

**BLYTHE'S INTERNAL CONFLICT IN ASHLEY
AUDRAINS *THE PUSH***

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on Blythe's Internal Conflict as seen in Ashley Audrain's *The Push*. The objectives of the study are to find out Blythe's Internal Conflict, to find out the causes of Blythe's Internal Conflict, and to find out the effects of Blythe's Internal Conflict on herself, her daughter, her husband, and her marriage. The theory used is the theory of Kurt Lewin. The finding shows that Blythe's internal conflict is against her mind about the situation that happened in her life. The causes of Blythe's Internal Conflict are moral conflict, love conflict, and existential conflict. The effect of Blythe's Internal Conflict is she got her freedom to write but she had divorced her husband and lost her right to take care of her child, Violet.

Key Terms: Conflict, internal conflicts...

A. INTRODUCTION

Life would be a lot easier if people got along better; people would be willing to agree, like, and even go along with what you offer. The scenario is rather different. Life continues to guide us to respond to conflict profoundly. The dangers of being hated, vulnerable, mocked, and even expelled are real. Fear of the unknown or unexpected can paralyze certain people. Human life is inextricably linked to conflict. Humans cannot exist without conflict, which means that they are inevitably entangled in battles, struggles, wars, and arguments. Strong emotions linked with disagreement can be overwhelming. Instead of attempting to flee the conflict as if it were a terrible social stain, see it as an opportunity to grow. Conflicts are a reflection of the search for a solution to a human problem. According to Dictionary.com which was retrieved on February 15th, 2022, said internal conflict is a struggle within a person's mind over a problem or question.

In this life, humans always face many things in deciding something in their life. Not infrequently this leads to choices that eventually lead to conflict. Conflict is not only found in real life but it is also found in literature because literature is a reflection of human life. Literature reflects what happens in the real life, by knowing people's values, thoughts, and conflicts. It can be seen in the following quotation :

The literature of people is the principal elements of its culture. It contains the record of the people's values, their thought, their problems and conflict. In short their whole way of life. (Little, 1996 : 1)

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The Push tells about the dark side of motherhood. In this book, there are many things such as trauma, sadness, and fear. Besides that, the language of the book is easily understood

by the thesis writer and get many good reviews from the New York Times, GoodReads, Washington Post, etc. Below is what Swirlanthread Reviews said about Ashley Audrain's *The Push*:

The Push is suspenseful, deftly written novel, exploring how an unspeakable act can reverberate through generations. This Pacey and at times shocking debut will ignite discussion around the expectations of motherhood that we're taught not to question, the concept of nature vs nurture, and the notion of unconditional love. (It is accessed on February 10th 2022 <http://www.swirlanthread.com/the-push-by-ashley-audrain/>)

From the quotation above, the thesis writer can summarize that *The Push* book written by Ashley Audrain is very interesting to read. *The Push* tells about the worry about a mother to her daughter, the motherhood in the novel, the conflict, and the parenting.

In many situations, people in the world often face a dilemma in deciding something that causes conflict. This phenomenon is related to what Lewis A. Coser said:

"The term literature seems best if we limit it to the art of literature, that is, to imaginative literature. Literature is also produced by the imagination of the author. Literature is not just a document of fact. It is not just the collection of real events, although it may happen in real life. Literature can create its world as a product of unlimited imagination." (1956: 11)

There are two parts to any literary work: internal and extrinsic. The intrinsic element, such as themes, characters and characterization, storyline, moral values, locations, and points of view, is what constructs the literary work from the inside out. In contrast to the extrinsic element, which comes from outside the literary work, such as the society's background and the author's background, the intrinsic element comes from within the literary work. Extrinsic aspects, on the other hand, are literary symptoms that originate outside of the two literary works. Conflicts or social phenomena, for example, can exist in society.

In general, the author incorporated societal issues from their surroundings into their writing. As a result, the social phenomena depicted in his art are or have been social occurrences in

actual life. When the author's work was finished, we were able to seek historical proof or historical phenomena. As a result, literary works can be compared to other historical works.

A literary work will have a conflict that will be aided by the narrative as an integral component of the story so that the reader can comprehend it. A short tale usually contains only one conflict, but a book usually has several. One of the building components of a literary work that will pique the reader's attention is conflict. The reader's engagement with what is going on in the literary works would be aided by the conflict.

Internal conflicts, such as man against self, and exterior conflicts, such as man against man, man against nature, man against society, and man against fate, are split in literature. The purpose of this study was for the author to learn more about the main character's internal turmoil. It will analyze how conflict is employed and how personality is changed by the conflict encountered by the main character in the selected novel, *The Push*.

Many aspects of life are depicted in *The Push*, including struggle, anxiety, anger, death, sadness, and love, all of which might be used as thesis topics, but the thesis writer chose to focus on love. Internal Conflict on Blythe in Ashley Audrain's *The Push*. The thesis writer employs the qualitative description approach to find the answer to Blythe's internal turmoil in Ashley Audrain's *The Push*. In reality, there are two types of methods: qualitative and quantitative descriptions. Qualitative data consists of quotations that are described using explanations. Quantitative data, on the other hand, is made up of numbers, statistics, and mathematics.

The significance of this research is to determine Blythe's internal conflicts, as well as the causes and repercussions of her problems. The end goal is to provide significance to a society that is dealing with the same issue.

B. RESEREACH METHOD

The researcher conducts qualitative research in which the research does not give priority to numbers and tables. The Source of data is the novel *The Push* written by Ashley

Audrain. The technique of data collecting applied is content analysis and the technique of data analysis applied is deductive and inductive method.

C. DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

Blythe has internal conflicts. There are some types of Blythe's internal conflict. According to Lewin's theory, there are three types:

1. Good and Good

Blythe has internal conflict when she faces telling about her thoughts with the woman. It is shown below quotation:

“Some women say being a mom is their greatest accomplishment. But I dunno, I don't feel like I've accomplished much yet.” (Audrain, 2021:35)

That quotation shows that Blythe thinks and feels that she does not have the same feelings and thinking as the women usually say that being a mom is the greatest accomplishment in life. But Blythe needs that woman, as a friend. So Blythe gives a response to that woman as she has an opinion with that woman even though what she said and what she felt are different, it can be seen on this below quotation :

“Yeah,” I said slowly, looking at her baby as though he were a weapon. “You want them and grow them and push them out, but they happen to you.”

That quotation shows that Blythe thinks that Baby is a weapon. Usually, a mother thinks that a baby is a gift and can make them happy, but this is different with Blythe.

2. Good and Bad

Blythe has internal conflict when she faces to tell the truth or not to her boyfriend. It is shown of the below statement:

“My Father. He didn’t return my message informing him I wouldn’t be home for Thanksgiving that year, but I lied to you and said he was happy I’d met someone, and that he sends his best wishes to your family. The truth was we hadn’t spoken much since you and I met. We’d communicated mostly through our answering machine, and even then it had become a series of stale, generic exchanges that I would have been embarrassed for you to hear. I’m still not sure how we got there, he and I. The lies was necessary, like the scattering of other lies I’d told so that you didn’t suspect just how fucked up my family was. Family was too important to you – neither of us could risk how the whole truth mine might change the way you saw me. (Audrain, 2021:7)”

The quotation shows that Blythe chooses to lie rather than tell the truth. Blythe has two choices to tell the truth or lie. First, if Blythe tells the truth, Fox will change his perception of Blythe and her family. The consequence is Fox will leave her if he knows the reality about Blythe’s family. Because for Fox family is too important.

Second, if Blythe tells lies, the consequence is her relationship with Fox will be fine and Fox does not about Blythe’s family condition. Then Blythe does not want to lose Fox and wants to take the risk, Blythe chooses to tell lies rather than tell the truth to Fox. Her decision to tell lies to Fox brings her to another internal conflict.

Another conflict that Blythe has to face is Blythe gets internal conflict when she thinks tired of taking care of her daughter. It is shown in the below quotation:

“Violet would wake like clockwork after two hours, and I was deep in the zone every – time. I felt physically and emotionally elsewhere. I got into the habit of letting her cry, promising myself just one more page. Sometimes I slipped on my headphones. Sometimes I wrote for another hour. When her pitch became frantic enough, I’d flip down my laptop screen and rush to her as though I’d just heard her for the first time.” (Audrain, 2021:45)

That statement shows that Blythe is tired of taking care of her daughter. Because her daughter keeps waking up every two hours and she has to do the household. She has to do all of it by herself. She does not have enough time to take a rest. Her husband does not care about her feelings, or how tired she is. According to those, she back to her last habits such as writing, not taking care her daughter well, and letting her daughter cry for a long time.

And she just takes care her daughter when she just finishes writing. Blythe has choices, first to take care of her daughter at first when Blythe hears she is crying or she does not take care of her daughter, finish her writing, and then take care of her daughter even though she has been crying for hours. If Blythe chooses to take care of her daughter, the positive effect for herself is she will keep tiring with her activity like usual and her daughter will stop crying if she takes care of her daughter. But the negative effect of herself is she cannot do her activity such as writing and she will lose her quality time. If Blythe chooses to get her quality time such as keep writing and does not take care of her daughter, she will get her quality time and her daughter keep crying. Between those choices, Blythe chooses to get her quality time and does not care for her daughter. She keeps writing and just takes care of her daughter when she finishes her writing. Because of her decision, she has another internal conflict.

Blythe gets internal conflict when she wants to balance her hobby and take care of Violet. It is shown in the below statement:

“I could write only when she was asleep, but she never napped long, and so we’d fallen back into our secret routine, as much as I promised myself I wouldn’t do that to her again. I let it happen only a few days a week. And I always tried to make it up to her – a cookie on our afternoon walk, a nice long bath time. (Audrain, 2021:62)

getting worse Blythe changed it with her make a cookie for the afternoon walk and make the bath time longer than before. Because of her choices, Blythe faces another internal conflict.

2. Bad and Bad

Blythe faces internal conflict in the choices between bad and bad when she must choose her dream to be a writer or be a mother while taking care of the baby. It is shown on the quotation below:

“You were the first person I’d told that I wanted to be a writer, and you replied,

“I can’t imagine you being anyone else.” (Audrain, 2021:2)

That quotation shows that Blythe told her dreams to her Boyfriend, but her Boyfriend does not agree with her dream and wants Blythe to be someone else. Blythe has to choose between difficult choices. She has to reach her dream or she has to make his boyfriend’s dream come true. If she makes her boyfriend’s dream come true, she will have two impacts on herself, first, she will lose her dream to be a writer then she will be sad because her dream will end. Second, she will make his boyfriend happy because already made her boyfriend’s dream come true. Another choice is if she reaches her dream to be a writer, she will be happy but she will lose her boyfriend because she does not help her boyfriend’s dream come true. It will be difficult to be a career woman and be a mother at the same time for her. Because of the difficult choices, Blythe cannot choose and she needs more time to think again about which one she will choose. Then Blythe’s internal conflict is not resolved.

Blythe starts to choose to make her boyfriend’s dream come true after she receives the love letter from her boyfriend. But from that moment she faces another internal conflict again, between being a mother or a writer. It is shown quotation below:

“For my birthday, you wrote down one hundred things you loved about me. *14. I love that you snore a little bit right when you fall asleep. 27. I love the beautiful way you write. 39. I love tracing my name on your back. 59. I love sharing a muffin with you on the way to class. 72. I love the mood you wake up in on Sundays. 80. I love watching you finish a good book and then hold it to your chest at the end. 92. I love what a good mother you’ll be one day.* “Why do you think I’ll be a good mother?” I put down the list and felt for a moment like maybe you didn’t know me at all. “Why wouldn’t you be a good mother?” You poked me playfully in the belly. “You’re caring. And sweet. I can’t wait to have little babies with you.” (Audrain, 2021:2)

That quotation shows that Blythe is happy with the words given by her boyfriend. But she gets conflicted when her boyfriend tells her that he wants Blythe

to be the mother of his child later. He wants to have a baby with Blythe. In Blythe's mind, she thinks that she cannot be a good mother, based on her experience. Her experience can be seen in the statement below:

“You asked about my mother, Cecilia, only on a few occasions. I told you only the fact: (1) she left when I was eleven years old, (2) I only ever saw her twice after that, and (3) I had no idea where she was. (Audrain, 2021:7)

That statement shows that Blythe's perception of being a mother is not good. She is afraid that she will be like her mother. A mother who does not take care of their children and chooses to reach her dream. Blythe does not know what she has to do if she will be a mother. Based on her experience, the person who always takes care of and prepares anything that she needs is her father. But Blythe has a figure of a good mother, it is from Mrs. Thomson, her neighbor. Mrs. Thomson takes care of her children well, she also treats Blythe well. Blythe is afraid that her fear becomes real. Because of that Blythe faces her other internal conflict.

Blythe faces her internal conflict on the choices between bad and bad when she must choose when she knows her husband cheated on her. The following quotation shows the statement:

“I don't care where you stay tonight. Just came back tomorrow to pack everything else.“ (Audrain, 2021:171)

From the above quotation, the thesis writer can investigate that she faces an internal conflict between bad and bad choices. She has difficulties in choosing between two actions whether she keeps her marriage but she let her husband still have an affair with his girl or agrees to be divorced but she will never see her daughter, Violet.

The two choices are very hard to determine because if she chooses one above another, she will suffer anyhow. If she continues the marriage, she will hurt her heart by agreeing to see her husband's affair, but if she does not do that she will lose her

daughter. It happens for her daughter will live with her husband.

D. CONCLUSION

The type of Blythe's internal conflict is moral conflict. When she does not treat her daughter well, even though she knows that is wrong to do she keeps doing it, for example when she has to give milk to Violet. She does not make sure to change the bottle, she knows that it has bacteria but she give it to her. The second type of Blythe's internal conflict is self-perception conflict. Blythe wants to make her husband happy, but her husband wants a family. Blythe thinks that having a baby can create a perfect family like what her husband wants and she thinks that can make her husband happy, she does not think about herself, she is happy or not if she has a baby. Third, Love conflict. Blythe knows that her husband does not like bagels, but she keeps making them, she wants to make her husband feel she does not like him anymore. Even though she still loves her husband. She does it as her emotion that she can show. The causes of Blythe's internal conflict are moral conflict, self-perception conflict, and love conflict. The most important is self-perception.

The effects of Blythe's internal conflict is resentment of everything that happened in her life such as her husband's behavior has changed and that makes her unhappy. Then injustice is when Violet gives her attention to Fox rather than to Blythe. That is a betrayal. Blythe spends a lot of her time taking care of Violet, but Violet is closer to her father than Blythe. Then envy, when Violet saw Blythe look so love her brother so much than love her and treat him so well than treat her before.

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