

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

Having analyzed the portrayal of the protagonists in She's Come Undone and White Oleander in chapter two and three, I can find some similarities and differences from the two protagonists. The first similarity is that both protagonists undergo abandonment in their childhood. Dolores, the protagonist in She's Come Undone, has to lose her parents in her childhood because of their separation and her mother has to stay at a mental hospital. Similar to Dolores Price, Astrid, the protagonist in White Oleander, is abandoned by her mother in her early childhood and she also never has the figure of a father. The abandonment becomes a traumatic experience for both of them and for that reason, both protagonists have behaviour and characteristics issue, and they have to endure a long journey of self-discovery.

Another similarity is both protagonists succeed in finding their true selves in the end. They change and their bad characteristics which are formed by their traumas are replaced by better ones. Dolores changes from an impudent, introverted, self-conscious and pessimistic person to a polite, extroverted,

confident and optimistic person. While Astrid changes from a dependent, diffident and pessimistic person into a person of independence, confidence and optimism.

Beside the similarities, there are some differences between Dolores Price and Astrid Magnussen. They are two different individuals who have distinct characteristics. Dolores is impudent, introverted, self-conscious and pessimistic, while Astrid is a dependent, diffident and pessimistic person. From these characteristics, I can say that in the beginning, Dolores is more of a rebellious person while Astrid is the submissive type of person.

The next difference is Dolores' abandonment happens when she is old enough to remember it, while Astrid is too young to remember. In other words, Dolores remembers about the abandonment in her conscious mind while Astrid keeps it in her unconscious mind. Therefore, although the trauma that these protagonists experience is similar, they develop different characteristics.

The last difference is Dolores Price's self-discovery is aided by others, one of which is the psychiatrist in the mental hospital who helps her in amending her childhood, while Astrid Magnussen's self-discovery happens within herself through the series of experience that she goes through in foster houses.

Based on the analysis of the similarities and differences above, there are some things that can be concluded. Firstly, abandonment in childhood period can be traumatic and can affect one's characteristics in adolescence period. The trauma can happen to any children even if they do not have capability to remember it. Trauma is kept in one's mind either in conscious or unconscious mind. Either way, the trauma will affect one's characteristics, action and behaviour. Often these people will not realize why they act in certain ways until

they find the root of the problems, which is the trauma. As for children, mostly they need love and attention. This is why abandonment from people they love, in this case their parents, can be traumatic to them.

Secondly, the characteristics affected by the traumatic events can be changed. From the analysis of the two protagonists, there are two ways to change or to discover one's true self. First, it is done with other people's assistance like Dolores. The second way happens within one's self like Astrid, or in other words, without any help from others.

Lamb creates the character Dolores Price to show that someone can be released from her traumatic experience through the assistance from other people. Lamb shows that to be able to free someone from her trauma and in order to make that person find her true self, a therapy is needed. The therapy can be done with or without a specialist as long as it involves other people. Like Dolores, the therapy is in the form of conversation with the others and some form of therapies with a psychologist. In these therapies, Dolores is decoyed to find the root of her bitterness through hypnotism and by undoing her childhood.

Unlike Lamb, Fitch through White Oleander wants to show that traumatic experiences can be cured through repeated actions and several new experiences that are totally different from the ones which someone has when she is in the traumatic situation. Fitch gives the idea that to discover one's true self, one does not need other people's help. It can happen within that person with the help of the series of experiences. Like in Astrid's case, she finally discovers her real characteristics after several experiences and the repeated abandonment she has in foster houses, without any assistance from the outside party.

In the final conclusion, I believe that abandonment in one's childhood may cause fatal effects in one's life. However, the trauma of abandonment can be cured either through Dolores Price's ways or Astrid Magnussen's ways. It depends on the situation and condition of the person.