

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Reason for Choosing the Topic

Agoraphobia is a phobia that occurs to a person who scared to show her or himself in the public area. Usually, a person who suffers this phobia feels that she or he will feel comfortable by spending her or his time at home rather than outside. Agoraphobia itself is not only found in medical cases but it also can be found in literary works like the poem, drama, short story, and novel. One of literary works that contain agoraphobia as the topic is *The Woman in the Window*, a novel written by Finn.

This novel tells about Anna Fox who suffering agoraphobia. She works as a psychologist for children. But her normal life changes after a car accident. After the incident, she chooses to spend her day mostly in her house. She spends a lot of time drinking alcohol every day. Not only that, but she also observes the activity of her neighbors through her camera.

Anna's phobia makes her spend a lot of time in her own house so that why she can not do her usual activity and meet other people in her neighborhood. Because of agoraphobia, she decides to join a group in an internet blog which has members who have the same phobia as her, so that she can exchange opinion with those people who have the same phobia.

To reduce a phobia that she owns, she does medical treatment with a psychiatrist. She starts with physiotherapy and consumes medicine that suggested

by her psychiatrist. She also had a yoga teacher who helps her to reduce her agoraphobia.

The uniqueness of this novel is the author was a student at Oxford University with English Literature about Psychology as his major. He writes a story with psycho as the theme and agoraphobia as the topic which is related to psychology.

Agoraphobia experienced by Anna Fox in this novel is interested to analyze and the writer will analyze the agoraphobia from the psychological perspective. The writer is interested to analyze this topic because this topic rarely found in literary work.

1.2 The Objective and Scope of The Study

The objectives of the study are:

1. To analyze the symptoms and causes of agoraphobia of the main character in *The Woman in the Window*.
2. To analyze the effects of agoraphobia on the main character in *The Woman in the Window*.

This research of this study is on agoraphobia. It will discuss symptoms, causes, and struggles of agoraphobia showing on the main character in *The Woman in the Window*. This research is limited to main character agoraphobia based on the data contains the symptoms, causes, and treatments of agoraphobia in *The Woman in the Window*.

1.3 The Formulation of Problem

Based on the objective and scope of the study, the writer finds two research questions for making an analysis of the data, there are:

1. How are the symptoms and causes of agoraphobia of the main character in *The Woman in the Window*?
2. How are the effects of agoraphobia on the main character in *The Woman in the Window*?

1.4 Review of Related Literature

1.4.1 Previous Studies

The discussion related to *The Woman in the Window* has not yet been examined scientifically whether they are in the form of articles or scientific journals or other scientific papers. As for exiting reviews in the form of loose reviews that are not in the form of scientific works or journals that can be referred to as scientific research. These loose reviews can be found as comments or reviews in personal blogs and book criticism website.

One of the books criticism websites is *Goodreads* which has many comments from the public regarding *The Woman in the Window*. Emily May (2018) says that *The Woman in the Window* treats is rather an obvious plot element as a spoiler for most of the book. It is about the woman called Anna who lives alone ever since separating from her husband and daughter. She is not told the circumstances of the separation, but she told Anna has a drinking problem and serve agoraphobia that prevents her from leaving the house. The chapter is short and hard-hitting, making the fast-moving plot zip by even faster.

Emily think the author does a great job of capturing both fuzzy-headed confusing brought on by Anna's alcoholism and the suffocating claustrophobia of staying inside for almost of year. She makes for a pretty great unreliable narrator,

and it is easy to feel her frustration when she cannot even be sure herself if what she says is completely true.

One of the personal blogs that review the novel is *The Globe and Mail* which summarizes the contents of the story and then discusses their opinions about the plot and the development of the main character traits as well as their opinions on the author and moral values in the novel. Margaret (2018) says that, the central character, really the only character, is Dr. Anna Fox, once a prominent child psychologist, now an agoraphobic, alcoholic recluse, holed up in her handsome house in a nice Harlem neighborhood with a small park. She is alone with a cat, and a hunky tenant in the basement apart. Anna knows all her neighbors, not that she visits or even calls them but she spends her days viewing them, intimately with her trusty camera. Affairs, fights, sobs, dinners, sex, Anna watches it all, killing time, creating storylines. The rest of her days is spent glugging merlot, playing chess online and doing a bit of desultory doctoring for people in an agoraphobia chat room. *The Woman in the Window* has previous research that can be referenced for this study. The research has never been done before, so the writer can do research using psychological theory as a form of research in *The Woman in the Window*.

1.4.2 Theoretical Framework

Literature and psychology are two interrelated branches of science that study the human soul. According to Emir (2016), Psychology is the study of human behavior and its causes, while literature describes human behavior through fiction. The basic which makes it connected is literary work. Furthermore, Wellek (1903-1995) and Warren (1899-1986) in Emir (2016) categorize psychological analysis

in a literary work as analyzing the author's personality, the way a certain literary work was made, the psychological types which are present in the literary works and the characteristics of their behavior, and the effect of literature on its reader (Wellek and Warren, 1983, p.101).

Emir (2016) also mentions that Abrams mentioned psychological analysis in literary works based on four elements, there are the psychology-based study of literature aims more at studying the influence of social conditions on the emotions, thoughts and behaviors of the characters in the story or novel, the analysis of the characters' personalities, the process of a literary work formations and the psychology of creativity.

From the previous element psychology of literature, the writer conduct a study of the character in *The Woman in the Window*, which is the main character of the novel. The character of the novel experiences agoraphobia which include in anxiety disorder.

1.4.2.1 Agoraphobia

The term agoraphobia was first coined by Westpal (1871) in his description of the three males who experienced intense anxiety when walking across open spaces. Westphal also noted the psychological symptoms of anxiety (i.e., palpitations, blushing, trembling and sensations of heat) and the intense subjective anxiety that is elicited upon anticipating entering a feared situation.

In the third edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical of Mental Disorders (DSM-III;* American Psychiatric Association, 1980), agoraphobia was characterized as a "marked fear and avoidance of being alone, or in public places

from which escape might be difficult, or help not available in case of sudden incapacitation”.

According to Barlow (1984), agoraphobia refers to avoidance or endurance with dread of situations from which escape might be difficult or help unavailable in the event of a panic attack, or in the event of developing symptoms that could be incapacitating and embarrassing, such as loss of bowel control or vomiting. Typical agoraphobic situations include shopping malls, waiting in the line movie theaters, traveling by car or bus, crowded restaurant, and being alone.

1.4.2.2 Symptoms of Agoraphobia

National Health Service Organization (2018) mentions that agoraphobia has symptoms can be broadly classified into 3 types:

1.4.2.2.1 Physical Symptoms

The physical symptoms of agoraphobia usually only occur when a person find him or herself in a situation or environment that causes anxiety. However, many people with agoraphobia rarely experience physical symptoms because they deliberately avoid situations that make them anxious. The physical symptoms of agoraphobia can be similar to those of a panic attack and may include:

- a. Rapid heartbeat
- b. Rapid breathing (hyperventilating)
- c. Feeling hot and sweaty
- d. Feeling sick
- e. Chest pain
- f. Difficulty swallowing (dysphagia)
- g. Diarrhea

- h. Trembling
- i. Dizziness
- j. Ringing in the ears
- k. Feeling faint

1.4.2.2.2 Cognitive Symptoms

The cognitive symptoms of agoraphobia are feelings or thoughts that can be, but aren't always, related to the physical symptoms. Cognitive symptoms may include :

- a. Panic attack will make you look stupid or feel embarrassed in front of the people.
- b. Panic attack will be life threatening, for example, you may be worried your heart will stop or you will be unable to breathe.
- c. You are losing your sanity.
- d. You may lose control in public.
- e. People may stare at you.

There are also psychology symptoms that are not related to panic attack, such as:

- a. Feeling you would be unable to function or survive without the help of others.
- b. A fear of being left alone in your house (monophobia).
- c. A general feeling of anxiety or dread.

1.4.2.2.3 Behavior Symptoms

Symptoms of agoraphobia relating to behavioral include:

- a. Avoiding situation that could lead to panic attack, such as crowded places, public transportation, and queues.
- b. Being housebound – not being able to leave the house for long periods of time.
- c. Needing to be with someone you trust when going anywhere.
- d. Avoiding being far away from home.

1.4.2.4 Causes of Agoraphobia

Most cases of agoraphobia develop as a complication of panic disorder. Agoraphobia can sometimes develop if a person has panic attack in specific situation or environment. They begin to worry so much about having another panic attack that they feel symptoms of panic attack returning when they are in similar situation or environment. This causes the person to avoid that particular situation or environment.

As with many mental health conditions, the exact cause of panic disorder is not fully understood. However, most expert think a combination of biological and psychological factors may be involved.

1.4.2.4.1 Biological Factors

There are number of theories about the type of biological factors that may be involved with panic disorder.

a. ‘Fight or Flight’ reflect

One theory is panic disorder is closely associated with your body’s natural ‘fight or flight’ reflect, its way of protecting you from stressful and dangerous

situations. Anxiety and fear cause your body to release hormones, such as adrenaline, and your breathing and heart rate are increased. This is your body's natural way of preparing itself for a dangerous or stressful situation. In people with panic disorder, it's thought the 'fight or flight' reflect may be triggered wrongly, resulting in a panic attack.

b. Neurotransmitters

Another theory is an imbalance in levels of neurotransmitters in the brainscan affect mood and behavior. This can lead to a heightened stress response in certain situations, triggering the feeling of panic.

c. The fear network

The fear network theory suggests the brains of people with panic disorder may be wired differently from most people. There may be a malfunction in parts of the brain known to generate both the emotion of fear and the corresponding physical effect fear can bring. They may be generating strong emotions of fear that trigger a panic attack.

d. Spatial awareness

Spatial awareness is the ability to judge where you are in relation to other object and people. Some people with panic disorder have a weakened balance system and awareness of space. This can cause them to feel overwhelmed and disoriented in crowded places, triggering panic attack.

1.4.2.4.2 Psychological Factors

Psychological factors that increase your risk of developing agoraphobia include:

- a. A traumatic childhood experience, such as the death of parent or being sexually abused.
- b. Experiencing a stressful event, such as bereavement, divorce, or losing your job.
- c. A previous history of mental illness, such as depression, anorexia nervosa, or bulimia.
- d. Alcohol misuse or drug misuse
- e. Being in an unhappy relationship, or in a relationship where your partner is very controlling.

1.4.2.4.3 Agoraphobia without Panic Disorder

Occasionally, a person can develop symptoms of agoraphobia even though they do not have a history of panic disorder or panic attack. This type of agoraphobia can be triggered by a number of different irrational fears, such as the fear of:

- a. Being a victim of violent crime or a terrorist attack if you leave your house.
- b. Becoming infected by a serious illness if you visit crowded places.
- c. Doing something by accident that will result in your embarrassing or humiliating yourself in front of others.

1.5 Method of Research

This research uses close reading method to analyze the novel *The Woman in the Window*. The research is conducted in close reading technique based on psychoanalytic. According to Kain (1998), she stated that close reading is observing facts and details about the text so that it can focus on a particular part or as a whole, then do it by interpreting one's own observations.

The writer collects the data by starting with her initials intuitive pleasure in reading, the improve this by focusing on individual words before moving to the sentence, and then out to the paragraph, stanza or chapter, then to the entire text, eventually moving further to world concerns: its politic, its history, and its contemporary preoccupations. The writer also researching some journals to supports the theory. Then finding the previous study that has the same novel to analyze, therefore, the writer knows if there is similarity and builds the differentiation. After collecting the data, the writer will use the method of research to analyze it.