

CHAPTER THREE

CONCLUSION

Having discussed the social and inner conflicts in Sue Miller's *While I Was Gone*, I would like to draw the conclusion of what I have analyzed in Chapter Two. The protagonist has experienced social and inner conflicts which have to do with her immaturity. This is evident from the author's description of her ways of thinking and behavior since her young age until her being a mother of three teenagers.

Josephine already has had a conflict with her mother since she is a young girl. She does not obey her mother's advice to continue her study as she feels her decision is more important than her mother's advice. She chooses to marry young just because her erotic relationship with Ted Morris. She decides to follow her own happiness while her decision makes her mother angry at her. She never thinks about her mother's feeling. Predictably, her impulsive decision and the wrong reason for getting married result in her unhappiness. Her attitudes show her shallow thought that makes her fall into her hard life. Soon, Josephine and Ted get divorced and Jo returns to her mother. Although the conflict between Josephine and her mother is not really solved, they are finally reconciled.

Josephine's failure of her first marriage has caused some other conflicts. First, she needs to hide her identity as she is ashamed with her past life. She wants to be somebody else to make her life more enjoyable. She only thinks about her own happiness in living a new life, whereas she does not think about the consequences of lying to her friends. Her impulsive thought results in her inner

conflict. She has to talk very carefully about herself to her new friends in order to hide her true identity while she wants to be honest. Her lies and selfishness also leads her into a social conflict between her and Dana, her best friend. Fortunately, she decides to tell the truth about herself and this solves both her inner and social conflicts.

Her immaturity is also shown when she impulsively decides to marry Daniel. She marries him because she does not want to live alone and lonely. It seems that she has not learnt from her previous marriage failure, which is caused by her impulsive decision. Having no strong foundation, her second marriage tends to break up. Her unhappiness leads her to an affair with Eli, her ex-boyfriend. She feels bored with Daniel, who is so busy with his job that they cannot communicate well. She is willing to complain to her husband about her problems but she does not have the courage to do it. Her immaturity makes her give up easily, so she is unable to solve her problems. Fortunately, the conflict is solved when Jo realizes that she is now a wife and a mother, and finally she returns to Daniel.

Her immaturity also makes her unable to communicate with her daughters, especially Cassie. She is too afraid to have a negative response from her. As a mother she actually could give advice to Cassie, but she does not dare to do it. She depends on her husband to solve her problems. Fortunately, Daniel can persuade Cassie to listen to her mother. However, although Cassie has talked to Josephine, it seems that the conflict is not completely solved.

Previously, during her affair with Eli, she gets her inner conflict concerning Eli's confession that he has been the murderer of Dana. Her inability to solve her problems and her impulsive decision makes her afraid to tell the

police, because her affair will be revealed. To get free from her inner conflict, she decides to tell the secret to the police. Meanwhile, her inability to talk to her daughters leads her into a social conflict with Sadie, the eldest one. She is afraid to talk about what is going on. This makes Sadie hate her. Although Josephine tries to apologize by writing a letter to Sadie, the conflict is not really solved.

In my opinion, Josephine is not the only one to be blamed for all her mistakes. She gets bored with her life and tries to run away from it. However, her action brings her great problems and she becomes depressed. Because of her past failure, she is afraid to communicate with others. That what makes her become an introvert person. She has to improve her personality to have a happy life. Only with the help of people who love her, can she finally overcome her problems and solve her conflicts.

From the analysis above, it is evident that Josephine is immature although she has become a mother. All her conflicts, both inner and social ones, happen because of her immaturity. As a result, when trying to get a happy life, she often chooses the wrong decisions, which cause her to have both inner and social conflicts. Josephine would be happier if she was able to feel grateful for what she has had and she would be wise if she carefully thought before deciding anything important in her life.

In the end, I would like to give comments on Jo's conflicts. In real life, people are surrounded by a lot of problems, which they can more easily solve by communicating them to others. Moreover, they have to think wisely about the advice other people give to them. They also have to learn from their past to have a better future.