A novel is a literary work that makes the character the most important role, where every characterization presented by the character will be the carrier of the plot (Kurniati et al., 2024). every characterization carried by the character has an effect on the story. Djasi (2000) said that characterization is the identification of the physical and mental characteristics of a character. Characterization can be described directly or indirectly. Directly the characterization is explained by the author or called explicit, indirectly the characterization is described through the character's characteristics which are known through dialogue, behavior, or the results of the character's thoughts. (Annisa, Patmarinanta & Potjut 2000).

In the novel "You've Reached Sam" the author brings the reader into the story. The author creates characters as doves to convey the author's message. Apart from that, the characterization of each character can also cause effects, reactions and emotions in each reader. This novel is a literary work that uses literary psychological studies. This study will focus on the psychology of characters in literary works. In this novel the author uses a literary psychology approach to describe the characters.

This study will be based on descriptive analysis using Sigmund Freud's theory. Sigmund Freud, a pivotal figure in the field of Western psychology, was born on May 6, 1856, in Freiberg to a Jewish family of German descent. As Adolf Hitler came to power, Freud sought refuge in England, where he ultimately passed away in London on September 23, 1939 (Hamali 2018). In psychoanalytic theory, Freud in 1923 divided the formation of human personality into 3 types, ego, super ego and id. (Nursafira et al. 2019). The theory of psychoanalysis, developed by Sigmund Freud, provides important insights in understanding the deepest aspects of human behavior, both in real life and in literary works. The human mind, according to Freud, is structured like an iceberg, where most mental processes are outside our awareness, influencing our behavior indirectly.



In a literary context, a psychoanalytic approach can help us understand characters and motifs in literary works. This kind of analysis not only enriches our understanding of the text, but also provides deeper insight into the inner conflicts experienced by individuals, whether in personal or cultural contexts. However, although this psychoanalytic approach is valuable, it should not be used as the only way to understand literary works. A work of art has a broader dimension, encompassing aesthetic experiences and symbolic meanings that go beyond mere psychological interpretation. Therefore, although psychoanalytic literary criticism provides a useful tool for exploring deeper meaning in literature, it is still important to consider various other perspectives in the analysis of literary works and human life as a whole.(Kuleshova n.d.)

Talks about the novel you've reached Sam by Dustin Thao, which was published on November 9 2021. Dustin Thao is a Vietnamese American writer based in southern California. from the title of the novel you have reached Sam is a girl who tries to let go of her lover. This novel carries the theme of a tragic love story which has an impact on human personality and mentality.

Julie's character is told as a character who experiences mental disorders. who initially had a cheerful nature became quiet and less social, this happened because of the loss of his lover and the conflict that arose from his own mind due to feelings of guilt. Apart from that, Julie's lover, Sam, is a character who exists in a different realm, but his figure is depicted as real in the novel. Julie and Sam still keep in touch via cell phone even though Sam has died. This made Julie feel like she was almost crazy . It is said that both of them have a dream, namely to go to college and live together after graduating from high school. Even though Sam is just a mirage, Julie still considers him real and will continue to make his dreams come true. until one day, Julie felt like she had failed. At that moment Sam felt he had to leave Julie. However, Sam asked Julie to move on with her life. Until finally Juli graduated from graduation, that was the day when Juli seemed to be born again, she became willing to socialize with her mother, family and friends. Apart from Juli, Mika's mental condition as Juli's friend and Sam's family has also improved, she has accepted Sam's departure and her interactions with Juli have improved.

The purpose of this analysis is to determine the development and changes in the characterization of each character. as well as the psychological depth of each character. This analysis is also to understand the course of the story. This analysis is also used to determine the meaning of the novel's meaning.

B. RESEARCH METHOD



The author of this research defines the characters in the novel "You've Reached Sam" by Dustin Thao using a literary psychology approach. One effective way to explore literary works is through the lens of literary psychology. This discipline examines literature as a reflection of the mind's processes and activities, offering valuable insights into the human psyche (Prawira 2018). This analysis is based on Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory.

This analysis uses a qualitative descriptive method. This method is used because it is in line with the objectives of the analysis, the problems that have been formulated can be answered using a qualitative approach. This method was chosen because in the analysis of this novel, there will be many events, phenomena, or psychological and social events analyzed. This method will be a method that is widely used because it can expose and clarify phenomena in detail (Sandelowski 2000). This method aims not only to analyze and describe data but also to clarify it and gain global knowledge about various dialogue presentations. The object of this research is the novel "You've Reached Sam" by Dustin Thao.

This qualitative research involves analyzing data presented in the form of words, images, and a bit of a tabular format. The data source in this research is the novel "You've Reached Sam". In this research, researchers used several methods to collect data; 1) Reading the novel "You've Reached Sam" 2) Understanding the characterization of each character in the novel "You've Reached Sam"; and 3) analyzing psychological changes in each character 4.) understanding the meaning of the novel "you've reached sam. The researcher chose humans as the main instrument for collecting data.

After collecting data, the author took several steps to analyze the data, namely: (a) Giving marking, marking is done on the part of the novel page where the character shows the development of characterization in the story line; (b) Data reduction, at the data reduction stage, the researcher summarizes and focuses on the main points of the data; in the form of an essay to provide a better understanding; (d) Drawing conclusions, finally at the conclusion drawing stage, the researcher examines and combines categories, finding relationships between them to obtain final results and research conclusions.

The main thing is researchers used qualitative methods to describe and analyze data in the form of characters' utterances in the novel which contain implied meanings (implicatures). They read the novel, identify relevant conversations, and then analyze them in depth to understand the deeper meaning of the text.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION



The novel is a work that is of interest to many people, regardless of who it is. This is because the novel is a life story related to the interactions of people. The foundational components of a novel can be broadly categorized into two main types: intrinsic elements and extrinsic elements (Afifulloh 2019). The novel also presents a story line, the conflict parts and the story series are connected to each other so that the reader feels interested and immersed in it. The most important part of the novel is the characters who dance in it. Each character has its own characteristics. Each characteristic has colors that become spices in each story. Characters are the essence of a novel.

Some of the interpersonal elements of a novel include theme, plot, characterization, setting, point of view, message and language style. Characterization in a novel includes a clear description of who the story character is, what his character is and how he is placed in the story (Safitri Said and Ibnu Rawandhy N. Hula 2022). Whether direct or indirect, characterization will be the material to be analyzed.

Conflict is a part of the novel that is definitely present in the novel. The uniqueness of each conflict in the novel will be interesting to analyze. The combination of literature and psychology will become literary psychology which has several approaches to it. Firstly, the psychology of the characters in the story can be studied using a textual approach. Second, reader psychology which can be studied using a receptive-pragmatic approach. Then finally, an expressive approach to studying literary writers. (Afthoni 2010). In the novel you've reached sam the description will focus on the internal conflict of the character July, internal conflict is the turmoil of a problem that is burning in the heart or soul of a character which is realized in the character's attitude. (Afifulloh 2019)

Through a psychological literary approach, the author wants to analyze the psychology of the characters in the novel "You've Reached Sam" using the psychoanalytic theory of Sigmund Freud (1856-1939). This theory is often used in literary studies to analyze the psychological elements of characters.

Freud Psychoanalysis divides the human personality structure into three: id, ego, and superego. Id is a basic human structure that exists from birth. From this id, the ego and superego will emerge. The ego develops from the id, which is a psychological aspect of personality that arises from awareness and decision making regarding human behavior. Meanwhile, the superego grows from the ego, reflects social values and makes the individual aware of moral demands. (Marcus 1999)



Tabel 1. July's Characteristicsssss

Characteristics	Personality Structure Types	Page Number (S)
Cheerful Stubborn	Id	3 – 10 20-21
Difficulty to interact Feel guilty Like crazy	Ego	14 – 16 44 38
Self-aareness Optimistic Sincere	Super Ego	125 239 247

The first focus of this analysis is July's character in the novel you've reached sam by Dustin Thao. In the personality structure types section Id has 2 characteristics.

Pages 3-10

Explain that July has a cheerful character as in the following example of a dialogue quote *"Today is the fifth, but who's counting?"* We both laughed. My shoulders relax a little

Pages 20-21

July has a stubborn character from the beginning of the story, July doesn't want to answer Sam's phone until an accident occurs because Sam becomes unfocused, until when July loses Sam, July is stubborn and doesn't want to visit Sam. This is included in the conversation below.

Mika looked at me. *"So, have you visited him?"*

I need time to answer. "No... not yet."

"You want?" he asked, holding my hand again. "We can go now. Together."

I pulled my hand back. "I-I can't now..."

"Why not?"

"I have something to do," I said vaguely,

"Like what?"

I don't know what to say. Why should I explain it?



Mika leaned over the table, his voice low. *"Julie, I know this is really bad for you. It's really bad for me, too. But you can't avoid it forever. You have to come, pay your respects. Especially now."* I clenched my empty cup. *"I told you, I don't want to talk about this,"* I said again.

"For God's sake, Julie," Mika scolded me. *"Sam would have wanted you to come. You weren't there for him this week. You weren't even there when they buried him."*

"I know, and I'm sure everyone else has a lot to say about it too," I said back.

"Who cares what other people say," shouted Mika, her body half-rising from the chair. *"All that matters is what Sam has to say."*

"Sam is dead."

This calmed us both.

Mika stared at me for a long time. His eyes searched for any sign of guilt or regret, as if he was waiting for me to change my words, but all I had to say was, *"He's dead, Mika, and my visit to him won't change anything."*

The second focus of this analysis is July's character in the novel you've reached sam by dustin thao. In the personality structure types section ego has 3 characteristics

Page 14 – 16

From the incident of Sam's death, it had an impact on Juli's mental state, namely that it was difficult for her to interact with people, even those closest to her, she became gloomy and withdrawn as shown in the following text

"For the past week my mother has brought food to my room and checked on me several times a day. So I wasn't surprised to hear a note of worry in his voice."

The second focus of this analysis is July's character in the novel you've reached sam by dustin thao. In the personality structure types section Id has 3 characteristics.

Page 44

July felt guilty on two occasions, the first time July felt she was the reason Sam died, and the second time she felt guilty because she threw away Sam's things, this also really affected July's psychology. shown in the following text. *"Wait a moment."* I turned it over in my hands, trying to understand what I was holding.



Winged book stand. The same book stand I threw away this morning. But no way. "Sam.. where did you get this?" "

At the antique shop. That's the half you lost."

I checked it carefully. He was right—it wasn't the same one I kept in my room. This is the part that was long lost and we couldn't find it. "But I think someone had bought it when we got back."

"That's me."

"What do you mean?"

"That's the surprise," Sam said with a laugh. "I went back and got the other piece for you. I let you think it was missing. That way, it'll be even more special when you finally get it together. When the wings are finished. It's quite romantic, isn't it?"

Except I don't have any other wings anymore. Because I threw it away, and now those two pieces will never be put together again. I can't believe I ruined the gift. I've ruined everything. "I expected a big reaction," Sam said, noticing my silence. "Whether

did I make a mistake?"

"No, no, it's just, I- I swallowed hard. "I don't have any other parts left, Sam." "Did you lose them?"

I gripped the bookend. "No... I threw it away." "What do you mean?"

"I threw it all away," I told him. "All your stuff. I can't look at it anymore. I'm trying to forget you. I'm sorry, Sam." Silence filled his room. I knew he was hurt by it, so I told him, "I tried to get her back. But it was too late. It was all gone. I know, I was mean, I'm sorry-

Pages 38



July's mental state became even more chaotic, like a crazy person after Sam contacted her, as in the following text. I hope you can tell me what happened," I said.

"How do I know if this is real?"

"Because it's real. I'm real, Julie. You just have to believe me."

"How could you do that? I feel like I'm going crazy."

"You're not crazy, okay?"

"Then how do I talk to you?"

"You called me, Julie. And I picked up. As usual." It was the same thing he said before. But that's not enough.

"I didn't expect you to answer. I didn't expect to hear from you again." "Are you disappointed?" he asked.

His question surprised me. I'm not sure how to answer that. *"That's not what I meant. I just meant. I-" I didn't know what to say.* My thoughts were too far away and scattered to concentrate.

The third focus of this analysis is July's character in the novel you've reached sam by dustin thao. In the personality structure types section supraego has 3 characteristics.

Pages 125

"I take a seat on the porch beside her. An air of silence hovers between us. She must

be angry with me. "I'm really sorry about last night. I completely forgot we were supposed to meet. I feel so terrible, Mika."

In this scene, July admits her mistake to Mika, she finds self-awareness, she also promises Mika Baha that she will come to Sam's vigil ceremony, although in the end July also breaks her promise because she feels unable to meet many people there. The form of admitting mistakes is self-awareness which is realized in July. Apart from that, July also tried to explain why he was not present as a form of self-defense.(Nyoman et al. 2023)

Page 239

You can see that July has risen and changed a lot, and is even very optimistic about living life like the text below:



"i could even apply to read college again. I have to stay cautiously optimistic."

Page 247

July's psychology has improved, she is like other people in general. This is like in the text where juli is willing to accept sam's departure.

"i listen to his voice mail until i have it memorized, and i don't need to play it anymore."

Tabel 2. Sam's Characteristic

Characteristics	Personality Structure Types	Page Number (S)
Lover Empathy Romantic	Id	3-10 40 26
Wise Committed	Ego	127 128
Honest Sincere	Super Ego	246 235 -247

The first focus of this analysis is sam's character in the novel you've reached sam by dustin thao. In the personality structure types section Id has 2 characteristics

Page 3-10

Basically, Sam is a loving man, therefore this is proven by July who always remembers him and finds it difficult to forget him. Sam's every touch and behavior always conveys great affection for his girlfriend July. here is a bit of text that fits that statement.

"We went around town until we lost track of time. And Sam kissed me again."

Pages 40

Sam always asked about july's condition after sam suddenly started contacting him even though in that situation sam was already dead.

"july what's wrong ?

"july are you crying ?

Page 26

As seen from the letter that Sam gave to July, Sam is a romantic person, here's the text: So that I can beat everyone, I want to write this first. *I hope it can be another proof of how much I love you. I still don't believe it. How could three years pass so quickly? It feels like just yesterday I was sitting on the bus behind you, trying*



to gather the courage to say something. It's crazy to think there was a time before we knew each other. The time before "Sam and Julie." Or "Julie and Sam"? I'll let you decide.

I know you can't wait to leave this place, but I'm going to miss it. But I understand. Your ideas are always too big for a small town, and everyone here knows it. But I'm glad your path somehow made you stop in Ellensburg halfway. So you and I can meet each other. Maybe it was meant to be, you know? I feel like my life didn't begin until I met you, Julie. You're the best thing that happened to this little town. For me. I realized it didn't matter where we went next, as long as we were together.

*Just be honest. I used to be afraid to leave the house. Now I can't wait to move on and make new memories with you. Don't forget the memories we made here. Especially when you are successful. And whatever happens, promise me you won't forget me, okay? Anyway, I love you, Julie, and will always love you
Forever yours, Sam Forever*

The first focus of this analysis is sam's character in the novel you've reached sam by dustin thao. In the personality structure types section Ego has 2 characteristics.

Page 127

Sam reminds him that he is no longer real, all his previous dreams will never happen, like the following text:

"Because it won't always be like this. It can't. I need you to remember that."

Page 128

Sam remains firm in his commitment, Sam is no longer as natural as Juli, he is limited, this can be seen in the following text

"stop it july," he interrupts me. "you and i can't do this forefer. That 's just not possiblde.

Page 235-247

Sam is willing to let July be with anyone who will accompany him in the future. Sam will no longer ask to be July's place of love. in the text there is

"and you deserve to fall in love a dozen times, because you are kind and beautiful, and who wouldn't fall in love with you "



Tabel 3. Mika 's Characteristic

Characteristics	Personality Structure Types	Page Number (S)
Emotional	Id	15-23
Feel disbelieve	Ego	160-170
Wise	Super Ego	198-204

The first focus of this analysis is sam's character in the novel you've reached sam by dustin thao. In the personality structure types section ego has 1 characteristic.

Page 15-23

Mika became very emotional when trying to find out the truth from Juli about her attitude, in the text below:

"who cares what everyone else says, "mika cries, her body half rising from the seat. "it only matters hat sam would say."

The second focus of this analysis is sam's character in the novel you've reached sam by dustin thao. In the personality structure types section ego has 1 characteristic.

Page 160-170

Mika of disbelief. Those who have died can be contacted again by telephone as in the following text:

"i don't know if i believe this.... is this some sort of a joke?" mika ask

The third focus of this analysis is sam's character in the novel you've reached sam by dustin thao. In the personality structure types section superego has 1 characteristic.

Page 198-204

Mika gives advice to Juli to get to know other people besides Sam because Sam is impermanent and will definitely leave her one day, as seen in the following text:
"because sam right, it would be good for you.

D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION CONCLUSION

Based on data analysis using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory, several conclusions can be drawn, including: (1) the character of July in the novel You've Reached Sam is described as a figure who was originally a cheerful and



loving girl who turned into a figure full of guilt, depression, and even lost her mind. However, the storyline also brings July's character back to being a character full of love, even though she remains a character who cannot interact with the people around her, at the end of the story the author depicts July's character returning to her original character. Then (2) the character Sam in the novel *You've Reached Sam* is described as a loving, kind and empathetic figure but also has an ambitious character. Then the third character is also described, namely Mika, who has an emotional character, full of feelings, loyal, loves family and on the negative side, Mika's character has a characteristic that is difficult to accept reality.

From several characters with their respective characteristics above, it can be concluded that there is a need to be kind and socialize both in the real and unreal world in a healthy manner. Mental health reflects an individual's capacity to build and sustain loving relationships, fulfill social roles typical of their culture, and adapt to change. It involves the ability to recognize, acknowledge, and articulate positive thoughts and actions, as well as to navigate emotions, including sadness. A strong mental health foundation fosters a sense of self-worth, empowerment, and a deeper understanding of both internal and external experiences (Bhugra, Till, and Sartorius 2013). Good mental health is vital for managing stress and is an integral part of overall well-being for both adults and children (Wulandari et al. 2022) Good communication without hurting anyone. Learn to accept every fate that happens to maintain mental health. Controlling emotions, pleasing yourself, paying attention to the people around you and not giving up easily are good life techniques

SUGGESTION

Suggestions from the author for readers :

1. This novel has a complicated storyline, where the forward and backward plots are scattered randomly so the reader must be careful.
2. The story presented is a fictional incident but lessons can be learned from it.



3. If we look at social events, a person should not judge other people by drawing their own conclusions.
4. If we look at their psychology, a person should be able to accept all forms of loss sincerely.

Suggestions for others reserchers :

1. For researchers, it is better to find the characteristics of the characters by reading the entire novel.
2. The psychology of each character can be seen from the way the character speaks and behaves, but in the novel the author also provides a little explanation.
3. This research was conducted using a qualitative method, but if more in-depth research is to be conducted, it can be deepened in its analysis technique.
4. In this research we use fraud theory, it is better for other researchers to make comparisons between other theories.



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