TRACING KRICKITT’S AMNESIA IN “THE VOW”: A PSYCHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

This research examines a novel entitled The Vow written by Kim and Krickitt Carpenter that raised the issue of amnesia. Amnesia can be caused by many factors. One of them is the head injury that makes the memory system disturbed in the brain. Krickitt’s case is caused by a car accident which affects her head. Her head was hit by the roof of the car and it injured her head. The main theory being used is psychoanalysis. The psychological about memory disorder and intrinsic element such as character are supported by characterization and plot. The research method uses library research which belongs to qualitative research. The analysis starts from general information about memory and then the kinds of memory disorder suffered by Krickitt and then the steps of therapy to make Krickitt remember again. This novel is chosen because it has the case, causes and the effect of amnesia suffered by the main character, Krickitt.

Keyword: memory, amnesia, character

INTRODUCTION

Brain is the center part of human’s body. It has many functions that can impact on human’s life because the brain controls all function. One of the functions of brain is to store the memories. If the brain has disorder automatically the function is also disturbed, and it is possible that human brain has problem. One of the problems in brain is amnesia. Amnesia is a kind of psychological disorder in which someone losses the memory such as events, information and experience. It might happen because of many factors, such as brain injury caused by the effect of being hit. (Morgan, King, Weisz and Schoplar, 1985, p.184)

Kim and Krickitt are a couple who have been married for two months. Their wedding was tested when a devastating car accident happened to them. The accident resulted in Krickitt’s head injury and she was in coma for a week. When she was conscious she did not know who Kim was and their relationship. This makes Kim struggled to deal with the problems that occurred to his wife.

The writer is interested in the topic because she wants to know how amnesia can have an impact on someone’s character, the behavior or the memory to remember about something. Through The Vow a novel written by Kim and Krickitt Carpenter, the writer will explain about amnesia which deals with the main characters.

RESEARCH METHOD

In order to achieve this research, there are several steps done. Library research is used to conduct this research. The media used for this research are The Vow and the books about theory of psychology, especially memory, amnesia and literature, especially about character and plot.

Firstly, the writer reads the novel The Vow for many times. Secondly, the research is continued by selecting the materials related to the case. Thirdly, she starts to analyze the case from the data collected from the novel The Vow and theory books. Then she analyzes the novel using psychoanalysis theory from the books related to the case of memory; the kinds of memory as well as its causes and effects. Lastly, she concludes the research.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The synopsis of The Vow

The story begins with the couple who met in September 1992, when Kim, a baseball coach in New Mexico, phoned a California sportswear company to purchase team jackets. Krickitt Pappas took his order. Kim and Krickitt discovered much in common. Soon they talked for several hours a week. In April 1993 they met in person for the first time. Kim said, “It was like I had known her all my life.” He proposed two months later, and they married on September 18, 1993.
Less than ten weeks after their wedding, their vows were tested. A fatal crash changed everything. Kim and Krickitt were both injured but Krickitt sustained worse long term injuries. The car’s roof collapsed around Krickitt and fractured her skull. She was upside down for 70 minutes before rescuers were able to free her. The doctors doubted she would survive. Within five days she was in life support with tools but remained in coma. Krickitt was treated by doctors for 21 days. Kim discovered that she would never be the same.

The trauma to her brain caused retrograde and posttraumatic amnesia that erased her memory almost all of the 18 months before the accident and 4 months after Kim was heartbroken the day he heard his wife said she was not married. She had no memory of her husband either in her head or in her heart.

During the weeks of Krickitt’s neurological rehabilitation, Kim was by her side pushing her toward recovery and trying to help her memory back with stories and photos. Krickitt, disliked “that stranger” and told himself that she did not know who he was, hated him, and asked him where he came from. Kim returned to work. He doubted about their future, but he had made a vow.

Krickitt was confused. The old Krickitt was gone instead there was a new blend personality. After intense struggles in their relationship through several months, at the advice of their therapist, the couple began dating again to rebuild the emotional bonds that grew in the early days of the relationship. New memories and new love appeared.

On May 25, 1996, they married again, exchanging new vows and rings. “Only one thing can surpass forever the painful events we have felt. That is the love I have for you,” Kim promised. Though they experienced up and down like every other couple, they knew that the love they share, based on their faith, could solve all the problems. Kim and Krickitt lived in Farmington, New Mexico with their two children. Kim served as the CEO of San Juan Country and Krickitt was a substitute high school teacher. (http://thecarpentersvow.com/)

The Plot of The Vow

This analysis will describe about the journey of Kim and Krickitt’s that have to deal their problem in their life. From the time they meet, dating, engaged and married. After that, they go to honeymoon and their marriage life is tested when they get an accident and caused Krickitt suffers amnesia that make their life changed at that time.

“Good morning and thanks for calling Jammin Sportswear. This is Krickitt… “Hi, Krickitt, “ I answered her, “I’m Coach Kim Carpenter from New Mexico Highlands University. I’m calling about the baseball coaches’ jackets in your catalog.”(3)

The quotation above explains when Kim and Krickitt met the first time on the phone when Kim as baseball coach ordered baseball jackets, and Krickitt as the sales woman who serviced Kim’s order.

Continue to the next step when Kim has the impression to Krickitt. After they met and they always talking on the phone, they decided to start dating at the first time. To trying to get them together.

“We both knew what the next step would be: a meeting in person. This would be a vitally important step in our relationship. After all, how do you know you truly connect with someone until you’ve physically spent time with him or her? So in February of 1993,
Krickitt and I started talking about the prospect of meeting and spending some time together, short though a trip might be due to our work schedules.”  (13)

Kim and Krickitt feel they have connection with each other, time by time they are together after they meet and both of them feel comfortable about their relationship. So that, they have a plan to continue talking about their future, so they are going to date at the first time. They do short trip and spend quality time for each other.

After they do dating for many times, eventually Kim proposes to marry Krickitt. Kim comes to Krickitt’s apartment and he reveals his plan to propose marriage to Krickitt.

“Will you be my lifetime buddy? Krisxan, will you marry me?” Krickitt took a quick breath and said the words I knew would come but was still dying to hear, “Yes, I will.” (23)

Kim asked Krickitt if she wanted to be his wife, he asked to marry him. Krickitt said that she wanted to be his wife. This quotation proved when Kim revealed his feeling and wanted to propose Krickitt to be his wife and Krickitt also has the same feeling if she wanted to be Kim’s wife.

“So on the evening of September 18, 1993, a perfect late-summer desert night, I stood at the altar with an audience of more than a hundred friends, family, and guests, held Krickitt’s hand in mine, and made a vow.” (23-4)

The quotation above explain that they got married on the evening of September 18, 1993, finally, they made a vow. With audience attending from their family, friends guests, they promised to became husband and wife who will always be faithful in every situation.

When they were enjoying their marriage moment, they were tested in terrible situation. This is the complication about the story when the characters have the problem in their marriage. They got an accident after they got back from honey moon. This condition made both having injuries but Krickitt’s has worse condition. She got coma after the accident because of the bump that attacked her head and doctor said she suffered amnesia. When doctor said Krickitt had amnesia, Kim decided to do therapy to regain Krickitt’s memory. First therapy started from therapy of her ability to remember by asking questions starting from the easy ones.

“do you know where you are? Krickitt thought for a minute before replying, “Phoenix”.

“That’s right, Krickitt. Do you know what year it is?” 1965. (82)
This is the question about general information that Krickitt has answered. Krickitt tried to recall the general memory about her, but she needed the second time to remember about the information.

“Krickitt, who’s your husband?” Krickitt looked at me with eyes void of expression. She looked back at the therapist without answering.” I am not married.” (82)

At that time Krickitt looked at Kim with no expression then looked at the therapist without answering the question about her husband, but she answered she was not married. Her answer made Kim shock and sad that she considered she was not married anyone. Kim felt desperate and hopeless with his efforts to make Krickitt’s memories back. This is the climax when she tries to remember but she cannot.

In the process to recall Krickitt’s memory, Kim asked for help to Mike Hill, his counselor. When Kim was talking about his problem to Mike, Mike gave some options to solve Kim’s problem. Eventually, Kim chose and took a decision offered by Mike. Mike would take some therapies for Krickitt to help her memory back. He came up with a plan.

“A new set of memories that she can remember will build new emotional ties between you. I think the old Krickitt is gone. It’s time you got to know the new Krickitt. And it’s time for her to get to know you.” (141)

Krickitt, whom Kim knew, changed. The new Krickitt did not know who Kim was. This was the time for them to know each other again. They had to start from the beginning like when the first time they met. They built again emotional relationship between them. This was the time for Krickitt to know who Kim was.

In this moment, Kim had a chance to rebuild his relationship with his wife. Even though through the way of pretending but this was one effort to make Krickitt’s memory back. Kim had to be patient to face the new Krickitt. This was the process for Krickitt to know about her memory that was lost after she got an accident.

After passing a long time to make Krickitt’s memory back, Kim felt that his struggle was not vain because Krickitt’s memory got back slowly. Finally she remembered Kim even though she still needed the evidence that would make her sure.

“When I lost my memory, I lost my feelings for Kim. I had to re-discover what it was about Kim I had fallen in love with before. I can’t remember what it was like the first time, but I’m guessing that this time my love has grown in a different way-not that ‘fluffy’ romantic love, but more of a conscious choice. The fact, I was married to this man. The feelings came later, and by God’s grace I’ve grown to love him again.” (146)
Krickitt said when she lost her memory, she also lost her feelings to Kim, but now she got back her feeling again. She felt in love again with Kim. Now, she got what was lost, with the different way, with more conscious. Her man that she loved very much came again to her new life. Because of God’s grace this happened again. This was the evidence of Krickitt’s memory about Kim which had come back. She realized her happiness and love to Kim. This is resolution when Mike, Kim’s friend help him to replay the past events of them.

CONCLUSION

This research is an analysis about a person who suffers from amnesia and gives the impact to her life. Krickitt, a woman having an accident after she had honey moon that make her head injured. To support this analysis some theories related to psychology focusing on memory disorder are used. This analysis uses plot to trace amnesia suffered by Krickitt.

The conclusion is amnesia that is suffered by Krickitt gives the impact to her and her husband. Because of that, their relationship, their marriage and their life change becoming bad situation and almost broken. Krickitt’s suffered some kinds of amnesia. There are, biological amnesia, retrograde amnesia and anterograde amnesia. With struggle and patient Kim succeed to make Krickitt’s memory back again, by doing some therapy and rehabilitation those are Kim’s effort to cure Krickitt’s memory to normal again.
REFERENCES


AUTHOR

Hafiyana Qisti was born in Bandung on October 9th, 1991. The author graduated his Bachelor degree at Bina Nusantara University in the field of English Literature on 2013.