REPRESENTATION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL HORROR IN PAULA HAWKINS'S THE GIRL ON THE TRAIN AND STEPHEN KING'S MISERY

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THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that in my opinion the thesis submitted by Sukaina Jabbar Subair AL-OKBI titled "REPRESENTATİON OF PSYCHOLOGİCAL HORROR İN PAULA HAWKİNS'S THE GİRL ON THE TRAİN AND STEPHEN KİNG'S MİSERY" is fully adequate in scope and in quality as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.

Assist. Prof. Dr. Nazila HEIDARZADEGAN .....

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This thesis is accepted by the examining committee with a unanimous vote in the Department of English Language and Literature as a Master of Arts thesis. July 20,2023

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The degree of Master of Arts by the thesis submitted is approved by the Administrative Board of the Institute of Graduate Programs, Karabuk University.

Prof. Dr. Müslüm KUZU .....

Director of the Institute of Graduate Programs

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own work and all information included has been obtained and expounded in accordance with the academic rules and ethical policy specified by the institute. Besides, I declare that all the statements, results, materials, not original to this thesis have been cited and referenced literally.

Without being bound by a particular time, I accept all moral and legal consequences of any detection contrary to the aforementioned statement.

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FOREWORD

The thesis brings the opportunity to enhance my literature skills and knowledge. For this, I want to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor, Assist. Prof. Dr. Nazila HEIDARZADEGAN, for her assistance and constructive criticism. It was advantageous to have the option to take her suggestions on my thesis with her.

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ABSTRACT

Humans experience mental torment as a result of their fears, which manifest as anxiety and emotional instability. This thesis aims to explore the existence of horror within human beings, the effect of psychological threatening on characters, and the elements of psychological horror in selected novels by the British novelist Paula Hawkins' The Girl on the Train (2015) and the American novelist Stephen King's Misery (1987) due to the presence of certain psychological disorders. The study presents psychological horror as a subgenre of horror fiction that occurs in society in general or for certain individuals, to analyze Rachel Watson's psychological horror in Paula Hawkins' The Girl on the Train, to analyze Paul Sheldon's psychological horror in Stephen King's Misery, and to show that Hawkins' and King's protagonists suffer from psychological horror that contains mental pressures like irrational fears, anxieties, and emotional instability. The thesis describes psychological horror as the same tale of human terror in their minds. The critical analysis is done by finding and analyzing the aims or objectives of the study. There are three chapters in the study, in addition to a conclusion. Chapter one discusses the definition, purpose, objective, and method of the study. Paula Hawkins' The Girl on the Train is analyzed in chapter two whereas Stephen King's Misery is interpreted in chapter three. These two chapters' analyses look into psychological horror's traits, including psychopathy, paranoia, suspicion, self-doubt, a lack of remorse or shame, and insufficient antisocial behavior. The study concludes that Rachel, Anna, Megan, Paul, and Annie experience psychological horror which is shown through their actions and their experiences with distressing events.

Keywords: Psychological horror, psychopath, paranoia, self-doubt, The Girl on the Train, Misery.

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ÖZET

İnsanlar, endişe ve duygusal istikrarsızlık olarak ortaya çıkan korkularının bir sonucu olarak zihinsel eziyet yaşarlar. Bu tez, insanlarda dehşetin varlığını, psikolojik tehdidin karakterler üzerindeki etkisini, ve İngiliz romancı Paula Hawkins'in Trendeki Kız (2015) ve Amerikalı romancı Stephen King'in Sefaleti (1987) tarafından seçilen romanlarda psikolojik korku unsurları bazı psikolojik bozuklukların. Tez, psikolojik dehşeti akıllarında insan terörünün aynı hikayesi olarak tanımlamaktadır. Kritik analiz, çalışmanın amaçlarını veya hedeflerini bularak ve analiz ederek yapılır. Çalışmada bir sonuca ek olarak üç bölüm bulunmaktadır. Birinci bölüm, çalışmanın tanımını, amacını, amacını ve yöntemini tartışır. Paula Hawkins'in Trendeki Kız ikinci bölümde analiz edilirken Stephen King'in Sefaleti üçüncü bölümde yorumlanıyor. Bu iki bölümün analizleri, psikopati, paranoya, şüphe, kendinden şüphe, pişmanlık veya utanç eksikliği ve yetersiz antisosyal davranış gibi psikolojik korkunun özelliklerini inceliyor. Çalışma, Rachel, Anna, Megan, Paul ve Annie'nin eylemleri ve üzücü olaylarla ilgili deneyimleriyle gösterilen psikolojik korku yaşadıkları sonucuna varıyor.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Psikolojik korku, psikopat, paranoya,kendinden şüphe, Trende Kız, Sefalet. .

ARCHIVE RECORD INFORMATION

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ARŞİV KAYIT BİLGİLERİ (in Turkish)

Tezin Adı	PSİKOLOJİK KORKUNUN TEMSİL EDİLMESİ PAULA HAWKİNS'İN TRENDEKİ KIZI VE STEPHEN KİNG'İN SEFALETİ
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Anahtar Kelimeler	Psikolojik korku, psikopat, paranoya, kendinden şüphe, Trende Kız, Sefaleti.

SUBJECT OF THE RESEARCH

The study is concerned with the existence of horror, which is the result of certain psychological disorders. This horror can exist inside the characters themselves or be the result of being the victims of other characters' influences. The study explores how the characters' lives are affected by the threat of psychological horror. The current study aims at exploring the elements of psychological horror in selected novels by the British novelist Paula Hawkins and the American novelist Stephen King. The selected novels are *The Girl on the Train* (2015) and *Misery* (1987).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research purpose is:

1. To present psychological horror as a subgenre of horror fiction that occurs in society in general or for certain individuals.

2. To analyze Rachel Watson's psychological horror in Paula Hawkins' *The Girl on the Train.*

3. To analyze Paul Sheldon's psychological horror in Stephen King's *Misery*.

4. To show that Hawkins' and King's protagonists suffer from psychological horror that contains mental pressures like irrational fears, anxieties, and emotional instability.

PURPOSE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH

Everyone has some fears in mind, and they get tortured mentally, which turns out to be anxiety and emotional instability. The thesis speaks about the same story of human fear in their minds, i.e., 'psychological horror'. The thesis discusses the selected works of authors in which they have portrayed the character's horror in their minds. The

thesis wants to communicate that people must know how to tackle the situation instead of making horror stories in their minds and live life to the fullest until mortality.

METHOD OF THE RESEARCH

The main texts used for this study are two novels: *The Girl on the Train* (2015) by Paula Hawkins and *Misery* (1987) by Stephen King. The method of data analysis is a critical description that is based on the horror fiction genre and psychological horror as a subgenre. For the scholarly interpretation of these novels, the method of critical analysis is selected. For the critical analysis, other sources that are relevant to the study, such as published books, journal articles, and online studies of authentic scholars, are adopted as secondary data for this research.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE RESEARCH

This study sheds light on a kind of horror known as psychological horror, which excludes the supernatural in favor of basing its terrifying atmosphere on the natural world. In psychological horror, the characters' subconscious experiences manifest as fear. The study focuses on there the relationship between horror and psychology in the sense that they both communicate the dread and anxiety of people in modern society.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS / DIFFICULTIES

The analysis of this study is focused on the elements of psychological horror in the two novels. The study is divided into three chapters and a conclusion: Chapter one is about definitions and theories. It explores the relationship between horror and psychology. Chapter two is about Paula Hawkins and is an analysis of her novel, The Girl on The Train. Chapter three is about Stephen King; it is an analysis of his novel Misery. The analysis of the two chapters goes through investigating the characteristics of psychological horror such as psychopathy, paranoia, suspicion, self-distrust, lack of remorse or shame, and inadequately antisocial behavior.

1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

"The oldest and strongest emotion of mankind is fear, and the oldest and strongest kind of fear is the fear of the unknown."

H. P. Lovecraft

"Monsters are real, and ghosts are real too. They Live inside us, and sometimes they win."

Stephen King

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Art can occasionally incite outrage, fear, and disgust. It is the purpose in the case of horror. For those who appreciate it, there may be no need for explanation or defense. But because horror stirs up such powerful emotions and because of the terrible deeds it portrays, it can be difficult for individuals who are easily offended to feel that a defense or reason is required.

The term "horror" in the sentences that follow refers to a literary and film genre, or more generally, a motif, used in creative works. And occasionally speak of horror as a particular feeling or a certain type of psychological encounter. Two key components of horror are (1) the appearance of the monstrous or supernatural evil (including the psychopath who kills monstrously) and (2) the deliberate arousal of dread, visceral revulsion, fear, or startle in the viewer or reader. According to this interpretation, terror has been a component of some of the critically acclaimed works of art and entertainment. According to Noel Carroll, the horror genre consists of stories with unnatural, dangerous monsters (1990, p. 15–16; p. 27–29). Carroll claims that the genre plays on a viewer's emotional antipathy to the concept of these monsters as they appear in his or her imagination. Carroll believes that monsters are largely imaginary and shouldn't be feared in the real world. They don't exist, and the viewer is aware of this. Contrary to Carroll, from a certain point of view, the threats presented by horror can manifest in the real world as well.

According to Noel Carroll's explanation of horror, in the absence of a true monster, psychopaths are humans, not monsters prevents the film from qualifying as a horror film (except metaphorically). Monsters can include zombies, vampires, and even ravenous birds. Carroll argues that the strange man in charge of the highway motel cannot be a monster because he already exists, while monsters only exist in stories. Carroll believes that the fictional nature of monsters is essential to the explanation of what makes horror enjoyable: "the pleasure and interest that many horror fictions sustain... derive from the disclosure of unknown and impossible beings" (1990, p. 184). He continues, "their monsters very impossibility vis a vis our conceptual categories is what makes them function so compellingly in dramas of discovery and confirmation" (1990, p. 185).

The "characteristic" reactions to impurity are "abomination, nausea, shivering, revulsion, disgust, etc.," whereas danger justifies anxiety. Yet, it seems that disgust plays a key role in the story because Carroll focuses on it more than any other purported reactions to impurity, such as nausea, abomination, etc. Carroll comes to this conclusion: "art-horror requires evaluation both in terms of threat and disgust" (Carroll, 1990, p. 28). On Carroll's most detailed description of the prerequisites and requirements for art-horror,

> I as an audience member am concurrently art-horrified by some monster X, say Dracula, if and only if 1) I am in some state of abnormal, physically felt agitation ... which 2) has been caused by a) the thought: that Dracula is a possible being; and by the evaluative thoughts: that b) said Dracula has the property of being ... threatening ... and that c) said Dracula has the property of being impure. (Carroll, 1990, p.27).

Carroll makes reference to the emotional response's origins. This is ambiguous because Carroll typically expresses his opinions in terms of appraisal or suitability. Although the deliberate object of an emotion and its origin often overlap, they can often diverge. Furthermore, as stated above, Carroll's is more of a characterization of art-horror in the scenario where a monster is the emotion's deliberate aim than a general definition of or a thorough specification of the necessary and sufficient conditions for art-horror. As a result, these monsters are ineligible to serve as the inspiration for the disgust that belongs in horror stories. But monsters can also be repulsive in other ways, perhaps because of the blood and gore they create. Hence, if one is willing to dissociate it from Carroll's assertions about horror monsters, one can still have a consistent understanding of horror as the contrast between fear and revulsion. But doing so will

mean abandoning the coherence of Carroll's description of horror as an art form that primarily revolves around the juxtaposition of terror and revulsion in addition to monsters.

Three epistemological insights provided by horror include the necessity of everyday construction. The first two led to this realization. The first realization is that our practical trust's conceptual foundation is not entirely safe. The second is that we can continue to behave as though our practical trust is solid even if its foundation is not. The final epistemological insight is that this condition is untenable. Even though we are aware that the logical foundation of our practical trust is insecure, we must create an image of the everyday where it feels secure. We need to create a safe space for ourselves where we won't be attacked in our bathrooms or kitchens and where our own bodies won't suddenly turn against us. This daily creation is important for a variety of psychological reasons, but one very broad psychological explanation is that we simply cannot concentrate on all the potential paranoid scenarios at once. The world has too many potential methods to undermine our confidence for us to keep them all in mind. The most obvious risks to our trust must be our focus. This forces us to rule out, at least temporarily, some of the countless other delusional scenarios. They cease to be menacing once they are out of our line of sight, and the notion of a typical, daily world starts to take shape. But the notion of a safe, routine, everyday environment is artificial. The fact that horror literature and movies keep this in mind is one of their many advantages (Contesi, 2020). Psychological horror novels delve deeply into the characters' thoughts, feelings, and psyches to induce fear, paranoia, or anxiety.

1.2. HORROR FICTION, BASIC DEFINITIONS OF THE GENRE

The term horror refers to a number of different divisions and can be subdivided into a number of categories; nevertheless, psychological horror is the most famous kind of horror and can be included in the vast majority of the other types. It is commonly agreed that the horror genre originated within the Gothic literary tradition, which focuses largely on combining the themes of dread and passion in its stories. Nevertheless, Douglas E. Winter (1998) describes the horror genre as a kind of fiction that develops through time, adapting to the worries and concerns of the era in which it was written. Dominic Strinati defines horror as "a genre that represents the need for suppression if

the horror shown is interpreted as expressing uncomfortable and disturbing desires which need to be contained" (Strinati, 2004, p. 82).

Even before there was such a concept as horror fiction as a genre, aspects of horror themes may be traced in most of the first works of literature. The writers of ancient times, who wrote about supernatural beings and the dread they caused, also contributed to the development of horror themes in their works. The Greeks and the Romans were known to experiment with a wide variety of literary forms, including epic poetry, dramatic and comedic writing, historical writing, and narrative. There was potential for the exploration of horrifying topics within each of these genres (Cardin, 2017).

The deep roots of English horror fiction go back to the eighteenth century, when the first gothic story, *The Castle of Otranto* (1764), was published by the British novelist Horace Walpole. He describes it as an effort to combine the two different types of romance, the classic and the modern varieties. Carroll (1990) refers to the existence of a monster as a fundamental requirement for horror, despite the fact that not every narrative that involves a monster can be classified as horror. Noel Carroll defines the genre of horror as

> the product of a genre that crystalized, speaking very roughly, around the time of the publication of Frankenstein – give or take fifty years – and that has persisted, often cyclically, through the novels and plays of the nineteenth century and the literature, comic books, pulp magazines, and films of the twentieth (Carroll, 2003, p.13).

He distinguishes what he refers to as "art-horror" from "natural horror", which is more of a feeling than a kind of art. Carroll goes on to explain that the reason why horror is still so popular is because humans have a natural fascination with weird and impossible beings or situations, and we also take pleasure in solving mysteries because it satisfies our innate need to be curious. The spectator is aware that the "art horror" they are being exposed to is fictional and that the perils and horrifying entities depicted in the work are not, in reality, there with them. As a result, the viewer’s interest in the work is greater than their dread and stress while being exposed to the work (Carroll, 1990, p. 206).

Horror fiction developed at the hands of the novelists of the nineteenth century as they transformed the gothic conventions of the eighteenth century into new and more frightening forms of intense sensation. They trace the conventions of "monster stories

from *Frankenstein* (1818) to *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886) and *Dracula* (1897), stories of crime and detection from Godwin's *Caleb Williams* (1794) to the Newgate novels and Sherlock Holmes " (Garrett, 2012, p. 469).

Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* is generally regarded as the first book in the horror genre. Shelley narrates a story about a scientist named Victor Frankenstein who produces an intelligent but large and unsightly creature that is instantly rejected and reviled by humanity. Shelley calls this creature the monster. In the end, he takes refuge in a run-down cottage all by himself. Her character's mental instability and bad disposition are both the outcomes of their environment's negative treatment. Whether in the form of supernatural fiction in the demonic bargains or the upheavals of Victorian family life in the sensation novel, terrifying and disruptive occurrences are frequent motifs in the literature of the nineteenth century. What distinguishes nineteenth-century horror fiction is their extreme views that combine with the convincing acting of the real and the supernatural to address true issues within society that are really constantly threatening and distributing people's lives. In the nineteenth century, Gothic fiction was experiencing a drop in popularity. As a direct consequence of this, the real monster had transferred from the material realm to people's minds.

It is crucial to acknowledge that contemporary horror fiction emerged from older, distinctively related story types. H. P. Lovecraft discovered the origins of the contemporary horror narrative in "the oldest folklore of all races" and traced its evolution from folklore through the Gothic to the modern horror story. Rather than being a cultural and social fabrication, horror is a predicted result of the evolution of human nature, it is a "natural" genre, not the result of a strange mind or particular cultural conditions (Clasen, 2010).

The primary aim of horror fiction is to terrify or unsettle its readers, and the term refers to two distinct subgenres within the genre: supernatural horror fiction, which makes use of supernatural elements such as spirits and monsters and also occurs in stories that are, to some extent, counter quantifiable. The other subgenre is psychological horror fiction, which tends to be realistic and may be dramatic or emotional at times (Clasen, 2010).

In this context, *Middlemarch* (1871) by George Eliot is one of the outstanding works of nineteenth-century realism that also contains veiled, secret subjectivity with

horror connotations. The depiction of Bulstrode's guilty terror as his concealed scandalous past comes back to haunt him is the one that is the most completely explored. In the concealed experience of her heroine, Eliot investigates a new and more disturbing sort of haunting. This form of haunting is generated not in the guilty past but prospectively, as the narrator represents Dorothea's great internal conflict when she was on her honeymoon in Rome. The frightening and strange effect of that last vision will stay with readers long after they finish the story. Eliot demonstrates how Gothic is intimately intertwined in the framework of nineteenth-century narrative by utilizing dramatic extremes to describe ordinary human existence, in this case the emotions of despair and their recurrent nature experienced by a young bride (Garrett, 2012).

The decades 1970–1980 are considered by many to be the golden age of horror literature. This is due to the fact that during this time, horror writers started focusing more on portraying the terror that was carried out by ordinary people as opposed to the supernatural horror of ghosts and monsters. The monsters who appear in contemporary works of horror literature are often portrayed as characters who have been marginalized and mistreated by society. *The Exorcist* (1971) by William Peter Blatty and *Rosemary's Baby* (1967) by Ira Levin, are credited with laying the framework for horror fiction throughout the 1970s and 1980s (Cardin, 2017).

1.3. PSYCHOLOGICAL HORROR; SUBGENRE OF HORROR FICTION

In general, the term "horror" refers to a literary or poetic style, as well as a dramatic or cinematic approach, that is intended to evoke feelings of extreme fear. Horror is a new genre of the fantastic, and its subdivisions include what is sometimes referred to as "killer horror," which centers on violent and murderous people as villains; monster horror; paranormal/supernatural horror; extreme horror that emphasizes gore and bodily destruction; and psychological horror" (Cardin, 2017, p. 684). Psychological horror is mainly classified as a subgenre within the genre of horror fiction. The difference is that psychological horror doesn't focus only on the elements of fear; rather, it is concerned with the psychological conditions and the mental torture that take place on the inside of characters' minds in order to evoke feelings of fear, anxiety, and horror. Psychological horror often focuses on the sinister aspects of human mentality and depicts characters who are either tormented by their own minds or troubled by the minds

of someone else. In psychological horror, the characters' minds and emotions play a central role, often taking the place of traditional monsters. When there are monsters in the narrative, they are usually veiled by shadows, so the dread is more subtle than obvious. As a matter of fact, the "monster" is often intended to serve as a symbol for the complexities of an individual or of a community as a whole. The overall result is a disturbing tale that probes the deeper, underlying anxieties, fears, madness, and paranoia of the human mind through the lens of internal strife.

Psychological horror is a subgenre that rejects the supernatural and instead employs reality to create terror. Fear emerges from the characters' minds in psychological horror. According to Spratford & Clausen (2004), "psychological horror may terrify us by drawing out that which we have suppressed in ourselves, but it also reminds us that we can stop the horror by addressing our personal demons" (Spratford & Clausen, 2004, p. 93). In the protagonists' minds, nightmares, illusions, and the fading of the barrier between the actual and the imagined occur often in such works. In the genre of "psychological horror" fiction, characters are usually static, and the readers are perpetually wondering if the situation is real or if it happens in the character's mind only. It is not necessary for a monster to appear when the darkest concepts that have been buried in the most remote parts of human minds are released into the atmosphere.

To show the difference between the genre and the subgenre, the traditional horror narrative places an emphasis on an exterior confrontation, with a demon or other supernatural creature serving as the narrative’s villain and destroying the ordinary lives of people as the protagonist. Matt Cardin (2017) illustrates that psychological horror, in contrast to "killer and monster horror", does not depend on a physical or external danger to create a sense of dread in its spectator. Contrary to "paranormal/supernatural horror", this subgenre of horror does not rely primarily upon the presence of a ghostly or magical realm as the primary source of fear in the story. Psychological horror, as opposed to horror, concentrates struggles and violence more than external ones in order to stir up the primary fear and dread in its spectators.

Psychological horror became popular a few years ago, when cinematic studies acknowledged it as a subgenre of the horror genre in the middle of the twentieth century. There are many early examples of film psychological horror, including "The Black Cat" (1934), "Cat People" (1942), and "White Zombie" (1932), which focused on aspects of

psychological fear rather than the existence of monsters and other creatures. Nevertheless, psychological horror has its roots in literary works. For instance, in *Young Goodman Brown* (1835), by Nathaniel Hawthorne, there is a portrayal of a dreadful journey through the woods out beyond the Village of Salem in Massachusetts, and it finally ends on a confusing remark, leaving the reader to doubt whether the protagonist encountered a demonic group or merely seemed to have a vision that made him suspicious of and distanced from his household and the other community members (Cardin, 2017).

Psychological horror writers utilize the personal demons of the typical individual to horrifying levels. Typically, these personalities attempt to suppress their newly emerged ideas, which, of course, leads to even worse outcomes. The protagonists in such novels are incapable of regular behavior due to abuse or confusion. This often results in their demise as they grow unstable or even insane.

The lack of a direct danger in the conventional sense is one of its most distinguishing features. There is an internal force that drives the horror element, or horror factor, of these works. The protagonists are tormented by horrifying experiences they have absorbed, such as remorse, whispers in their minds, trauma, or torture they endured during their lives. "In some cases, these personal demons stay encased in the character's head, slowly driving him or her crazy but never actually surfacing as reality" (Spratford & Clausen, 2004, p. 92). In the novels of psychological horror, the characters' irrational fears, anxieties, and beliefs, as well as their emotional instability, are at the core of psychological horror. The intrigue, tension, and fear are all raised to a higher level. In this sense, Edgar Allan Poe was the genre's foremost author, and his stories continue to terrify readers even in this day and age. Stories such as *The Black Cat*, The *Tell-Tale Heart*, and The *Fall of the House of Usher* are outstanding examples of the author's use of the elements of psychological horror. Poe created essentially all of his works with struggle in mind, portraying individuals that look normal on the surface but have lost control and become manic. *The Black Cat* is about an addict who is pushed to insane behavior by his cat and commits violent deeds as a result. *The Fall of the House of Usher* is Poe's famous work in this subgenre. It portrays a dreadful mood, a gloomy narrative, and the psychological horror of humans in order to illustrate the process of the

dissolution and destruction of the human psyche, therefore providing readers with a distinct visual experience using psychological horrors.

Spratford & Clausen (2004) refer to the fact that readers have been enthralled by not just Poe's works but also those that he influenced. It is possible that horror readers are drawn to psychological fear because they are looking for a more authentically terrifying situation to read about. Even though these works have elements of fiction, the "monsters" are generated from the subconscious of real people. Because of this, many readers believe the stories have become more realistic and, as a result, extremely frightening. Besides explaining the psychology of offenders and victims as well as the act of horrific abuse, the subjects of his works include unreliable narrators, retribution plots, and family members who go mad. Poe's prescience in what would become many of the genres that followed Gothic literature reveals how psychological horror, in particular, evolved from Gothic literature.

Along with the narratives of Paula Hawkins and Stephen King, which are the subject of analysis in the next chapters, other famous modern works of psychological horror fiction include L. Ron Hubbard's Fear (1940), Shirley Jackson's *The Haunting of Hill House* (1959), Robert Bloch's *Psycho* (1959), *Rosemary's Baby* (1968) by Ira Levin, and *Woman at Point Zero* (1975) by Nawal El Saadawi. These works all convey the fear of increasing psychotic episodes and real inner conflict. Psychological horror and the standard thriller themes might merge in a psychological thriller. For instance, in a detective story, the main character begins to question his sanity or his ability to distinguish between friends and foes. On the other hand, there may be a murder investigation where the facts and witnesses are so outlandish that the investigator starts to doubt his own sanity and the reality he has been living in. Psychological thriller narratives can be clearly found in the novels of Agatha Christie, the only British novelist to ever master the genre.

1.3.1. The Psychology of Horror

The human protagonists' emotional experiences towards the existence of monsters that live in their imaginative worlds are extremely crucial aspects of the story. Readers of horror novels and viewers of horror films and television shows are intended

to have analogous experiences in the sense that they have similar psychological responses to terrifying creatures. To be more specific, humans share the emotional judgment that monsters are terrifying and disgusting, which may be translated as frightening and uncomfortable, and this causes us to experience the same emotions as the characters and the readers (Carroll, 1990). Horror, in its realistic nature, is weird and uncomfortable; therefore, it infiltrates every part of the human psychology. According to Gina Wisker, "Horror is social, cultural, political, psychological, emotional, spiritual, supernatural, natural, and part of the human condition…horror is thus ambivalently human" (Wisker, 2005, p. 4). In this sense, horror can affect people in all life domains, and this usually causes great pressure on humans' psyches. Noel Carrol refers to the importance of psychoanalysis within horror fiction and makes it clear that psychology can still have so much contribution to horror, "if only because various psychoanalytic myths, images, and self-understandings" are consistently and significantly adopted by horror fiction writers of the twentieth century, regardless of whether it gives a suitable general explanation of the genre and its appealing aspects. Psychology could still be required when discussing the genre or, more particularly, specific instances of the genre (Carroll, 1990, p. 168).

Carroll intends to explain that horror has an authentic relationship with psychoanalysis, and it can be seen when the modern horror genre and postmodernism have a relationship in that they both articulate a fear about cultures and ages; both turn to the past, sometimes with significant melancholy; and both depict the individual in terms that are not sacred. To discover this relationship in its profound meaning, this study focuses on the elements of psychological horror, namely, psychopathy, paranoia, self-doubt, and suspicion.

1.3.2. Psychopathy

Psychopathy is a personality disorder that is defined by an inability to create connections with other people and conduct that is antisocial and extremely narcissistic. Psychopathy is a psychological condition that may have negative consequences for society. In general, a psychopath is characterized by the absence of compassion, irresponsibility, and dependability. They are also adept at lying and covering their tracks. (Helfgott, 2008). A psychopath is a freak and has no empathy, as indicated by the term.

According to Robert Hare, "psychopaths are social predators who charm, manipulate, and ruthlessly plow their way through life, leaving a broad trail of broken hearts, shattered expectations, and empty wallets" (Hare, 1999, p. xi). The behavior of psychopathic people is related to their lack of sense of guilt. Psychopaths have a remarkable ability to try to justify their behavior and to ignore personal responsibility for actions that cause horror and frustration to their community and companions. Their control over inhibitory activity is not very strong. It is one of the reasons why it is so easy for them to engage in actions that are prohibited and excessively violent.

According to Hare, the scientific term for these people who may be charming but are always dangerous is "psychopaths". They are often quite nice and charming, and they have the ability to be highly successful when it comes to presenting themselves in a positive light. On the surface, people with this disorder seem normal and may even get along well with others. This is anything that they do in order to conceal something else that they wish to do, something that is obviously harmful to society and includes things like murder and other things. Hare describes them as being "completely lacking in conscience and in feelings for others; they selfishly take what they want and do as they please, violating social norms and expectations without the slightest sense of guilt or regret" (Hare, 1999, p. xi).

Psychopaths are distinguished by their egoistic behavior and attitude, in which they pursue their own goals without regard for the perspectives or experiences of others. Because of their self-centeredness, individuals are free to act in whatever way brings them joy. Psychos are developed with psychological traits such as instability and fearlessness that cause them to engage in risk-seeking behavior and a failure to accept social norms. These differences contribute to the fact that psychopaths are unable to conform to society's expectations. They like putting themselves in potentially dangerous situations, which causes an increase in their levels of adrenaline. As a result, they often disobey the rules that govern society. The moral deficiency of a psychopath is mirrored in the violent crimes they commit, which might include abusing, raping, murdering, and even stealing body parts. Lack of behavioral control is common among psychopaths, who also tend to have fewer emotional responses. The inability of a psychopath to exert emotional control contributes to the ice-cold appearance of their personality. Psychopaths have a high level of sensitivity to every perceived slight or insult. The

majority of people who are considered normal have strong inhibitory restrictions over their conduct.

Derek Russell Davis (1984) states that psychopathy manifests itself at times of hardship and is a reflection of the inability to accomplish a stable reorganization of society through alterations in routines and functions. These emergencies may be broken down into two categories: developmental and accidental. As part of the natural progression of the life cycle, developmental crises are to be anticipated. For instance, enrolling in school, graduating from university, getting a good job, and starting a family are all significant life events. Accidental crises include things like the unexpected death of a family member or other loved one, the abandonment of a loved one by a family member or other loved one, or sickness. Therefore, the signs and symptoms of a psychopath begin to manifest themselves in infancy and persist throughout the individual's maturity (Davis, 1984). The psychopathic personality is able to cover or disguise the underlying absence of inner personality characteristics, an internal instability that leads to continually intended harmful conduct and is often more detrimental to the psychopathic person than it is to people. Regardless of the fact that on the outside the psychopathic person seems to be serious, clever, and even attractive, on the inside they are incapable of experiencing real feelings. Psychos have a tendency to produce a favorable initial impression on individuals and often give the impression to onlookers that they are incredibly ordinary. However, they are self-absorbed, dishonest, and unreliable.

1.3.3. Paranoia of Self-Doubt and Suspicion of Others

As a psychological disorder, paranoia is defined as “a psychiatric diagnosis assigned to individuals who persistently perceive interpersonal threats and danger without sufficient evidence or cause”. However, paranoid imagination may serve an adaptive function, which is important to keep in mind since the symptoms of paranoia often create considerable problems in personal relationships and in overall well-being. People who are paranoid have a definite survival advantage over those who are overly comforting or defy factors of danger and threat because they are able to focus their attention on discovering or escaping risk, as well as being selective in who to rely on or believe (Lewis & Ridenour, 2017, p .1).

Paranoia as a term incorporates an "extraordinarily complex medical, psychiatric, and psychoanalytic history", which comes to mean "the fear of persecution", A sense of anxiety, frequently to the point of insanity and hallucination, a need for dominance, the supposed loss of self, and feelings of disempowerment are typical symptoms of paranoia (Bersani, 1989, p. 145). Over the course of the last two thousand years, writers in the field of medicine have made references to the word "paranoia," which means "out of one's mind" in Greek. Emil Kraepelin, a German psychiatrist, changed. The word "paranoia" has transitioned from its original meaning of insanity to its current meaning, which refers to thinking that is unreasonable. Kraepelin proposed that there is a gradient of intensity along which the phenomenon of paranoia might be viewed, with more severe cases being at one end of the spectrum. The first to explore paranoid processes was Sigmund Freud (1856–1939), who developed psychological theories of paranoia built on a first-person account of the disease. Freud's early investigations on the issue stated that paranoia was a response to condemned homosexual tendencies. However, subsequent psychoanalytic authors stress the use of estimation as a more general kind of inner defensive strategy against deeply embedded, bitter feelings about oneself (Millon et al., 2004).

Multiple theoretical approaches, particularly the psychology of self, have influenced the paranoid literature. The idea that paranoia is a reaction to actual or imagined dangers to the self is central to the majority of paranoia theories. Paranoia may be melancholy, a psychological condition designed to prevent "a breakthrough into depressed thought". This approach is based on the notion that depression is a state that fights psychological resilience. According to this point of view, one may expect those who suffer from paranoia to identify as having little or a low level of despair (Zigler & Glick, 1984, p. 57).

The main features of paranoid individuals are extensive and unjustified distrust and skepticism of everyone else. Paranoid people are trapped in a strict and dysfunctional cycle of thinking, mood, and action predicated on the belief that everyone else is "out to get them". Over time, people who have been diagnosed with this condition maintain a heightened level of awareness by monitoring their surroundings for any dangers. They also have a tendency to be suspicious of pleasant gestures and any circumstances that may be cloudy. Hypersensitivity to what are perceived as actual

slights, along with an inflated belief in one's own expertise and ability, strains interpersonal connections and depletes social networks. They frequently isolate themselves and struggle to participate in occasions or situations on a social basis, and they usually suspect their partners of becoming unfaithful. Because they see the world as a dangerous place, they have an extreme sensitivity to any information that would indicate that they are the ones being victimized. They often misunderstand the statements and actions of others because they are always looking for evidence that they are victims themselves. Paranoid individuals do not only suspect others; self-doubt is likely another important element that contributes to certain feelings of horror and inner struggle (Oltmanns & Okada, 2006).

Self-doubt is a sense of uncertainty about one or more characteristics of oneself, such as competence or charisma. It is commonly accepted that some level of self-acceptance is acceptable since many individuals may question their abilities to manage unfamiliar or hard conditions. A threat to the protagonist's ego is the source of the terror in a psychological horror. A protagonist may start to question whether he or the entire world has lost touch with reality if, for instance, he or she is experiencing similar symptoms. Suspicion, paranoia, and self-doubt on the part of the protagonist are rather standard fare (Oltmanns & Okada, 2006).

People who suffer from paranoia are a recurrent theme in works of horror literature, especially those related to the subgenre of psychological horror. In many cases, they serve as a more personal and relatable kind of terror that is intermingled with the more out-of-this-world aspects of the horror genre. Both H.P. Lovecraft's and Edgar Allan Poe's literary works make considerable use of paranoia. Edgar Allan Poe's *The Tell-Tale Heart* (1843) also incorporates the theme of paranoia. The nameless narrator is afflicted with a psychotic preoccupation that at first focuses on an elderly man's eye and then shifts its focus to the "beating" heart of the elderly person. In broad strokes, it is a tale about a murder committed with callous indifference that makes use of suspense to evoke feelings of dread in the readers. Multiple variables, which might be environmental or psychological, contribute to paranoid personality disorder. *A Tale Tell Heart* does not go into the narrator's upbringing or early life, but it does provide a detailed account of the personality disorder element that led to his actions. Because of his insanity, the narrator develops a personality problem. He suffers from excessive and

irrational anxiety. Because of his severe anxiety, he develops acute paranoid symptoms, which in turn influence his mood and behavior.

Similarly, H.P. Lovecraft is a close instance of an author who reveals a comprehensive paranoia framework; fundamental to his works was the notion that followers of religions organized to worship evil gods are trying to bring those gods back to govern humanity. In several of Lovecraft's works, individuals going mad after viewing a monster or ancient deity that their minds cannot grasp is a reoccurring motif. His tales' moods focused mostly on fearful characters, such as Dagon, from beginning to finish. The protagonist in The Call of Cthulhu develops paranoia during the course of the novel. At the conclusion of Dagon, the central protagonist and narrator begin to go mad. Thruston has been more concerned about his security, and a cult has murdered those who knew very much about Cthulhu. The plot revolves around the fact that Thruston seems to be the only person with credible proof of the cult's existence.

The whole chapter suggests that the horror fiction of the twentieth century do not necessarily include gothic settings filled with demons and unfamiliar creatures. Modern horror fiction incorporates and reflects the modern fears and pressures experienced mentally by the characters. This blending between traditional and modern elements can be clearly traced in the psychological horror fiction of both Paula Hawkins and Stephen King.

2. PAULA HAWKINS'S *THE GIRL ON THE TRAIN*

"I have lost control over everything…even the places in my head"

2.1. AN OVERVIEW OF THE AUTHOR AND THE NOVEL

The Girl on the Train (2015) is among the novels that have achieved the highest success on a worldwide scale. It recounts the story of a woman's secrets that are connected to a murder. This novel, which has been recorded as the New York Times's greatest book in fiction for the year 2015, after some time, the novel was turned into a movie that was produced in Hollywood and starred by Emily Blunt as Rachel Watson, the main character.

Born in 1972, Paula Hawkins is a British author famous for her novel *The Girl on the Train.* She enrolled in Oxford and earned a degree there with a triple major in philosophy. After her career as a business writer for The Times, she went on to write for a wide range of periodicals throughout her independent career. Hawkins changed her interest to writing literary works. She published four humorous novels under the name Amy Silver. She achieved her fame only after the publication of *The Girl on the Train*, which has been translated into forty languages (Course Hero, 2017).

Emine Saner (2015) noted that Paula Hawkins wrote the novel while feeling a sense of urgency that was almost fearful, as that feeling pervaded the novel. However, *The Girl on the Train* is a story with many aspects, and one of these aspects is the formation of a multifaceted personality. It explores how domestic abuse, drug addiction, and murder all contribute to a psychopath's personality. The plot ingeniously revolves around the lives of three females who are all going through difficult times and situations that clearly created threats, which in turn affected their stability (Flores-Quesada, 2019).

Rachel, Anna, and Megan are the three females on whom the novel is centered. Rachel, a 32-year-old alcoholic, is the main character. As the girl on the train, she embodies the metaphor of the title. She takes the same train to and from work every day, and during each trip, she stands to check on a suburban house she passes every day. The

only family and couple whose home she sees on a daily basis is that of Jass and Jasson, to whom she gives their names. This house brings back fond memories of a wonderful life she once had with her husband, Tom, before they divorced. Rachel's former husband's name is Tom Watson. Rachel's melancholy was caused by their inability to have children, which was the catalyst for their divorce. Rachel yearns to have a child and experience joy in the same way as other women. This is the reason why Tom started having an affair with Anna and eventually married her. Anna is stunning, yet she is somewhat younger than Rachel. Anna is portrayed as a bad person in this novel since she is the one who caused Rachel and Tom's separation. She considers Rachel to be a threat to her marriage. After learning she is infertile, Rachel, the protagonist of the story, spirals downward into drunkenness and misery. She is forced out of her home, fired from her job, and separated from her husband, Tom, who eventually weds Anna and gives birth to a baby girl.

In his article, *the Nature of Horror* Noel Carroll assumes that "the current ascendancy of the genre of horror may be the mass popular expression of the same anxiety concerning criteria that preoccupies the more esoteric forms of postmodernism" (Carroll, 1990, p. 58). Hawkins shows that the marriage experience in postmodern times becomes a real source of anxiety. The feeling of horror, which is connected to violence committed against women, is the focus of the narrative. The murder of Megan, as well as the mental horror caused by Tom to the novel's three narrators, Rachel, Anna, and Megan. The night that Megan mysteriously disappeared, Rachel was abused by a stranger, even though she does not truly remember anything. The underground station comes to serve as an opposition to the two houses, which Rachel sees as symbols of safety and refuge.

Anna makes an effort to fulfill the pattern of mother and wife relationships, but she is unable to do so in a healthy manner because she believes it is necessary for her to despise other women and compete with them. The third character is Megan, a wife who is dissatisfied with her marriage and uses her femininity and beauty as a shield to avoid dealing with the issues that really bother her. Rachel sees the same woman every day while riding the train to work, and that woman is Megan.

Megan is not only Anna's neighbor but also her baby's nanny. The fear that haunted the lives of the main characters started just after the mysterious murder of

Megan. All of the women who suffered constant fear are involved directly and indirectly in relationships with Tom, the murderer; Megan is his current wife; Anna is his former lover; and Rachel is his former wife. The horrific experiences of the women fractured their narratives and disrupted the life that is portrayed as an ideal of a wonderful family. Rachel's memories are foggy because of her intoxication, but even more crucially, her body is mistreated by herself and others.

2.2. PSYCHOLOGICAL HORROR EXPERIENCED BY RACHEL

The psychological horror permeates the whole novel and appears through the protagonist, Rachel. The novel is about Rachel Watson's post-divorce situation. Her marriage to Tom has lasted for five years. He abuses her, and after divorcing her, he directly married another woman. "He looks away. There's something about the shape of his mouth that suggests distaste. He finds me distasteful" (Hawkins, 2015, p. 27). Rachel's psychological horror started when she waited for children but was unable to have them. Rachel developed psychopathy, paranoia, and self-doubt as a result, fell into a deep depression, and turned to drinking to drown out her difficulties.

> I felt isolated in my misery. I became lonely, so I drank a bit, and then a bit more, and then I became lonelier, because no one likes being around a drunk. I lost and I drank and I rank and I lost. I liked my job, but I didn't have a glittering career, and even if I had, let's be honest: women are still only really valued for two things – their looks and their role as mothers. I'm not beautiful, and I can't have kids, so what does that make me? Worthless (Hawkins, 2015, p. 40).

Rachel experimented with alcohol because she was so depressed and lonely. She simply pursues her passion without taking into account the social standard that it is unacceptable to be a drinker in her area. Once Rachel understood she would be alone, she decided to enjoy herself by drinking heavily. She was not outgoing and had no friendships. Rachel recalls an unpleasant café meeting with old colleagues. She tells them she is at the location for an interview, which is a lie. Instead, she went towards the park, found a bench, and received a voicemail from Anna asking her to avoid calling. She continued drinking a lot and sleeping on the bench.

Numerous elements contribute to Rachel's portrayal as a psychopathic and paranoid woman. She does not get along well with anyone, including her husband, Tom. Additionally, her actions are influenced by her mood and sense of herself, which are clearly overwhelmed by doubt. The only reason this scenario is resolved is because

Rachel finds out that Tom is engaged in a relationship with Anna, which ultimately leads to the divorce. Rachel believes that she is to blame for everything that has happened, especially after learning that she was the only one who was unable to have children. Rachel had barely recovered from the loss of her father when she met Tom, the perfect partner in every way. She becomes depressed and eventually an alcoholic after realizing, after they are married, that she is an infertile woman.

As the train passes by the town where her previous home is located, Rachel constantly imagines alternate worlds that she reflects onto the houses she sees. She is no longer familiar with the strong attachments formed in these settings as a result of her painful breakup, which has removed her from the setting that once gave her a respectable status and an appropriate social position, which in turn leads to the anxieties and insecurity of Rachel's mind (Carla Rodríguez-González, 2017).

Rachel is able to get a vision of the two houses that she so passionately desires while riding the train, which provides her with a feeling of purpose despite the instability that exists in other aspects of her life. Along with the fact that he has married another woman he loves and is now living in the home that they shared, the fact that she is being tortured into submitting to Tom is also a factor:

> I see the houses as others do not; even their owners probably don't see them from this perspective. Twice a day I am offered a view into their lives, just for a moment. There's something comforting about the sight of strangers safe at home (Hawkins, 2015, p. 12).

The statement that Rachel made was in reference to the married couples that she observes while traveling. She does this so that she may escape her own life, which has fallen apart as a result of her alcoholism and imagine how beautiful and joyful their lives are. In the explanation made by Kun Mar'atul Fauziah (2018), Rachel decided to ride the train. She enjoyed rail travel. Since her separation from Tom, she has had no clear purpose in life. Her own attitude has caused her to lose everything, including her job. It compelled him to do something so pointless. Rachel became uneasy about herself. Since she was intoxicated, this altered her look.

However, later, the story reveals that the houses that are meant to be secure in the suburbs instead contain anxiety resulting from the horror of murder and violence. On one of her usual travels, Rachel notices Jess kissing a stranger who is not Jason. Her anger arises as a result of the fact that the dishonesty of Jess brought to mind the betrayal of Tom.

A negative relationship might cause paranoia. Rachel constantly feels sad when she thinks back on her divorce. She must also accept the reality that Tom lives in comfort with his new wife and baby. When Rachel discovered that her brother Tom had a relationship with Anna, she was devastated:

> That was my first home. … I can't bear to look at it. Well, I can, I do, I want to, I don't want to, I try not to. … I still remember the pain I felt when I saw Anna watering the rose bushes near the fence, her T-shirt stretched tight over her bulging belly, and I bit my lip so hard it bled (Hawkins, 2015, p. 03).

Rachel met Tom not long after her father passed away, and he helped her through her bereavement. Over time, she became content. She finally achieved the happy ending she had always hoped for when she married Tom and settled into the beautiful home she had always dreamed of. Later, Rachel discovered emails from a woman named Anna who sent a love text to her husband as evidence of their love connection. Rachel was already in pain when she and Tom separated, but their separation caused her further suffering. It was more agonizing when she experienced severe depression because of their unsuccessful efforts to have a child. Tom abandoned her and married Anna after divorcing Rachel. All of these occurrences create an impression on Rachel's personality that can only be described as psychopathic. Instead, she believes that she is obligated to apologize for actions or mistakes that she neither remembers nor has ever committed. When she begins seeing a psychiatrist, she recognizes that some of her recollections have been twisted and formed by her ex-husband's actions; this signifies the start of her road to recovery.

Angela Connolly (2003), in her article "Psychoanalytic Theory in Times of Terror," explains: "In postmodern times, the existence of the monster is not anymore portrayed as being separate from the environment that emerged in the narrative but rather as originating from its conflicts, contradictions, and anxieties (Connolly, 2003, p. 418). As can be seen clearly from the beginning to the end of the narrative, there are no ghosts, monsters, bloodshed, or supernatural powers that make continuous horrific attacks. Tom is the human monster who causes her psychological horror, controls her life, and creates her paranoia and self-doubt, all of which contribute to creating a lonely person who has no ability to be in contact with others or be in connection with real events. The psychological horror appears with the paranoia of Rachel for many reasons: her divorce, her loneliness, her addiction, her suspicion of others, the bloody scene after heavy drinking, and the murder of Megan.

Rachel's paranoia leads her to deceive others by pretending to be another person. Rachel lied a lot to hide her unemployment. She doesn't inform Cathy that she has been dismissed from her job, but she has actually been lying since she feigned to head every morning to work and return in the afternoon. For months, she hid her lies. In a moment of confrontation, Cathy says to Rachel, "Please tell me that you haven't been pretending to go to work. That you haven't been lying to me—day in, day out—all this time. I didn't know how to tell you" (Hawkins, 2015, p. 79).

Rachel became anxious as she realized the shameful things she had done. She nevertheless does not modify her behavior; she continues to do dumb things and behave unconsciously as an irresponsible person, "two girls sitting across the carriage look at me and then at each other, with a sly exchange of smiles. I don't know what they think of me, but I know it isn't good" (Hawkins, 2015, p. 32). As she passes her former residence, she remembers that the night before, while drunk, she called Tom and informed him she still loved him. This is not as terrible as the many previous times she has been drunk and done terrible things, like damaging a wall while arguing with Tom or being sent home from work. Tom calls her that evening when she is on the train and tells her she has to stop calling him. As seen in Rachel's situation, the resulting pressure and intense fear of being an unacceptable person may have detrimental impacts on people who are unable to meet these expectations. Her failure to satisfy societal expectations for a woman of her age causes her self-doubt. When she is in this state of mind, she creates her own sense of identity, treating the once-happy, bright, beautiful woman as if she were someone else. Due to the fact that she was physically rejected, she is unable to remember the last time she had any type of personal interaction with another person: "a hug, or a heartfelt squeeze of my hand... my heart twitches" (Hawkins, 2015, p. 21). This unsociability is a direct result of her psychopathy, and she cannot remember the last time she spoke to another human being. Her little connection with others, coupled with a feeling of isolation, promotes her psychopathy as a person to be shunned or alienated, and this gradually develops her sense of self-rejection:

> I am not the girl I used to be. I am no longer desirable, I'm off-putting in some way. It's not just that I've put on weight, or that my face is puffy from the drinking and the lack of sleep; it's as if people can see the damage written all over me, they can see it in my face (Hawkins, 2015, p.27).

Rachel is presented as a woman who's perfect life has fallen apart, which has caused her to suffer. Her mental instability is the root cause of her horror. Rachel's

obsessive thoughts are symptoms of anxiety and fear of the unknown. Rachel feels anxious due to her transformation. She believes she is no longer a good-looking woman because of her excess weight and swollen face from excessive drinking and a lack of rest. Rachel struggles with feelings of unworthiness. She is under the impression that she is to blame for all of the horrors that have upset her throughout her life. She believes that Tom had no part in the demise of their relationship since she was unable to have a child throughout their time together. Her in Rachel's paranoid behavior is clear in many ways, including her emotions of anxiety, turning to alcohol, often inflicting dread on others, and being disagreeable to everybody else. She doesn't only hurt herself; she also has the ability to hurt other people and cause them a feeling of anxiety or terror: ability to have a child was the impetus for her downward slide into alcoholism.

> Look, I know you're having a tough time, „she says, as though she has nothing to do with my pain, but you can't call us at night all the time. It's a bad enough that you wake us when you call, but you wake Evie, too, and that's just not acceptable (Hawkins, 2015, p.16).

Because it gave Anna such a restless feeling, she thought it was a form of panic. Additionally, calling a married person at a late hour is improper conduct. Because it goes against social conventions: "Please, Rachel, you can't call me like this all the time. You've got to sort yourself out" (Hawkins, 2015, p. 32). She has ruined other people's peace of mind. Frequently, Rachel phones Tom even at late hours; this worried Anna, his new wife since they were unable to sleep peacefully.

Rachel's feelings for Tom never changed, but their chances of being together were dwindling since Tom was set on marrying Anna. Rachel moved into Cathy's apartment after her separation from Tom. They went to the same university and knew each other superficially, but Cathy became a real friend for Rachel in her tough times. Cathy offered Rachel a spare bedroom in her apartment, and Rachel gladly accepted. Rachel had intended to remain for a short period, but she ended up staying for two years. She was unhappy, even though she shared a home with Cathy. She still had a propensity for isolation, and her thoughts often focuse on Tom.

Rachel's psychological horror is further developed by her sense of self-doubt. One day, she decides to travel to Jess and Jason's home in an effort to feel more connected to them, but this time she quits the train and walks along the station. The next morning, she wakes up with injuries, especially on her head. She vaguely recalls traveling to Blenheim Road. She believes she fainted, and a person picked her up, or that

a quarrel may have occurred. She gets many voice messages from Tom shouting at her because she is frightening his wife. Rachel suffers from the kind of self-doubt and memory problems that often follow excessive alcohol addiction. Rachel does not herself remember what occurred on that Saturday night, and she is unable to reveal the incident. This incident creates an atmosphere of mystery that raises Rachel's sense of horror and self-doubt. She becomes suspicious of the idea that if she really hurts Megan while drunk,

> Mrs. Watson, Anna Watson said that she thought you were drunk when she saw you outside her home. Were you drunk? No, I said, I keeping my eyes firmly on the detective so that I didn't catch Cathy's eye (Hawkins, 2015, p. 103).

Based on the fact that the missing woman's address was provided in the news report, Rachel is able to figure out that Jess and Megan refer to the same woman. Megan, or the woman Rachel calls Jess, disappeared, and Rachel is being questioned by police after this incident. Anna also saw Rachel, who was apparently intoxicated, staggering across the street from her home. She was aware that the police were looking into her as one of the potential suspects in connection with Megan's disappearance. Specifically, on the day that Megan left, Rachel was in the same area close to Megan's home. In addition, she is an addict, which both intensifies the situation and increases the probability that she may do something without even realizing it. Rachel feels horror after this situation. By obscuring the incidents surrounding Megan's disappearance, the novel generates many lines of doubt. Scott may have discovered

Megan's boyfriend and been engaged in what occurred that evening. Rachel believes that the police are looking into Scott, Megan's husband, as the suspect because they are unaware of what she is aware of, which is that the victim was in a relationship with another man. According to the investigation, she may have attacked Megan because she mistook her for Anna. Rachel admits that Megan and she had a relationship, but the investigators do not seem to trust her. Rachel comes to the understanding that the ideal story she envisioned was nothing more than a fantasy and that nothing she believed she saw was really as things are. It is possible that her every day journey will be the beginning of her process of coming to terms with reality. It may become Rachel's first step to releasing herself from the self-doubt that has haunted her for months.

Rachel shows compassion for Scott because she believes that he must be experiencing the same feelings of separation that she endures because of his wife's affair

and her abandonment of the relationship. Rachel, too, is a victim of betrayal and rejection by Tom:

> I'm thinking about her now. I have to convince Scott that I knew her—a little, not a lot. That way, he'll believe me when I tell him that I saw her with another man. If I admit to lying right away, he'll never trust me (Hawkins, 2015, p. 60).

Since her alcoholism has made her testimony less credible, she has been beating herself up about it. She becomes very depressed when Scott informs her that the police think she is a helpless bystander who intervenes in other people's lives. It seems like Megan's issue has given her life some value. Her anxiety and feeling of worthlessness grow as she realizes she cannot do anything to assist and that her witness will be disregarded as untrustworthy. Megan's case investigation seems to be the only thing that gives her any sense of significance. Her feelings of guilt and low self-esteem increase as she understands she cannot do anything to help and that her testimony is not taken seriously because of her drinking problem. Rachel is excluded as a credible witness in Megan's case. Scott is furious that Rachel lied to him about her relationship with Megan. He locks the door to the spare bedroom after carrying her there. Scott finds her fear amusing. After a little pause, he unlocks the door and tells her to go. Rachel reports Scott to the police, but she fears Detective Sergeant Riley doesn't really believe her. Because she has nothing to focus on, she goes back to drinking. She continues to be ignorant of Tom's ability to manipulate and deceive her.

The repeated occurrence of Rachel's nightmares intensifies her sense of fear while simultaneously reducing the probability that Megan will make it back home alive. Rachel does not stop having suspicions about Kamal and Scott, despite the fact that both of them have important incentives related to the claimed love affair involving Rachel, Kamal, and Scott. Rachel often has dreams in which she feels as if she is choking. Rachel is certain that her shattered memory contains the solution to the mystery, so she starts acting like a private investigator. She assigns each memory flash a category in an effort to better understand them and find a solution that will allow her to retrieve further information.

As the narrative progresses, Rachel is no longer an addict bothering her former husband Tom, and the narrative shifts to focus on her memory of the incidents caused by Tom's aggression against her. Towards the end of the story, it becomes clear that Tom, Rachel's ex-husband, exploits her state of intoxication in order to frighten and

torture her, both mentally and physically. He led her to think that she was the person who had been acting violently and was a risk to both him and other people. In other words, Tom takes advantage of Rachel's fragility in a manner that inhibits her from gaining power over her personal life in a way that is detrimental to both of them. Anna and Rachel are ultimately capable of committing a terrible act of responsibility against the man who victimized them.

2.2.1. Megan and Anna

Megan is a woman who suffers from self-doubt related to her experiences**.** After Megan has gotten over the initial shock and grief at the passing of her brother, she makes the decision to move in with her boyfriend, Mac. They have a baby whom, they name Libby, but she leads them to fight with one another and make mistakes until the child dies. After the loss of the baby, Mac completely disappeared from the scene. Megan had feelings of remorse for her experiences and kept them to herself.

> At night I can still feel it. It's the thing I dread, the thing that keeps me awake: the feeling of being alone in that house. I was so frightened —too frightened to go to sleep. I'd just walk around those dark rooms and I'd hear her crying, I'd smell her skin. I saw things (Hawkins, 2015, p. 210).

Megan's psychological horror comes from her negative outlook on both the present and the future, which is also a contributing factor to her depressed state of mind. Because Megan considers herself guilty for the past, her self-doubt shows itself in her behavior. Megan insisted that she was to blame for the loss that she experienced. Megan had the impression that everything was going well in her life until she lost Ben. On the other hand, Megan was left feeling perplexed following the experience.

Megan is in an increased state of self-doubt, she finds herself trapped by her reliance on men, who in turn control her, and such relationships define her not as an autonomous woman but in relation to men. Since her marriage is suffocating her, Megan turns to the one thing she thinks would give her power, which is the sexual interest she arouses in men, even though this has only ever led to further suffering. As a result, she has an affair with Tom, who exerts as much control over her as he does over his wife and mistress; in fact, he asks her to take care of his and Anna's child, incorporating her into the domestic sphere that Tom rules, although at a lesser status than his wife. She initially agrees to be with the baby but finds the daily contact with the kid to be

impossible to endure, so she ends up quitting her job and withdrawing farther inside the home she and Scott share. Megan believes she lacks the ability to be a suitable wife to Scott: “I’m scared,’ I tell him. ‘ What if I do it all wrong again? What if there’s something wrong with me? What if things go wrong with Scott?” (Hawkins, 2015, p. 157). She claims to love Scott, but she and Tom are having an affair that mirrors Anna and Tom’s relationship when they cheated on Rachel. The events of her past negatively affected her future. Therefore, she abandoned her efforts to be a better partner. Megan is incapable of developing confidence in anybody, subjecting her to a sequence of shallow relationships that serve to divert her attention from her crushing feeling of regret.

Megan suffers night terrors and has trouble sleeping. Scott, hoping it might help, urged her to see a psychologist. Megan discussed her relationship with Scott with her therapist, Dr. Kamal Abdic, who is a psychotherapist. Dr. Abdic made the assumption that Scott was an emotionally abusive person. Megan developed a relationship with her therapist. The affair continued despite his warnings that it was immoral. As she gets closer to him, Megan reveals to Dr. Abdic that she had a child at the age of seventeen. The child drowned while she fell asleep in the bathroom while holding the infant. After that, she and her partner buried the baby to cover her death. After getting into trouble with Dr. Kamal, Megan has some regrets about how she handled their relationship. Because Megan experiences feelings of rejection from Tom, she acts inappropriately with Dr. Kamal.

Megan is confronted with rejection from her lover as well as an increasing amount of attention and control from her husband; she erupts in anger, withdraws from other people, and eventually becomes weak. When she made sure about her pregnancy, she looked up to see Tom emerge from under the bridge, and he waved for her to enter his car so that the two of them could have a talk. He brought her into the woods with him. She let him know that she was pregnant with his child: "He’s coming towards me. He has something in his hand. I’ve fallen. I must have slipped. Hit my head on something. I think I’m going to be sick. Everything is red. I can’t get up" (Hawkins, 2015, p. 171). He suggested that she have an abortion. Tom’s response failed to meet her expectations. She was thus upset and disappointed, and she yelled at Tom. Megan

expressed her feelings, and she rejected Tom's response. They got into a fight because she was so angry, and as a result, he killed her.

Unlike Megan, Anna has tremendous affection for her family. She has faith in Tom and praises him for being a wonderful partner. Rachel was the one source of tension in her otherwise happy marriage. She remained close to her family and made it a habit to call Tom since Rachel still feels the need to be close to him. When Anna looked into Tom's bag, she found a phone. Anna discovers that the phone really belongs to Megan and that she is using it. Because Megan was last seen with her phone, Anna starts to form the hypothesis that Tom was in a relationship with Megan and that he might have met her on the night that she was killed.

Rachel recalls the things that happened the night Megan passed away. She remembers that Tom hit her on the head while they were standing under the bridge close to his home, and she recalls seeing Megan enter his car with him at that moment.

Anna eventually comes to the realization that she is very much like Rachel, the person who was causing her anxiety and who poses a danger to her marriage. However, unlike Rachel, Anna is mistaking the actual source of the threat for Tom. However, Megan's response is distinct from the others' since she is not dependent on Tom in the exact manner that the other women are.

2.3. TOM AS A HUMAN MONSTER

Tom tricks the women he knows, putting them in a permanent state of horror and despair as a result of his actions. Rachel was exploited, and he cheated on her with Anna. He convinces her that she is to blame for everything that goes wrong in her life, which in turn causes her to live in continual self-doubt. Tom takes advantage of the fact that Rachel is an alcoholic who suffers from blackouts. When she drinks excessively, she has blackouts in which she cannot recall what occurred or recalls only specific aspects. Tom tells her lies about what happened since he knows she will not remember it. Rachel, who suffers from self-doubt, continues to adore Tom despite the couple's divorce and Tom's cheating throughout their marriage. She has absolute confidence in all that he says to her. After getting a divorce from Rachel and marrying Anna, he then betrays Anna by having an affair with Megan after they have been married for a while. When

Anna and Tom decide to employ Megan to care for Evie, Tom and Megan soon find themselves involved in a romantic relationship. When he discovers that Megan is pregnant with his baby, he violates her by refusing to support and defend her. Tom finally kills Megan.

At the end of the novel, she realizes that she can finally rely on her own memory. She has come to the conclusion that he has been deceiving her on a regular basis. In a moment of recollection, she becomes able to recognize that Tom is the real monster who is responsible for all the horror. Rachel says:

> Everything is a lie. I didn't imagine him hitting me. I didn't imagine him walking away from me quickly, his fists clenched. I saw him turn, shout. I saw him walking down the road with a woman, I saw him getting into the car with her (Hawkins, 2015, p. 150).

Rachel undergoes a transformation in which she ultimately manages to find the confidence to defend herself from Tom and the horror he left inside her.

Tom's behavior towards Rachel represents his psychopathy; he believes that he is superior to her. The fact that Tom has left Rachel weak and made her feel responsible for all of his actions and words demonstrates that Rachel is unable to confront Tom. Rachel realizes that the person she believes to be her true love has been deceiving her. Even though Tom had deceived Rachel, she blamed herself and did not give it any more thought. Finally, Rachel had the courage to confront Tom about Megan's murder. Rachel came to the realization that she was innocent of any involvement in this crime. Tom does not just rely on violent restraint to keep the women around him in their proper roles; rather, he engages in acts of psychological horror against these women. On the other hand, Rachel is no longer fooled by his psychotic behavior and filthy manipulations. She remembers: "Tom and a woman getting into a car. Of course, that woman wasn't wearing a blue dress; she was wearing jeans and a red T-shirt. She was Megan" (Hawkins, 2015, p. 150). Rachel becomes aware of what is taking place and draws on her inner courage to fight against it. Rachel spent a lot of time allowing Tom to place the blame for his horrors on her, but she became more resilient than his deceit. Rachel and Anna reached the shocking truth: Tom was never a member of the military. Following his robbery and subsequent loss of his family's money, he broke all ties with them. Tom was frequently unfaithful. Rachel had the impression that she was never familiar with Tom.

The fact that Tom abandons Megan when he learns she is carrying his child and that Megan becomes obsessed with finding him highlights the way in which Tom is able to manipulate the feelings of the three women who are his victims. The fact is that all the women who have ever had a romantic connection with Tom They all suffer from different kinds of psychological horror that appear in the form of fear, anxiety, self-doubt, or suspicion. He treats them as cards in his game of manipulation, causing them to live in a state of perpetual fear by threatening to withhold his affection and the additional meanings that this sentiment has for every one of them.

In the last chapter, the presence of the horror has ultimately gone, and Rachel, while riding the train, remembers the tough moments she and Anna confronted. Rachel remembers everything about the night Tom died. After she placed the screw into Tom's neck, Anna hurried to the garden and placed her palm on Tom's throat. Instead of attempting to control the bleeding, Anna pushed the screw deeper to ensure his death. Rachel recalls how Anna called for an emergency on that terrible night, but by the time it arrived, it was too late to save Tom. Rachel could not believe what she was seeing as she sat on the couch watching the police and the investigators, Gaskill and Riley, arrive. Rachel was left speechless as Anna provided answers to all of their questions. Anna and Rachel were both taken for personal interrogations by the police at the station before either one of them was allowed to leave.

3. STEPHEN KING'S *MISERY*

"I'm your number one fan."

3.1. AN OVERVIEW

Stephen King (1947) is a prominent modern author of horror fiction. He is often regarded as the king of horror literature. He is the author of a number of horror books. He also works under a variety of pseudonyms, including John Swithen and Richard Bachman. He has been called by modern critics "The King of Horror" as well as "The Master of the Macabre" (Simpson & McAleer, 2014, p. xi). According to Harold Bloom (2002), Stephen King's writing "emerges from an American tradition one could regard as sub-literary: Poe and H. P. Lovecraft. Lovecraft revered Poe, though he also followed the British fantasist Arthur Machen" (p. 1). Stephen King's interest in the works of early American horror fiction author Howard Lovecraft stems from this fascination.

King seems to have begun his childhood in misery; he was raised at the home of a merchant seaman (Donald Edwin King) and a housewife (Nellie Ruth Pillsbury King). One day, his father pretends to walk outside to purchase cigarettes, but he never returns, leaving his two-year-old son, Stephen King, with his mother. King's talent grows as he enjoys reading horror and suspense fiction, particularly "Tales from the Crypt". He composes comments on these tales for pleasure. He also demonstrates an interest in writing by submitting some of his essays to Dave's Rag (a newspaper). Throughout his early life, he develops into an intelligent individual who is aware of his surroundings. King supposedly observed one of his childhood friends being murdered by a train, but he has no recall of the incident. His family informed him that after leaving the house to play with the child, King returned looking speechless and in astonishment. This particular action shown by the child indicates the power of his observation and emotional senses. This event affects his psychological abilities and provides him with a permanent impression of horror. This may be one of the primary influences that led him to write about the dark sides of life in his horror novels (Russell, 2002).

King wrote many psychological horror novels, most notably *The Shining* (1977) *The Stand* (1978), and *The Girl Who Loved Tom Gordon* (1999). In these works, he

presents protagonists who suffer from mental instability caused by social pressures or a psychopath.

Stephen King published his psychological horror novel *Misery* in 1987 under his pen name. It tells the story of a well-known author named Paul Sheldon who, after being in a terrible traffic accident, finds himself lying in an unfamiliar room with broken legs. What, at first glance, may be seen as a salvation for Paul ends up being his greatest horror. He is being imprisoned in a home that is owned by Annie Wilkes, a mentally disturbed ex-nurse who feels herself to be Paul's biggest fan. Her own words indicate that she enjoys all of his writings. As Paul ended the existence of her favorite character in the most recent edition of his series, the ending did not sit well with her. She determines that he must produce another narrative in which he should revive Misery. Paul is compelled to follow her instructions when she gives him an old typewriter. Annie provides him with the necessary pills in return for the new narrative. Paul's first thought upon waking up was, "I need to get to a hospital and get away from this woman, but he soon discovered there was no escape from the jail he had found himself in.

3.2. THE PSYCHOLOGİCAL HORROR EXPERİENCED BY PAUL SHELDON

Misery deals with suffering and the process of writing itself. The protagonist, Paul Sheldon, is a 42-year-old man. He has twice been married and divorced, is a raging alcoholic and smoker, and is now involved in a number of personal problems as a famous author (Tabler, 2020). The novel depicts the challenge of novelists trying to reach bestselling status in the marketplace. Paul Sheldon is a tremendously successful fiction author, and he has just written his first book in which the protagonist, Misery Chastain, was murdered. Annie Wilkes comes to Paul's rescue after he has an accident with his car. She takes Paul prisoner, demanding that he write a beautiful love story in order to bring back Misery (Stabiner, 1987).

The name of the psychological horror novel, *Misery*, is based on Misery Chastain, the protagonist of Paul Sheldon's books. Yet, the events occur against a cold Colorado backdrop in Stephen King's story, where the renowned novelist, Sheldon, is enjoying his luxurious residence at a five-star hotel. Everything is fine until the famous

author steps outside into the terrible weather. Paul Sheldon has a horrible accident on the hazardous roads, leaving him stuck and unable to move because of injuries to both of his legs. Paul is found by someone else with highly trained expertise in the medical field, a former nurse named Annie (Ellington, 2021).

According to Noel Carroll, "It is frequently remarked that horror cycles emerge in times of social stress and that the genre is a means through which the anxieties of an era can be expressed" (Carroll, 1990, p. 207). Thus, *Misery* is Stephen King's investigation of the capacities of his own imagination as well as the pressures of society. Paul Sheldon's condition is an expression of insecurity regarding his position as a famous writer of fictional works, and such fear can also be seen in King's statements regarding his own fame (Lant & Thompson, 1998). Through the creation of Annie Wilkes, a psychotic fan who, through a series of extreme incidents, imprisons a famous writer called Paul Sheldon, she torments and forces him to write the novel she desires. Stephen King is able to convey his most powerful feelings of fear at the demands placed on him by his fans in this novel. She is the true embodiment of King's anxiety about readers or fans going out of their minds. She is the fan who will spoil his work, distort his approach, and possibly put him at risk. The fact that Misery is Stephen King's best book on inspiration and the challenges faced by authors King sets out early on in the novel the problems that Paul Sheldon would confront and the ways by which he would work out the issue of becoming a great and extremely successful writer. He also develops the means by which he will establish the methods through which he will deal with the problem.

While the story is being told from the first chapter, Paul Sheldon establishes order by providing context for the phrase "your number one fan". Yet the author in this book finds himself powerless: "The pain was somewhere below the sounds. The pain was east of the sun and south of his ears. That was all he did know" (King, 1987, p. 2). He is lying in bed after being in a car accident; he is in terrible pain; he fades into and out of awareness; and it seems that the woman who pretends to be an enthusiastic admirer is holding him captive.

Paul was out having a good time to celebrate the release of his most recent book. "Fast Cars", a novel that he wrote after he finished his best romance books that included Misery Chastain as the protagonist, A tale that, in his opinion, was not written very well

and was not to be praised. When he had a lot of alcohol and was feeling excited after his success, he got behind the wheel of a car. On the outside road in Colorado, he was driving recklessly and wrecked his car. His legs are terribly fractured. The only sounds he hears when he wakes up are those of Annie's farm, which is located outside of Sidewinder. He feels someone blowing air into his mouth to help him breathe.

> "Breathe, goddam you!" the unseen voice shrieked, and he thought I will, anything, please just don't do that anymore, don't infect me anymore, and he tried, but before he could really get started her lips were clamped over his again, lips as dry and dead as strips of salted leather, and she raped him full of her air again (King, 1987, p. 5).

He senses a woman forcing him to breathe on his own. Paul wishes she would stop breathing into his mouth since he finds her breath to smell like a combination of "desert and chicken gravy". Paul finds out quite immediately that his legs are fractured and twisted. Annie was a nurse and could have definitely put them right. Being completely dependent on his biggest fan, who is acting strangely, he is in severe agony and is dependent upon pain relievers. His memories were cloudy throughout. He remembers being in an accident, not breathing for a moment, and then starting to breathe once again. Paul begs Annie to just leave him alone since the condition is so serious.

> The ambiguity of Annie Wilkes' role as Paul Sheldon's nurse is the root of their conflict. She rescued him after his injury, but now he cannot function without her. His legs are broken, and he has become dependent on the drug "Novril", which he later learns contains a large amount of "codeine" (King, 1987, p. 8).

Noel Carroll suggests that:

> As well, the onset, in the sense of the manifestation, of the monster, may be either immediate or gradual. The horrific being, that is, may be identified for the audience immediately in an early or an opening scene (e.g., the movie Night of the Demon), or its presence and/or identity may be only gradually revealed. (Carroll, 1990, pp. 99-100).

The case is identical with Annie's; there is a monster and a mad character inside her. She has a horrible secret that only sometimes emerges; it may harm him and ultimately cause his death. He has to bring back the main character, Misery Chastain, in a new Misery book for her if he wants to stay alive.

Noel Carroll assumes that it should come as no surprise that the horror subgenre would be useful in this respect, given that dread and anxiety are its primary elements. In some contexts, it is probable that horror might include or assimilate broad social fears with its image of horror and suffering (Carroll, 1990). Even beneath the influence of medicines and suffering, he senses something strange; he gets suspicious that something fearful exists.

> That prescient part of his mind saw her before he knew he was seeing her, and must surely have understood her before he knew he was understanding her — why else did he associate such dour, ominous images with her? (King, 1987, p. 4).

King's narration shows the internal conflict and psychological torment of Paul in the most terrible way. There is a real sense of psychological horror. While Annie is vicious, she is unconscious of her behavior:

> He discovered three things almost simultaneously, about ten days after having emerged from the dark cloud. The first was that Annie Wilkes had a great deal of Novril (she had in fact, a great many drugs of all kinds). The second was that he was hooked on Novril. The third was that Annie Wilkes was dangerously crazy (King, 1987, p. 5).

In order to punish Paul for looking into the farm while Annie was gone, Annie decided to cut off his foot with an ax. It is ruthlessly effective, and in a strange way, Annie seems strangely nice. Beforehand, she gives a little anesthetic and a pain reliever to Paul.

Paul suffers the constant horror of being tortured to death in the literal sense. He is essentially buried while he is still alive. He is obscured by a twisted and spatialized fantasy that he has created for himself: "The pain throbbed in his legs and made a deep steel circlet around his crotch. He had touched himself down there, and he thought his pelvis was intact, but it felt twisted and weird" (King, 1987, p. 17). Paul suffers from psychological horror in more than one way: he is unable to move due to his broken legs, and he is confined by the bed, the room, the home, and the remote location of Sidewinder, Colorado. He is isolated from the rest of the world. He thinks of his wrecked car and imagines it buried under the snow plowed over by the road-clearing vehicle that has passed over it. The psychological horror of Paul reaches its highest when he finds himself forced to write a plot that he is unwilling to tell:

> The anger sparked again. Anger at her obdurate density, anger that she could actually kidnap him — keep him prisoner here, force him into a choice between drinking dirty rinse-water from a floor-bucket or suffering the pain of his shattered legs — and then, on top of all that, find the nerve to criticize the best thing he had ever written (King, 1987, p. 11).

Paul is not only frightened by Annie's presence and her horror; rather, he feels psychological horror from the fact that she is compelling him to accept her interpretation of the world in relation to his writing. He finds himself having to follow her own point of view. It causes him great self-damage, and he becomes suspicious of his writing,

> She had read each of his eight novels at least once, and had read her very favorites, the Misery novels, four, five, maybe six times. She only wished he would write them faster" (King, 1987, p. 9).

Paul's skills and his fans are better suited to the realm of romance fiction. His works of romantic fiction are genuinely written, and he makes profit and fame from his readers as a result of the appeal of these works; yet Paul is unable to exhibit the same natural ability in "Fast Cars". His writings that came after "Misery" were not written for the purpose of artistry or even for the purpose of literature. It was written for the purpose of Paul Sheldon's reputation, career, and self-importance. She decides he will survive, so he does. She decides he will change his writing, so he writes:

> Please? Miss Wilkes? The pain —"Call me Annie. All my friends do.'She gave him the glass. It was cool and beaded with moisture. She kept the capsules. The capsules in her hand were the tide. She was the moon, and she had brought the tide which would cover the pilings. She brought them toward his mouth, which he immediately dropped open . . .and then she withdrew them. 'I took the liberty of looking in your little bag. You don't mind, do you? 'No. No, of course not. The medicine (King, 1987, p. 8).

Annie starts a sequence of abuses when Paul first refuses to give in to her demands for more stories concerning Misery. Paul is not only terrified on a mental level, but he is also in physical pain because Annie keeps invading his body with intravenous tubes, needles, and pre-operation injections, which destroy the structure of his skin and cause him to bleed inside. Paul suffers both mental and physical horror because of his confinement; Annie admits that she is struggling because of the views of others about her. Annie is seen by the citizens as a child murderer, which proves to be correct; nonetheless, she was able to avoid punishment by exploiting her intellect.

The struggle takes a new turn between them. Paul's narrative or Annie's That is the essence of the conflict between Paul and Annie. Paul continues to go through her writing and learns that he will die soon. After forcing Paul to burn his beloved "Fast Cars" novel under torture, Annie cuts his foot when she suspects he is planning to escape.

Annie poured some of the liquid on his left ankle and some more on to the blade of the axe. The smell reminded Paul of the doctors' offices in his childhood.

> 'There won't be much pain Paul, it won't be bad''Annie Annie of Annie no please don't Annie I swear to I will be good I swear I swear to God I will be good just give me a chance to be good. ANNIE PLEASE LET ME BE GOOD (King, 1987, p.56).

This is the best at showing Paul's fear and Annie's psychosis. Paul attempted several times to escape the house, and when they failed, he finally called the police for help. When a police officer came searching for Paul Sheldon. Annie got upset and nervous. When the police officer came to look for Paul inside her home, she killed him. Paul was completely depressed about how to get out of that predicament. Annie tortured

him with horrible pain whenever he disobeyed her. His imprisonment is a symbolic death, a scenario that he believes will result in another actual burial. He fears that this will happen since he is in a position where he cannot escape. He has an obsession with Annie stabbing him to death and burying him in the backyard once he finishes writing his next novel. Paul Sheldon suffers through his live burial as if it were a living death, imprisoned within the world of his captivity. His experience of being buried alive is simply a preparation for his real experience of being buried, whether alive or dead (Sears, 2011).

In order to save his career, Paul should murder her. After the horror he experienced, he succeeds, but Annie still exists in his mind. The memory of the power of the mad fan stalks him. "I think she's dead. But be careful. If she's still alive... dangerous... like a rattlesnake" (King, 1987, p. 300). Despite Paul's loathing for Annie as a fan, she contributes to his success by having him publish Misery's Return once he recovers from the horror of his imprisonment. Keesey (1998) explains that despite the fact that Paul is the one who is victimized most of the time, he is facing a woman who is strong and distinguished by her ambiguous or straight-out masculine features. He comes out victorious in the end, restoring the masculine order of control and power.

The decisive conflict between Paul and Annie begins when Paul throws a large machine at Annie. He misleads her into believing that he burned his new work, Misery, using a deception in which Paul shows her the final copy of the book and then drops a flame on using a deception in which Paul shows her the final copy of the book and then drops a flame on it. As she was furiously attempting to extinguish the flames, Paul attacked her. Paul's deception was successful. Sheldon hits Annie with the typewriter machine, causing her to fall from the impact. Wilkes tragically dies in this violent encounter with her favorite author.

3.3. ANNIE WILKES AS A PSYCHOPATH MONSTER

Annie is an ordinary woman; she does not possess a supernatural power, but her behavior shows that she is a psychopath. Stephen King portrays the story of Annie Wilkes as that of a woman with psychopathic behavior. She is a solitary person who lives on her own farm in Colorado. She has strange outbursts, during which she does

terrible things to whomever happens to be around her. She lived her whole life in a remote place, completely cut off from people. Annie gives the appearance of a psychopath who has no ability to control her actions. She has been aggressive since childhood. When she was younger, she was responsible for the deaths of her father, many of her neighbors, and one of her roommates. Annie was surprised to see that Paul Sheldon had been injured in the accident that occurred close to Sidewinder. Annie is Paul Sheldon's number-one fan. She helped him when she discovered that he had suffered a severe injury to his leg. She holds Sheldon prisoner and compels him to reveal the story's climax before he has even finished writing it. Due to the painkiller that she gives Paul, Annie controls the progression of the narrative of his story, "Misery's Return."

Like the character of Tom Watson in The Girl on the Train, Annie is a manipulative person who is able to convince others through speech while hiding her horrible internal intentions. She tells Paul the story of how she tried to prevent Paul's death. She revealed to Paul that when the accident happened, Paul was in so much suffering that he shouted, and then he passed out. Annie was able to persuade Paul of how worried she was throughout the event. She tells him that when she saw his condition, she decided to do her best to bring him back to life, and then she brought him into her home, took care of him, and provided some medication for him. It is evident that Annie made an effort to persuade Paul that she is a highly moral woman by telling him positive things about herself.

In many situations, Annie is irresponsible for her behavior; she makes sudden decisions without thinking about the results. She kills the policeman who comes looking for Paul: "You killed him, Paul said. His voice sounded dim and ancient. She smiled uneasily at the wall. Well, I guess it was something like that" (p. 21). In this particular scene, there was no sign of guilt in her after she had committed a crime. Psychopaths feel no regret for their actions, even after committing horrible crimes such as murder, even when they are aware that what they did was wrong. She uses weapons, such as an axe and a knife, to inflict traumatic injuries on Paul as a form of punishment. In the other horrible situation, when Paul begs her not to cut his leg, she replies, 'Just a little pain, Paul, and then this unpleasant matter will be behind us' (King, 1987, p. 56). This shows Annie's psychopathy in its most horrible way.

Korinna Csetényi (2021) states: "Annie, the victimizer, is an embodiment of the monstrous feminine, a castrating female, who symbolically emasculates the male hero" (p. 144). Annie is also a prisoner of her condition, being subjected to horrible mood swings and irregular behavior patterns due to the fact that she suffers from psychopathy. This mental illness enslaves her body, dictates who she is as a person, and makes her existence a living hell. While trying to express the feeling that she was consumed by madness.

Annie, the psychopath fan, transforms herself into a writer and becomes the author of Paul's life when she determines whether he will survive. In the same way that fictional characters depend entirely on the people who create them, she has all of the cards when it comes to his fate. Berkenkamp (1992) has pointed out that "Paul, the writer, has to become a reader in order to survive" (p. 204). Since Annie suffers from psychosis, he has little choice but to learn to read her emotions. He has to train himself to be able to understand what is going through her mind and to anticipate what she will do next. Because of how wildly unpredictable her mood swings are, Paul has to keep a very close eye out for the smallest of clues. Alterations to her typical activities are often a good indicator that her illness is getting worse.

Beahm argues that Paul stands in for King, while Annie is representative of those who have high expectations of him. King’s celebrity status has an effect on his life, despite the fact that he makes every attempt to keep his center of gravity as low as possible (Beahm, 1995). Annie’s power over Paul Sheldon is symbolic of his fans' potential to exert influence over his career, especially the consumers who do not care about how writing is done. By keeping Paul Sheldon confined in her house, she not only prevents him from evading her control but also stops him from leaving the world of romance novels for the higher ideals of literary fiction. Annie’s efforts to prevent Sheldon from fleeing, most notably her decision to cut off his foot and thumb, indicate a form of control that not only prevents him from escaping but also strips him of his ability to come up with new ideas (Schroeder, 1996).

Paul finds a scrapbook in the home named "Memory Lane" while making one of his attempts to get out of his room. Later, Annie admits that she purposefully left the book lying around because she was certain that he would see it. It has been revealed that Annie is the one who created it; the scrapbook is full of newspaper clippings that discuss

the murderous acts she has committed. Despite the fact that she did not really create the papers, she is the mastermind behind them, as they all reveal her criminal activities. When she served as a nurse at a number of different hospitals, she was responsible for the deaths of numerous people whose lives she deemed meaningless due to the fatal nature of their diseases or birth abnormalities. Her book may be seen as her artistic creation and the result of her life's labor; during the height of her insanity, she undoubtedly believed she was an Angel of Mercy as she was relieving other people of their pain. Paul finds out, to his shock and horror, that the last item in the scrapbook is a missing person report on him. To all intents and purposes, he has been included in Annie's book in the same manner as though he were a character in the story. Even if he follows Annie's demand to finish the next Misery novel, he always has reason to worry for his life since everyone who was named in her book has been murdered.

The novel ends with Annie's death when Sheldon develops an idea for punishment; he decides that as he completes the novel, he will burn it in the presence of Wilkes. He learns that at the conclusion of his writing, Annie will end both of their suffering by killing Paul and then herself. After much effort, he was finally successful in locating the exit from that house. While he was on the verge of escaping, she appeared and immediately began to brutally hurt him. Annie's anger drives her to the point that she ends up sacrificing the life of her best writer. Annie is killed in this fight. Finally, Paul is able to escape from her house and is saved by passengers.

CONCLUSION

By focusing on the psychological turmoil that its protagonists go through, psychological horror stories are able to create a terrifying effect on their readers. Horror novels show intense responses to anxiety. Psychological horror delves further into the peculiar emotional components that are brought on by a horrific circumstance. The goal of the horror subgenre is to induce fear, paranoia, anxiety, or a sense of unease in the audience by focusing on or exploiting certain psychological states or emotions. Recently, psychological horror has been categorized as a subgenre of horror fiction. The distinction is that psychological horror is concerned with the psychological circumstances and the mental agony that occur inside characters' brains in order to arouse emotions of dread, anxiety, and horror rather than focusing just on the ingredients of terror.

This thesis deals with the psychological horror of Rachel in *The Girl on the Train* by Paula Hawkins and Paul Sheldon in *Misery*. Both Hawkins and King's characters experience psychological horror, which includes stresses on the mind such as fears, anxieties, and emotional instability.

The study concludes that this subgenre of horror tends to concentrate on the most terrible elements of the human psyche. Characters that are either tortured by their own thoughts or disturbed by the minds of others are portrayed in the novels of Hawkins and King. The study shows that in psychological horror, the thoughts and feelings of the characters play a significant role, and they often take the place of the more stereotypical types of monsters. When there are monsters in the story, they are often concealed by shadows, so that the sense of foreboding is not as overt as it may otherwise be.

Rachel appears to be a woman whose formerly ideal life has completely disintegrated, causing her to endure a great deal of pain. Her mental condition is the primary factor contributing to her dreadfulness. The anxiety and dread of the unknown that Rachel feels are reflected in her compulsive thoughts. She has the mistaken belief that she is responsible for all of the horrors that have transpired in her life and caused her to be distressed. As she was incapable of having a child for the whole of their time together, she thinks that Tom had no role in the breakdown of their relationship in any

way. Her failure to have a child was the catalyst that started her descent into alcoholism, which she blamed on herself. Rachel's conduct reveals that she is paranoid in many different ways, such as her feelings of worry, her reliance on alcohol, the frequency with which she inflicts fear on others, and the fact that she is unpleasant to everyone else. Not only does she injure herself, but she also has the possibility of harming other people and giving them a sense of dread or panic as a result of what she does.

To sum up the whole analysis, it has been shown in Paul Hawkins's *The Girl on the Train* that Rachel, Megan, and Anna suffer psychological horror within their personalities. Rachel is afraid due to the psychological disorder in her mind. She fails to control her emotions, to soothe her husband with a child, and to guide her psychology to find a cure for her infertility, which leads her to the chaos of his personality. In order to escape from her horror, she becomes an alcoholic and ultimately loses her job, home, father, and husband. The psychological disorder in Anna erupts from within her personality when she finds herself guilty of separating Rachel and Tom. It is shown that the horror is often disguised in domestic violence in this postmodern era.

Rachel becomes the victim of psychological horror due to her husband's anger and mental torture towards herself. She fails to fulfill her roles as a mother and a beautiful wife. As a result of this, she suffers from psychopathy, paranoia, self-doubt, depression, and drinking. She does not take care of social standards, rather satisfying her inner self. There are various elements that contribute to her horrors. She blames herself due to her infertility, isolates herself from society, bears Tom's tortures, falls apart her personality into her body and her life, enjoys alcoholism, finds the horror of murder and violence in the houses of the suburb, and feels pain by comparing Jass to Tom. Tom appears as the human monster who causes her psychological horror, controls her life, and creates her paranoia and self-doubt, all of which contribute to creating a lonely person who has no ability to be in contact with others or be in connection with real events.

Rachel's horror leads her to paranoia. She pretends to be another woman and conceals the facts of her life, even from her friend Cathy. Rachel becomes anxious as she realizes the shameful things she has done. Her failure to satisfy societal expectations for a woman of her age causes her self-doubt. When she is in this state of mind, she creates her own sense of identity, treating the once-happy, bright, beautiful woman as if

she were someone else. Her mental instability is the root cause of her horror. Rachel's obsessive thoughts are symptoms of anxiety and fear of the unknown. Rachel feels anxious due to her transformation. That's why her actions become questionable. For example, with her act of calling her ex-husband frequently at late hours, her decision to visit Jess and Jason and fainting on the road, her realization of being incapable of giving testimony, and her being suspicious of Megan, Kamal, and Scott on the other hand, Tom continues to take advantage of Rachel's fragility in a manner that inhibits her from gaining power over her personal life in a way that is detrimental to both of them. Anna and Rachel are ultimately capable of committing a terrible act of responsibility against the man who victimized them.

Due to her experiences, including arguments with her partner Mac, having to deal with her brother and daughter passing away, and Mac being missing. Megan develops self-doubt, night terrors, and difficulty falling asleep. Psychological horror from Megan's past haunts her today. Due to her hasty reliance on men, she feels guilty. Megan struggles to trust others, which forces her into a string of unsatisfying relationships and serves to distract her from the crushing sense of guilt she is constantly feeling. In contrast to Megan, Anna cares deeply about her family. She is confident in Tom and thinks highly of him as a partner. The one source of conflict in an otherwise blissful marriage was Rachel. Since Rachel still feels the urge to be near Tom, she stayed close to her family and developed the practice of calling him. Anna discovered a phone when she opened Tom's luggage. Anna learns that Megan actually owns the phone and that she is the one utilizing it. Anna begins to believe that Tom was romantically involved with Megan and that he might have first met her on the night that she was slain because Megan was last seen carrying her phone. Anna finally comes to the realization that Rachel, the person who was giving her anxiety and who posed a threat to her marriage, is quite similar to her. But unlike Rachel, Anna is mistaking Tom for the real threat. Megan's answer, however, differs from the others' since she is not totally reliant on Tom like the other ladies are.

Tom deceives the women he knows, and by doing so, he renders them permanently terrified and hopeless. He defrauds Rachel, takes advantage of her drinking tendencies, and cheats her. He is the primary factor in Rachel's psychological horror. His treatment of Rachel exemplifies his psychopathy. Rachel is unable to face Tom

because he has rendered her defenseless and made her feel accountable for all of his deeds and remarks. To maintain the women in his immediate vicinity in their right duties, Tom uses more than simply physical confinement; instead, he commits acts of psychological horror against them. The fact that Tom abandons Megan after learning she is expecting his child and that Megan becomes preoccupied with finding him highlights the way in which Tom is able to manipulate the emotions of the three women who are his victims. All of the ladies who have ever been romantically involved with Tom are true. All of them experience various forms of psychological horror, which manifest as anxiety, fear, mistrust, or self-doubt. By threatening to withhold his affection and the additional implications that this sentiment has for each of them, he uses them like playing cards in his game of manipulation, keeping them in a state of constant terror.

Stephen King exemplifies what it would be like to suffer from the state of being possessed by a monster, who additionally appears to be a mad woman. Her abnormal obsession with Paul, in addition to her fascination with the fictional character Misery, is evidence of her unstable mental state.

The psychological horror of Paul Sheldon is reflected in Stephen King's *Misery*. According to reports, he ends up imprisoned in Annie Wilkes' house as a result of his mishap. She also has a psychologically damaged personality. Sheldon suffers from his fate as a result of his twice-married and divorced status. Sheldon experiences post-marriage trauma, just like Rachel did in the earlier book. His alcohol consumption, like Rachel's, makes him more susceptible to psychological problems. He has a luxury life as an author, according to the analysis, prior to the disaster he encounters on the trip. Paul hurls a heavy machine at Annie to start the crucial argument between them. By showing her the final copy of the book and then dropping a flame in front of it, he tricks her into thinking that he burned his new book, Misery. Paul attacked her as she was frantically attempting to put out the flames. Paul was successful in his trick. Sheldon strikes Annie with the typewriter device, causing her to fall out due to the impact. In this violent encounter with her favorite author, Wilkes tragically perishes.

Paul is literally being tortured to death, which is a constant source of horror for him. In a sense, he is buried while still living. Due to his broken legs, Paul is unable to move, and the bed, the room, the house, and the isolated setting of Sidewinder, Colorado, all enclose him. His isolation from the outside world is severe. His destroyed car comes

to mind, and he visualizes it being buried beneath the snow that the road clearing truck has ploughed over. Because she is pressuring him to adopt her view of the world with regard to his writing, he experiences psychological horror. He discovers that he must adopt her viewpoint. He suffers severe self-harm as a result, and he develops doubts about his writing. Due to his incarceration, Paul has physical and mental agony; Annie acknowledges that she is having difficulties due to others' opinions of her. Although Annie is indeed a child killer, as evidence shows, she was able to dodge punishment by using her wits. By using Paul Sheldon's character, the study has shown the pressure that the author feels to please his readers. Prominent authors like Paul Sheldon and Stephen King have to decide between their own artistic ambitions and those of their readers, which causes internal conflict.

Similar to Tom Watson's role in *The Girl on the Train*, Annie is a cunning individual who can persuade others through conversation while concealing her evil intents inside. She describes to Paul how she fought to keep him from passing away. She told Paul that when the accident occurred, Paul was in such agony that he yelled before collapsing. Through the course of the incident, Annie was able to convince Paul of her anxiety. She explains to him that, after noticing his state, she made the decision to do everything in her power to save him. She then brought him inside her house, took care of him, and gave him some medication. It is clear that Annie tried to convince Paul that she is a very moral person by complimenting her on her own virtues.

The victimizer and personification of the monstrous feminine, a castrating female who metaphorically emasculates the male hero, appears to be Annie. Due to her psychopathy sickness, Annie is also a prisoner of her condition, suffering from terrible mood swings and erratic behavior patterns. Her body is a slave to this mental disorder, which also determines who she is as a person and makes life a daily misery for her. She struggled to put into words how she felt like she was going insane. Annie is a manipulative person who is able to persuade people through words while masking her core evil intentions. This is similar to the character Tom, who is also a manipulative person. She relates to Paul the events that transpired while she was attempting to save his life. Annie, the psychopath fan, reinvents herself as a writer and takes on the role of Paul's life's author when she chooses whether or not Paul will live. She controls his

future, much in the same way that the individuals who create fictional characters are completely responsible for everything about those characters.

Finally, the novelists present characters who have fallen under the pressure of psychological horror caused for them by other individuals as well as social pressures. Hawkins's novel shows how Tom is a real monster. Tom terrifies all the women, leaving them in a perpetual state of fear and hopelessness as a direct consequence of his deceitful behavior. Rachel was used unfairly, and he had an affair with Anna while he was with her. Since he is able to persuade her that she is to blame for everything negative that occurs in her life, she is left with an ongoing sense of self-doubt as a result of his actions.

Hence, Rachel, Anna, Megan, Paul, and Annie experience psychological horror, psychopathy, paranoia, suspicion, self-doubt, a lack of remorse or shame, and insufficient antisocial behavior. The elements of psychological threatening, psychological horror, and the presence of terror are studied through the behaviors of the characters, with connections to the stressful events they have experienced.

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