

THESIS

**THE PORTRAYAL OF GRIEF IN *YOU'VE REACHED SAM*
NOVEL BY DUSTIN THAO**



**MITAHUL JANNAH
1810621010**

**ENGLISH LITERATURE S1 DEPARTMENT
ECONOMICS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES FACULTY
UNIVERSITAS FAJAR
MAKASSAR
2022**

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Bachelor
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Written by

MITAHUL JANNAH
1810621010

Has been examined

Makassar, September 31, 2022
Advisor,



Andi Febriana Tamrin, S.S., M.Hum.

Head of English Literature S1 Department
Economics and Social Sciences Faculty
Universitas Fajar



Andi Febriana Tamrin, S.S., M.Hum


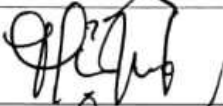

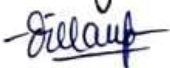
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MITAHUL JANNAH
1810621010

Has been maintained in the thesis examination
On 31 August 2022
And stated has qualified graduation

Approved by
Examiners Committee

Examiner	Position	Signature
Andi Febriana Tamrin, S.S., M.Hum.	Head	
Ana Rosida, S.S., M.Pd.	Secretary	
Syahrani Junaid, S.S., M.Pd.	Member	
A. ST. Aldilah Khaerana, S.S., M.Hum.	External	

English Literature S1 Department
Economics and Social Sciences Faculty
Universitas Fajar

Dean,

UNIVERSITAS FAJAR
DEKAN FAKULTAS
EKONOMI DAN ILMU SOSIAL
Dr. Yustiana, S.Sos., M.I.Kom.

Head,

UNIVERSITAS FAJAR
ANDI FEBRIANA TAMRIN, S.S., M.HUM.

PERNYATAAN KEASLIAN

Saya yang bertanda tangan di bawah ini:

Nama : Mitahul Jannah
NIM : 1810621010
Program Studi : Sastra Inggris

Dengan ini menyatakan dengan sebenar-benarnya bahwa skripsi berjudul **The Portrayal of Grief in *You've Reached Sam* Novel by Dustin Thao** adalah karya ilmiah saya sendiri dan sepanjang pengetahuan saya di dalam naskah skripsi ini, tidak terdapat karya ilmiah yang pernah diajukan oleh orang lain untuk memperoleh gelar akademik ini di suatu perguruan tinggi, dan tidak terdapat karya atau pendapat yang pernah ditulis atau diterbitkan oleh orang lain, kecuali secara tertulis dikutip dalam naskah dan disebutkan dalam sumber kutipan dan daftar pustaka.

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Yang Membuat Pernyataan,




Mitahul Jannah

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All praise, gratitude, the researcher conveys To Allah SWT, the lord of the universe who always blessed the researcher so this research can be completed on time. To our prophet Muhammad SAW, may peace and blessing be upon him, his family and his followers.

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The resercher realizes that this thesis has not been perfect, suggestions and constructive criticism are expected in the completion of I hope that this thesis can provide

Makassar, September 2022

Researcher,



Mitahul Jannah

ABSTRACT

THE PORTRAYAL OF GRIEF IN *YOU'VE REACHED SAM* NOVEL BY DUSTIN THAO

**Mitahul Jannah
Andi Febriana Tamrin**

This research analyzes the grieving process by Julie as portrayed in the novel *You've Reached Sam* by Dustin Thao. The method used in this research is the qualitative descriptive method. The data source is from *You've Reached Sam* novel. In analyzing the data, the researcher uses the stages of grief theory by Kübler-Ross and Kessler. A psychological approach is used in conducting this research because this research was about character's behaviors.

Stages of grief by Kübler-Ross and Kessler is a theory that focuses on the grieving stages of the mourner. They believe a bereavement person has to go through five stages after losing their loved one, such as Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression, and Acceptance.

The result of this research shows Julie follows all the stages of grief over Sam's death. Even though the grief stages is unsequentially. Among all the existing stages, she did not experience 2 of the stages indicators, namely shock in the denial stage and angry towards those who have control of their loved one's lives in anger stage. Her characterization changes at each stage, where Julie is initially wishy-washy and then becomes grumpy, Julie then became pessimistic and moody until finally she can be sincere and accept her destiny.

Keywords: Grief, Stages, Kübler-Ross & Kessler, Qualitative Descriptive

ABSTRAK

PENGGAMBARAN KEDUKAAN DALAM NOVEL *YOU'VE REACHED SAM* KARYA DUSTIN THAO

**Mitahul Jannah
Andi Febriana Tamrin**

Penelitian ini menganalisis proses berduka Julie yang digambarkan dalam novel *You've Reached Sam* karya Dustin Thao. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah metode deskriptif kualitatif. Sumber data berasal dari novel *You've Reached Sam*. Dalam menganalisis data, peneliti menggunakan tahapan teori kedukaan oleh Kübler-Ross dan Kessler. Pendekatan psikologis digunakan dalam melakukan penelitian ini karena penelitian ini tentang perilaku karakter.

Tahapan berduka oleh Kübler-Ross dan Kessler adalah teori yang berfokus pada tahapan berduka orang yang berkabung. Mereka percaya orang yang berduka harus melalui lima tahap setelah kehilangan orang yang mereka cintai, seperti penyangkalan, amarah, pengharapan, depresi dan penerimaan.

Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan Julie mengikuti semua tahapan kesedihan atas kematian Sam walaupun kedukaannya tidak berurutan. Di antara semua tahapan yang ada, ia tidak mengalami 2 indikator tahapan, yaitu syok pada tahap penyangkalan dan marah terhadap orang yang memiliki kendali atas kehidupan orang yang dicintainya pada tahap amarah. Karakterisasinya berubah di setiap tahapannya, dimana Julie yang awalnya plin-plan kemudian menjadi pemarah, Julie kemudian menjadi pesimis dan murung hingga akhirnya ia bisa ikhlas dan menerima takdirnya.

Kata kunci: Dukacita, Tahapan, Kübler-Ross & Kessler, Deskriptif Kualitatif

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the research backgrounds, research question, research objectives, research significance, and the scopes of the research. Those subchapters are discussed deeply below.

1.1 Research Background

Every living thing will surely die, it could be animals, plants, or humans. Human social life will automatically be cut off when they dies. However, it was different for the person that being left. People whose loved ones died will have difficulty to adapt in a new world where their beloved ones are no longer around. According to Wang & Wang ya-huei, confronting a loss or a life-threatening situation requires a certain process in order to adjust to the new circumstances; that is, those experiencing loss need resilience or the ability to recover from grief and maintain a stable equilibrium (Wang & Wang ya-huei, 2021, p. 80). While recovering from grief, human are expected to eperience vary of emotions.

Emotion is a complicated reaction involving experiential, behavioral, and physiological factors on which an individual want to deal with a truly meaningful issue. According to Jack et al. (2014), humans have four basic emotions, namely fear, anger, joy, and sad (Jack, Garrod, & Schyns, 2014, p. 189). Out of all those basic emotions, sadness is the emotion that dominates one's feelings when dealing with grief. In the grief state, people are expected to experience an extensive emotions, such as, shock, sadness, confusion, anger, and despair.

G.R.VandenBos (2007), stated "Grief is the anguish experienced after a significant loss, usually the death of a beloved person. Grief is often distinguished from bereavement and mourning. Not all bereavements result in a strong grief response, and not all grief is given public expression (see disenfranchised grief).

Grief often includes physiological distress, separation anxiety, confusion, yearning, obsessive dwelling on the past, and apprehension about the future.”

Grief is a feeling that is certain to be experienced by humans after losing someone or something they valued and loved. Losing a job, breaking up, a loved one dying, or losing valuables can make people feel a sense of loss. The most painful of all is losing someone who has left this world for good. Humans can still find new love if they break up. It is still possible to find valuables if they keep looking and can still find a new job if fired from their job. However, the loss of a loved one cannot be replaced by anything. A loved one cannot come back alive. A famous proverb goes, "The only time goodbye is painful is when you know you will never say hello again" (Anonymous). From the feeling of loss, Humans are required to overcome their feeling because life will go on. However, it is not that simple.

Researchers conducted research on grief because, as Lichenthal (2017) stated "People often believe they should feel a certain way. But such 'shoulds' can lead to feeling badly about feeling badly. It is hugely important to give yourself permission to grieve and allow yourself to feel whatever you are feeling. People can be quite hard on themselves and critical of what they are feeling. Be compassionate and kind to yourself." Based on this quote, it is possible to conclude that many people face difficulties and even blame themselves when confronted with grief. By conducting this research, the researcher hopes that it will be used as a benchmark for future research and for people who are grieving so that they can process and acknowledge their emotions and let go of their loved ones after going through the five stages of grief.

Feelings of loss can trigger deep grief. There is no right or wrong when it comes to grieving. Kübler-Ross & Kessler stated that “There is no better or worse death. Loss is lost, and the grief that follows is a subjective pain that only we will know that in sudden death, just like any other kind, the person left behind needs to take it day by day. But how do you find your way in the new, lonely, numbing world? Sometimes doing normal things gives you a sense of normalcy” and “Our grief is as individual as our lives (Kübler-Ross & Kessler 2015, p. 200), which means that the human ability to deal with feelings of loss or grieving is different for everyone. Some can quickly rise from their grief, and some feel that grieving is very painful, difficult, and often takes a long time to get used to a change. The change referred to here is the absence of people who have died.

Despite of the differences, Kübler-Ross and Kessler (2015), stated that there are 5 stages of grief that humans could follow to let go of the deceased. They are denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance (Kübler-Ross & Kessler, 2015, p. 7)

In conducting this research, the researcher applied literary psychological approach to explain the character personality in the novel. The character that is understudy is Julie, the main character. Character is included as one of the literary aspect along with plot, theme, etc. Psychology as a science that studies human character can be used comprehensively to understand the characters contained in literary works. The approach then will be combined with qualitative descriptive method in order to answer the research question.

The researcher chose the *You've Reached Sam* novel by Dustin Thao as the object of research because this novel tells about a 17-year-old girl named Julie who lost her lover in an accident. This novel is an epic depiction of how

devastated the feeling is after a loved one dies. The reader is invited to see how Julie deals with her bereavement and feel Julie's heartbreak when she faces the death of Sam, her lover. The novel entered the ranks of the New York Times and USA Today Bestseller list.

Julian Winters (2021) who is an award winning author of *Running With Lions* on his twitter @julianw_writes stated

"*You've Reached Sam* is hauntingly remarkable debut. Dustin Thao gently weaves grief, regret, second chances, and the honestly beautiful moments we carry from a first love. Every tear you shed reading this book will be worth it" he then continued his tweet ".....*You've Reached Sam*, a honest exploration of grief, regret, first love, and the healing power of hope" (Winters, 2021)

By reading the reviews above, the researcher's interest in finding out about the grieving process experienced by Julie as the main character in the novel *You've Reached Sam* by Dustin Thao increasing rapidly.

Julie's characterization changes, her closeness to Sam, and the trauma she experienced are also described epically in the novel. Dustin Thao's ability to write dialogue and showed flashbacks to Julie and Sam's past makes it easy for the reader to build sympathy for the main character. Julie, who was originally a quiet and introverted girl, began to look at the outside world and turned into a happy and cheerful girl when she got to know Sam. Analyzing Julie's characterization becomes very interesting in this study because Sam's death impacts her. The very close relationship between Julie as the main character and Sam makes the acceptance stage or the final stages of grief difficult to achieve.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the research background above, the research raises one question, namely how does Julie deal with the grieving process as portrayed in the novel.

1.3 Research Objectives

Based on the research questions above, the objectives of the research is to analyze the grieving process faced by Julie in the novel.

1.4 Research Significance

Theoretically, this research can help the readers to understand the novel *You've Reached Sam* by Dustin Thao and also to get a different perspective such as the five stages of grieving shown in the novel. And practically, this research can be used as a reference for students and other researchers who wish to do the same research using the same theory.

1.5 Research Scope

The researcher only focuses on the grief that Julie experienced after losing her boyfriend as portrayed in the novel *You've Reached Sam* by Dustin Thao. The novel is written by Dustin Thao. The novel has a total of 240 pages, first published in the United States by Wednesday Books, an imprint of St. Martin's Group, on November 9th, 2021. This research uses the theory of five stages of grief by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross and David Kessler.

CHAPTER II

LITERARY REVIEW

This chapter discusses some of the previous findings, some topics related to the five stages of grief theory by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross and David Kessler, other theories used in the research and the synopsis of *You've Reached Sam* By Dustin Thao.

2.1 Previous Studies

For better comprehension and obtain other perspectives in carrying out the study, first and foremost, the researchers must first learn and find out the previous study that has been done beforehand. Previous studies are very helpful for researchers as a reference and provide an overview of the research that have been carried out

Since this novel was only released on September 9th, 2021 (paperback version) and September 11th, 2021 (hardcover version). The researcher is the first to use it as the primary research object. As a result, in this sub-chapter, the researcher describes previous studies conducted using the same theory, namely Elisabeth Kübler-Ross and David Kessler's Stages of Grief theory.

Three previous studies were reviewed. Two of them are undergraduate thesis, and one is an article. The first study conducted by Hidayat (2018) entitled Jack Salmon's Stages of Grief In Accepting Susie's Death As Seen in Alice Sebold's *The Lovely Bones*. Harjanto (2021) conducted the second study entitled Cheryl Strayed's Management Of Grief As Seen In Her Memoir *Wild; From Lost to Found In Pacific Crest Trail*. The last studies entitled *Using the Kübler-Ross Model of Grief with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD): An Analysis of Manchester by The Sea* by Wang & Wang (2021).

Firstly, the research entitled *Jack Salmon's Stages of Grief In Accepting Susie's Death As Seen in Alice Sebold's The Lovely Bones* by Hidayat (2018), a student of Sanata Dharma University. He uses a psychological approach with library research methods in carrying out his research. In his research, Hidayat mainly aims to find out about the stages of grief experienced by Jack Salmon after her daughter's death. Using Ross and Kessler's stage of grief theory, he found that there are only four stages of grief experienced by Jack before accepting the death of his daughter. The stages Jack experienced before accepting the death of his daughter are denial, anger, bargaining, and depression. Jack follows all five stages of grief. Jack, who is considered a strict parent, also influences the flow of his stages of grief. Being a strict parent makes his anger stage longer than the other stages (Hidayat, 2018).

Secondly, Harjanto (2021), in the research entitled *Cheryl Strayed's Management Of Grief As Seen In Her Memoir Wild; From Lost to Found In Pacific Crest Trail*. In his research, Harjanto used the library research method and psychological approach. The data gathered from several books in the library and online platforms combined with character and characterization and the stages of grief theory. Harjanto aims to discover the main character, Cheryl's characteristics, and how she manages her grief after her mother's death. The finding shows that Cheryl's characteristics, who is optimistic, brave, realistic, and smart, have a huge impact on her journey while facing the five stages of grief. As stated before, everyone has their way of coping with bereavement; in Cheryl's case, her characteristic allowed her to quickly complete the five stages of grieving. Even though she had faced difficulties and was pessimistic in the denial

phase, she overcame it because Cheryl is an optimistic character (Harjanto, 2021)

The third research was conducted by Wang & Wang in 2021. The article entitled *Using the Kübler-Ross Model of Grief with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD): An Analysis of Manchester by The Sea*. They use the qualitative research method in their research. Unlike the other previous studies, they used movie as the object of their research. Not only using the five stages of grief theory and finding out about the character's way of coping with bereavement, but they also did research on PTSD that occur because of the trauma experienced by the character. In their study, they found out that not every character in the movie follows all five stages of grief. In fact, one character named Lee can not recover from his bereavement and traumatic past. He chooses to avoid the reality which makes him stuck in the traumatic grief process and his grief continues endlessly (Wang & Wang, 2021)

Based on the reviewed previous studies, there are several differences and similarities between the three previous studies and the researcher's research. The first and second studies applied the same theory, namely the stages of grief theory. Although researching with the same theory, each researcher uses a different research object. As for the third research, apart from examining the stages of grief, they also examine PTSD experienced by the characters in the film. Therefore, in this research, the researcher aims to find out about Julie's characterization and the stages of grief experienced by Julie in the novel entitled *You've Reached Sam* by Dustin Thao.

2.2 Theoretical Background

This sub-chapter will discuss about the psychology of literature approach and the theories used in carrying out the research.

2.2.1 Psychology of Literature

Literature as the science of humanities has several areas of study, such as anthropology, religion, sociology and psychology. In the areas of psychology, the study is focused on human behaviour and feelings. Psychology has a great value in a literary work. An author can successfully present characters, by including psychological components, authors may communicate their feelings and engage the reader in the psychological dimension of human reality.

The researcher applied a literary psychological approach in conducting this research. Ahmadi stated that psychology as a science that studies human character could be used comprehensively to understand the characters contained in literary works. Psychology is part of the study of literature which examines the psychological problems of humans (characters) contained in literary works, both from the perspective of the work, the author, and also the reader (Ahmadi, 2015, p.2).

Psychology researches human behaviours and their causes, while literature depicts human behaviour through fiction (Yimer, 2019, p.159). Literary and psychology share a concern on phantasies moods, as well as the human soul.

In the real world, the characterization of a person can not be openly shown because humans have a psychological mask which allows them not to show their true personality. On the contrary, through the world of literature,

human characterization can be raised and explored in depth without having to be afraid of the rules contained in the real world (Ahmadi, 2015, p.5).

2.2.2 Kübler-Ross & Kessler's Stages of Grief Theory

The stages of grief theory was first published as stages of dying theory in Elizabeth Kübler-Ross's book entitled *On Death and Dying* in 1969. In her book, Kübler-Ross, who was a Swiss-American psychiatrist, stated "There are five stages a dying person goes through before death the first stage is denial and isolation, the second stage is anger, the third stage is bargaining, the fourth stage is depression and the last stage is acceptance" (Kübler-Ross, 1997).

This theory was later renewed into a different theory and published in a sequel to the book *On Death and Dying*, namely *On Grief and Grieving* in 2005. This was done after Kübler-Ross & Kessler realized that grieving people also face stages that similar to those who find out that they will die. In their book, Kübler-Ross & Kessler stated that people who face bereavement face denial, anger, bargaining, and depression before accepting the death of their loved one (Kübler-Ross & Kessler, 2005, p.23).

The length of the five stages of grief and loss can vary greatly. Some stages of grief can last longer than others, and there is no specific timeframe for grief in general. The stages do not always happen in the same sequence for everyone. People can go through the stages in any order, repeat them, and even go through multiple stages at once. (Kübler-Ross & Kessler, 2005, p.7). Some find it difficult to move from the denial phase, and some people can quickly reach the acceptance phase without going through all five stages.

Using this theory, the researcher aims to find out about the stages of grief experienced by Julie in the novel *You've Reached Sam* By Dustin Thao. The following is a more detailed explanation of the five stages of grief

1. Denial

Denial is the first of the five stages of grief described by Kübler-Ross & Kessler in their book. It is characterized by a conscious or unconscious inability to acknowledge or accept the fact that a loved one just died.

Stage denial occurs to people whose loved ones have recently died. People who are grieving will have difficulty processing reality. The grieving person knows that he has just been abandoned by a loved one but he just can't process the fact that his loved one has really left the world for good. People who are in a denial phase are usually characterized by shock.

People often find themselves telling stories of their loss over and over, which is one way our minds deal with trauma. This is a technique for suppressing grief while trying to accept the fact that we have indeed lost. As the denial fades, the reality will gradually begin to surface ((Kübler-Ross & Kessler, 2005, p.11).

2. Anger

Anger is the second of the five stages of grief. Those who already in this stage feel upset about anything to anyone. They could feel anger towards those they think have control over their loved ones' lives. For example, the doctor who handles them or if their loved one dies in an accident will feel angry at the person responsible for the incident. The person who experiences loss can also feel angry towards themselves.

They were angry because they could not prevent the death of their loved ones. Anger has no limits, it can extend not only to friends, to yourself, to those who have control over the lives of your loved ones, but also to those who died.

According to Ross&Kessler, people who grieve often feel the urge of anger toward the unexpected and undeserved situation. Some people even blame God for the fate that befell their loved ones.

The anger stage is very important because by expressing all anger, it will help the healing process of the grieving person, so that expressing emotions and anger is much better than suppressing emotions (Kübler-Ross & Kessler, 2005, p.16).

3. Bargaining

People who grief, tend to bargain or negotiate about the death of their loved one and become lost in a maze of "if only..." or "what if..", they want life to returned to what it was; and wanted to to go back in tie to stop the accident from happening (Ross & Kessler, 2015, p. 17)

People desperately try to bargain with God in hope for a different outcome. Before a loss, it seems you will do anything if only your loved one may back to live.

The feeling of guilty often comes with bargaining. The "if onlys" question makes people criticize themselves and what they "believe" they could have done better. Some even make a deal with the suffering.

The bargaining stage is very important for people who are grieving because by doing this stage, it will be easier for people to move from one stage to another surface (Kübler-Ross & Kessler, 2005, p.19).

4. Depression

Depression is the fourth stage of grief. People who are in depression stage feels disconnected from as if they are lost in a desert (Ross & Kessler, 2015, p. 81). Depression results in emotions of melancholy and/or a loss of interest in previously loved activities. During depression, people often resort to neglect. they don't care about anything because you feel their life is pointless (Ross & Kessler, 2015, p. 21)

Losing a loved one is a depressing scenario, feeling gloomy is a common reaction that someone may have after losing a loved one. They even mentioned that not feeling melancholy following the death of a loved one is atypical.

People who are depressed because a loved one has died often feel emptiness because of that person's absence. They tend to deny the fact that they are depressed even after being told by people around them.

To move from one stage of depression to another, the bereaved person must treat grief as normal and appropriate so that we can continue with life as usual. This is important so that we can move to the next stage, namely acceptance (Kübler-Ross & Kessler, 2005, p.23).

5. Acceptance

Acceptance is the fifth stage of grief. When the first to fourth stages can occur out of order, the acceptance stage does not change place. In this phase, the grieving person has begun to give up their loved one. They will start their healing process. They have realized that with or without their loved one, life must go on.They realized that there is nothing they can do to bring back their loved one.

Many people think that people who can accept the death of their loved ones are already fine. However, the fact is, it is not like that. People who are already in this phase are not doing well. They are still in a state of mourning but have accepted the fact that their loved one will not return to this world again, and he or she sooner or later, whether we like it or not, will have to continue living life as usual in the world where their loved one are now gone (Kübler-Ross & Kessler, 2005, p.25)

In the acceptance stage, people will start their healing journey and begin the integration process (Ross & Kessler, 2015, p. 25). Such as restarting their social life, and focusing more on their future that they used to abandoned

2.2.3 *You've Reached Sam*

You've Reached Sam is a novel written by Dustin Thao. Dustin Thao is a Vietnamese-American who focused on contemporary fiction genre in his writing. *You've Reached Sam* is his novel debut and able to enter *New York Times* and USA TODAY bestseller list.

The novel tells a story about Julie, who is struggle in facing the death of her boyfriend, Sam. Julie is a 17-year-old girl who moved to Ellensburg. That's where she met Sam. Sam Obayashi is a handsome, Japanese-American man who is also Julie's first love, they first met at the bookstore where Julie worked. They were a very sweet couple, always doing everything together, even planning to go out of town to college and live together after their graduation. Nevertheless, all of that became lost when Sam suddenly died. A heartbroken Julie goes into deep grief and does everything to forget Sam. Julie threw away all Sam's belongings in her house; she did not attend

his death ritual and did not even want to talk about Sam to anyone. However, everything changes when Julie reads her school yearbook and finds Sam's writing on it. Long before Sam died, he had written in Julie's yearbook. This makes Julie feel guilty for not attending Sam's funeral, for throwing away all of Sam's belongings and how evil she is for trying to forget all about their memories together. Julie ran to the cemetery to see Sam's grave, and it was raining heavily that day. It was quite a distance from Julie's house to the cemetery, but she did not feel tired running.

When she arrived at the cemetery, she hesitated to enter and realized that she could not find Sam's grave among thousands of other gravestones. Julie desperately calls Sam's cellphone. She did not know what to expect. She just wanted to be able to hear Sam's voice once more. She knew it was impossible for Sam to pick up the phone, but not that day; after ringing for a long time, Sam picked up the phone. She has connected with Sam once more.

After the incident that day, Julie always called Sam and Sam, on the other end, still picked up the call from Julie. Julie felt fine even though she could not see Sam directly. This phone call makes a grieving Julie unable to move on from Sam even more. Julie has hopes to stay in the line with Sam forever. However, in the other hand, Sam wants Julie to move on with her life and let him go. He picked up the phone only to give Julie a chance to say goodbye.

2.2.4 Novel and its intrinsic elements

Novel is an extended work of fictional prose narrative. it implies a book-length narrative. It is more compact than a short story. Because of the extended length, a novel usually has more characters, varied scenes, and a

broader coverage of time than a short story (Kennedy & Gioia, 2010). Narrative prose relies essentially on the telling of a chain of related events, by a narrator. The events in the narrative are related in the sense that they are linked in some manner (Croft & Myers, 2008, p. 25)

2.2.4.1 Novel Intrinsic Elements

According to Wellek and Warren, novel has two types of elements, they are intrinsic and extrinsic elements. Intrinsic elements include theme, story, plot, characters, points of view.

a) Point of View

In short, point of view is who narrate or tell the story in the novel. Croft & Myers differentiate the point of view into first person and third person narration.

In first person narration, the story in the novel was being narrate by the "i" narrator that tells the story she or he experienced which lead the reader directly into the mind of the narrators.(Croft & Myers, 2008, p. 27).

In third-person narration, the narrator is often portrayed as omniscient that sees and knows all series of event that occurs in the novel. The third-person narration is divided into unintrusive and intrusive narrator. The intrusive is in the novel aand explicitly comenting about the events and the characters in the novel, while unintrusive narrator is telling the story from a distance (Croft & Myers, 2008, p. 28).

b) Themes

Themes are the main ideas of a story related to social life, views, insights, and such. Themes can be universal, which means they apply throughout the ages as long as the work is still around (Al Ma'ruf, 2009).

Theme is also a general basic idea that supports a literature, and it become basic development of the whole story, so it must represent the whole part of novel.

According to Stanton, a theme can have a greater meaning than it looks if it is equating with the main idea. Some of the factors that support the theme come from the characters' characterizations, characters, and the writer himself. It can conclude that the theme is the main idea of a story that moves the story from beginning to end.

c) Plot

A plot is a series of events that are connected to each other which will determine the flow of the story of a literary work. There are five elements of novel. They are exposition, conflict, crisis, climax, falling action, and resolution (Pardede, 2020).

d) Character

Any person, animal, or figure depicted in a literary work is referred to as a character. Characters are essential to a good story, and it is the main characters who have the most influence on the plot or are most affected by the story's events. Most simply, a character is one of the person who appears in the literary work, while characterization is the art of creating characters for a

narrative, including the process of conveying information about them.

Characteristics refer to a person's character, lifestyle, and values that regularly develop so that behavior is consistent and easy to notice. Characteristics are expressed by how the character responds to conflict through conversation and information. The character is the form or appearance of the character itself. Characters can be static, showing slight changes, or dynamic, significantly influenced by the narrative.

e) Setting

Setting typically refers to the location, connection of time, and social environment in which the event takes place. Setting accurately and clearly conveys the elements of the narrative. Setting is vital for giving readers a realistic impression by creating an environment that appears to be true at first glance. As a result, readers find it easy to use their imagination and participate in criticizing the novel.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter consists of Research Design, Data Resource, Data Collection Instrument, Data Collection Procedure, and Data Analysis Technique. Those sub-chapters will be discussed deeply below.

3.1 Research Design

The researcher uses qualitative descriptive method to explain and interpret the data in this analysis. The researcher uses the qualitative descriptive method because some qualities such as people's judgments, emotions, ideas, and beliefs can not be interpreted in numbers (quantitative); they can only be conveyed in words (Walliman, 2011).

The researcher uses qualitative descriptive methods to obtain results in the following ways: text or images, not numbers and statistics. This study will understand each chapter's contents to collect data, record each sentence and even paragraphs containing the five stages of grief, group the data according to needs, and insert sentences into sentences.

3.2 Data Source

The data that the researcher observes is Dustin Thao's *You've Reached Sam* novel. The novel has a total of 240 pages, first published in the United States by Wednesday Books, an imprint of St. Martin's Group, on November 9th, 2021.

3.3 Data Collection Instrument

The data collection technique in this research is in-depth data analysis. In-depth analysis is the process of thoroughly studying a topic or problem. It frequently entails looking at data or information in a fresh light in order to discover

hidden patterns or previously unknown correlations. In-depth analysis can be done to solve complicated problems or gain a better understanding of complex systems. This data analysis uses to analyze the data in Dustin Thao's novel. In order to answer research questions, the researcher must comprehend the content of the discussion and highlight dialogues and narratives that align with the theory.

As explained by (Friedman, 2014) noting can improve storing information obtained in various sources. By marking important sentences, it can be easier for the researcher to sort and reduce the data to be managed (Friedman, 2014). This, of course, can speed up the process of conducting research.

3.4 Data Collection Procedure

After collecting the data, the researcher sorted and identified the conversations that described the five stages of grief shown in the novel. The researcher took several actions to analyze the data. First, the researcher will make a list of data containing the five stages of grief in the novel *You've Reached Sam*. Then the identification of the data is entered in their respective places. In data collection, there are several stages used by the researcher, namely:

1. Read and understand the novel *You've Reached Sam*
2. Understand the content of each chapter
3. Mark data about Julie's actions related to the five stages of grief.
4. Sort the data found according to their categories.

3.5 Data Analysis Technique

The researcher collects the data as detailed as possible. The data is quotations obtained from *You've Reached Sam* novel. Kübler-Ross & Kessler's stages of grief theory is used to analyze the data. The researcher

then highlighted the data that contained the denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and the acceptance stage that Julie experienced.

CHAPTER IV

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This chapter consists of two sub-chapters, namely research findings and the discussion. It is intended to answer the research problem of the study. In finding, the researcher will present the data found on the novel related to the problem studied. Furthermore, in the discussion session, the researcher deduced the findings.

4.1 Research Findings

After reading the novel, the researcher found some data that shows the stages of grief experienced by Julie. In this sub-chapter, the answer to the research question will be discussed furthermore. The research was done using the stages of grief theory by Kübler-Ross & Kessler. However, before finding out about the stages of grief portrayed in the novel, the researcher first describe the intrinsic elements contained in the novel in order to better understand the novel being studied.

4.1.1 *You've Reached Sam* intrinsic Elements

Intrinsic elements of a novel are the elements that helps to build the novel as a literary work. Intrinsic elements consists of Intrinsic elements include plot, characters, setting, and points of view.

a. Plot

The exposition can be found in the first few chapters of the novel. It is depicted that the main character is Julie and Sam, a highschool love birds who loved each other. Julie is a 17 years-old girl from seattle that moved to Ellensburg, she loves to write and she works at Mr. Lee's bookstore while Sam is a handsome

Japanese-American boy who loves to play music and work as a waitress.

The first conflict arises when Sam forgets to pick up Julie and instead party at the bonfire with his friends. Julie, who felt that Sam didn't care about her, chose to remain silent and didn't respond to all of Sam's calls and messages and preferred to walk alone. Sam finally caught up with Julie by driving her car. However, it was while on the way that Sam had an accident, he was hit by a truck which caused his death. Julie feels that she is the cause of Sam's death. This makes her feel guilty and tries to forget Sam. She didn't go to Sam's funeral for fear of being ridiculed by the people who came.

The crisis was shown that after Sam's death, Julie felt that she was ostracized at school. She becomes rigid in interacting with her friends and prefers to avoid crowds.

The climax in this novel occurs when Julie reads Sam's handwriting in her yearbook. The writing made her think again and feel guilty until she finally ran to the cemetery. It was raining heavily, but Julie didn't care about that. Out of desperation, she finally called Sam, she didn't know what she was expecting, however, she was very stunned when she found out that Sam picked up the phone.

After she finds out that she can connect with Sam by phone, Julie spends all her time with Sam, while many good things have happened because of their connection, there are some negative

things that arise because of their calls. Such as Julie's acceptance stage is harder to achieve because of her reluctance to let Sam go. The Failing Act starts after Julie learning that her connection to Sam will one day end. She couldn't accept it at first, but gradually she began to realize that she had to be strong in order to survive.

Even though she had prepared herself to part with Sam, Julie still seemed devastated by the end of their call. The resolution finally happened when Julie, who initially felt that she couldn't let go of Sam, was gradually able to restart her social life and started to return to the way it was before.

b. The Characters

The main characters of this novel are as follows

1. Julie

Julie is the main character that the researcher analyzed. She is the protagonist of this novel that experienced grief which the researcher focuses on. Julie is a 17 year old. She is a high school student who is about to graduate. Her hobby is writing as can be seen from the quotation below.

“Writing often helps me keep my mind off things. I brought a notebook with me... We don't have spaces for creative writing at school, so I try to do it on my own time. You never get the chance to write what you want in class anyway. I understand you have to know the rules before you break them, but writing should bring you joy, right? I think teachers forget that.”(p. 23)

Julie's character is also described as a very gentle, caring and easily carried away person. It can be seen when she meets James, Sam's younger brother who ran away from home. She feels bad that she never visited Sam's family after his death.

My heart breaks from hearing this. I wipe my eyes and take James by the hands.... A sharp pain stabs through my chest as the weight of this hits me. I can barely fight back the tears. I open my mouth, and find myself unable to speak. I should have come by and checked up on his family after Sam died. I never thought about what James must be going through.(pp. 224–225)

2. Sam

Sam is Jule's lover, he is described as a person who likes to play music and quickly gets along with strangers. Sam's character can be seen from the following quote:

“The terrible thing is when people see them together all the time, they accuse them of isolating themselves from the rest of school. I never noticed this until Sam mentioned it to me. Sam told me his friends would refer to them as those Asians. When Sam finally said, “You know, I’m Asian, too,” one of his friends replied, “Yeah, but you’re ... different.” Because Sam was born here and didn’t have an accent. Sam never said anything back. He just grabbed his things one day and moved to Yuki’s table, and I went with him.(Thao, 2021, p. 57)”

Yuki, Jay and Rachel are asian international students. This makes them ostracized at school. Sam who saw that did not remain silent and in the end brought his food and sat down with them. His kindness made Yuki, Jay and Rachel not feel left out anymore.

c. Setting

Setting of place or where the story is taken place. The story revolves around Ellensburg, Sam's house, Sam's grave, Julie's house, the hill, the cemetery and near route 10 where Sam's accident happened.

Setting of time or known as when the events occur in the novel. the setting of time that are shown in the novel is a few months before graduation which means the event takes place when Julie is already at the end of the semester.

d. Point of View

Point of view is who narrate or tell the story in the novel. Croft & Myers differentiate the point of view into first person and third person narration. Julie is the one who narrate all the story in this novel, which means *You've Reached Sam* novel uses the first-person point of view in telling the story.

4.1.2 Stages of Grief Experienced by Julie

According to Kübler-Ross & Kessler, people who face bereavement will experience denial, anger, bargaining, and depression before accepting the death of their loved one (Kübler-Ross & Kessler, 2005). The researcher focused on the stages of grief experienced by Julie or the main character of the novel *You've Reached Sam*. The following is an illustration that shows Julie's journey to the acceptance stage.

People often think of the stages as lasting weeks or months. They forget that the stages are responses to feelings that can last for minutes or hours as we flip in and out of one and then another. We do not enter and

leave each individual stage in a linear fashion. We may feel one, then another, and back again to the first one. (Kübler-Ross & Kessler, 2005).

Using this theory, the researcher found that Julie's stages of grief are seen in the novel through the conversations and Julie's point of view.

1. Denial

The first stage of grief is denial. People who face bereavement not necessarily do not know that their loved one is gone. They just have a hard time understanding and comprehending the reality that their loved one are no longer in the world, especially if it is sudden death. As Kübler-Ross & Kessler stated "...Death is hardest to comprehend without any forewarning. The news and laws are crossing. How can a world change so dramatically and without any warning? Look preparation, no good-byes, just the loudest absence one could ever imagine. As a result, denial will be longer and deeper in sudden death. The suddenness thrust us into a new, abnormal world...." (Kübler-Ross & Kessler, 2005)

Facing the death of a loved one is already hard; it is even more challenging if the death is so sudden. The mind cannot process what just happened. In Julie's case, Sam's death is sudden because they were talking on the phone, and Sam was on his way to pick up Julie.

Kübler-Ross & Kessler characterize people who are in a denial phase as disbelief, shock, cannot process reality, and often find themselves telling stories of their loss over and over, which is one way their minds deal with trauma. These characteristics will be described as follows:

- a. Conscious or unconscious inability to accept the fact that a loved one is dead**

Julie's conscious or unconscious inability to accept the fact that Sam is dead can be seen on the data below:

Data 1:

"Every day these little reminders of him get harder to look at. They say moving on becomes easier with time, but I can barely hold a photo without my hands trembling. My thoughts go to him, they always do. I can't keep you around, Sam. It makes me think you're still here. That you're coming back. That I might see you again" (Thao, 2021, pp. 11-12)

Sam's death which is so sudden makes Julie does not have the ability to accept the fact that Sam is really gone. She cannot seem to move on with her life. Julie always had this thing in her mind where she thinks she might see Sam again. Everything makes her think about Sam, about their memories together. All those flashbacks and memories make it harder for her to stop this denial stage.

Data 2:

*A few leaves fall from a tree as I throw my things on the bench and sit, Facing the lake. Sam and I Used to meet here in the warmer months. It was our little escape from the world. Our secret getaway when we couldn't afford to live down. Sometimes, I would sit with a notebook, trying to write something, while Sam was out swimming. **If I close my eyes, I can hear him paddling in the water, see the blades of his glinting Shoulders cut across the lake. But then I open them and see the glassy, flat surface of the water, and find myself alone again.** Stop thinking about Sam. Think about something else.* (Thao, 2021, pp. 22-23)

Data 2 was happen in the first few weeks after Sam's death. Julie kept on remembering Sam and goes to the spot that they used to hang out at and kept reminiscing about their memories together.

Data 3:

"I close my eyes and take this all in. It doesn't take long for my mind to drift back to before. Before everything changed and all the plans we made were still in place. Before Sam died and I could

*reach out to touch him and know he's there. **Before everything was taken from us. On the other line, I sense Sam is doing the same. When I open my eyes, I find myself alone in my room.***" (Thao, 2021, p. 62)

In the quotation previously, Julie is alone in her room while connecting with Sam and her mind kept on going back to the day where everything was still in place. Julie is desperately craving Sam's presence and touch.

Data 4:

*"I used to live inside my daydreams. I spent hours planning the future in my head, imagining myself ten years from now, finished with college, living in an apartment in the city, getting to write for a living. I imagined the details of the rest of my life—the appliances I would have in the kitchen, the titles of stories I would publish, the places I would travel, who would be there with me. **But then you get rejections in the mail, lose that person who meant everything to you, and find yourself back at the beginning with nowhere to go. I try not to daydream anymore. It only tricks me with images of Sam, filling me with the possibility that we can still be together, that there's a future for us, until reality comes in like a storm to blow everything away.**" (Thao, 2021, pp. 214-215)*

The sudden loss she experienced, after all the plans she made with Sam hurt her. She said all the things she hoped for after her graduation but everything was ruined because of Sam's death

b. Difficulty in processing reality

In Ross and Kessler's theory, they stated that someone facing the denial stages does not necessarily mean that they do not know their loved one is dead; instead, they will not believe the fact that their loved one is no longer around.

The loss experienced by Julie makes her unable to process reality, she faced difficulties in differentiating her wish or dream from the reality. These were shown in the data as follows:

Data 5:

"I don't bother to check the time or see if it's dark out. Instead I hurry downstairs, grab the car keys, and head out the door. I back the car out of the driveway before my mother comes out, and head up route 10, following the railway, leaving Ellensburg.

This might sound ridiculous, but Sam might be out there waiting for me. I have to go find him.

My headlights are the only things shining on the barren highway for miles. I keep looking out the window to see if Sam's walking along the side of the road."(Thao, 2021, p. 93 - 94)

The data shows how Julie kept on thinking that Sam was still alive after having some dreams about him. She thinks that the dream was some kind of guidance for her to find Sam again.

Data 6:

*Out of everything I'm throwing out, this reminds me of him the most. He wore it every day. Maybe it's all in my head, but **it still smells like him.** I never got the chance to give it back like I promised. I press the jacket against me. For a moment, I consider keeping it. I mean, **why does everything have to go? I could shove it in the back of the closet, hide it beneath my coats or something.** (Thao, 2021, p. 12)*

The data shows that Julie was about to throw out Sam's belonging. Out of all Sam's things, Julie face difficulties when it comes to Sam's jacket. She can't throw Sam's jacket because that still smells like him. She is tied to the past which makes it harder to move on.

Data 7:

*I recall the fields from yesterday, and smile to myself. "Among other things," I say. "And I just needed a break from my desk. Thought I would call you. I miss you." "I miss you, too. I miss you infinity." Sam's voice is warm against my ear. **I wish things could stay like this. I wish we could talk forever.** (Thao, 2021, p. 138)*

Julie's can't let-go-ness is shown in one of their call, Julie already knows that Sam is dead, but hearing his voice again, being connected with him through phone call raise her hopes up and makes her believe that they could be together as they used to be.

Data 8:

*Maybe, he says. "I guess we won't know until it does. But there's a chance it could break our connection forever. I'm not sure if we should risk it." I swallow hard. The thought of this sends a chill through me. " **then I won't tell anyone. I'll keep this a secret. I don't want to lose you. Not this one.**" I don't want to lose you, either. "* (Thao, 2021, p. 141)

Sam directed Julie to a secret place he wanted to show her while he was still alive, a hill with a beautiful view of the barley fields. When Julie finally got to her destination, she asked what might happen if she let someone else talk to Sam. Sam said that most likely, their connection would deteriorate. In her denial, Julie refuses to believe that their connection will eventually end

Data 9:

*Questions fill my mind, but I push them aside for now and allow myself to live in this beautiful strange rabbit hole I've fallen into. I don't care how any of this is possible. I have Sam back. **I don't want to let him go*** (Thao, 2021, p. 63)

From the quotations above, SaJulie cannot process the fact that her boyfriend was already dead. She does not want to let go. She insists on being with him even if that means she can only be connected with him through the phone.

Data 10:

*"For a long moment, **I can feel him lying there besides me.** If I turn my head to look, I'd see him with his arms tucked behind his*

*head, wearing his plaid shirt, his eyes opened wide at the sky, his beautiful dark hair, that handsome smile on his face. But I don't dare to look, because I'm scared no one will be there. So I just **stare straight up at the stars, and allow myself to keep pretending***". (Thao, 2021, p. 123)

From the quotation above, Julie will not turn her head because she knows that Sam is not by her side, so to stop her from feeling disappointed, she chose not to look and keep pretending that he is with her.

Data 11:

*"Mine won't go," I say as the others look over, watching curiously. "Look." I can't help smiling, and laughing a little at this, because I think Sam heard me. **He heard what I whispered to him, and he wants to stay with me a little longer.** And then a breeze comes, and begins to pull the lantern down the fields, keeping it low, letting it almost graze across the grass. I step forward and follow it, trying to keep my hands right beneath to—I don't really know. When the lantern picks up some speed, so do I. And the next thing I know, I'm dashing down the fields with my hands stretched out, chasing after it.* (Thao, 2021, p. 180)

The lantern released was first initiated by Sam's group of friend. It is supposed to be a symbol of "released of Sam". Julie is shown to chasing the lantern down to the fields while the others were just standing there and watching after releasing their lanterns.

Data 12:

*"During our last call, **Sam told me something I refuse to believe.** He said **there's a chance we only have a few calls left before our connection ends forever.** The worst part is Sam warned me this could happen, but **I didn't listen.**"* (Thao, 2021, p. 167)

Data 13:

"You and I can't do this forever. That's just not possible." "But you said I could take as long as I need to say good-bye," I remind him. "What if I don't? What if I refuse to say it?" Sam lets out a breath. "So is that what you decided to do ... to never say good-bye to me?" "That was always it, Sam. Since the day I met you..." I think of the day when he will no longer pick up when I call and I can barely breathe. I finally heard him sing; what if I forget his voice? I can't imagine losing him all over again." (Thao, 2021, p. 124)

Data 13 previously shows that Julie and Sam is in one of their call routine. She remained in his denial for trying to hold Sam and remained on the call for a long time and she even try to ignore the fact that she need to say good-bye someday.

Data 14:

I look at her, my head slightly titled, wondering what she means. For a second, I almost ask if she knows about the calls, but I don't. "I know I have to say goodbye soon," I say. "But I don't think I can let him go." (Thao, 2021, p. 231)

She knows that Sam is dead, she just does not like to think of Sam as dead. "...I never thought of it this way. Maybe because I don't like to think of Sam as dead.". this thought would make it harder for her to accept the reality. She avoid the thought about Sam being dead which make her minds could not proess it either.

c. Shock

There is no data in the novel that shows Julie went into shock after learning that Sam died. Therefore, it can be said that shock is not represented in Julie's grief in *You've Reached Sam* novel.

d. Telling stories of their loss

Everyone has their own way of dealing with trauma, telling the story of the loved one or the story of the loss can become one way

their minds deal with trauma. Julie in fact, chose not to talk about her grieving. Instead, she chose to talk about Sam, about their memories together. This will be important because by telling their story, Julie can cherish their memories and makes her forget about the painful events that happened and made her focus on writing instead.

Data 15:

*“... I told her I was writing about Sam. But I’m not sure what it is I want to say yet. What do I want to tell the world about him? I imagine what some people might expect from me. Write about his death. About what happened. About what it meant to lose him. **But that’s not something I want to focus on. Because I don’t want to remember Sam as a tragedy. I don’t want that to be his story. When people think about Sam, I want them to think of his best moments. I want them to remember him as a musician, staying up late on a school night, writing music on his guitar. I want them to know him as an older brother, building giant forts in his room. And I want them to remember us, and the last three years we spent together. How we met, our first kiss, all the reasons I fell in love with him. I want them to fall in love with Sam, too. Maybe that’s what I’ll do. Write down the memories of him. Memories of us. Tell our story. Once I decide this, moments from over the years flash across my mind. I spend the next hour jotting down the ones that mean the most to me. I keep writing until I completely lose track of time”***(Thao, 2021, p. 133)

Data 15 shows that Julie when asked by Yuki about what she wants for her next writing. Having no idea what to write about, he decided that he wanted to write about Sam. Her writing about Sam makes her flooded with ideas by recalling all their good memories this also helps to relieve her pain for a moment.

Data 16:

*The clouds are out this afternoon. Oliver and I take the long route to avoid the crowds in town. **When I tell him I’ve never visited Sam’s grave before, he doesn’t judge me. Maybe he already guessed this. Maybe he understands why I’m afraid to see it. As***

memorial hill rises into view, my stomach turns to knots. A few steps before we reach the iron gates, something stops me. Just like before ... Oliver looks back. "You alright there?" "I just need a second—" I don't know what else to say. I stare at the iron bars of the opened gate, wondering if this is a mistake. Don't be scared, Julie. That's not Sam up there. He's still with you. You haven't lost him yet." (Thao, 2021, p. 128)

Julie also found some comfort by talking to Mika, Sam's cousin, and Oliver, Sam's Best friend. They all are mourning about Sam's death so they can relate and comforting each other's feelings. Data 16 previously shows Oliver accompanies Julie to visit Sam's grave for the first time, Julie is afraid of being judged. However, Oliver who also felt the grief of his best friend's death could understand and comfort Julie's feelings.

2. Anger

The second stage is anger. The anger stage presents in many ways, it could be feeling upset towards God, oneself, to the dead, and often experienced by those who grieve. The inability to control the emotion seems to make all the feelings pile up and could burst at any moment. In Julie's case, she felt angry with herself, with Mika, with Sam and cannot control her emotion while being provoked by Taylor.

While facing bereavement, People tend to be unable to control their emotions, they don't think before saying something. They are easy to provoke and have a short temper. This makes people's personalities way different while grieving and not. For example, a person who was previously a patient person can turn into a temper when they are grieving.

In Julie's case, in the first few chapters, she has short-temper while talking to anyone that could annoy her interlocutor.

a. Angry at those who left them

Julie's anger toward Sam can be seen in the data below:

Data 17:

Sam looks at me. "Julie.. If I could stay with you. I'd never leave."

"but you did leave."

" I know... I'm sorry. "

"you never say goodbye..."

"That's because I never thought I had to..." ..." this isn't fair, Sam". "I know this wasn't part of our plan, Julie. But at least we had this time together, right? I want you to know... If I could do it all over again, I would. every second of it. " (Thao, 2021, p. 9)

Julie met Sam at their favorite place, by the lake. there Julie spilled her frustration over what had happened to Sam. she was mad at Sam for leaving her so suddenly without even saying goodbye

b. Angry toward those who have control of their loved one's lives

Julie does not shows any sign of Anger toward those who she have control of Sam's lives in the Novel. Therefore, it can be said that this indicator of anger is not represented in Julie's grief.

c. Angry towards oneself

Julie's anger towards herself is shown on the data below:

Data 18:

*"I did walk home. All five miles from the bus station, dragging an overstuffed carry-on with a broken wheel in the middle of the night. Sam kept trying to reach me. Twelve unread messages, seven missed calls, and one voice mail. **But I ignored them all***

and kept walking. Reading these back again, I wish I hadn't been so angry at him. I wish I had picked up the phone. Maybe then everything would be different.”(Thao, 2021, p. 11)

Sam had an accident while he was on his way to pick up Julie. The data shows that Julie is angry with herself for being angry with Sam which causes her not to respond to Sam's calls and messages. he showed annoyance to himself and said that he shouldn't be angry with Sam.

d. Angry towards friends

Data 19:

I clench my empty cup. "I told you, I don't want to talk about this," I say again. "For god's sake, Julie," Mika scolds me. "Sam would have wanted you to come. You haven't been there for him this entire week. You weren't even there when they had him buried." "I know, and I'm sure everyone has a lot to say about that, too," I say back. this quiets the both of us. Mika stares at me for a long time. Her eyes search mine for signs of guilt or regret, as if she's waiting for me to somehow amend my words, but all I have to say is, "He's dead, Mika, and me visiting him isn't going to change anything."

"This isn't my fault, you know? I told him not to come but he wouldn't listen to me. I told him to stay there. So everyone needs to stop expecting some apology from me, and blaming me for any of—" "I'm not trying to blame you for this," Mika says. "I know you aren't. But everyone else probably does." "No. Not everyone thinks that, Julie. And I'm sorry, but this isn't about you—it's about Sam. It's about missing his funeral. It's about how the one person who was closest to him, who knew him best, wasn't even there to speak about him. Sam deserved more, and you know it. That's what everyone expected. But you weren't there, through any of it." "You're right. Maybe I do know him better," I say. "And maybe I think he doesn't believe in any of this stuff. The ceremonies, the vigil, the people from school—please. Sam doesn't care about any of them. He would have hated all of this. He's probably glad I didn't show up!" "I know you don't

believe that,” Mika says. “Don’t tell me what I believe,” I say. That came out sharper than I wanted it to. I almost take it back, but I don’t. “ (Thao, 2021, pp. 20-21)

Data 19 shows Julie who finally wants to get out of the house and meet someone, in this case Mika. Julie, whose emotions have not stabilized due to Sam's death, finally ends in a fight with Mika and thought that her words “*came out sharper than I wanted it to.*” Showed that she is just blatantly speaking without thinking first. Her emotion takes over his mind which makes her unable to speak rationally.

Data 20:

Taylor throws out her arm, almost hitting me. “What’s wrong with us?” she says back. “We’re not the ones who moved here to ruin everyone’s life.” “What are you talking about?” Taylor’s eyes narrow at me. Her voice sharpens. “Don’t play stupid, Julie. It’s your fault he’s dead.” A chill goes through me as people around us stop to listen. I knew she would confront me with this one day. But I didn’t expect it to be in front of everyone at school. I swallow hard, trying to keep my voice steady. “Don’t you blame me for that. You don’t—” “Don’t you pin this on anyone else,” Taylor cuts me off. She presses her finger to my collarbone, forcing me to step back. “You made him drive an hour away to pick you up. Sam was only trying to spend time with his friends. It was the first night all of us were together since you came here. But you wouldn’t even let him have that. We were all there, Julie. You made him leave and ruined everything.” “That’s not true,” I say. “He was the one texting me. I told him he didn’t have to go. I said I would walk home.” Taylor shoves another finger at my chest. “You’re such a liar. I was talking to him before he left. He told me everything you were saying. And you guilted him into leaving. And that killed him. Because of you.” My stomach hardens. “You’re wrong. You don’t know the whole conversation. Sam wouldn’t—” “You don’t know what Sam thinks,” Taylor cuts me off again. “And you don’t know what happened. You didn’t read our texts.” “Then show me them.” “I can’t...” “Why not?” “Because I deleted them.” “That’s what I thought.” This is the last conversation I want to have. I want to run away, but too many people have stopped to listen, so I have to defuse this before it turns into something worse. I take a deep breath and force myself

to say something. "Even if I made him go, it wasn't me who was driving the truck. It wasn't me who swerved into his car. How can you seriously blame me for that? I'm about as responsible for his death as whoever planned the bonfire, which was you." Taylor presses another finger into my chest, even harder this time. "So you're trying to blame this on me now?" I clench my fists. "I'm not blaming anyone. It's you who's blaming me." "If this isn't your fault, why didn't you show up to his funeral?" Taylor asks me. "Was it because you felt guilty or you just didn't give a shit?". (Thao, 2021, pp. 149-151)

The quotations above showed that Julie has so little self-control. Julie could not control her emotion when provoked by Taylor. This encounter was the moment when Julie's anger stage blew up.

Talking to Sam again makes Julie's anger stage shorter than the other stages. Sam was there for her if she wanted to talk about her problem. Even though it is shorter than the other stages, the stage is important so that the grieving person can start their healing process. It may seem endless, but the more you truly feel it, the more it will begin to dissipate and the more you will heal (Kübler-Ross & Kessler, 2005)

3. Bargaining

As Kübler-Ross & Kessler stated, In the bargaining stage, people who experience grieving most definitely will do anything so that their loved ones can be spared. They want life to return to what it was. They often say and imagine how things could've turned if only they will act differently. For example, in Julie's experience, she always thought that there might be a way she and Sam could be together, there might be a way where she still is able to rescue him from the incident.

a. Want life to returned to what it was

People who are grieving often wish that they could back to their normal life, just like before their loved one dies. It is also happening to Julie. She often hoped that she can stop the time and be with Sam forever. After reconnecting by phone, Julie often bargained that she could always be with Sam. These were portrayed in the novel as follows.

Data 21:

"I miss Sam. I miss the sound of his voice. I miss knowing he would always answer me if I called. I don't even know where I am or who I can talk to it. This isn't one of my finest moments."
(Thao, 2021, p. 28)

In the quotation above, we can see that Julie's dependence on Sam makes her unable to function normally. Sam was always be her place to talk to, so losing Sam was like losing her best friend who she can talk about everything and spill all the burdens of thoughts that she has.

Data 22:

"Sometimes, I wish the sun would never set, so we could stay here, enjoying each other's company, talking like we always do, laughing at inside jokes, pretending like nothing could ever go wrong. I look at Sam, and take in his face, his beautiful smile, his black hair that sweeps across his forehead, his tan skin, and wish I could freeze this moment and hold on to it forever. But I can't. Even in a dream, I can't seem to stop time."
(Thao, 2021, pp. 8-9)

Data 23:

"What am I going to do when he's gone? I wish the world would slow down for us. I wish I could put coins into a machine to buy us more time. I wish I could save these last calls for as long as I can, so we can stay connected. I wish there was something, anything I could do to keep him with me". 215
(Thao, 2021, p. 215)

As spotted in the data 22 and 23 above, Julie wishes that she could stop time so that she and Sam could do anything that they always do before all these accidents happens. People who are grieving are more likely to experience this. Because of all these emotions, all the sadness that they felt can disperse after having the thought that they can be with their loved ones once more.

Data 24:

*“But why can’t it be?” “It just can’t—” His voice cracks a little. “Think about it. You’re not going to live the rest of your life talking to your dead boyfriend on the phone, while everyone else is out there living their lives, meeting new people, moving on with the rest of the world. You can’t live this way forever.” “I don’t see what’s so wrong about this,” I say back. “You’re making it sound worse than it is.” **I can’t think of anything I want more in the world right now, other than having him be alive again. As if I care what other people think of me. As long as I have you. And if we can still be together, we should make it work. Even if it isn’t exactly like we planned—**” (Thao, 2021, pp. 123-124)*

Keeps on hoping that them being reconnected was a gift from the universe. She felt like all her prayer was heard and this was all an answer to her wishes after Sam’s death. Julie has a different perspective about the meaning of this connection. She kept on thinking that grow old with Sam can be achieved even if that means they could only hear each other. While Sam said that the call was a way given from the universe so they both can say goodbye to each other.

b. Wanted to to go back and stop the accident from happening

Data 25:

Suddenly, a surge of light zooms through the darkness, blasting cold air at me, and my heart jolts. I rise up in time to see tail lights, the sputter of smoke from a muffler, and the vanishing

*silhouette of a truck. My throat closes as I stand there, watching. I know exactly where it's heading. **And I need to get there first. I have to get to Sam before it's too late.** The suitcase falls over as I rush into the darkness, racing after the tail lights. But it's too fast for me. I'll never reach it in time. Then I notice something. A rope tied to the back of the truck. I seize it at once, grabbing hold of it tight. **It's a guitar string!** I pull it with all my strength, digging my feet into the ground. The string tenses in my grip as the truck stalls in the distance, honking furiously, its taillights flashing violently. This isn't superhuman strength. It's the strength born out of fear and desperation.* (Thao, 2021, p. 115)

Julie's wish to go back in time so that she could stop the accident from happening are shown in the data above. She kept thinking about how to save Sam until someday she had a dream. She dreams that she was on the night the accident happened, she then sees the truck that hit Sam's car. Julie ran as hard as she could to save Sam but it was too late.

c. Feeling Guilty

Guilt is often bargaining's companion (Kübler-Ross & Kessler, 2005). In the bargaining stage, feeling guilty is often felt by people who experienced grieving. They often blame themselves for what happens. Julie feels guilty about a lot of things, some of the examples are shown in the novel.

Data 26:

*"Sam kept trying to reach me. 12 unread messages, 7 missed call, and one voice mail. But I ignored them all and cat walking. **Reading this back again, I wish I hadn't been so angry with him. I wish I had picked up the phone. Maybe then everything will be different.**"* (Thao, 2021, p. 11)

Data 27:

*“If only he had listened to me and stayed with his friends. If only he didn't forget about me in the first place. If only he just this once let me be upset instead of always trying to fix things, no one will be blaming me for what happened. **I wouldn't be blaming me**” (Thao, 2021, p. 11)*

Data 28:

*“**Maybe if I had called at just the right time, he might have heard it and picked up, and I could have sent for help. Maybe if I hadn't been so angry with him, he might not have left the bonfire so quickly and might have missed the truck entirely. Maybe if the stars were aligned differently, or the wind blew the other direction, or it suddenly started raining, or something else, Sam would still be alive, and I wouldn't be driving out here in the middle of the night looking for him.**” (Thao, 2021, p. 94)*

In the quotations previously, Data 26 through 28 shows Julie is having a flashback about the night before the incident happening. Julie is angry that Sam forgot to pick her up and instead has a bonfire party with his friends. Her anger makes Julie not picking up the phone and Sam's messages unanswered that leads her to blame herself for the accident that befell Sam.

Data 29:

*It's been one week since Sam died. And in my attempt to move on, I've been trying to erase him from my life like a terrible memory. **After everything we've been through together. I threw out all of his things. I skipped his funeral. And I never even said good-bye.** In his death, Sam asked for only one thing, and that was for us to remember each other. Yet here I am trying so hard to forget. (Thao, 2021, p. 25)*

Not only Julie feels guilty about Sam's accident, she also felt guilty about how in the first few days after Sam's death, rather than coming to his funeral ceremonies, she instead tried hard to forget him. She throws out everything about Sam and does not once go to his ceremony.

Data 30:

“As soon as I turn the corner and my house is in view, I look for the curb and realize it’s gone. Everything. All of Sam’s things. I nearly stumble as this heavy, sinking feeling falls over me, like water filling my chest, and I forget how to breathe. I run inside the house and check the kitchen. The counters are empty. I search the living room in the chance that my mother had saved me from making a horrible decision, and brought some of Sam’s things back inside. But nothing’s here.”
(Thao, 2021, pp. 25-26)

From the quotations above, we can see that Julie’s attempt to move on ends up being her feeling guilty about her own action. She even tried to go back and find all Sam’s belonging that she had thrown out prior.

Data 31:

“I suddenly remember how I skipped every service and ceremony that was held in his memory—memories I abandoned. I didn’t even bother to visit his grave. I can’t seem to stand still. I keep pacing back and forth through the empty house as these sudden emotions, the ones I’ve been holding back, cycle through me like ice water in my veins, making my hands shake. Mika was right. What would Sam think of me if he knew how I treated him?” (Thao, 2021, p. 26)

After all the emotion that she had tried to deny, she finally come to a realization that she should not do any of that, she should have gone to Sam’s ceremony. She should have never thrown out Sam’s thing and etcetera.

4. Depression

Kübler-Ross & Kessler explained depression stages as a stage where the grieving felt withdrawal from life, intense sadness, empty feelings and griefs enter their lives on a deeper level that makes it extremely depressive for the people experienced it. *If grief is a proccess of healing,*

then depression is one of the many necessary steps along the way.

(Kübler-Ross & Kessler, 2005, p. 21)

Experiencing depression is totally normal for the person who grief. It can help the person who is grieving into accepting the reality of their loss little by little. Depression can influence the way people think, feel and act. In Julie's case, her depression was shown in the novel as follows.

a. Disconnected with social life

Data 32:

For the past week my mother's been bringing meals up to my room and checking in several times a day. So I'm not surprised to hear the note of concern in her voice. "And I'm meeting a friend." "Fantastic." My mother nods. "You could use the fresh air, get some decent coffee. And it's good to see your friends. That reminds me, have you talked to Mr. Lee at the bookstore?" "Not yet..." I haven't really spoken to anyone. (Thao, 2021, p. 14)

After Sam's death, Julie was having a hard time to get back on her feet and continued her usual life. She is always taken a back and chose to avoid human interaction. She even mention that her mom have been bringing her meals to her bedroom

Data 33:

"As soon as the waitress turns, Mika looks at me. "You didn't reply to my messages. I wasn't sure if we were still meeting." "Sorry. I haven't been the most responsive lately." I don't really have another excuse. I have a habit of leaving my phone on silent. But this week, I've been especially disconnected. ... "I missed you, too." As much as I tell myself I like being alone, I feel a rush of relief to see a familiar face. To see Mika again." (Thao, 2021, p. 17)

Data 34:

*The day after the funeral, she stopped by my house to drop off soup and tea for me **even though I ignored all her messages.** (Thao, 2021, p. 56)*

Yuki visits Julie after attending Sam's funeral. Yuki brought tea and soup to make Julie's mood better even after Julie ignored her

Data 35:

There are plenty of chairs open but nowhere to sit. I consider eating outside, but I feel everyone watching me. I don't want them thinking I'm afraid to eat alone. I won't be one of those girls who ends up hiding in a bathroom stall. (Thao, 2021, p. 55)

In the quotations above, Julie is having a hard time with something most people would not consider as a struggle, which is finding a seat. Plenty of seats was available, but she chose not to sit in any of them because of the fear that people might stare at her.

Data 36:

"It's the end of school. I need to hurry home without running into anyone. But it's difficult to avoid people when you can't even get to your locker without bumping into a dozen shoulders." (Thao, 2021, p. 108)

Data 37:

"When Yuki first asked if I would come with her, I said I couldn't. I've been keeping to myself more lately. Since the film festival two weeks ago, I haven't had much of a yearning for social interaction."(Thao, 2021, p. 216)

Data 38:

"While the others head farther into the arcade stands of Pike Place Market, I take a break from the touristy attractions and find a bench away from the crowds to get some space alone."(Thao, 2021, p. 217)

Data 39:

*"I haven't gone anywhere yet," I say. "I'm still here." "I know..." she says, releasing a breath. **"But I don't get to see you too much. I know it isn't your fault ... but you've been hard to reach lately. This is the first time you and I sat down for dinner in two weeks. I just feel a little less ... connected to you. But maybe that's just me."** I stare at my phone on the table, then back at my mom. Has it really been that long since we*

had dinner together? After Sam died, I brought my meals up to my room. And since we've been connected again, I been spending all my time with him. I was gone all day yesterday. And the day before. A wave of guilt hits me as I think of what to say. I used to talk to her about everything. But I can't open up about Sam. I can't tell her what's happening. "I'm sorry," is all I can say. "I didn't mean to ignore you." (Thao, 2021, p. 137)

The data above, shows Julie had dinner with her mother. She declared her intention to continue her studies out of town. to which her mother responded, hoping that Julie could stay with her. Julie's mother explains how Julie has been disconnected and spent very little time with her after Sam's death. Julie also felt guilty because she didn't realize that she had made her mother think like that.

Data 40:

"I close my eyes for moment. "Thank you for bringing me here. I didn't realize how much I needed to be away from everything." "Feels like a different world, doesn't it?" Sam whispers next to me. "Like Ellensburg is a million miles away."" (Thao, 2021, p. 123)

Julie's disconnection can be seen in the data above. When Julie got to the hill, she said she needed some time to herself and away from everything.

b. Feeling empty

Feels empty or have a hollow in their heart was a normal thing experienced by a grieving person. For example, before their loved one they used to do thing together while after the death of their loved one, of course they need to do everything alone. This makes people feels like something is different and feels like there is an empty feeling. This was also experienced by Julie.

Data 41:

"Sam never said anything back. He just grabbed his things one day and moved to Yuki's table, and I went with him. Now lunch

feels empty without him here. Like something's missing. I know the others sense it, too." (Thao, 2021, p. 57)

The quote above shows another flashback that Julie experienced. she remembers the day she finally became friends with Yuki, Rachel and the others thanks to Sam. Now that Sam is gone, he feels that his friends also feel the same emptiness

Data 42:

"A few days pass without any bad dreams, but I still wake up with the same empty feeling. Like there's a hole in my chest. I don't know what's wrong or how to explain it. The feeling seems to come whenever I get off the phone with Sam and find myself alone again. It's like this void inside me that I can't seem to fill up. I wish I could send Sam a text, or see our call history on the phone, so I can remind myself it's real. Because sometimes I'm still not sure. Maybe that's where the hole is coming from. Whenever this feeling comes, I reach for Sam's things, because they're the only things that seem to make sense. His shirt on the back of the chair, the other bookend on my desk, the other things in my drawer—I still have everything." (Thao, 2021, p. 143)

The data above shows that Julie still feels empty every time she finishes calling Sam. She is still trying to process everything that has happened because everything feels unreal. Julie stated that even though her bad dreams were no longer coming, she still wakes up with the same empty feeling just like there's a hole in her chest.

c. Loss interest in previously loved activities

After experiencing loss, people might find everything is meaningless and pointless. This makes people who grief sometimes doesn't care about anything in their life, In Julie's case, her loss interest in previously loved activities were shown in the novel

Data 43:

“My hair unbrushed, skin more pale than usual, wearing yesterday’s shirt, cradling Sam’s jacket like it’s still a part of him. A chill of embarrassment goes through me, and I look away”. (Thao, 2021, p. 12)

Data 43 previously shows how Julie is neglect toward herself by the way she described her appearance. Her unbrushed hair and yesterday’s shirt she wore shows how she has no time to take care of herself.

Data 44:

“If I miss another week they won’t let me graduate.” Not to mention I’m behind on all my schoolwork, which keeps piling up. I really need to focus again, and pull myself together, because what else am I supposed to do? The world keeps moving, no matter what happens to you. “ (Thao, 2021, p. 15)

Before Sam’s death, Julie is portrayed as a girl who love to study and write. Her disinterest was seen in the data 44 previously. it captured the conversation she had with her mom. She explained that she ended up having to go to school because she had missed a lot of schoolwork and haven’t done any of her essays task.

Data 45:

“The bell echoes down the empty hallway as I arrive late to school. I missed the bus this morning. Now I have to make an entrance to a class that’s already started, and draw more attention to myself. I consider skipping first period to avoid this altogether. But I’ve been absent for an entire week of school now, and I’m already here. I might as well get this over with, since I’ll have to face everyone sooner or later. At least I remembered to set my alarm yesterday.” (Thao, 2021, p. 54)

Julie has been skipping school for an entire week, being late to class, and even consider to skip the class that already started

showed how her grief was making her becoming an irresponsible person.

Data 46:

“The word graduation catches me off guard, and I nearly panic. Is it really only two months away? I haven’t even heard from colleges yet. And I’m so behind on school, what if I don’t catch up in time? I become so lost in thought, I forget what Tristan even asked me.” (Thao, 2021, p. 71)

Graduation was considered as one of the most important thing a high schooler are going to experience. But Julie in the other hand lost track of time which makes her caught of guard after Tristan told her that graduation was only two months away.

Data 47:

The day doesn’t get better. I can’t seem to pay attention in any of my classes. Every time I stare at the clock, I think it stops, making the day feel longer. I scribble on notebook paper and stare out the window to get time moving again but it doesn’t work. Nobody takes the seat beside me. I pretend not to notice. My teachers drone on, and I don’t hear a word they’re saying. All I can think about is Sam. I wish I could talk to him right now. (Thao, 2021, p. 85)

Julie explained that she had difficulty paying attention in all of her classes. It was her first few weeks back at school after Sam's death. Everyone was awkward with him and all he could think of was to get out of there so he could call Sam.

5. Acceptance

Experiencing all the four stages of grieving is something that is hard for everyone. Some people even found it hard to reach this stages because how hard it is for them to lose their loved one. Julie’s acceptance journey was really mesmerizing. Looking back at the first few chapters

makes it hard to believe that she could finally reach this stage. Julie's acceptance journey was shown as follows.

a. Restarting Her Social Life

Julie's social life become unfunctional. As seen from the previous stages, on the first few weeks after Sam's death was her hardest time. She avoids all kinds of human interaction. As time goes by, she could finally restarting her social life and slowly get back to her normal usual life.

Data 48:

Ever since my last call with Sam, I don't find myself waiting by the phone anymore. Instead I'm spending more time with my friends and focusing on school again. (Thao, 2021, p. 229)

On the quotations above, Julie's acceptance journey began with how she did not wait by the phone for Sam to call anymore. She finally can live her social life like she used to without being stuck waiting for a call from Sam.

b. Focusing On Her Future

Sam's death that affect Julie's abandonment to her school life is shown for a few times in the novel. After going through all the roller-coaster emotions, Julie finally able to focusing more in her future and one step closer to her back to normal life.

Data 49:

After dinner, I help clear the table and head upstairs. As much as I want to call Sam, I should catch up on schoolwork. I make some progress on an essay for Gill's class that isn't due until next week, and finish an art history assignment. My mind seems to have cleared up, and I find it easier to focus. (Thao, 2021, p. 138)

In the data previously, Julie is shown to be having dinner with her mom which she never did in the first few weeks after sam's death. She even helps to clear the table and go straight to her room to catch up with her schoolwork.

Data 50:

I have a lot of time to myself these days. Time to think and process and catch up with the rest of the world. Ever since my last call with Sam, I don't find myself waiting by the phone anymore. Instead I'm spending more time with my friends and focusing on school again. I finished up my final essay for Mr. Gill's class, and am set to graduate. I also found time to work on my writing sample, even though I won't be submitting it anywhere soon. Who cares if no one else reads it right now. I found peace in writing something for myself for once. Peace in remembering those moments makes me feel connected to Sam, especially when our calls are broken. Those memories of us are something I'll always have. Even after he's gone. I only wish he had a chance to read it. But I try not to think like this, though. I'm thankful for this temporary hole in the universe that we found ourselves floating through these last few months together. (Thao, 2021, p. 229)

In the data above, Her connection with Sam has gotten worse after she let James, Sam's little brother to speak with him. But instead of mourning about their broken connection, Julie is shown to be a more productive and positive person. She found peace in writing and grateful for the emporary connection they had.

c. Start to Moving On

in the acceptance stage, the first time people realized that they had to move on and start their journey to moving on was not easy. Julie's first realizations that she had to moving on was first shown in the quotations below.

Data 51:

*“Remember what you said about my dreams? The ones about Sam, I mean. How I should seek the opposite to find balance or something...” Yuki nods. “I remember.” “I thought about it,” I say, staring down at my phone again, holding it tight. **“I think it’s obvious what it means now. It means I have to stop thinking about him. That I have to let him go and move on with my life.”** I let out a deep breath. **“I wish it was easier for me.”** (Thao, 2021, p. 218)*

On the quotations above, Julie stated that in order to stop the bad dreams that have been haunting her sleep is she has to stop thinking about Sam and move on with her life.

Data 52:

*Being away from Ellensburg was exactly what I needed after all. **I still think about Sam from time to time, but the memories are fond, letting me breathe easier. Even though he isn’t here, I still see him everywhere. And for the first time, the thought of this brings me comfort.*** (Thao, 2021, p. 220)

On the data above, after going with Yuki to the fair, Julie seemed to have started to accept the reality she had to live with. Different from the previous several stages where Julie could not let go of Sam and still hoped that Sam could come back to life. For the first time in a long time, she finally make peace and cherish their memories together instead.

Data 53:

*“But since our connection is breaking, the call doesn’t last too long. When James hands the phone back to me, Sam and I only have a few seconds to speak. **“Thank you for this,” he says. “But I have to go now.” “I understand,” I say. And then the call ends. Just like that.*** (Thao, 2021, p. 227)

Data 54:

“A part of me wishes I could save this call for as long as I can, but I have to be strong for both of us. It’s been a few

weeks since we last spoke on the phone. It still pains me to be away from him for so long, like he's moving further away from me with each day" (Thao, 2021, p. 229)

The beginning of the acceptance stage is always difficult for the grieving person. As seen on the quotations above, Julie realizes that she can't always be selfish and demands Sam to stay with her. She needs to learn to stay strong. Especially after their connection is breaking up.

Data 55:

"Are you there?"

*"I'm here. Don't worry," he assures me. "But I need you to say goodbye now. Okay? I need to hear you say the word." I swallow hard. The words come out cracked and broken. "Good-bye, Sam." "Good-bye, Julie." Right after, he says, "I need you to do one last thing for me, okay?" "What is it?" I ask. "After we hang up ... I'm going to call you again. And I need you to not pick up this time. Can you promise me that?" He needs me to break our connection for good. He needs me to move on. "I can..." I whisper, even though it kills me inside. "Thank you. I'm going to hang up now. Okay?" "Okay." "I'm glad we were able to speak one last time," Sam says. "Even if it was just for a few seconds." "Me, too," I tell him—but the call has already ended. **My body goes numb as I sit on his bed in silence, waiting for the call. And then the phone rings. The number is unknown but I know it's him. I squeeze the phone tight, wanting to pick it up so badly, desperate to hear his voice again. But I can't do that to him. I made a promise. So I let it ring. I let it keep ringing until it stops, the screen turns black, and I'm alone in the room again. My heart shatters, and sinks into the pit of my stomach. I set the phone down, and curl up on Sam's bed, letting myself cry.**" (Thao, 2021, p. 238)*

The data previously shows Julie and Sam in their last call. There is one thing that must be done so that their connection can be completely cut off, the condition is Julie is not allowed to pick up calls from Sam. It could be seen that Julie was having a hard time not

picking up the phone but she had promised to let Sam go even though it was torturing her. They were finally able to properly say goodbye to each other.

Data 56:

“I listen to the message again. I listen to it on the way home, and several more times before I fall asleep. I listen to it the next morning when Mika comes over and I replay it for her. I listen to it again that night and the day after that. I listen to it on the days I miss Sam most and want to hear his voice again. I listen to his voice mail until I have it memorized, and I don’t need to play it anymore.” (Thao, 2021, p. 240)

After their last call, Sam sends Jules a voice note one last time. The voice note contains Sam's feelings, who also find it very hard to let Julie go. Julie played the voice note over and over for days. Finally, she memorized all the sentences that Sam said and she didn't have to play the voice note again.

4.2 Research Discussion

This research is about the stages of grief experienced by Julie based on the *You’ve Reached Sam* novel by Dustin Thao. This research uses theory of grief by Kübler-Ross & Kessler. This section is intended to analyze the result of the research finding based on the related theory.

4.2.1 Stages of Grief Experienced by Julie

Everyone will face death; death impacts not only those who die but also those who are grieving. Everyone has their way of grieving. However, there is a way to understand someone's grief. Using Kubler-Ross & Kessler’s grief theory can help people better understand and acknowledge their grief. This theory can be used to find out and analyze the stages of a person's grief through specific indicators:

denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. Julie's grief is portrayed in the novel *You've Reached Sam* by Dustin Thao.

The researcher found all the stages of grief experienced by Julie. Totals of 56 data were found. 16 of them are data from stage denial, 4 are anger data, 11 of them are bargaining data, 16 of them are depression, and 9 of them are acceptance stage.

There are four indicators when someone is in the denial stage; there are conscious or unconscious inability to accept the fact that a loved one is dead, difficulty in processing reality, shock, and telling stories of their loss. Out of all those indicators, Julie is experiencing difficulty processing reality the most because her love for Sam makes it harder for her to accept the reality that Sam is gone. Therefore, Julie does not experience shock after learning that Sam is dead because she chooses not to believe that Sam is dead, which does not allow her to experience the shock. As a result, in the denial stage, Julie is portrayed as a person who cannot accept reality and is wishy-washy in facing her grief over Sam's death.

People who are in a period of grieving will go through a stage of anger. In this stage, people feel that the world is turning away from them. Their inability to control their emotion makes people in this stage tend to have a short temper. The indicators of this stage are anger towards friends, those who left them, those who have control over their loved ones' lives, and even themselves.

Julie was often angry with herself, especially after she had flashbacks to the night before the incident and remembered that Sam

had an accident while trying to pick her up while she was angry with Sam.

Sam died suddenly, and she was even mad at him the night the accident happened. This situation made Julie angry with Sam for leaving her. People who are in a stage of anger cannot think logically. Julie blames Sam even though she knows Sam does not want to die either. Nevertheless, she needed someone to blame to cultivate her anger instead of bottling it up. Anger is a necessary stage of the healing process. It is crucial to explore the anger and not suppress it, because the more you hold it, the bigger the affect will be once you let it out (Kübler-Ross & Kessler, 2005, p. 16)

The indicators that show someone is in the bargaining stage are feeling guilty, wanting life to return to what it was, and wanting to go back in time to stop the incident from happening. Julie's bargaining is portrayed in the novel. Losing a loved one is certainly not easy. People will continue to hope that the person they care about can come back to life as a natural thing. People sometimes also feel guilty because they feel like they can stop the death of their loved ones, that it can be prevented, but that is not possible.

Julie's guilt takes a significant portion of her bargaining stage because she often thinks that she is the reason Sam is dead. Her gentle and easily carried away characterization also played a big role as the reason why her bargaining stage was the stage she experienced the most.

The indicators for people in a depression stage are disinterest in the activity they used to love, disconnected from social life, and withdrawal from life. Feeling empty is also one indicator that shows if someone is in a depression stage. People who feel depressed find it hard to meet many people. Life feels pointless, and they tend to seclude themselves from every activity that requires them to meet many people. Julie's depression stage becomes the stage that appears most often in several chapters, her avoidance of social life is the most common depression she felt especially when Sam has just died. In this stage, Julie's characterization is portrayed as gloomy, careless, and a person who is disconnected with the real world.

Being in the acceptance stage does not mean that the grieving person is okay with the death of a loved one. The world will keep turning, time will go on. maybe some people can feel that life is not fair but they have to move on in order to survive.

Indicators that show that someone is in the acceptance phase include starting to socialize more, focusing on their future that was previously abandoned, and then finally starting to move on. It is not easy to get to this stage; people have to go through various twists and turns, up and down from the previous stage. For example, losing a loved one may feel like the end of the world, but it is not. Once you accept the situation, everything will be fine, and memories with loved ones also do not need to be forgotten.

Julie's characterization, which was initially a very caring and caring person for others, played an essential role in achieving her

acceptance. As is well known, her connection with Sam has been strained ever since she let Sam talk to Mika. However, that did not stop her from caring about James, Sam's younger brother. She still gave her phone to James even though it meant her connection with Sam would only worsen.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter consists of two sub-chapters, namely conclusions and suggestions. These sub-chapters will be discussed deeply below.

5.1 Conclusions

After the analysis, the researcher found several points of grief experienced by Julie in the novel *You've Reached Sam* by using Kübler-Ross and Kessler's stages of grief theory. Julie follows all the stages of grief over Sam's death. Even though, her grief happened unsequentially. Among all the existing stages, she did not experience 2 of the stages indicators, namely shock in the denial stage and angry towards those who have control of their loved one's lives in anger stage. Out of all the stages, due to her gentle and easily carried away characterization makes bargaining a stage that she experienced frequently. Her characterization changes at each stage, from wishy-washy, to grumpy, to pessimistic, to gloomy, and in the end she finally can be sincere and accepting her destiny.

5.2 Suggestions

Based on the discussion and conclusion, the researcher provides suggestions related to the results of the research that the researcher have done. This research was done using the psychological approach, but *You've Reached Sam* is a great novel that can be analyzed using a different approach and theory. The researcher suggests the next researcher could analyze this novel using a different method and theory, for instance, the magical realism aspects of the novel. And, to those who wishes to analyze *You've Reached Sam* by the same theory, the researcher suggests exploring it from a different point of view, such as the grief experience by Oliver.

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APPENDIX

Julie's Portrayal of Grief

No	Chapter	Stage	Indicator	Data
1.	Prologue	Bargaining	<u>Want life to returned to what it was</u> <i>"Sometimes, I wish the sun would never set, so we could stay here, enjoying each other's company, talking like we always do, laughing at inside jokes, pretending like nothing could ever go wrong"</i> (Thao, 2021, pp. 8-9)	Data 22
		Anger	<u>Angry at those who left them</u> <i>"but you did leave." " I know... I'm sorry. " "you never say goodbye..."</i> (Thao, 2021, p. 9)	Data 17
2.	One	Anger	<u>Angry to oneself</u> <i>But I ignored them all and kept walking. Reading these back again, I wish I hadn't been so angry at him. I wish I had picked up the phone. Maybe then everything would be different."</i> (Thao, 2021, p. 11)	Data 18
		Bargaining	<u>Feeling Guilty</u> <i>Reading this back again, I wish I hadn't been so angry with him. I wish I had picked up the phone. Maybe then everything will be different."</i> (Thao, 2021, p. 11) <i>Maybe then I wouldn't be blaming me"</i> (Thao, 2021, p. 11)	Data 26 & 27
		Denial	<u>Conscious or unconscious inability to accept the fact that a loved one is dead</u> <i>"Every day these little reminders of him get harder to look at. They say moving on becomes easier with time, but I can barely hold a photo without my hands trembling. My thoughts go to him, they always do."</i> (Thao, 2021, pp. 11-12)	Data 1
			<u>Difficulty in processing reality</u> <i>"it still smells like him". " why does everything have to go? I could shove it in the back of the closet, hide it beneath my coats or something."</i> (Thao, 2021, p. 12)	Data 6

No	Chapter	Stage	Indicator	Data
		Depression	<p><u>Loss interest in previously loved activities</u></p> <p><i>“My hair unbrushed, skin more pale than usual, wearing yesterday’s shirt, cradling Sam’s jacket like it’s still a part of him. A chill of embarrassment goes through me, and I look away”. (Thao, 2021, p. 12)</i></p>	Data 43
			<p><u>Disconnected with social life</u></p> <p><i>My mother nods. “You could use the fresh air, get some decent coffee. And it’s good to see your friends. That reminds me, have you talked to Mr. Lee at the bookstore?” “Not yet...” I haven’t really spoken to anyone. (Thao, 2021, p. 14)</i></p>	Data 32
		Depression	<p><u>Loss interest in previously loved activities</u></p> <p><i>“If I miss another week they won’t let me graduate.” Not to mention I’m behind on all my schoolwork, which keeps piling up. I really need to focus again, and pull myself together, because what else am I supposed to do? The world keeps moving, no matter what happens to you. “ (Thao, 2021, p. 15)</i></p>	
			<p><u>Disconnected with social life</u></p> <p><i>“Sorry. I haven’t been the most responsive lately.” I don’t really have another excuse. I have a habit of leaving my phone on silent. But this week, I’ve been especially disconnected. ... “I missed you, too.” As much as I tell myself I like being alone, I feel a rush of relief to see a familiar face. To see Mika again.” (Thao, 2021, p. 17)</i></p>	Data 33

No	Chapter	Stage	Indicator	Data
		Anger	<p><u>Angry towards friends</u></p> <p><i>“He’s dead, Mika, and me visiting him isn’t going to change anything.” “This isn’t my fault, you know? I told him not to come but he wouldn’t listen to me. I told him to stay there. So everyone needs to stop expecting some apology from me, and blaming me for any of this” “You’re right. Maybe I do know him better,” I say. “And maybe I think he doesn’t believe in any of this stuff. The ceremonies, the vigil, the people from school—please. Sam doesn’t care about any of them. He would have hated all of this. He’s probably glad I didn’t show up!”....“Don’t tell me what I believe,” That came out sharper than I wanted it to. I almost take it back, but I don’t. “ (Thao, 2021, pp. 20-21)</i></p>	Data 19
		Denial	<p><u>Conscious or unconscious inability to accept the fact that a loved one is dead</u></p> <p><i>If I close my eyes, I can hear him paddling in the water, see the blades of his glinting Shoulders cut across the lake. But then I open them and see the glassy, flat surface of the water, and find myself alone again. (Thao, 2021, pp. 22-23)</i></p>	Data 2
		Bargaining	<p><u>Feeling Guilty</u></p> <p><i>After everything we’ve been through together. I threw out all of his things. I skipped his funeral. And I never even said good-bye. (Thao, 2021, p. 25)</i></p> <p><i>“I suddenly remember how I skipped every service and ceremony that was held in his memory—memories I abandoned. I didn’t even bother to visit his grave. I can’t seem to stand still. Mika was right. What would Sam think of me if he knew how I treated him?”. (Thao, 2021, p. 26)</i></p>	Data 29 & 31

No	Chapter	Stage	Indicator	Data
3.	Two	--	--	--
4.	Three	--	--	--
5.	Four	Depression	<p><u>Loss interest in previously loved activities</u></p> <p><i>“But I’ve been absent for an entire week of school now, and I’m already here. I might as well get this over with, since I’ll have to face everyone sooner or later. At least I remembered to set my alarm yesterday.” (Thao, 2021, p. 54)</i></p>	Data 45
			<p><u>Disconnected with social life</u></p> <p><i>There are plenty of chairs open but nowhere to sit. I consider eating outside, but I feel everyone watching me. I don’t want them thinking I’m afraid to eat alone. I won’t be one of those girls who ends up hiding in a bathroom stall. (Thao, 2021, p. 55)</i></p> <p><i>The day after the funeral, she stopped by my house to drop off soup and tea for me even though I ignored all her messages. (Thao, 2021, p. 56)</i></p>	Data 35 & 34
			<p><u>Feeling empty</u></p> <p><i>“Sam never said anything back. He just grabbed his things one day and moved to Yuki’s table, and I went with him. Now lunch feels empty without him here. Like something’s missing. I know the others sense it, too.” (Thao, 2021, p. 57)</i></p>	Data 41
		Denial	<p><u>Conscious or unconscious inability to accept the fact that a loved one is dead</u></p> <p><i>Before everything was taken from us. On the other line, I sense Sam is doing the same. When I open my eyes, I find myself alone in my room.” (Thao, 2021, p. 62)</i></p>	Data 3
			<p><u>Difficulty in processing reality</u></p> <p><i>I don’t want to let him go (Thao, 2021, p. 63)</i></p>	Data 9
6.	Five	Depression	<p><u>Loss interest in previously loved activities</u></p> <p><i>“The word graduation catches me off guard, and I nearly panic. Is it really only two months away? I haven’t even heard from colleges yet. And I’m so behind on school, what if I don’t catch up in time? I become so lost in thought, I forget what</i></p>	Data 46

No	Chapter	Stage	Indicator	Data
			<i>Tristan even asked me.” (Thao, 2021, p. 71)</i>	
7.	Six	Depression	<u>Loss interest in previously loved activities</u> <i>Nobody takes the seat beside me. I pretend not to notice. My teachers drone on, and I don't hear a word they're saying. All I can think about is Sam. I wish I could talk to him right now. (Thao, 2021, p. 85)</i>	Data 47
		Denial	<u>Difficulty in processing reality</u> <i>This might sound ridiculous, but Sam might be out there waiting for me. I have to go find him. . I keep looking out the window to see if Sam's walking along the side of the road.”(Thao, 2021, p. 93 - 94)</i>	Data 5
		Bargaining	<u>Feeling Guilty</u> <i>“Maybe if I had called at just the right time, he might have heard it and picked up, and I could have sent for help. Maybe if I hadn't been so angry with him, he might not have left the bonfire so quickly and might have missed the truck entirely.” (Thao, 2021, p. 94)</i>	Data 28
8.	Seven	--	--	--
9.	Eight	Depression	<u>Disconnected with social life</u> <i>“It's the end of school. I need to hurry home without running into anyone. But it's difficult to avoid people when you can't even get to your locker without bumping into a dozen shoulders.” (Thao, 2021, p. 108)</i>	Data 36
10.	Nine	Bargaining	<u>Wanted to to go back and stop the accident from happening</u> <i>”And I need to get there first. I have to get to Sam before it's too late” (Thao, 2021, p. 115)</i>	Data 25
		Depression	<u>Disconnected with social life</u> <i>“I close my eyes for moment. “Thank you for bringing me here. I didn't realize how much I needed to be away from everything.” “Feels like a different world, doesn't it?” Sam whispers next to me. “Like Ellensburg is a million miles away.”” (Thao, 2021, p. 123)</i>	Data 40

No	Chapter	Stage	Indicator	Data
		Denial	<p><u>Difficulty in processing reality</u> <i>I can feel him lying there besides me. So I just stare straight up at the stars, and allow myself to keep pretending". (Thao, 2021, p. 123)</i></p> <p><i>"What if I don't? What if I refuse to say it?" "That was always it, Sam. Since the day I met you..." what if I forget his voice? I can't imagine losing him all over again." (Thao, 2021, p. 124)</i></p>	Data 10 & 13
		Bargaining	<p><u>Want life to returned to what it was</u> <i>I can't think of anything I want more in the world right now, other than having him be alive again. "As if I care what other people think of me. As long as I have you. And if we can still be together, we should make it work. Even if it isn't exactly like we planned—" (Thao, 2021, pp. 123-124)</i></p>	Data 24
11,	Ten	Denial	<p><u>Telling stories of their loss</u> <i>"You alright there?" "I just need a second—" I don't know what else to say. I stare at the iron bars of the opened gate, wondering if this is a mistake. Don't be scared, Julie. That's not Sam up there. He's still with you. You haven't lost him yet." (Thao, 2021, p. 128)</i></p> <p><i>But that's not something I want to focus on. Because I don't want to remember Sam as a tragedy. I don't want that to be his story. When people think about Sam, I want them to think of his best moments. I want them to remember him as a musician, staying up late on a school night, writing music on his guitar. I want them to know him as an older brother, building giant forts in his room. And I want them to remember us, and the last three years we spent together. How we met, our first kiss, all the reasons I fell in love with him. I want them to fall in love with Sam, too. Maybe that's what I'll do. Write down the memories of him. Memories of us. Tell our story. (Thao, 2021, p. 133)</i></p>	Data 15 & 16
		Depression	<p><u>Disconnected with social life</u> <i>"But I don't get to see you too much. I</i></p>	Data 39

No	Chapter	Stage	Indicator	Data
			<i>know it isn't your fault ... but you've been hard to reach lately. This is the first time you and I sat down for dinner in two weeks. I just feel a little less ... connected to you. But maybe that's just me." After Sam died, I brought my meals up to my room. And since we've been connected again, I been spending all my time with him. I was gone all day yesterday. And the day before." (Thao, 2021, p. 137)</i>	
		Acceptance	<u>Focusing On Her Future</u> <i>After dinner, I help clear the table and head upstairs. As much as I want to call Sam, I should catch up on schoolwork. I make some progress on an essay for Gill's class that isn't due until next week, and finish an art history assignment. My mind seems to have cleared up, and I find it easier to focus. (Thao, 2021, p. 138)</i>	Data 49
		Denial	<u>Difficulty in processing reality</u> <i>I wish things could stay like this. I wish we could talk forever. (Thao, 2021, p. 138)</i> <i>" then I won't tell anyone. I'll keep this a secret. I don't want to lose you. Not this one." I don't want to lose you, either. "</i> <i>(Thao, 2021, p. 141)</i>	Data 7 & 8
12.	Eleven	Depression	<u>Feeling empty</u> <i>Because sometimes I'm still not sure. Maybe that's where the hole is coming from. Whenever this feeling comes, I reach for Sam's things, because they're the only things that seem to make sense. His shirt on the back of the chair, the other bookend on my desk, the other things in my drawer—I still have everything." (Thao, 2021, p. 143)</i>	Depression
		Anger	<u>Angry towards friends</u> <i>I knew she would confront me with this one day. But I didn't expect it to be in front of everyone at school. I swallow hard, trying to keep my voice steady. "Don't you blame me for that. You don't—" "He was the one texting me. I</i>	Anger

No	Chapter	Stage	Indicator	Data
			<i>told him he didn't have to go. I said I would walk home." Taylor shoves another finger at my chest". . "And you don't know what happened. You didn't read our texts." "Then show me them." "I can't..." "Why not?" "Because I deleted them." "Even if I made him go, it wasn't me who was driving the truck. It wasn't me who swerved into his car. How can you seriously blame me for that? I'm about as responsible for his death as whoever planned the bonfire, which was you." (Thao, 2021, pp. 149-151)</i>	
13.	Twelve	--	--	--
14.	Thirteen	Denial	<p><u>Difficulty in processing reality</u> <i>He heard what I whispered to him, and he wants to stay with me a little longer. (Thao, 2021, p. 180)</i></p> <p><i>Sam told me something I refuse to believe. He said there's a chance we only have a few calls left before our connection ends forever. The worst part is Sam warned me this could happen, but I didn't listen.</i> (Thao, 2021, p. 167)</p>	Data 11 & 12
15.	Fourteen	--	--	--
16.	Fifteen	--	--	--
17.	Sixteen	--	--	--
18.	Seventeen	Denial	<p><u>Conscious or unconscious inability to accept the fact that a loved one is dead</u> <i>But then you get rejections in the mail, lose that person who meant everything to you, and find yourself back at the beginning with nowhere to go. I try not to daydream anymore. It only tricks me with images of Sam, filling me with the possibility that we can still be together, that there's a future for us, until reality comes in like a storm to blow everything away." (Thao, 2021, pp. 214-215)</i></p>	Data 4
		Bargaining	<p><u>Want life to returned to what it was</u> <i>I wish the world would slow down for us. I wish I could put coins into a machine to buy us more time. I wish I could save these last calls for as long as I can, so we can stay connected. I wish there was something, anything I could do to keep</i></p>	Data 23

No	Chapter	Stage	Indicator	Data
			<i>him with me". 215 (Thao, 2021, p. 215)</i>	
		Depression	<p><u>Disconnected with social life</u> <i>"When Yuki first asked if I would come with her, I said I couldn't. I've been keeping to myself more lately. Since the film festival two weeks ago, I haven't had much of a yearning for social interaction."</i>(Thao, 2021, p. 216)</p> <p><i>"While the others head farther into the arcade stands of Pike Place Market, I take a break from the touristy attractions and find a bench away from the crowds to get some space alone."</i>(Thao, 2021, p. 217)</p>	Data 37 & 38
		Acceptance	<p><u>Start to Moving On</u> <i>"I think it's obvious what it means now. It means I have to stop thinking about him. That I have to let him go and move on with my life." I let out a deep breath. "I wish it was easier for me." (Thao, 2021, p. 218)</i></p> <p><i>. I still think about Sam from time to time, but the memories are fond, letting me breathe easier. Even though he isn't here, I still see him everywhere. And for the first time, the thought of this brings me comfort. (Thao, 2021, p. 220)</i></p> <p><i>"Thank you for this," he says. "But I have to go now." "I understand," I say. And then the call ends. Just like that." (Thao, 2021, p. 227)</i></p>	Data 51, 52 & 53
19.	Eighteen	Acceptance	<p><u>Restarting Her Social Life</u> <i>Ever since my last call with Sam, I don't find myself waiting by the phone anymore. Instead I'm spending more time with my friends and focusing on school again. (Thao, 2021, p. 229)</i></p>	Data 48
			<p><u>Focusing On Her Future</u> <i>I have a lot of time to myself these days. Time to think and process and catch up with the rest of the world. Ever since my last call with Sam, I don't find myself waiting by the phone anymore. Instead I'm spending more time with my friends and focusing on school again. I finished</i></p>	Data 50

No	Chapter	Stage	Indicator	Data
			<p><i>up my final essay for Mr. Gill's class, and am set to graduate. I also found time to work on my writing sample, even though I won't be submitting it anywhere soon. Who cares if no one else reads it right now. I found peace in writing something for myself for once. Peace in remembering those moments makes me feel connected to Sam, especially when our calls are broken. Those memories of us are something I'll always have. Even after he's gone. I only wish he had a chance to read it. But I try not to think like this, though. I'm thankful for this temporary hole in the universe that we found ourselves floating through these last few months together. (Thao, 2021, p. 229)</i></p>	
			<p><u>Start to Moving On</u> <i>"A part of me wishes I could save this call for as long as I can, but I have to be strong for both of us." (Thao, 2021, p. 229)</i></p>	Data 54
		Denial	<p><u>Difficulty in processing reality</u> <i>"I know I have to say goodbye soon," I say. "But I don't think I can let him go." (Thao, 2021, p. 231)</i></p>	Data 14
		Acceptance	<p><u>Start to Moving On</u> <i>My body goes numb as I sit on his bed in silence, waiting for the call. And then the phone rings. The number is unknown but I know it's him. I squeeze the phone tight, wanting to pick it up so badly, desperate to hear his voice again. But I can't do that to him. I made a promise. So I let it ring. I let it keep ringing until it stops, the screen turns black, and I'm alone in the room again. My heart shatters, and sinks into the pit of my stomach. I set the phone down, and curl up on Sam's bed, letting myself cry." (Thao, 2021, p. 238)</i></p> <p><i>"I listen to the message again. I listen to it on the way home, and several more times before I fall asleep. I listen to it the next morning when Mika comes over and I replay it for her. I listen to it again that night and the day after that. I listen to it</i></p>	Data 55 & 56

No	Chapter	Stage	Indicator	Data
			<i>on the days I miss Sam most and want to hear his voice again. I listen to his voice mail until I have it memorized, and I don't need to play it anymore.” (Thao, 2021, p. 240)</i>	

Note: The data shown in the table above refers to the data in Chapter 4 on Research Finding