

POSSESSION AND LOSS: REVELATION FROM THE UNCONSCIOUS IN
COLLEEN HOOVER'S *IT ENDS WITH US* AND *IT STARTS WITH US*



A Dissertation

Submitted by

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation has not been submitted for candidature for any other degree.

I understand and agree that my dissertation will be a part of the permanent collection of Nepal Open University Library. My signature below authorises release of my dissertation to any reader upon request for any scholarly purpose.

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The undersigned certifies that I have read and recommend to the Faculty of Social Sciences and Education, Nepal Open University, for acceptance, a dissertation entitled “Possession and Loss: Revelation from the Unconscious in Colleen Hoover’s *It Ends with Us* and *It Starts with Us*” submitted by Thir Bahadur Khadka in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy in English.



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LETTER OF APPROVAL

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 “Possession and Loss: Revelation from the Unconscious in Colleen Hoover’s *It Ends
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APPROVED

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July 18, 2024

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July 18, 2024

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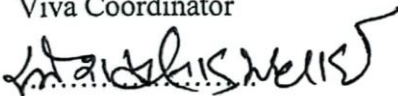
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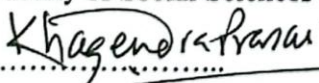
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ABSTRACT

Individuals are guided and influenced not only by their consciousness but also by the unconscious in terms of carrying out different activities, behaviours and choices. The objective of this study is to analyse how human unconscious influences undertaken activities, and to explore the way Colleen Hoover's novels *It Ends with Us* and *It Starts with Us* replicate the revelation of the unconscious either the desire to possess or the fear to lose. Adopting qualitative research to thematically analyse the complex qualitative phenomena of unconscious such as repressive desires, underlying motives, impulses and neurotic fears influencing behaviours, this study brings library based textual analysis of the novels employing psychoanalysis as a theoretical perspective primarily drawing upon Sigmund Freud and Karen Horney. The findings of the analysis show that the principal characters Lily and Atlas are guided by their repressive desires to possess their first love and act unconsciously to fulfill the repression. Lily takes divorce with Ryle instead of helping him in anger management for a better conjugal life. Atlas strives to be closer to Lily despite initially trying to keep distance. Ryle, on the other, is under the influence of neurotic fear that Lily could leave him that ultimately makes him struggle against the threat. The struggle makes him abusive although he begs pardon every time he abuses her. As literary texts represent the influential role of the human unconscious, the psychoanalytical analysis of the texts could reveal the underlying causes of human behaviours. As an approach to excavate the underlying causes of human activities, Psychoanalytical analysis could help in analyzing human activities, behaviours and choices, thereby helping to address mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, trauma and personality disorder resulted particularly due to the tussle between biologically determined internal irrational forces and external rational discourses.

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Thir Bahadur Khadka

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CHAPTER I

COLLEEN HOOVER AND THE CONCEPT OF UNCONSCIOUS PROCESS

This study analyses Colleen Hoover's two novels *It Ends with Us* (2016) and *It Starts with Us* (2022) in the light of psychoanalysis considering the influential role of the unconscious process particularly repressive desires, impulses, inner conflicts, and neurotic fears in shaping human behaviours and activities. It explores that the central characters Lily and Atlas are driven by their unconscious desire to possess their first love which shapes their major decisions and activities. Similarly, it excavates how Ryle, another central character, increases his abusive behaviour under the unconscious guidance of his neurotic fear of losing his wife's love. The analysis of their case shows that apart from the conscious process of decision-making and alternative selection, individuals often conduct tasks incongruous with their conscious decisions mainly because such "unconscious thoughts and feelings influence not only the way we perceive ourselves and the world around us but also our everyday actions" (Bargh 34). In this case, Jos Brosschot and colleagues rightly state, "Unconscious processes are perfectly able to carry out highly complex and intentional cognitive tasks and drive important behaviour in daily life, and their actions cover the whole range from the very basic to the highly complex" (410). If our repressive desires, wishes and unconscious fantasies affect our conscious experience, the "insight which we gain thereby enables us to infer unconscious mental content" (Arlow 7). The way the human unconscious influences the undertaken activities and emotional responses, the analysis of the activities and behaviours, in turn, helps to look at the unconscious psychological state of mind. Besides this, the study also analyses the way Lily, Ryle and Atlas navigate a tension between true self and the ideal self in the process of taking their lives ahead.

Hoover (December 11, 1979), a widely read contemporary American author with more than twentieth three novels, is basically known for her romance and young adult fiction. Her fictions consist of emotionally charged and character-driven storytelling. She presents the complexity of human relations intermixed with the theme of love, loss and trauma. Her characters usually represent both the qualities: virtues and vices. It makes her writing more engaging particularly because common human beings also consist of both the qualities. The common qualities make the characters life like and trustworthy. As a most common thematic element, romantic love is presented although it is amalgamated with the complexity of trust and mistrust. The presentation of unexpected plot twists and intermittently changing point of view takes readers into the thought process of multiple characters who undergo personal growth, self-discovery and forgiveness. Employing many of these features, she has presented a complex triangular love story of Lily, Atlas, and Ryle through her last series *It Ends with Us* and *It Starts with Us*.

There is certain degree of influence of the author's childhood experience particularly growing up in an abusive family environment behind the creation of *It Ends with Us* and *It Starts with Us*. Like Hoover herself, Lily Bloom is presented as growing up in a violent home having an abusive father, and undergoing the pain of parental conflict. Like Hoover's mother, Lily divorces her husband and marries another man. The opening scene of the novel introduces Lily as a graduate living in Boston who happens to meet a residential doctor named Ryle Kincaid. She becomes puzzled with Ryle's proposal of sleeping for a night although she confesses how she had sex with Atlas Corrigan years back at the age of fifteen. Lily and Ryle's closeness increases leading to their romantic affair. Atlas reenters into the story and his reunion with Lily affects her affair with Ryle. She also tries to suppress her desire as Atlas

says that he has another girlfriend. Her attempt turns out to be feeble before the influence of her hidden desire. Her closeness with Atlas increases Ryle's abusive behaviour although Ryle promises not to repeat it again. Finding more evidences of Lily's closeness with Atlas, Ryle becomes additionally abusive leading to divorce at the end. Whenever Ryle confronts Lily, Atlas appears for protection. She finally accepts Atlas and is determined to free her daughter from an abusive environment by divorcing her abusive husband Ryle. Kissing on daughter's forehead, she promisingly says, "It ends with us" (*It Ends with Us* 361).

As a series to *It Ends with Us*, *It Starts with Us* continues the story of Lily, Atlas, and Ryle. Lily and Atlas unexpectedly meet in Boston, remember their past, and unconsciously begin to be closer to each other although they try to maintain distance in the beginning as many things have passed and Lily is engaged with Ryle. They eagerly wait for text messages, go on dates, regularly remain in touch, and attend parties together. The instances of how Atlas is eager to wait for Lily's text message and how Lily cannot concentrate on work due to thinking about Atlas and their past replicate the way their unconscious process guides their conscious decisions and behaviours. Both of them review their journal writings and remember the depth of their love. Ryle is allowed to see his daughter only during the day as Lily knows his uncontrollable temper. Besides sending verbally abusive text messages and fighting with Atlas, he again pushes Lily knowing that she spent the night at Atlas' house. Suggesting Ryle about the need for anger management classes, she moves to Atlas's house along with her daughter and initiates a new life. Undertaking this story of the novels, the study has analysed the case of Lily, Atlas, and Ryle from psychoanalytical perspective considering the connection of their performance and its underlying causes, thereby bringing the revelation of their unconscious processes. Lily's

closeness with Atlas has been analysed relating it with her unconscious process almost in the way that Atlas's struggle to be closer to Lily has been linked with his unconscious desire to possess his repressed love. Likewise, Ryle's abusive behaviour has been analysed concerning its connection with his neurotic fear of losing Lily. In addition, the journal writings of Lily and Atlas have been analysed regarding how successful they are in expressing their hidden desires and impulses in the light of Freud's examination of literature as a world of wish fulfillment.

Unconscious processes, mental activities that consist of repressive desires, impulses, inner conflicts, and neurotic fears, remain hidden from conscious awareness but occur automatically as the underlying cause to influence certain conscious activities and behaviours. Thomas Smythe states, "When a person lacks privileged access to his psychological states, the psychological states will be unconscious" (418). Lacking privileged access to the unconscious state of mind is the condition of remaining unaware of the unconscious psychological state. Smythe believes that the individual may also achieve the knowledge of some parts of the unconscious process but it is only through reflection on the behaviours as well as the reception of others' comments (418). Human "behaviour is normally carried out by unconscious, automatic processes, while consciousness can occasionally intervene to override, regulate, redirect, and otherwise alter the stream of behaviour. . . ." (Baumeister and Bargh 36-37). Despite the occasional intervention of consciousness essential particularly for preserving socially and morally acceptable behaviours, different behaviours and activities take place unconsciously. Consciousness is bypassed in some cases and the influence of the unconscious takes place. This is the reason that sometimes people are involved in unwanted activities like abusing their dear ones despite loving them and wishing to protect them. In normal situations, intimate family

members such as husband and wife have mutual understanding, collaboration, and cooperation. In certain cases, the desire to preserve the conjugal relationship, however, takes different forms including abuse, violence, and mistreatment.

People's behaviours and roles are the primary base for the analysis of their character. Their personality is looked at depending on what activities they conduct. The observation of what is manifested and overlooking the underlying causes that the doer might also be unaware of is a normal phenomenon. The abuser is basically looked at with hatred and is likely to be punished. Such a practice, however, brings additional problems instead of the solution. In this case, this study stresses on the need to look at the underlying causes by analysing the unconscious process instead of merely paying attention to what is manifested and giving judgment based on that manifestation. The practice of looking at the underlying causes helps in addressing the real causes and rooting out the problem particularly associated with human personality and mental state of affair. As a step in this practice, this study encourages the practice of looking at the hidden or invisible causes of the events. Despite being part of literary analysis and replicating how the selected novels replicate the influence of unconscious processes in human activities and performance, this analysis also has clinical significance. As Norman Norwood Holland states, "psychoanalysis stands or falls on a cumulated base of clinical experience" (3), this study also has reinforced the importance of discovering the real causes of neurotic disorder having certain degree of clinical significance.

Statement of the Problem

Hoover's novels *It Ends with Us* and *It Starts with Us* have crafted a triangular love story of Lily, Ryle, and Atlas who undergo a complex psychological state of mind. The situation is that Lily and Atlas's passionate love began years back when

Atlas was a homeless and helpless boy. She not only provided him food, clothes and occasional shower at her bathroom but also sensual satisfaction. Their desire for each other was increasing but the circumstances separated them for many years. Lily comes into Ryle's contact and develops an intimate relationship, and both of them develop a family connection including going to the restaurants to have dinner together which shows how Lily and Ryle are closer to each other. Ryle sacrifices his better career opportunity in Minnesota at the Mayo Clinic for her sake while Lily promises to remain faithful to him. Both of them promise to support each other and remain true in love. In the meantime, Atlas appears as the owner of the restaurant and gets reconnected with Lily. This reconnection injects tensions in Lily and Ryle's relationship although Lily repeats her promise to be faithful to Ryle and also marries him. But the problem increases as Ryle becomes more abusive particularly when he witnesses evidences of her connection to Atlas no matter whether he excuses and promises not to repeat it each time he abuses her. Lily's increasing connection with Atlas unconsciously develops Ryle's neurotic fear which results in his abusive behaviour towards her. She knows that her connection to Atlas makes Ryle angry and yet cannot maintain distance. The way she is guided by her unconscious desire of possessing Atlas, Atlas also pursues to regain her. He is also aware of the fact that Lily is somebody else's wife and yet strives to be her closer often memorizing their past relationship including the material support she did for his survival. Finally, Lily divorces Ryle and gets united with Atlas. Relying at this background, this study has explored regarding what underlying desires, wishes, motives, impulses, or fears influence the lives and activities of these characters. In other words, this study has explored what affinity the unconscious state of mind of the characters has with different activities they conduct in the process of carrying their lives ahead.

Research Questions

- a. What underlying reason prevents Lily from helping Ryle in anger management and making her conjugal life happy by stopping her connection to Atlas?
- b. How does Atlas strive to possess Lily although she marries Ryle and begets a baby?
- c. Why does Ryle become abusive to Lily despite loving her a lot and begging pardon each time he abuses her?

Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study is to analyse the connection between the human unconscious and the undertaken activities by considering the way Hoover's principal characters in *It Ends with Us* and *It Starts with Us* are guided by their unconscious desires, impulses, motives, and fears. Based on this major objective, this study has the following specific objectives:

- a. To explore the connection of Lily divorcing Ryle and marrying Atlas with her unconsciously hidden desire to have her first love in her life.
- b. To examine Atlas's efforts to possess Lily as the manifestation of his unconsciously hidden desires to obtain the dearest object of his life.
- c. To excavate the underlying reason behind Ryle abusing Lily despite loving her a lot and asking for forgiveness each time he abuses her.

Rationale for Selection of the Texts

Hoover's two contemporary novels *It Ends with Us* and *It Starts with Us* have been selected for the analysis primarily because they have the potential issues for psychoanalytical study. They offer a detailed description of the principal characters undergoing the influence of unconscious that establishes a ground to see how repressive desires and impulses impact the manifest behaviours of human beings. As

such, these novels have been purposively selected to look at the way human beings undergo the tussle between the unconsciously repressed irrational forces and the rational entities that human beings themselves have invented. In this sense, the political purpose of selecting these contemporary novels is to look at how human activities, choices and behaviours at present time are influenced by the conflict between the innate qualities biologically encoded in them and the rational sorts of discourses such as ethical and moral values. In addition, these texts also have presented the role of material achievement in determining human relations. Linking the desire of material gain with human unconscious, this study unravels regarding how people in the present world not only undergo the influence of irrational libidinal desires but also the motivation of material achievement.

Delimitations of the Study

This study is delimited in the psychoanalytical analysis of Hoover's two novels *It Ends with Us* and *It Starts with Us*, and some of the relevant available materials on the novels. It is confined in the analysis of the principal characters Lily, Ryle and Atlas while the cases of other characters are not included in this study. Moreover, the study is also limited in the use of relevant notions of psychoanalysis including repressive desires, impulses and neurotic fears for the textual analysis of the selected novels while other psychoanalytical notions like Oedipal and Electra complex have been excluded.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant primarily because it reveals how human activities and behaviours undergo the influence of unconsciously repressed desires, neurotic fears and impulses. The practice of looking at the underlying causes promotes the practice of addressing mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, trauma, and

personality disorder. It analyses the way the principal characters in the novels undergo the tussle of rational and irrational forces in terms of carrying their life-journey ahead and stresses on the need of giving proper outlet to the repressed desires and impulses along with preserving the rational discourses. As it attempts to unravel the inner psychic forces and explore the impulses influencing the choices and activities of the characters, it promotes the explanation of psychological phenomena in a systematic manner. Moreover, this study also replicates the way people in the present world are motivated to have material gain and physical comforts. This part of analysis emphasises on the relevance of psychoanalytical study in the present world instead of merely reiterating the emphasis on libidinal desires.

Organization of the Study

This study has been organised into four chapters excluding preliminary pages and works cited list. The first is the introductory chapter entitled as “Colleen Hoover and the Concept of Unconscious Process” that introduces the overall study. Besides briefly introducing the author and the concept of unconscious process, it presents statement of the problem, research questions, objectives, rationale for selection of the texts, delimitation of the study, significance of the study, and organization of the study.

The second chapter “Psychoanalysis as a Theoretical Underpinning and Empirical Reviews of the Novels” is a review section. It includes the review of basic concepts of psychoanalysis and empirical reviews on *It Ends with Us* and *It Starts with Us*. The review of the basic concepts and the theoretical modality incorporates the discussion on the division of mind, division of psyche, the concept of neurotic fear and anxiety, the desire for material attainment, and revelation of the unconscious in the form of undertaken activities. The review and discussion on these concepts is

followed by empirical reviews on the novels while there is a brief description of the research gap and the point of departure before the final elaboration of the methodology applied to conduct the study.

The third chapter entitled as “Possession and Loss: Revelation from the Unconscious” is the textual analysis section. As this is the major part of the study, the analysis has been carried out under some thematic titles, such as: “Dynamics of Unconscious: Repression and Revelation of Desires”, “Struggles for Intimacy: Resolution to the Repressed”, “From Neurotic Fear of Abandonment to Aggression: A Revelation of Impulses”, “Expressive Writing: Literature as a World of Wish Fulfillment” and “Unveiling from the Unconscious: Material Gain as the Driving Force”.

The fourth chapter is the last chapter of this study. This chapter is entitled as “Conscious Decisions and Activities under the Influence of Unconscious” that summarises and concludes the study, and finally presents some recommendations for further studies in this field.

CHAPTER II

PSYCHOANALYSIS AS A THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING AND EMPIRICAL REVIEW OF THE NOVELS

This section consists of two types of reviews: a review of basic concepts and theoretical modality, and the empirical reviews published on the novels under the study. It begins with a review of the basic concepts of psychoanalysis and theoretical modality applied for the analysis of Hoover's novels *It Ends with Us* and *It Starts with Us*. Thereafter, there is a review of the scholarly works published on *It Ends with Us* and *It Starts with Us* followed by a brief discussion on the research gap and the point of departure for the present study. Finally, there is a brief discussion of the methodology applied to conduct this study.

Psychoanalysis: The Theory of Unconscious

Psychoanalysis is a theoretical branch founded by Sigmund Freud, an Austrian doctor, that "came into being—entered its first phase—near the end of the nineteenth century, when Freud began his ambitious effort to found a psychology that would be a branch of science rather than philosophy" (Holland 5). Despite its initial development as a part of medical treatment for the analysis and therapy for neurotic personality, Freud himself and his followers like Carl G. Jung and Jacques Lacan expanded psychoanalysis to different fields like the study of civilization, culture, myth, and literature. As a part of literary analysis, it is used as a literary theory that treats a text as "a source of information about the unconscious mind of the speaker" (Barker 98) and helps to explore the hidden desires and impulses either of the author or the character. Its application as a theory to excavate the hidden meaning of the text about personality organization and personality dynamics has made it one of the most fascinating and rewarding modern approaches (Hossain 41). As a systematic

procedure of investigating mental processes, psychoanalysis helps to discover the unconscious thoughts, feelings, and inner conflicts necessary for the treatment of neurotic personality. It provides a special perspective to look at the underlying motives, desires, and inner conflicts of the characters and works as a valuable tool to analyse the thematic issues and the intended messages.

Besides studying human psychology and treating the patients with psychic disorders, the massive application of psychoanalysis in multiple fields has given it multiple dimensions and a wider range. Jill Barker states, "Psychoanalysis theory is itself multiple: Freud's opinions changed during his lifetime, and those theories in turn were taken up with differing emphases by disciples who developed and reinterpreted them . . ." (101). Expanding the dimension of psychoanalysis from therapeutic techniques under medical practice to the analysis of civilization, culture, myth, literature, and many other fields gave multiple dimensions to this theory. Besides this, the expansion from Freud's emphasis on erotic desires occupying a dominant position in the human unconscious to different non-erotic desires also brought changes.

Despite great changes and the addition of newer dimensions to classical psychoanalysis, the discovery of the unconsciously repressed desires to possess or the fear to lose the object of desire remains dominant in psychoanalytical analysis whether it is the case of investigating the psychic state of people or the part of literary analysis in the light of this theory. Such desires are sexuality and gendering with Freud as Barker further writes, "For Freud, desire and the loss of the object of desire are crucially bound up with sexuality and gendering and with emotional maturation, and these in turn with the identity of the speaking subject . . ." (101). Many psychoanalysts disagree that such desires are erotic and yet do not disagree with the fact that the human unconscious consists of multiple repressive desires seeking

constant outlet. Literary texts can replicate such desires of the speaking subject. By 'speaking subject' Barker means both the writer and the characters if it is the case of literary analysis.

Division of Mind: Conscious and Unconscious

Freud is considered as an important scholar to systematically and scientifically analysing human mind as conscious and unconscious in the beginning. He "divided the mind initially into the conscious part and the unconscious. Later, he proposed a new typography of ego (the conscious mind), superego (or conscience), and id (or unconscious)" (Ryan 94). Consciousness is rational and is related to reason as well as morality. It is guided by social, moral, and ethical rules and regulations. Unlike the human conscious, the unconscious is filled with uncountable repressive desires. As a term 'unconscious' was originally used to refer to people's unintentional actions (Bargh and Morsella 74) and was interpreted as a storehouse of repressive desires which are mostly sexual or irrational in Freudian interpretation. If the consciousness is a thin layer, the unconscious occupies most of the part of the human mind.

Being guided by pleasure-seeking tendencies, the unfulfilled desires and wishes of the unconscious constantly try to get their outlet. Freud argues that such repressed desires and wishes can be expressed either in dreams or literature. The unconsciously hidden desires and wishes that are not fulfilled in real life may appear in dreams often displacing socially and morally unacceptable images with acceptable ones, and condensing multiple images into one. Like dreams, literature is also the world of wish fulfillment that helps the person give outlet to repressive desires. Undertaking this notion, psychoanalytical criticism analyses dreams or literature as the imagined or fantasised fulfillment of unfulfilled and repressive desires and wishes.

Literary texts are observed regarding how they reflect the revelation of unconsciously hidden desires, impulses, and motives either of the author or of the characters.

Besides conscious and unconscious, Freud also talked about the subconscious mind that works as a bridge between conscious and unconscious. It contains those memories, beliefs, and habits that individuals can easily recall into consciousness. It functions as a memory bank that registers the events or experiences obtained by five sensory organs. Although individuals do not need to keep on thinking about the events and experiences stored in the subconscious mind all the time, they are memorised in need.

Division of Psyche: Id, Ego and Superego

Freud takes the id, ego, and superego as the important aspects of human personality which are mutually related and constitute the totality of human behaviours. Drawing upon Freud, Yuliana Sari and colleagues argue that as a part of the unconscious, it is related to the "principle of pleasure, which is always seeking pleasure and always avoiding inconvenience" (100). In the process of avoiding inconvenience or barriers, the id tries to defy social rules as well as moral conduct, and thus it is often called irrational, the darker side of human personality, and animalistic in nature. It can further be understood with what James Uleman in the chapter "Introduction: Becoming Aware of the New Unconscious" published in the book *The New Unconscious*, states about the human psyche:

It includes the id (the innate and inherently antisocial sexual and aggressive drives that blindly seek expression and satisfaction) and most of the superego (the conscience and ego ideals) and ego (processes that deal with reality such as perception and motor control, and defense mechanisms that mediate conflicts between reality, id, and superego. (4)

Uleman's commentary further clarifies id as antisocial, aggressive and always searching for satisfaction. However, it is controlled by ego and superego since such desires are socially and morally unacceptable. The superego puts extreme pressure on the id to suppress irrational and immoral desires particularly because the superego itself consists of supra-consciousness or ultra-consciousness and is guided by morality and rationality. As Uleman emphasizes, it is the part of human conscience and tries to make an individual remain ideal and superhuman. If an individual under the total guidance of the id conducts animalistic behaviours, he/she becomes like an angel or sage under the total guidance of the superego. Human, in Thir Bahadur Khadka's terms, "is human because of ego as it creates a balance between id and superego" (68). Ego preserves individuality and human identity. It respects social reality and stands between id and superego by bridging them. It manifests some of the parts of the superego on the one hand and fulfills some of the desires of the id but does not let the id as well as the superego be totally dominant. In this sense, "ego is the synthesizer and executive that chooses strategies and tactics that best balance these competing needs" (Holland 8). It keeps human beings to be socially and mentally healthy as a mediator of reality, id, and superego.

The suppressed desires and wishes under the domain of id are not eliminated. Rather, they keep on seeking their outlet. Lois Tyson states, "Repression doesn't eliminate our painful experiences and emotions. Rather, it gives them force . . ." (12). Tyson's argument about the repression of painful experiences and emotions clarifies that repression is not the elimination of the experiences or desires. The repressed mental contents are revealed in distorted form particularly because of the fear id has from ego and superego. Ego and superego do not let the unethical and immoral aspects of repressed desires under the zone of id to be revealed in their original form.

In other words, id fears with ego and superego and does not bring out the repressed mental contents as they are. This conflicting situation between these psychic forces continues to balance human personality. Talking about this conflicting relationship, Patrizia Giampieri-Deutsch states:

In psychoanalysis, mental phenomena are explained as the outgrowth of conflict between (i) an instinctual (aggressive or sexual) wish and a defense against the wish, (ii) different intrapsychic structures (id, ego, superego), or (iii) an impulse in opposition to internalized demands of external reality. Therefore wishes are warded off by defensive techniques like repression, isolation, undoing, reaction formations, among others. (254)

Patrizia's interpretation further reiterates the Freudian concept that the instinctual desires and wishes under the unconscious particularly the id constantly try to get an outlet instead of being totally eliminated although the role of ego and superego does not let the unethical, immoral, and unacceptable desires such as erotic ones be expressed as they are. It causes the id to employ either displacement or condensation as the ways of presenting socially and morally unacceptable desires and wishes in distorted form.

Displacement is the technique that id employs to replace unethical, immoral, and unacceptable images with ethical, moral, and acceptable ones. A boy, for instance, may dream of playing with a balloon, entering into a cave, or having food on a plate. Here, the balloon can represent the female breast while the cave and plate can represent the female genital organs. With the same logic, the image of a tower a girl climbs on may represent a male genital organ. In such a case, having images of non-sexual objects instead of sexual ones does not bother the ego and superego. However, using displacement as a technique id fulfills its erotic desires. Despite the simplicity in

this example, the replacement is not easily identifiable. It can also be observed in what Freud argues: "They are connected with the element they replace by the most external and remote relations and are therefore unintelligible . . ." (27). Freud means to say that there is no direct and intelligible relationship between the images or allusions that replace and those that are replaced. Their connection is rather external, remote, and difficult and the interpretation of the linkage needs serious, systematic, and rigorous endeavours. Similarly, using condensation, the id condenses or mingles multiple images into a single one as Freud says, "The achievement of condensation can be quite extraordinary. It is sometimes possible by its help to combine two quite different latent trains of thought into one manifest dream . . ." (248). Mingling two or more latent or unconsciously hidden desires, particularly in the id gets replicated as one under this technique. A schoolboy seeing a dream of a rat chasing a cat, for example, can stand for fighting against his father, teacher, political leader, or other powerful people. In this case, multiple images against whom the boy desires to fight are mingled together. As in the case of displacement of erotic desires with non-sexual images and objects, there is no problem for the ego and superego with a powerless animal chasing a powerful one. However, indirectly the boy's desire to fight against powerful people has been fulfilled employing condensation as a technique.

Revelation from the Unconscious and the Influence on Behaviour

Repressive desires, impulses and neurotic fears remain at the depth of human unconscious and keep on influencing the undertaken activities, behaviours and choices. Giampieri-Deutsch states that the process of unconscious remains very active in everyday human activities although it "follows different principles of organization than those which characterize processes occurring during the state of consciousness" (257). Giampieri-Deutsch's argument that the "dynamic unconscious is active,

meaning that unconscious processes have a bearing on behaviour and experience, even though the subject may be unaware of this" (257) also stresses that unconscious processes influence people's behaviours and experiences. Along with its formation, as Freud says, immediately after the repression of the child's first desire to play with the mother's body at the phallic stage of psychosexual development, the unconscious collects the repressive desires and wishes. The first repression is due to the fear of punishment that Freud calls castration at the hands of the father; the father stands for society as well as morality that rejects accepting socially and morally unethical desires. The desire to play with the mother's body becomes unfulfilled and gets transformed into unconscious. In later days, socially and morally unacceptable desires that remain unfulfilled are stored in the unconscious. Such desires, however, are not eliminated. If those desires are not fulfilled, they take different ways of revelation. Rather, they seek outlet and are revealed in the form of dreams, daydreaming, nightfalls, literature, myth, jokes, tongue slips, unusual movements of the body parts, and the like.

The process of revelation of the unconsciously repressed desires, motives, and inner conflicts influences people's activities and behavioural tasks. In a similar context, elaborating Freud's argument regarding repressive desires and effects, Azadkhan Niaz and colleagues state:

According to Freud, the unconscious part of mind has impact in our behaviour because being host for feelings of anxiety, memory, pleasure, clashes, pain, etc. Yet we are not aware of them. These memories do not disappear because we repress them but these repressions affect our behaviours. We hide the feelings not necessarily mean we forget them. (42)

As clarified in the extract, there is a close affinity of the unconscious state of mind with the collection of different repressive desires and the activities undertaken by people. The existence of such unconscious desires, however, is not realized by people as Jung rightly states, "Normally the unconscious collaborates with the conscious without friction or disturbances, so that one is not even aware of its existence" (282). Freud believes that human mind also "finds alternate ways of expressing urges, desires, and yearnings that are deemed unacceptable by society or that for some other more local reason have to be repressed" (Ryan 94). The technique of replacing particularly erotic desires with socially and morally acceptable objects or images Freud calls 'displacement' and sometimes mingling multiple images into one image Freud calls 'condensation' also does not let the desires be revealed as they are. Such a distorted form of desire either in the form of dreams and literature or activities causes people not to easily understand the unconscious or the repressive desires and wishes.

Unconsciously hidden desires, wishes, fears, and anxieties are the focal point in the psychoanalytical approach to literary analysis. Hammad Mushtaq states, "Analysis of a literary piece of work on the basis of Sigmund Freud's concepts of id, ego, superego, libido, complexes, unconscious desires and sexual repression is an interesting way of literary analysis" (8). Mushtaq's commentary in the analysis of Andrew Marvell's poem "To His Coy Mistress" in the light of psychoanalysis stresses on an interesting use of psychoanalysis in literary analysis. It is interesting also because this approach deals with the internal aspects of the human psyche and gives them a revelation. Such a revelation helps us to understand the unconscious state of mind either of the writer or the character that the writer creates in the text. Moreover, such an understanding helps to uncover the past aspects of life which is the reason that Freud was "concerned to explain psychoneurotic symptoms as deriving from

traumatic childhood experiences" (Macintyre 54). Uncovering past activities and events or traumatic experiences by analyzing the present psychological state of mind also replicates another aspect of the case that the present activities of people get shaped by the past events that happened in life.

Neurotic Fear and Anxiety: Beyond Pleasure Principle

Psychoanalysis is not only the theory of libido; it is not limited within the study of repressed sexual desires. Rather, it also encompasses many other aspects that are connected to human psychology and neurosis. In *New Ways in Psychoanalysis*, Karen Horney says, "Sexual problems, although they may sometimes prevail in the symptomatic picture, are no longer considered to be in the dynamic center of neuroses. Sexual difficulties are the effect rather than the cause of the neurotic character structure" (10). Sexual desires and their complications are only the effects of neurotic characteristics but not the cause; many other things are connected with neurosis often representing difficult conditions determining a sort of struggle for life. Horney further argues that human beings are not only ruled "by the pleasure principle alone but by two guiding principles: safety and satisfaction" (*New Ways in Psychoanalysis* 73). When people encounter different situations that could bring loss in their life, property, or love, they feel threat and develop anxiety and fear. To maintain the feeling of security an individual needs, as Horney further states, "obtaining reassurance against a lurking anxiety which lends his strivings their strength and tenacity" (43). However, the more the situation of 'danger' increases, the greater the degree of anxiety and fear.

It is a general psychology of human beings that they want to put dangerous situations off. Sometimes they fight against such situations with victory while sometimes fail and become feeble in front of the challenges. For Horney, the "same

situation may provoke either fear or anxiety depending on the individual's capacity or willingness to tackle the danger" (*New Ways in Psychoanalysis* 195). Horney means to say that if people dare to fight or at least do have the capacity to try to fight against danger, it turns out to be fear but in the case they do not have any courage or capacity to fight against danger, it provokes anxiety. Interpreting what anxiety is and how people become anxious, Horney further states:

Anxiety is an emotional response to danger, as is fear. . . It depends entirely on the conditions under which a person lives and on the structure of his personality what for him specifically represents an essential value whether that would be, for instance, his body, his possessions, his reputation, his convictions, his work, his love relationships. (194)

Horney clarifies that people become anxious when they feel danger to certain values of great importance but can do nothing. The dangerous situations for life, dearest possessions, family members, freedom, or love relationships could bring anxiety to people. Despite lying in the human unconscious, Horney further states, it "often appears simultaneously with physiological symptoms such as palpitations, perspiration, diarrhea, quick breathing" (193). Despite being unaware of having anxiety, people suffer from some sort of physiological disorder resulting in response to danger.

Like anxiety, fear is an important aspect of human emotion that shapes life significantly. It "permeates many of our minor and major decisions, and explicitly or implicitly influences our choices and behaviour" (Starkstein and Sergio 1).

Sometimes fear stops people from some sort of accidents or harm as they may become careful or alert. However, fear is not always beneficial and preventive. Sometimes people avoid doing even the essential things due to some unconscious fear. Sidney

Levin's example that "a student may avoid study of biology because he unconsciously fears re-experiencing intense disgust of learning about bodily functions" (375-376) is quite clear to see how even students may avoid studying certain subjects due to fear. The avoidance of conducting different activities due to unconscious fear deeply rooted in the minds of people can also affect normal personality development. In this context, Levin further states, "Neurotic fears may cause patients to avoid various everyday activities-such tasks as trying to control undesirable habits, or buying one's clothes, or the sexual experimentation that occurs in normal development" (386). Levin's conclusion can be observed for two specific things. The first is that there is a close connection between the human unconscious that consists of some sort of fear/s and everyday activities or behaviours. The second is that when people avoid certain tasks due to such fear/s the normal or day-to-day functioning such as personality development can also be affected.

Neurotic fear can also be observed resulting in violent reactions of people even though such a reaction may not be intentional. The person may not have the intention of bringing harm or damage on the part of the person who becomes the victim of such a violent reaction. Sometimes it so happens that the patient with neurotic fear can be violent to the dearest one. Such a violent reaction can be the reflection of the patient suffering from neurotic fear. The fear of losing the dearest person can also result in abusive behaviour. It can be observed in an analytical study by Bela Mittelman who studied the neurotic interactions of participants closer to each other. Observing the behaviours of homosexual partners, Mittelman found that when one of the partners began keeping their distance, another feared separation which resulted in an abusive relationship (481). An abusive relationship, in this sense, also can take place between very close partners who love each other. The fear of

losing another partner such as a dearest family member can also bring tussles and make the partner abusive.

Desire for Material Attainment: Influence on Human Behaviours

Psychoanalysis is not only the study of how unconsciously repressed libidinal desires influence people's activities and choices. Rather, it also provides insights for the analysis of materialistic activities of people considering how their activities and choices are affected by their desire of having material accomplishment such as political power, earning money, and getting material satisfaction. In this sense, it is relevant to have psychoanalytical study of how people's activities and behaviours in the present society are determined by their desire for wealth. Economic crisis often brings anxiety, depression and personality disorder among people. Tim Kasser and Virginia Kasser state that people in high materialism feel more insecure than the people in low materialism as they feel incapable to overcome the challenges and obstacles of life (693). As an insight to look at the unconscious mental contents, psychoanalytical study helps in uncovering underlying causes of such behaviours and activities under capitalistic society.

Relying on this psychoanalytical emphasis on the exploration of unconsciously hidden desires, impulses, inner conflicts, and neurotic fears for adequately interpreting and analysing the activities people undertake, this study has systematically analyzed the case of the principal characters in *It Ends with Us* and *It Starts with Us*. Besides analysing the case of Atlas attempting to possess the object of his desire and Lily's activities unknowingly moving in the direction of fulfilling her unconscious desires by giving resolution to her internal conflicts, the study has explored how Ryle's fear of losing Lily makes him more abusive. In other words, the role of neurotic fear particularly in making people violent or abusive or conducting

certain harmful activities that are not part of their conscious choice has been given special emphasis. Beyond the domain of libidinal desires and neurotic fear, the study has also linked the case of Lily, Atlas and Ryle with the present capitalistic society where people's behaviours and activities are directed to fulfill the material needs.

Real Self versus Ideal Self: Theory of Neurosis

As a prominent psychoanalyst, Karen Horney has discussed the concepts like 'real self' and 'ideal self' under the theory of neurosis particularly in her text *Neurosis and Human Growth: The Struggle Toward Self-Realization*. Highlighting the tussle between who individuals truly are (real self) and who they strive to be often driven by societal expectations and personal aspirations (ideal self), she has emphasised on the reconciliation of these forces for the better psychological health and personal growth.

Horney defines 'real self' as the authentic self referring to who the person truly is. As a true self consisting actual thought, feeling, desire and experience, real self includes strengths, weaknesses and unique traits of the person. In this sense, the acceptance of real self stands for the acceptance of the true nature of the person and avoiding the external or unattainable version of the self. The progress and prosperity of the individual is possible only with the real self particularly because it is, as Horney further states, "alive, unique, personal center of ourselves; the only part that can, and wants to, grow" (155). Personal development is possible only with real self but not the imagined or idealised one.

Unlike real self, ideal self is an idealized version of the self or a constructed image influenced often by societal expectations and internalised idea. The person desires to attain it particularly because this version of the self-image is perfect, flawless and capable to respond social norms, cultural values and personal expectations. Individual creates an ideal self when the inner conditions of life remain

unfavourable leading him/her to imagine the self that is all powerful. Horney additionally says that such an imagination “sets to work and creates in his mind an idealized image of himself. In this process he endows himself with unlimited powers . . .” (22). Creating idealised image, the individual imagines becoming powerful, strong and capable to solve the problem. This is the reason that the person is tilted to this self. Horney argues that “idealized self becomes more real to him than his real self, not primarily because it is more appealing but because it answers all his stringent needs” (*Neurosis and Human Growth* 23). Her point is that even if the ideal self is a constructed one, individuals treat it more real even than the real self itself as it appears to solve all the problems although it is rarely an imaginative one.

The development of ideal self is a condition of alienation from the real self. This alienation is self-deception, lack of direction and self-decision. Instead of pursuing self-decision, people undergo the influence of social expectation. Talking about what people do under the influence of ideal self, Horney states, “People then do what they think others expect them to do; they are what they think others desire them to be. And they may develop considerable astuteness about what others need or expect” (*Neurosis and Human Growth* 168). The extract clarifies that after adopting the idealised self people monitor their activities as per the external influence instead of the internal necessities. They carry out the tasks considering what other people expect or need. This excessive alienation with the real self, however, makes the person more anxious and neurotic although it is not as clearly visible as it impacts. Horney portrays it as “the loss of the feeling of being an active determining force in his own life. It is the loss of feeling himself as an organic whole. These in turn indicate an alienation from that most alive center of ourselves which I have suggested calling the real self” (*Neurosis and Human Growth* 157). She sees it problematic

mainly because the distance with real self detaches the person from real life circumstances.

Horney suggests that the individual needs to come to the reality by accepting the real self which is connected to the real potentiality of the person instead of the imagined one for the maintenance of healthy psychological state of mind. Healthy psychological state and normal human activities are possible only when there is the resolution of the conflict between real and ideal selves or the acceptance of real self by avoiding the idealised one. When people become free from socio-cultural pressures and neurotic conflicts, they come back to the real self by accepting what they actually are. Leaving the idealised or imagined power, status and capability can release the person from internal conflicts and anxiety, thereby leading him/her integrating the real self essential for healthy life. Releasing the person from pseudo-solutions, it guides for real solutions which are quite constructive and goal oriented. It is a genuine search for the real destination by accepting the person as he/she is as well as by challenging the ideal self instead of running after unattainable and unrealistic standards.

Empirical Reviews of the Novels

The available research, reviews, and comments on the novels have concentrated on many issues including domestic violence, trauma, defense mechanisms, language use, and the representation of the author's experience of living in a patriarchal society. In a descriptive-analytical study of the novel *It Ends with Us* in the light of gender and feminism, Taria Lestari and colleagues have interpreted the novel as a story of gender-based domestic violence and the struggle to tackle it, particularly by the female protagonist Lily Bloom. Stating different forms of violence Lily undergoes, they state, "Lily experiences several forms of gender-based violence such as child abuse, physical attacks, domestic violence, pornography violence, and

an act of rape” (1). Although their emphasis is on such different forms of violence, they also deal with the ways Lily tackles the violence such as developing her independence as well as gaining economic independence along with raising her child as a single parent instead of relying on her abusive husband.

Almost in the same context but with different perspectives and of course, different conclusions, Winda Dwiastuti and Harumi Yamin have examined Hoover’s *It Ends with Us* considering how successful the novel is in terms of representing the issue of domestic violence. To obtain the goal, they applied the concept of attitudes and the notion of hegemonic femininity. Examining the novel as failure in terms of truly replicating the seriousness of domestic violence, Dwiastuti and Yamin state:

Despite the popular opinion of readers which claim that *It Ends with Us* is an empowering narrative, the issue of domestic violence discussed in the novel is simplified through its plot and through the perspectives of the peripheral characters as demonstrated by their varied responses to the abuse Lily undergoes in her marriage. The narrow viewpoint of the public and the and lack of a layered understanding of the complexity of domestic violence is influenced by myriad factors such as self-conception, internalized patriarchal norms, traditional gender roles, social perspectives on marriage, occupations, and homosocial bonds with peers. (80)

Dwiastuti and Yamin's comment responds to the reviewers and critics who have praised the novel as a splendid and honest portrayal of domestic violence. Instead of seeing the novel as a perfect replica of domestic violence, Dwiastuti and Yamin claimed that Colleen Hoover failed to comprehend the complexity of domestic violence. They argue that Hoover's failure to better replicate the seriousness of domestic violence was the result of the fact that she had internalised patriarchal norms

and values of the traditional society that takes domestic violence as a common phenomenon in married life. Besides this, Dwiastuti and Yamin critique the novel arguing that the peripheral characters are failing to support the abused female protagonist.

Interpreting the novel from biographical criticism Camille Abegail Riva and others have stated that “the novel’s plotline is based on the author’s personal experiences” (13) which shows how the authors of contemporary times have not only emphasised on enjoying entertaining literary creations but also revealed the realities of the time. They focused on the theme of domestic violence and looked at how males treated women. Their findings replicated that the way males treated women in contemporary society was portrayed in the novel. In this sense, this study has interpreted the novel as the reflection of Colleen Hoover’s experiences of living in the contemporary male dominated society. It does not mean that it was her individual experience. It was rather a common experience of women including Hoover herself and her mother.

Ni Kadek Risa Puspita Padmi and I. Gusti Agung Sri Rwa Jayantini analysed the conflicts found in the novel based on the theory proposed by William Kenney that categorizes conflicts as internal and external. The study analyses that Lily goes on having internal conflict that takes place between her heart and mind while external conflict takes place between Lily and her parents (33). Finding internal conflict between Lily and her feeling as dominant in the novel, they state that Lily undergoes internal conflict since she “often feels uncomfortable, threatened and does not get enough affection from her parents” (39). Padmi and Jayantini have found Lily’s internal conflict between mind and heart as more dominant than her external conflict with her abusive father and submissive mother.

In the line of Padmi and Jayantini, Jihan Nurkamila Almas Zahro has looked at the inner conflict of Lily Bloom. Using Kurt Lewin's theory of inner conflict, Zahro analyses that "Lily Bloom experienced three types of inner conflict, there are: approach-approach conflict, approach-avoidance conflict and avoidance-avoidance conflict" (ix). Defining these conflicts based on the idea of Lewin, Zahro states:

Approach-approach conflict is a conflict in which at the same time two forces are pushing in opposite directions. . . . Approach-avoidance conflict is a conflict in which at the same time two forces push and hinder arise from one goal. . . . Avoidance-avoidance conflict is a conflict in which the two forces hinder in the opposite direction. (17-18)

As replicated in the extract, the first conflict takes place when both the positive forces take two different directions. Likewise, the second conflict takes place when one positive force takes one direction but the negative one hinders it. The third conflict takes place when both the negative forces take two different directions. Zahro finds approach-avoidance conflict is dominant in the case of Lily. The conflict between positive and negative forces has resulted in doubts, confusion, and dilemmas in Lily that further result in her internal conflict although she resolves such conflicts using three sorts of valences- positive, negative, and neutral. By positive, Zahro means to say that she accepts the positive option and acts accordingly. Likewise, adopting negative valence, she rejects the options that she dislikes and finally remains neutral adopting the final valence.

In a thesis dissertation, Putri Arti Lestari has analyzed the novel looking at the way Lilly gets her hierarchy of needs fulfilled. Drawing up on Maslow's theory of needs and relating it to Lily's hierarchy of needs, Lestari states, "The five hierarchy of needs are physiological needs, safety needs, love and belongingness needs, esteem

needs, and self-actualization needs" (1). Interestingly Lestari argues that Lily's love occupies the third position that she fulfills from Atlas.

Based on Carl Gustav Jung's personality theory, Hanin Asilah has conducted a study that compares the character of Lily's father and her husband Ryle. Comparing these characters, Asilah states, "Father shows his persona as town mayor while Ryle shows his persona as neurosurgeon, they present themselves to society as public figures who are loved and admired by society around them" (70). The son-in-law has been analyzed as the shadow of his father-in-law. Both father-in-law and son-in-law are presented as the public figure where the first one is the Mayor of the city and the second is the neurosurgeon. Besides this brighter aspect, both are jealous, short tempered and abusive. Both these characters abuse their wives. They represent the figures for domestic violence.

Lidya Sarungu and Ambar Andayani have analysed the novel from a psychological perspective revolving around Lily's trauma and her coping mechanism. They have found Lily's coping mechanism of journal writing as the result of her long experience of dealing with such situations whether it was the abusive environment when she was a child or the wife of a man who abused her. Talking about how such writings could be a coping mechanism, Sarungu and Andayani state:

In the practice of expressive writing, people feel free to write about their feelings, and it has been studied and identified that expressive writing, such as narrating the traumatic experience through letter-writing, diary entries, or storytelling, can be comforting for trauma survivors. Survivors can work through traumatic events by creating a narrative for their memories. (11)

The extract makes the point clear that the act of trauma survivors expressing their traumatic experience freely in their expressive writings could make them feel relief from the burden they carry through such experiences. Lily's case also has been analyzed with this glance and found that by selecting expressive writing in the form of letters to Ellen DeGeneres to express her pains, agonies, and sufferings, she invented her coping mechanisms in the novel. By making her protagonist undergo her coping mechanism, Hoover has shown the effectiveness of such a coping mechanism in terms of managing traumas in the lives of individuals. From this point, the novel has been praised for artistically weaving the story of Lily dealing with psychological trauma.

Likewise, the novel has also been analysed from a linguistic perspective, particularly on the use of coordinating conjunctions in sentences. For example, I. Kadek Agus Sugiantara and colleagues conducted a descriptive qualitative study based on the theory of Quirk and Greenbaum and found the novel using syndetic coordination, asyndetic coordination, and the combination of both (98). It was a unique sort of research since its concentration was on the use of coordinating conjunctions employed in the compound sentences in this novel.

As a sequel to *It Ends with Us*, *It Starts with Us* “picks up right where the epilogue for *It Ends with Us* left off, giving readers the exhilarating sequel to Colleen's bestselling phenomenon they have been begging for!” (Hoover, *It Starts with Us* Bark). In a qualitative descriptive study, Chaerul Ihsanul Mubin and colleagues have analysed this novel in the light of Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness. Praising the novel for raising the complex social issues appropriate to look at with the theory of politeness, they state, “The novel's characters are multi-dimensional and have diverse backgrounds and perspectives, which could provide a rich source of data for studying how politeness strategies are used in different

contexts and relationships” (125). They have found nine politeness strategies including six positive politeness and three negative politeness strategies used in the novel. Positive politeness strategies are employed to maintain friendly relationships and avoid conflicts, particularly by considering others' needs. They foster effective communication and help to develop mutual understanding. Unlike this, "Negative politeness involves being more indirect and less intrusive, and avoiding imposing on the other person's freedom and autonomy” (Mubin et al. 125).

Adzra Zakiya Rana conducted a thesis study on *It Starts with Us* concentrating on the psychological trauma of Atlas Corrigan and Lily Bloom and the defense mechanism employed to deal with that trauma. Analysing the novel in the light of the theory of trauma and Freud's idea of defense mechanisms, Rana finds the characters undergoing childhood trauma, domestic violence, and anxiety. As Rana states, "Atlas's childhood trauma was caused by his own mother, who was willing to abandon him in order to choose her own partner” (4). Rana's focus was on the similarity between Atlas's trauma with that of Lily who, as Rana further states, “experienced this trauma as a child, when she frequently witnessed her father's acts of domestic violence. Growing up, Lily witnessed violence in a relationship perpetrated by her own partner, Ryle Kincaid” (4). As another focal point of analysis, Rana looks at the defense mechanism employed particularly by Lily: sublimation, avoidance, displacement, and reaction formation.

The analysis of these novels from a psychoanalytical perspective is a potential area of study particularly to identify the underlying causes of different activities that the principal characters undergo. Such an analysis replicates how unconsciously repressed desires, motives, and impulses give shape to human life and the conduct they carry in the course of life's journey. However, the previous studies have left out

this aspect of analysis. Lestari and colleagues, for example, concentrated on domestic violence as portrayed in the novel *It Ends with Us* and found it successfully portraying the issue along with revealing the way Lily struggles against such violence. Unlike this, Dwiastuti and Yamin concluded the novel as a failure to represent the seriousness of domestic violence. Likewise, the study by Padmi and Jayantini concentrated on internal and external conflicts employed in the novels where internal conflict has been linked with Lily and external conflict has been linked with Lily and her parents. Jihan Nurkamila Almas Jahro's analysis was also on conflict but its focus was on the management of conflict employing the strategies like approach-approach conflict, approach-avoidance conflict, and avoidance-avoidance conflict. Putri Arti Lestari's study revolved around how Lily fulfills her hierarchy of needs. The linguistic analysis of the novel by Sugiantara and colleagues concentrated on the use of syndetic coordination, asyndetic coordination, and the combination of both sorts of sentences in the novel. Unlike other studies, Sarungu and Andayani analysed the novel from a psychological perspective. However, their focus was on Lily's trauma and her coping mechanism. The focus of Rana's study on *It Starts with Us* was on the trauma and defense mechanisms of the major characters Lily and Atlas. Rana amalgamated the idea of trauma theory and the psychoanalytical concept of defense mechanisms. Mubin and colleagues' analysis was on politeness strategies employed in the novel including both positive and negative politeness strategies. As a point of departure, the present study has analysed the novels from a psychoanalytical perspective paying attention to the way the unconscious process of the principal characters influences their major decisions and activities. It considered Lily's unconscious motivating her to adopt Atlas almost in the same way that Atlas strives to be closer to her. At the same

time, it has also analysed the underlying causes that make Ryle abusive to his wife despite loving her a lot and begging for forgiveness each time he becomes abusive.

Methodological Design

This study has employed qualitative research design to have thematic analysis of the complex qualitative phenomena of unconscious such as repressive desires, underlying motives, impulses and neurotic fears influencing behaviours, activities and choices as replicated in Colleen Hoover's two novels *It Ends with Us* and *It Starts with Us*. As a library based textual analysis, this study has been conducted by assimilating the notion that "Literature has always been an object of study" (Ayers 4) and "Literary theory is an unavoidable part of studying literature and criticism" (Bennet and Royal x). Like Julian Wolfreys's portrayal of literary theories as "a range of disparate critical practices and approaches which are used by members of the humanities in the exploration of literary texts . . ." (2), this study has utilised the theoretical perspective of psychoanalysis to analyse and explore the influential role of unconscious in shaping human activities, behaviours and choices as replicated in the selected novels. Both primary and secondary data have been employed in this study where the primary data have been taken from the novels and the secondary data have been obtained from library documents such as relevant research articles, analytical books, criticisms, and thesis dissertations. The proper study of the selected novels has been done to obtain the necessary primary data and relevant secondary sources have been collected from the internet, bookshops, and libraries for obtaining the necessary secondary data.

The primary data obtained from the novels have been analyzed based on the secondary data. Employing a descriptive-analytical approach, the collected data have been described and analysed from the perspective of psychoanalysis. Freud's insights

into the human unconscious and the revelation of unconscious desires, wishes, and motives in different forms including literature have been used to search the connection between the characters' unconscious process of mind and their behaviours. Besides the concept of conscious and unconscious, Freudian notions of id, ego, and superego have been employed for analysis. To have the concept of a modern dimension of psychoanalysis, Karen Horney's popular text *New Ways in Psychoanalysis* has been consulted. Among different ideas and concepts of psychoanalysis, Horney's insights on anxiety and neurotic fear have been applied to the analysis of the characters' fear particularly in enforcing abusive behaviours. Many other scholars and their insights on psychoanalysis have been employed for adequate analysis of the selected texts as per the need.

Hoover is one of the most widely read, reviewed and celebrated novelists with more than twenty-three published novels. Among them, she is best known for *It Ends with Us*. As a sequel to this novel, *It Starts with Us* brings the story ahead from the point in which the first gets its completion. Besides being popular, these novels are quite relevant to studying how unconsciously hidden desires, impulses, inner conflicts, and neurotic fear affect the behaviours and activities people undertake which is an important issue of study. The modern society is becoming more and more complex and the cases of extramarital affairs, domestic violence as well as divorce are increasing. In the majority of the cases, the manifested activities and incidents have been observed while the underlying causes have been overlooked. Dealing with a similar story of love, abuse, violence, and struggle to possess repressive desire, these novels have become rich sources of primary data for the analysis of the case. For this reason, these novels have been selected.

Freud was the pioneer of psychoanalysis who had contributed to this field with both theoretical conceptions and practical implementations. His ideas on the division of mind as conscious and unconscious, and psyche as id, ego, and superego have been adopted for the analysis of issues like repression of desires, influences of unconscious and revelation of desires, and many more. Karen Horney has dealt with new ways in psychoanalysis particularly bringing the theoretical ideas and insights beyond the limitation of libidinal desires. His ideas have been adopted for analysing the role of neurotic fear in shaping the activities of the characters in the novels under study. Likewise, the analysis of how people's decisions, efforts and activities are influenced by their desire of having material achievement in the present capitalistic world has been done based on the ideas of different scholars and their publications.

CHAPTER III

POSSESSION AND LOSS: REVELATION FROM THE UNCONSCIOUS

This chapter presents the textual analysis of Colleen Hoover's two novels *It Ends with Us* and *It Starts with Us* in the light of a psychoanalytical perspective drawing up on Freud, Horney and many others. The analysis has been divided into six sub-titles which help in enlarging the thematic analysis and elaboration of the case explored. The first subtitle is "Dynamics of Unconscious: Repression and Revelation of Desires" that deals with how Lily is driven by the dynamics of her unconscious, particularly the desire to possess Atlas she tested her first love with. As this section has been developed to obtain the first objective of the study, it explores her divorce with Ryle and the adoption of Atlas as the revelation of her repressed desire to have her first love in her life.

The second subtitle is "Struggle for Intimacy: Resolution to the Repression" which is developed to fulfill the second objective of the study regarding the examination of Atlas's efforts to possess Lily as the manifestation of his unconsciously hidden desires to obtain the dearest person Lily, a girl who not only became the source of his inspiration to live but also the means of sexual satisfaction. His struggle to be intimate with Lily has been justified as a resolution of his repression.

The third subtitle is "From Neurotic Fear of Abandonment to Aggression: Revelation of Unconscious" that excavates the underlying reason behind Ryle abusing Lily despite loving her a lot and asking for forgiveness each time he abuses her. This section has been developed to obtain the third objective of the study regarding the exploration of the underlying reason behind Ryle abusing Lily. It justifies how Ryle's

fear of losing Lily due to her increasing closeness to Atlas increases his aggression and makes him additionally violent to her in an unconscious manner.

The fourth subtitle is "Expressive Writing: Literature as a World of Wish Fulfillment" which analyses Lily's expressive journal writing considering the way she expresses her inner feelings, emotions, and desires which gives outlet to her repressed desires.

The fifth subtitle is entitled "Unveiling from the Unconscious: Material Gain as the Driving Force" that presents how human desire for pursuing material wealth and maintaining financially successful life influences their activities and choices. It is the reflection of the role of unconsciously repressed material desires in determining human actions particularly in the capitalistic society.

This chapter ends with the discussion on "Real Self versus Ideal Self: Navigating the Tussle" that reflects how the major characters Lily, Atlas and Ryle undergo the tussle between real self and ideal self. Following their real self, they accept their actual reality and act accordingly while under the influence of ideal self, they imagine to have an idealised version of life and other things. It shows the importance of balancing these selves for a successful life since the gap between these selves generates problematic circumstances.

Dynamics of Unconscious: Repression and Revelation of Desires

Freud argues that the human mind uses repression as one of the important defense mechanisms to keep people mentally healthy. Repression is "the unconscious process of pulling thoughts into the unconscious, to keep unwanted, anxiety-provoking, painful memories, thoughts, desires, and impulses from entering consciousness" (Berlin 13). The human unconscious is the result of a condition in which "a person lacks privileged access to his psychological states" (Smythe 418) and

remains "a repository of repressed desires, feelings, memories, and instinctual drives" (Rivkin and Ryan 119). Despite encompassing such repressions, "unconscious processes appear capable of doing many things previously thought to require deliberation, intention, and conscious awareness, such as processing complex information and emotions, goal pursuit, self-regulation" (Berlin 20) and many more. The condition of remaining unaware of pulling thoughts and memories into the unconscious mind helps people remain stress-free or free of mental illness. Likewise, they also cannot exactly measure what is going on in their unconscious state of mind although the affected or influenced behaviours and activities are observable. It has been replicated in the case of the principal characters Lily, Atlas, and Ryle as they unconsciously strive to either possess the object of their desire or violently react against the fear of losing the obtained desired object.

Lily is the female protagonist who met Atlas in her teenage. Atlas was homeless and helpless at that time and she gave him food and clothes. Besides allowing him to use her shower in her parents' absence, they slept in her bedroom, passionately kissed, and had sex many times. They fulfilled their libidinal desires and perceived each other as the source of satisfaction. Lily felt Atlas's entry into her life as an important and meaningful event as stated herself, "There was not much that happened in my life worth writing about before he entered it . . ." (*It Ends with Us* 30). Taking his entry as an important part of her life, she began filling the pages of her journal expressing her feelings about him, their love, and sensual pleasure. She was very happy to have Atlas as a boy she tasted her first love with. It also made her quite philosophical in thinking about love as a natural process that both humans and non-humans such as plants need. Talking about love, she says, "Plants need to be loved the right way in order to survive. So do humans. We rely on our parents from birth to love

us enough to keep us alive. And if our parents show us the right kind of love, we turn out as better humans overall. But if we're neglected . . . , we end up homeless and incapable of anything meaningful" (*It Ends with Us* 105). As replicated by the extract, Lily understands love as an important thing for better survival. Atlas helped her in gardening which she loved and thought about the importance of love.

It was the expression of her love for gardening as well as for Atlas. Getting the warmth of his love, she began taking her life meaningful and worth living and felt depressed when he went to Boston. Her restlessness increased and she felt depressed on her sixteenth birthday particularly because Atlas was absent. Expressing her sadness in an imaginative communication with Ellen, Lily writes in the journal, "I was deep in the depression stage the night of my sixteenth birthday. My mother had tried to make the day a good one. She bought me gardening supplies, made my favorite cake, and the two of us went to dinner together. But by the time I had crawled into bed that night, I couldn't shake the sadness" (*It Ends with Us* 210-211). Lily's expression clarifies how sad she was without Atlas on her birthday. She was also not satisfied with whatever her mother did for her. Her depression decreased only when Atlas came secretly in the night wishing her birthday. They made physical love and enjoyed it a lot. Their libido was satisfied leaving a deep imprint in their psyche. They desired each other throughout their life although they were forcefully separated when her father knew about it. Atlas was beaten severely and was taken to hospital. They were separated forcefully although the separation failed to eliminate her love for Atlas; it was only suppressed for the time being. Psychologists have accepted the role of the unconscious in guiding human actions and behaviours. Citing the argument of B. F. Skinner, the twentieth-century behaviourist, John Bargh writes:

The effect the unconscious has on behaviour has provoked debate among psychologists for decades. For a good part of the 20th century, B. F. Skinner and the behaviourist school of psychology argued forcefully that our actions were entirely under the control of what we saw, heard and touched in our surroundings and that conscious intent played no role. (34)

As revealed in the extract, Skinner believed in the role of the impression people have from the surroundings or the environment. He believes that instead of conscious intention the unconsciously registered impression on people makes them conduct certain actions. With reference to Skinner, Bargh emphasizes the dominant role of the unconscious in shaping human actions and behaviours. Lily's connection to Atlas in Boston is also the result of unconsciously repressed desires.

Lily happens to meet Atlas in Boston after many years after many events have happened. She is engaged to Ryle, a doctor by profession with whom she is planning to have marriage. Despite being aware of Atlas as her past and Ryle as her present, she unknowingly becomes closer to Atlas. James Uleman argues "People may not be able to verbalize implicit impressions or even realize they have them, but implicit impressions nevertheless affect explicit impressions and behaviours towards others" (12). Quite like Uleman's comment, Lily also does not understand the reason behind her increasing closeness to Atlas. It is her implicit impressions or the unconsciously repressed desire that further makes her panicked when Atlas says that he has a girlfriend named Cassie. She states, "For whatever reason, a huge tear falls down my cheek. A huge pathetic, what-the-hell-is-this-wetness tear. I swipe at it and push the button to start my car" (*It Ends with Us* 137). She becomes angry with Atlas knowing that he has another girlfriend and desires to finish reviewing the journal she expressed her love for him. Expressing her anger, she further says, "And if I finish the damn

journal, I can put it back in the shoebox and never have to open it again" (*It Ends with Us* 138). Her anger with the journal is, in fact, her anger against Atlas's present condition of having another girlfriend. This is the expression of her unconsciously repressed desire to have Atlas in her life. Although it is not part of her conscious selection, she conducts what John Bargh and Ezequiel Morsella call "unintentional actions" (74) under the influence of her unconscious.

The circumstances remind Lily of her past particularly her love for Atlas. She goes on reviewing journals she wrote years back expressing her love for Atlas. The more she reviews the journals, the more she remembers her desire for him. It refreshes her love that makes her passionately desire for him. Remembering the lovely past, she narrates:

He pushed me on my back and pressed his hand against my cheek and kept kissing me. It just got better and better as I grew more comfortable. My favourite moment was when he pulled back for a second and looked down at me, then came back ever harder. I don't know how long we kissed. A long time. When we fell asleep, I'm pretty sure his mouth was still touching mine.
(*It Ends with Us* 144)

The extract clarifies how romantic and passionate they were in love. It replicates their devotional love for each other. Lily's active role in lovemaking can be seen when she further says, "I closed my fist around the heart and then leaned over and kissed him so hard, he fell back onto the bed. I threw my leg over him and straddled him and he grabbed my waist and grinned against my mouth" (*It Ends with Us* 151-152). The impact of Atlas and Lily's kiss is so great that her journal is full of the word 'kiss' that she uses more than any other word in both the novels under this study.

Unconsciously hidden desires play an important role in human life, particularly in motivating people to work in such a way that such desires, wishes, and motives get their outlet. It can be understood when Heather A. Berlin states, "A great deal of complex cognitive processing occurs at the unconscious level and affects how humans behave, think, and feel" (Berlin 5). Berlin's argument clarifies the fact that the unconscious influences human thinking and activities. Elaborating Freud's emphasis on the role of the unconscious, Karen Horney, likewise, avers that human "actions and feelings may be determined by unconscious motivations" (18). Like Berlin, Horney too emphasizes the important role of the unconscious state of mind in shaping people's activities. In this context, Horney further states:

Freud has not only revealed the importance of unconscious processes in the formation of character and neurosis, but he has taught us a great deal about the dynamics of these processes. The shutting out of awareness of an effect or impulse Freud has called repression. . . . The process of repression can be compared to the ostrich policy: the repressed affect or impulse is as effective as it was before, but we "pretend" that it does not exist. (25)

Freud's argument gives a clear picture that the role of the unconscious is pivotal in influencing human activities and forming character. Another important thing is that despite being unaware of repressed desires, they behave and act in such a way that the repression seeks an outlet. People's pretention of having no repression also cannot erase its existence and thus the role of the unconscious in influencing their activities is unavoidable. In other words, people conduct many activities despite being unaware of the underlying reason that influences those activities and behaviours. Lily's closeness to Atlas despite her engagement with Ryle is its example. She visualises her future with Ryle and decides to be faithful to him. But unknowingly she happens to get

connected with Atlas such as by taking his support while going to hospital and by taking shelter in his house.

Lily knows that Atlas is the major reason behind her conflicting relationship with Ryle and yet takes shelter in Atlas's house for a few days. Expressing her awareness regarding the cause of her conflicting relationship with Ryle and the sense of guilty feeling, she says, "Atlas is the very reason Ryle was angry at me last night, yet he's the one I ran to when I needed help? Being here fills me with guilt" (*It Ends with Us* 285-286). She feels it shameful to be under Atlas's roof. However, she is unknowingly guided to be closer to Atlas. It can be observed by seeing at her eagerness and motivation to go dating with him. Talking about her the first date, she says, "It is our first date, and I am nervous. But it's a different kind of nervousness. A good nervous. I know him so well already, so I don't feel like I'm about to have to spend an evening with a stranger" (*It Starts with Us* 71). Atlas is no more a stranger for her. He was her first boyfriend with whom she had shared her private things. It makes her becoming pleased to date with him and stay at his house. It does not mean that she has no shame or hesitation to do so. She knows that the issue of Atlas makes Ryle angry whether it is the case of Atlas's phone number, magnet, journal writing, or the tattoo she made under Atlas's inspiration. Despite having this knowledge and realisation, neither she stops staying with him nor going for dating. Her consciousness shows her the path of shame while her unconscious drags her into Atlas's door. At this point, her unconscious seems dominant over her consciousness. She is even ready to defy morality and ethical norms and values. Despite being somebody else's wife and pregnant, she stays with a different man. She follows Atlas when he says, "I wasn't asking you to leave. I was just making sure you'd still be here. I want you to stay as long as you need to" (*It Ends with Us* 289). While staying at Atlas's house, she

discovers that Atlas does not have a girlfriend. It pleases her. She, however, laments for choosing Ryle believing that Atlas had a girlfriend and she did not have a chance to be reunited with him. It could be observed when she further narrates, "Ryle and I weren't even an official couple yet when I ran into Atlas at that restaurant the first time. Hell, if Atlas had given me any reason to believe there was a chance between us that night, I know without a doubt that I would have chosen him over Ryle. I barely even knew Ryle at that point" (*It Ends with Us* 303). Lily's statements give a clear picture of her lamentation for not knowing the reality that Atlas had no girlfriend as they still had a chance to be reunited. It shows that she still desires Atlas over anybody else in her life. She married Ryle as she saw it only an option particularly because Atlas was supposed to be with his girlfriend. Knowing the reality after so many events have happened she feels greatly panicked. It is her unconscious revealing her great attachment to Atlas over Ryle.

Some behaviours or activities suddenly take place under the influence of unconscious desires and wishes. Sometimes people spontaneously speak something although it may not be their conscious selection and reveal their unconscious hidden thoughts and feelings. Freudian practice of making the patient verbally express the thoughts freely without any interruption so that the analyst can measure the underlying cause such as repressed desires, inner conflicts guilt or anything else necessary for mental treatment also replicates this case. It can further be understood when James Uleman states about the unconscious that "Unconscious processes seem to be capable of doing many things that were, not so long ago, thought of as requiring mental resources and conscious process. These range from complex information processing through behaviour to goal pursuit and self-regulation" (3). Lily spontaneously confesses her love for Atlas when Ryle pushes her against the ground

finding her keeping a magnet that Atlas had given her as a gift can be the replica of complex unconscious processes she undergoes. Responding to Ryle's query on the magnet, for example, she states:

Yes. I kept the magnet Atlas gave me when we were kids. Yes. I kept the journals. No, I didn't tell you about my tattoo. Yes, I probably should have. And yes, I still love him. And I'll love him until I die, because he was a huge part of my life. And yes, I'm sure that hurts you. But none of that gave you the right to do what you did to me. Even if you would have walked into my bedroom and caught us in bed together, you still would not have the right to lay a hand on me, you goddamn son of a bitch! (*It Ends with Us* 323)

As clarified in the extract, Lily is very angry with Ryle and his abusive behaviour. She not only reveals that she has been keeping things given to her by Atlas but also confesses that she still loves him. She challenges Ryle arguing that he does not have any right to abuse her and finally decides to remain separate.

In the process of expressing her inner thoughts, Lily is dominated by her unconscious. Her unconscious remains dominant over her conscious and subconscious. This point not only reveals her inner thoughts but also takes important decisions in her life. She is pregnant with Ryle's child in her womb and yet does not stay with him. Ryle promises to help her in pregnancy saying, "I want to be in our baby's life. I want to be your husband and I want to be good at it. But I have no idea what's going through your head" (*It Ends with Us* 346). He wants to help Lily in every manner and play his role perfectly. But Lily does not trust him. Suspecting him, she says, "You would never intentionally hurt your own child. I don't even believe it was intentional when you hurt me, but you did" (*It Ends with Us* 346). She remembers how abusive her father was towards her mother and compares Ryle with him and

herself with her mother. She gives birth to a baby girl and both of them accept Emerson or Emmy as her name. She allows Ryle to play the role of a father but does not let him keep the baby at night since she suspects Emerson to be in the same abusive environment that she herself had experienced. Hence, she demands divorce although Ryle pleads with her to give him one more chance. Rejecting his proposal, she kisses on Emerson's forehead determines to end the abusive environment and says, "It stops here. With me and you. It ends with us" (*It Ends with Us* 361).

Lily's act of divorcing Ryle instead of helping him with anger management and making their conjugal life better is not motivated by her desire to fight against male domination and female empowerment. It is because by divorcing Ryle, she abandons a male but by adopting Atlas, she adopts another man. Her journey from Ryle's life to Atlas's life is rather the influence of her repressed desires to possess Atlas. Repression of desires is a natural process in human life. Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan elaborate repression as natural and essential and aver, "Repression is essential to civilization, the conversion of animal instinct into civil behaviour, but such repression creates what might be called a second self, a stranger within, a place where all that cannot for one reason or another be expressed or realized in civil life takes up residence" (119). The extract clarifies how repression protects individuals from carrying animalistic instincts. The socially and morally unacceptable desires are repressed and collected in the unconscious although they constantly try to get an outlet in different ways. However, excessive repression causes illness in people and makes them behave abnormally and unconsciously (Tyagi 8). Like Monika Tyagi's observation, excessive repression of desires causes individuals to carry out different unconscious activities.

The forceful repression of Lily's love for Atlas causes her to do unusual acts. Her closeness to Atlas and her divorce from Ryle can be linked to this line of interpretation. As Dwiastuti and Yamin state, "Lily is able to leave her abusive relationship" (80) by having separation from her husband. Her divorce with Ryle is of course the result of his abusive behaviour. But it is also the reality that her increasing closeness with Atlas causes Ryle to be abusive although she does not become ready to take responsibility for herself. She says, "I never would have left you for Atlas. I didn't leave for Atlas. I left you because I deserve to be treated better than the way I was treated by you" (*It Starts with Us* 206). She looks at the way Ryle behaves her but does not look at the underlying reason of Ryle's abusive behaviour towards her. It is clear that Ryle becomes angry and abuses her when he finds her closeness with Atlas. She does not realise the role of repression of her love for Atlas and her increasing closeness with him as a casual factor to make Ryle abusive. Her inclination towards Atlas is greatly shaped by her past full of Atlas and his love. In comparison to the past particularly the first bite of love, Ryle's love proves to be feeble. It can also be understood when she narrates the present kissing scene with Atlas and links it to the past relationship, "This kiss is hope. It's comfort and safety and stability. It's everything I've been missing in my adult life, and I am so happy Atlas and I have each other again, I could cry" (*It Starts with Us* 185). Her happiness to be with Atlas again is shaped by their past relationship. To be with Atlas again and get the warmth of his love gives her the feeling of comfort, safety, and stability.

Lily is also motivated to fulfill her libidinal desire which is quite a natural phenomenon for a healthy human life. Freud interpreted sexual desire as an innate, biological and motivating fact (DeLamater and Sill 139). It is taken as a natural and obvious attempt if somebody tries to fulfill this bodily need. Proposing to Lily for sex,

Ryle says, "Please, Lily. Please have sex with me" (*It Ends with Us* 82), and she takes it positively. Ryle's libidinal desire becomes dominant while Lily's is no less active. Both of them are motivated to fulfill their desire. In a conversation with Allysa, for example, she praises Ryle's sexual frankness, "It's fine Allysa. Lots of people want to fuck me. . . . At least your brother speaks his mind. Not a lot of people have the courage to say what they're actually thinking" (*It Ends with Us* 53). Despite this motivation for fulfilling her erotic desire, she, however, prefers a long relationship instead of a single night. She believes that Ryle will desire additional sexual relationships with her if tasted once, particularly because she is "like a drug" (*It Ends with Us* 71) and he will love having it more and more. Having this belief and motivation for fulfilling her sexual desire, she takes him to her bedroom and prepares for the sex as if it is a great event going to take part in her life. Narrating her preparation, she states:

I shaved more parts of me than was probably necessary, and then spent a good twenty minutes having a freak-out, and had to talk myself out of opening the door and telling him to leave. But now that my hair is dry and I'm cleaner than I've ever been, I think I might be able to do this. I can totally have a one-night stand. I'm twenty-three years old. (*It Ends with Us* 72-73)

As indicated by the extract, Lily well prepares for sex such as by taking a bath and shaving many parts of her body to be neat and clean. Spending a long time taking a bath and cleaning her body well is of course accompanied by thinking a lot about the relationship going to take place. In other words, it is both physical as well as mental preparation for the relationship. Her preparation for a one-night stand, however, remains unfulfilled since Ryle sleeps without having sex. It causes Lily's preparation to go in vain and her desire to remain unfulfilled. She develops irritation. The next

morning, she says: “I actually don’t mind if he tries this again, but then I remind that we want two different things from life. And it’s good that he fell asleep and we never even kissed, because if I would have had sex with him while he was wearing scrubs, I would have been the one showing up at his door on my knees, begging for more” (*It Ends with Us* 74-75). Lily’s expression replicates her dissatisfaction even if she does not confess in exact words. It is the sexual dissatisfaction she undergoes. Her conscious thinking makes her take things positively but in front of her internal desires, it turns out to be a thin layer.

The line of Lily’s argument that not having sex was good since if they did it she would ask him to have more proves how feeble the rational way of thinking is. There is a clear reflection of the domination of her anger or irritation of having her libidinal desire unfulfilled as she further states:

It all hits me at once. The anger . . . the irritation . . . the half glass of champagne I had in the kitchen. I am so mad, I can’t even think straight. If the guy wants to have sex with me so bad . . . he shouldn’t have fallen asleep! If he doesn’t want me to swoon, he shouldn’t buy me flowers! He shouldn’t hang cryptic pictures of me where he lives! (*It Ends with Us* 87)

The extract reflects Lily’s dissatisfaction with Ryle although she desires a long relationship with him. This dissatisfaction is natural in the sense that Ryle proposes to have sex for one night while she desires a long relationship as she states, “I like you, Ryle. And knowing that you only want me for one night makes me really, *really* sad” (*It Ends with Us* 89). Likewise, he sleeps without having sex while all her preparations go in vain. Her dissatisfaction, however, takes a different course when Ryle goes to her room and kisses her next time. Describing the way he kisses her, Lily says: “His tongue slides against mine and he releases my wrists to grab my face. His

kiss grows deeper and I grasp at his hair, pulling him closer, feeling the kiss in my entire body. . . . Both of us become a medley of moans and gasps as the kiss brings us over the edge, our bodies wanting more than our mouths can deliver" (*It Ends with Us* 92). The words Lily uses to describe the way Ryle kisses her indicate bodily satisfaction. By talking about how their bodies desire more kisses than what their mouths deliver, she sheds light on her desire for additional sexual pleasure. It can also be observed when she further states, "He grabs my hand and pulls me down on top of him so that I'm straddling him. He brings my mouth to his and kisses me so hard, it makes me wonder if he's trying to prove his sister wrong" (*It Ends with Us* 99). Bodily desire is a natural process and giving an outlet to repressive desires is essential "so as to keep our existence smooth, progressive and pleasing" (Khadka 73). Lily becomes happy even when she imagines having a romantic sexual game with Ryle.

In this case, she further says, "What's even better, is when I do decide to have sex with Ryle, we can have it over here all the time and not have to worry about being quiet" (*It Ends with Us* 201). Lily further becomes happy and satisfied as her imagination comes true. She becomes romantic while narrating the sexual scene she and Ryle are involved in. Her happiness can be observed as she further avers:

He rolls me onto my back and then drags his hand down my body, straight to my hip. He moves closer, sliding his hand down my thigh. He pushes against me and a surge of heat shoots inside me. I grab a fistful of his hair and whisper against his mouth. "I think we've waited long enough. I would very much like for you to fuck me now." (*It Ends with Us* 122)

The fulfillment of erotic desires pleases Lily a lot. She feels that her body is waiting for it and its fulfillment is pleasing. She finds Ryle energetic in having sexual romance compared to many boys she had sex with. It becomes clear when she says,

"The few who came before him were all boys-nervous hands and timid mouths. But Ryle is all confident. He knows exactly where to touch me and exactly how to kiss me" (*It Ends with Us* 122). Compared to other boys, Lily finds Ryle mature in the making process. He knows exactly where to touch and gives her relaxation during the course. It somehow lessens the earlier dissatisfaction she developed when he slept without having sex although it happens to be temporary as she divorces him at the end and becomes closer to Atlas.

Ryle imagines if he could have any chance to get reunited with Lily again even after the divorce. Responding to Lily's continuous blame that he is abusive, Ryle asks, "What if I've changed?" (*It Starts with Us* 110). This hope or imagination of becoming united again, however, is responded to negatively by Lily when she says, "I don't care if you've changed, Ryle. I hope you have. But it's not my responsibility to test that theory" (*It Starts with Us* 110). Lily's response indicates how strong she is in her determination to leave Ryle. Reflecting on her awareness of Ryle's intention, she says, "He thinks if he treats our divorce like we're being silly, I'll eventually agree with him and take him back" (*It Starts with Us* 110). In response to such an intention, Lily states, "His life would be easier if I took him back. . . . But my life wouldn't be easier" (*It Starts with Us* 110). Motivated by the desire to make her life easier, she selects divorce and remains strong in her decision particularly because she thinks that she has done lots of things for Ryle and is tired now as she further narrates, "I'm stuck dealing with Ryle's feelings forever, and frankly, I'm growing tired of always feeling sorry for him, worried for him, fearful of him, considerate of his feelings" (*It Starts with Us* 143).

Lily fears Ryle's intervention even after the divorce. She fears that Ryle's intervention can prevent her from being closer to Atlas. In this regard, she says, "And

as long as he exists, I fear that any type of relationship, or even a friendship between me and Atlas, can't exist" (*It Starts with Us* 8). She fears Ryle's continuous interruption in her relationship with Atlas although she strives to place her fear back and frequently meets Atlas. She feels lucky to have Atlas in her connection as replicated in the way she remembers her past relationship with Atlas and says, "I did not know how rare men like Atlas were, so I didn't know how lucky I was to have him in my life" (*It Starts with Us* 35). It shows that Lily takes Atlas as a rare man and feels very lucky to be his closer and further desires to have him in her life again. She enjoys dating him although she feels nervous to some extent in the beginning as she says, "It is our first date, and I am nervous. But it's a different kind of nervous. A good nervous. I know him already, so I don't feel like I'm about to have to spend an evening with a stranger" (*It Starts with Us* 71). Lily's comment clarifies her excitement to go on dating Atlas. Her pleasure to be with Atlas is the way of giving her a repressive desire outlet. It is a revelation of her desire to possess her first love that was repressed years back in the past.

Whenever Ryle tries to interrupt her life, she threatens him to take legal action. She is determined to avoid Ryle at any rate. She does not like to sacrifice for the betterment of Ryle's life. She asks Ryle "to undergo anger management" (*It Starts with Us* 284) and suggests Ryle's family to help him in this case but she does nothing. Ryle is a doctor by profession. He is sensible in other activities. He loves his daughter and somehow contributes to her rearing and caring. He has a good relationship with other family members. He was often involved in family gatherings and ceremonies such as better preparing marriage anniversary celebration of his parents. Lily also knows that he has no any criminal record and says, "He has no criminal history, and he has money for the best lawyers" (*It Starts with Us* 225). She knows that he is a

good doctor and has earned lots of money. Even if she files a case against him in the court, Ryle does have a greater chance to win the case since he is known for his merit. However, he becomes angry and abusive to Lily whenever he finds any connection she makes with Atlas. She justifies her divorce as a step away from fear, the fear of his abusive activities. She says, "The contact Ryle and I do have is still sometimes terse, but all I've ever wanted out of our divorce was my freedom from fear, and I truly feel like I have that" (*It Starts with Us* 294). Lily could have tried to help Ryle with his anger management and see what he would do. She could have stopped all her connections to Atlas and seen how Ryle would take her or love her. Like the majority of people, she also looks at his activities but not the underlying causes of such activities. The way she interprets three cases of push as violent attacks upon her and sufficient cases for divorcing him shows her negligence towards setting things in the right order by eliminating the causes of performance. Her motivation of maintaining a close connection to Atlas whom she loved for the first time in her life shapes her way and activities. The repression of her love for Atlas is revealed in the way she divorces Ryle and adopts Atlas in her life.

Struggle for Intimacy: Resolution to the Repressed

As a homeless and helpless boy, Atlas found Lily both the inspiration for living and the source of sexual satisfaction the first time he met her. Before he met her, he had "Nothing. No money, no belongings, no family" (*It Starts with Us* 96). He felt worth living due to Lily as he narrates, "You made me feel interesting and unique. Your friendship gave me worth" (*It Starts with Us* 97). Falling in her love, he desired to possess her. It can be observed when Lily writes in her diary, "Let's just say we both kissed a lot. We both laughed a lot. We both loved a lot. We both breathed a lot. A lot" (*It Ends with Us* 214). Atlas expressed his love and said, "I love you, Lily.

Everything you are. I love you” (*It Ends with Us* 214). Like Atlas’s desire to be with Lily, Lily also wanted to have Atlas as she said, “If you don’t come back for me, I’ll come for you” (*It Ends with Us* 214). Lily's expression clarifies her strong determination to possess Atlas although their desire was repressed due to the entry of Lily's father in-between them. Narrating it, Lily says:

My father heard me in there talking to someone, and when he threw open my door and saw Atlas was in bed with me, he was angrier than I’d ever seen him. And Atlas was at a disadvantage by not being prepared for what came next. . . . By the time the police got to my bedroom and pulled my father off of him, I didn’t even recognize Atlas, he was covered in so much blood. (*It Ends with Us* 215)

As clarified in the extract, Atlas was caught living in Lily’s bed in the middle of the night. Her father punished him while Lily was forbidden to meet Atlas. The presence of ‘father figure’ represents social norms and values which do not allow young boys and girls living together and making love unless they are married couple. Under the guidance of libidinal desire, Lily and Atlas cross social and moral limitation. The presence of social and moral aspect represented by the role of Lily’s father’s, they are separated. Getting punishment on the part of Atlas is the result of his failure to balance between rational and irrational forces of human personality. He falls under the trap of superego and id. He not only meets Lily at night but also fulfills his libidinal desire. But he forgets the voice of ‘superego’ or rationality. He obtains punishment for defying social and moral aspect of human society. The punishment not only separated him from Lily but also caused his love for Lily to be suppressed. Like Lily, Atlas’s remaining days also underwent the influence of that suppression.

Memory plays an important role to bring Lily and Atlas closer to each other at present. They screen the memory of their past and feel intensive love for each other. Drawing upon Freud, Barker states about screen memory, “Freud uses the term ‘screen memories’ . . . for the memories that conceal significant earlier events: within both the literary text and the discursive text of psychoanalysis, the other is displayed (screened) as in a cinema- at a distance from its origin, and also hidden (screened) from view behind the metaphoric duplicities of language” (99). Barker's clarification of the Freudian notion of screen memories is quite relevant in the case of Atlas and Lily particularly the strong desire they had for each other and its influence at the present. Lily, for example, has a strong influence of memories and puts forward her determination to keep loving Atlas, "I love him. I still do and I always will. He was a huge wave that left a lot of imprints on my life, and I'll feel the weight of that love until I die. I've accepted that" (*It Ends with Us* 218). Lily's determination of loving Atlas throughout life replicates her realisation that she cannot be disconnected from him. It makes her continue her relation with Atlas no matter she undergoes different ups and downs while pursuing her goal.

Atlas's love is permanently imprinted on Lily's heart similar to the heart-shaped tattoo she has made on her neck under his inspiration years back. Talking about the connection of her tattoo and her love for Atlas, Taria Ayu Lestari and colleagues state:

It appears that the tattoo is a symbol of Lily's love for Atlas, namely her first love. When they were teenagers, Atlas once gave a gift in the form of an open heart-shaped wood carving at the top, then inspired Lily to get a similar tattoo on her body. This shows that although Atlas has become a part of Lily's past,

there is still a part of Atlas that is in Lily's body permanently like the tattoo.

(5)

As replicated in the extract, Atlas has become an integral part of Lily's life. She not only carved a tattoo on her body as an inspiration but also internalized her deep love for him. This shapes her activities while divorcing Ryle and adopting Atlas at the end of the story in the novels.

Atlas, who had left his suicidal thinking after seeing Lily, understood her not only as an inspiration for his living but also as a way for his happy future. He was "Lily's first love and the person who knows Lily's history with domestic violence firsthand" (Dwiastuti and Yamin 78). He was the first man who slept with her. Similarly, Lily was the only person who took his care in the most critical period of his life. At a point, he states, "It was that time I got sick and you took care of me. You noticed I was ill as soon as I crawled through your window. I remember you taking immediate action. You gave me medicine, water, and blankets, and forced me to sleep on your bed" (*It Starts with Us* 295). Atlas's memory regarding Lily's love, care and devotion makes him more determined to have her. This is also the reason that he strives to protect her in need. This is the reason that he confronts Ryle since he discovers how Ryle pushed Lily causing her face to hit on the cabinet door handles and get wounded. Threatening Ryle, he says, "You touch her again and I'll cut your fucking hand off and shove it down your throat, you worthless piece of shit!" (*It Ends with Us* 198). Preserving protective efforts and desiring to possess her, he further becomes closer to her after meeting her in Boston. Besides visiting her flower shop, he gives her his phone number in case she needs his help. He also regrets that he told a lie that he had a girlfriend. He knows that if he had not told that lie, Lily would not have married Ryle. In regret, he says, "I regretted lying to you as soon as I did it" (*It*

Ends with Us 306). He also informs Lily about how he searched her in college and says, "I began walking towards you when someone came up behind you. A guy. He dropped to his knees next to you and when you saw him, you smiled and threw your arms around him. Then you kissed him" (*It Ends with Us* 305). Seeing Lily with another boy, Atlas left the place. In a sense, he tried suppressing his desire for her either in the case of telling her a lie that he had a girlfriend in their meeting at the restaurant or in the case of stopping his search for Lily seeing her with another boy.

The desire of Atlas to possess Lily can be observed in the way he not only takes Lily into his home but also pleads to love him if she likes. Requesting her in this case, he says, "In the future . . . if by some miracle you ever find yourself in the position to fall in love again . . . fall in love with me. . . . You're still my favorite person, Lily. Always will be" (*It Ends with Us* 309-310). This confession expresses Atlas's love for Lily. He left Boston after being beaten by Lily's father and was forced to forget her. He concentrated on his career and became the owner of a restaurant famous in the city.

Atlas looks at Lily's relationship with Ryle closely and interprets Ryle as immature. He also associates Ryle's weakness as an opportunity to bring her closer to his life again. It is clear when he states, "If he would have been a more mature, more rational man, Lily never would have left him. He'd have his wife and his daughter, and me and Lily would not even be in contact" (*It Starts with Us* 222). Knowing Lily and Atlas becoming closer to each other, Ryle goes to Atlas's restaurant and accuses him of the reason Lily got divorced. He says, "You're the reason we are not together!" (*It Starts with Us* 237) while Atlas replies, "You're the reason you are not together" (*It Starts with Us* 237). He believes that Ryle's quick anger is the primary cause of Lily getting a divorce. Suggesting Ryle to cooperate for Lily's happiness, he suggests:

As happy as I know I can make Lily, she'll never be fully happy until she has your acceptance and cooperation. And you're making it difficult, even though you know she deserves a good life. They both do. If you want your daughter to grow up with the best version of Lily, then please work with her. This is possible for all of us. (*It Starts with Us* 238)

Atlas's suggestion is practical particularly for Lily's happiness while Ryle does not see other options as she does not have the mood of reconciliation. Ryle struggled and fought but in vain. Seeing such a condition, Atlas at once said, "I thought I pitied him before, but he's fighting for a woman he barely even knows, which means he's just fighting for the sake of fighting" (*It Starts with Us* 239). With this comment, Atlas tries to indicate Ryle's weakness but never thinks about whether he is doing an unethical act by being closer to someone else's wife and somebody's mother. It is because he was the major cause of Lily and Ryle's conflict; he went in-between their relationship and brought their conjugal life to an end. In this point, he violated the code of conduct of the society. It is not ethical for a third person to enter in-between the conjugal life of some people and brings their relationship to an end. Atlas's repressive desire of possessing Lily makes him defying morality and ethics.

From Neurotic Fear of Abandonment to Aggression: A Revelation of Impulses

The major activities of Ryle undergo the influence of neurotic fear of losing his dearest person from his life that not only causes him to lose the control over his action but also brings his conjugal life to an end. Despite being a medical doctor, he fails to realise the underlying cause of bad temper as reflected in abusively behaving Lily. He associates it with a childhood event that he had accidentally shot his seven year old brother when he himself was just six but in reality his neurotic fear of losing Lily is at play that leads him to be aggressive and ultimately abusing her.

Lily is Ryle's dearest person that he does not like to lose. She is the source of fulfilling his libidinal desire that he wants to keep control over. The beginning of his relationship with her is also tinged with fulfilling his sexual desire. In the very first meeting, for example, he says, "You're beautiful. I'm a guy. If you were into one-night stands, I would take you downstairs to my bedroom and I would fuck you" (*It Ends with Us* 20-21). He repeats his statement in the next meeting, "I still very much want to fuck you" (*It Ends with Us* 53). This proposal reflects Ryle's strong sexual desire that he wants to fulfill from Lily. To fulfill his desire, he tries to convince her by saying:

I'm very attracted to you, too. There's no much about you I don't like. But I kind of hope we're never around each other again, because I don't like how much I think but you. Which is not all that much-but it's more than I'd like. So if you still aren't going to agree to a one-night stand, then I think it's best if we do what we can to avoid each other. (*It Ends with Us* 56)

Ryle's initial attraction to Lily is due to the possibility that she can be resourceful to him particularly to satisfy his desire in the case she accepts his one-night stand proposal. The way he does not see any significance in remaining in touch if she rejects having sex with him shows how he is guided by a utilitarian perspective in which something becomes important only if it proves to be beneficial. The way he proposes to her either to have sex or to do everything that can end their relationship comfortably enough to avoid each other reveals his hidden intention that besides sexual pleasure there is nothing more valuable.

Lily also accepts Ryle's proposal of having sex. It is the case of body and bodily pleasure. Motivated to fulfill bodily pleasure, Lily takes Ryle to her house and does certain preparations asking Ryle to wait for a few minutes, "I don't think sexy

right now, Ryle. I worked all day, I'm exhausted, I smell like sweat and probably taste like dust. If you give me a little while to shower first, I might feel sexy enough to have sex with you" (*It Ends with Us* 71). Lily's preparation to look sexy and attractive shows how much importance she has given to this moment. Although Ryle sleeps for the first time without having sex, he does it next time. The proposal of a one-night stand is extended as Ryle is attracted more. He becomes like an addicted one in having sex with Lily and says, "You warned me. You said one time with you wouldn't be enough. You said you were like a drug. But you failed to tell me you were the most addictive kind" (*It Ends with Us* 123). Taking Lily as an addictive one and being addicted to her love, Ryle feels blessed while being with her, kissing her, and pushing inside her.

He does not like to think otherwise except for having Lily inside his arm and his organ inside her. Ryle's determination to have sex with Lily can be observed from her narration of their sexual scene: "He's still somehow deep inside me and I'm trying to move against him, but he's rock solid as the tremors begin to rush through me. My legs are shaking and my hands are at my sides, gripping the tops of his thighs as it takes every ounce of my strength not to scream out his name" (*It Ends with Us* 175-176). Lily's narration demonstrates that Ryle remains active in fulfilling his libidinal desire through her. Having her inside his arm pleases him a lot and he says, "I like you. Everything about you, Lily. Being inside of you. Being outside of you. Being near you. I like it all" (*It Ends with Us* 176). Ryle is satisfied with Lily and so is his libidinal desire. She is the source of his satisfaction and desires to have her throughout his life. He likes the romantic sexual game he can play with Lily. Taking her as his everything, he does not like to lose her from his life.

Ryle knows about Lily's past with Atlas from the first meeting as they confess their naked truth. Lily confesses that she had a physical relationship with Atlas years back. Ryle does not care about this in the beginning. But he begins fearing for losing her particularly when Atlas comes to the scene again in Boston. The first seed of his fear is sowed when he finds Lily and Atlas talking to each other in the bathroom the day when Lily, Ryle, and Lily's mother go to Bib's for dinner. He also finds Atlas seeking closeness with Lily and interferes. The interference results in fighting which is, in fact, the tussle of two different desires of two persons. Atlas desires to regain Lily while Ryle desires not to lose her. The incident makes Ryle upset as revealed in his statement, "I didn't want this, Lily . . . I didn't want a relationship! I didn't want this stress in my life!" (*It Ends with Us* 200). Ryle's expression gives a clear picture of how sad he becomes when he finds Lily and Atlas becoming close again. He undergoes the 'fear of abandonment' which means "the unshakable belief that our friends and loved ones are going to desert us (physical abandonment) or don't really care about us (emotional abandonment)" (Tyson 16). Alternately, it can also be said the 'fear of betrayal' which means "the nagging feeling that our friends and loved ones can't be trusted, for example, can't be trusted not to lie to us, not to laugh at us behind our backs, or in the case of romantic partners, not to cheat on us by dating others" (Tyson 16). The fear of being abandoned or betrayed by Lily makes Ryle panicked.

Ryle is having great satisfaction with Lily and is also planning to marry her. But the reentry of Atlas into Lily's life injects restlessness in him. He realizes a great obstacle in the way of his satisfaction. Talking about this fearful situation, he narrates: "If you don't want to be with me . . . please tell me right now, Lily. Because when I saw you with him . . . that hurt. I never want to feel that again. And if it hurts this

much now, I'm terrified to think of what it could do to me a year from now" (*It Ends with Us* 202). Ryle's expression clarifies how much pain he registers when Lily becomes closer to Atlas. He fears that his dearest person Lily can leave him. If he loses her, his romantic life, dearest love, and pleasing sexual satisfaction will come to an end. It is a challenge that appears on his way. In *New Ways in Psychoanalysis*, Horney argues that the dangerous situation results in neurotic fear that the individual strives to fight against (195). The fight or struggle to overcome the dangerous situation unconsciously takes place and motivates the person to take action even if such an action may not be the choice of the person. The way Ryle becomes angry when he finds Lily having Atlas's contact number is his reaction against such a danger. As a reaction, he grabs her wrists and pushes her away. He scolds her and speaks angrily whatever comes to his mind. In the mental treatment of the patient "the patient talks, saying whatever it occurs to him to say" (MacIntyre 52) moving from one topic to another which reveals the patient's emotional responses. MacIntyre believes that such a response allows the analyst to "suggest an interpretation to him of what he is saying" (52). Ryle angrily pushes his wife all of a sudden just in the manner that the patient under mental treatment speaks without having clear consciousness of what has been spoken. This is what happened with Ryle and his response towards Lily is psychoanalytically meaningful.

Ryle often feels that his anger could be the result of the tragic childhood incident in which he mistakenly killed his brother in the course of playing with his father's loaded gun. As He says, "I shot him, Lily. My best friend. My big brother. I was only six years old. I did not even know I was holding a real gun" (*It Ends with Us* 240). Ryle feels that the traumatic memory of the past brought his emotional disturbances and caused him to be uncontrollable particularly when he feels certain

threats in his life. He associates that tragic incident and its effects with his inability to control his anger. Analyzing Ryle's abusive behaviours and its underlying cause in the line of Ryle's comprehension, Sarah Ahsan states:

Ironically, Ryle is a neurosurgeon who does not have control over his own impulses. His overall persona is of a thorough gentleman. Ryle's abusive nature is later linked in the novel to his guilty past; the loaded pistol of his father resulted in the accidental death of his elder brother. The trauma of his brother's death conflated with the guilty consciousness is the underlying cause of his abusive behaviour. (351)

Ahsan's analysis regarding the affinity of Ryle's tragic past and his present abusive activities towards his wife aligns with Ryle's realization. It indicates that Ryle did not inherit abusive nature by birth. But both Ryle's realisation and Ahsan's interpretation do not dig out the underlying reality. It is true that nobody becomes abusive by birth and some situations contribute abuse. There are certain impulses biologically encoded in human beings. The desire of preserving the dearest thing in life is human nature. At the same time, giving reactions for the fear of losing the dearest object or thing is also a natural instinct. Ryle undergoes the same thing. He lost his brother that gave him pain. But his present reaction towards the threat for losing Lily is the result of the present case. He does not become angry and abusive all the time. His anger towards Lily increases when he finds evidence of Atlas's closeness to her and he cannot control himself. He becomes angry when he feels Lily cheating him since such cheating threatens to snatch his dearest person away from his life just like he lost his dearest brother. Stating the reason for his anger, Lily states, "He thought I was cheating on him. He was hurt and angry and I got in his way" (*It Ends with Us* 242). He also realizes mistakes every time he does it and says, "You are my wife. I'm

supposed to be the one who protects you from the monsters. I'm not supposed to be the one" (*It Ends with Us* 241). Ryle's conscious mind makes him ask for forgiveness but his unconsciously hidden fear makes him resist the challenge that results in the form of abuse. There is tussle between impulses and rationality. As a reaction towards the threat, he reacts violently while the rational thinking makes him realise his fault and beg pardon. In this case, Bargh and Morsella's argument is quite logical that "actions of an unconscious mind precede the arrival of a conscious mind" (73). Even before having conscious thinking or rational selection of different options, people happen to conduct things under the influence of their unconscious. Actions take place unconsciously also because, as Bargh and Morsella further state, "the higher mental processes such as judgment and social behaviour could be triggered and then operate in the absence of conscious intent and guidance" (74). As suggested by Bargh and Morsella regarding people conducting unintentional actions, Ryle abuses Lily under the influence of his unconscious. Whenever he gains his consciousness, he feels sorry and asks for forgiveness for what he does to her.

Besides asking for forgiveness, he becomes ready to sacrifice his best career for Lily's sake. Being offered a good job in Minnesota at the Mayo Clinic, Ryle wants to go there. But Lily does not accept to leave Boston. He rejects the offer and says, "If I have to choose between working at the best hospital in the world and making my wife happy . . . I choose you. You are my success. As long as you're happy, I don't care where I work. We'll stay in Boston" (*It Ends with Us* 247-248). In addition to deciding to stay in Boston, Ryle buys a new flat intending to make Lily happy. Lily becomes happy but it is temporary. Lily has been keeping a gift from Atlas. It is a 'magnet' Atlas had given her long ago but Lily has been preserving it as an important property. It becomes a matter of conflict between Lily and Ryle as Ryle discovers this

secrecy. He becomes angry and presses her against the mattress. Lily's forehead gets bleeding. This third abusive act proves to be the biggest event and a great turning point in their conjugal life. Lily blames Ryle for the abuse and divorces him although he begs pardon and promises not to repeat such an abuse. Lily does not see any significance in believing Ryle. Looking for possible changes in his behaviours and manner is only a waste of time for her. She does not see any future with Ryle and is determined to make a strong decision. Having the decision to keep herself separate from the legacy of an abusive environment, she divorces Ryle and adopts Atlas. Ryle pleads her not to have divorce or makes it a sort of joke saying that taking divorce is a senseless act. However, she interprets it as a "manipulation tactic" (*It Starts with Us* 110) and leaves him. Before leaving Ryle, she suggests his family for some treatment to help Ryle with anger management. But she does not reflect on the casual factor that results in his anger except a certain intermittent realization that Ryle becomes angry if he knows about her close connection to Atlas. She fails to understand the fact that Ryle's anger is the result of his unconsciously driven struggle against a danger that appeared on the way of his conjugal life.

Expressive Writing: Literature as a World of Wish Fulfillment

Writing such as literature has long been analyzed from a psychoanalytical perspective to get insight into the authorial intention, psyche, or sentiment, particularly from the time of Freud as the "coupling of literature and psychoanalysis goes back to Freud himself" (Kurzweil and Phillips 1). Freud interpreted literature as a window to look at the unconscious mind of the author obtained basically through the analysis of the characters, symbols, and themes employed in the text. In this case, Holland rightly states, "Literature also embodies the psychological assumptions of its makers, and literature is realized through the psychological assumptions of its

interpreters" (29-30). Holland's argument clarifies that literature preserves the authorial psychological state of mind which can be observed with psychoanalytical analysis of the text. This is the reason that Freud compares literature with dreams, particularly because both work as the world of wish fulfillment by giving an outlet to the repressive desires of the individual. Reviewing Freud's psychoanalytical criticism, Azadkhan Niaz and colleagues have stated that "dreams are the fulfillment of the wishes. . . . As dreams, literary work, fictions are the creations of our minds" (43). The comparison of literature with dreams is set based on the common ground that both are the product of the mind and they help the individual fulfill unconscious desires and wishes.

The author could express hidden thoughts, repressive desires, intentions, and inner conflicts in the texts often employing displacement or condensation as the technique to make the images socially and morally acceptable. In condensation, multiple thoughts and ideas are condensed as a single image while socially and morally unacceptable thoughts, emotions, and desires are displaced or substituted by acceptable ones in displacement. John B. Watson avers that "When the adult strives for something which society denies him, his environment offers him, if he is normal, something which is "almost as good," although it may not wholly take the place of the thing he originally strove for" (480). Watson calls this process a substitution that helps the person fulfill the repressed desires either in the form of dreams or literature. Despite consisting of condensed or substituted images and symbols, literature helps individuals fulfill their internal desires and wishes by giving them 'expression'. The analysis of such expressive writings could help in analysing the unconscious state of mind of the individual.

Lily writes journal entries addressing Ellen DeGeneres in such a way that she is talking to somebody face-to-face and expresses her internal feelings, conflicting thoughts, and secret sentiments freely. As a child, she used to concentrate on writing a diary whenever her parents had fighting and conflicts in the family. Even in her adult age, she has chosen expressive writing either to express her connection to Ryle and Atlas or to different sorts of dilemmas and confusions she undergoes. Whenever she encounters conflicting and frustrating situations she indulges in expressive writing or reading past writings and feels relieved. Sarungu and Andayani argue that expressive writing is "a therapeutic writing technique that individuals can use to express their emotions through writing" (11). Lily has the same experience similar her expressive writing. Her repressive desires and impulses get outlet through expressive writings. Talking about this, Sarungu and Andayani further write, "In her childhood, she likes to write a letter to Ellen DeGeneres until she turns sixteen. She is a big fan of Ellen. Her diaries are her outlet; whenever she needs to feel better, she writes down her feelings" (14). Their analysis reiterates the fact that Lily has been using her expressive writing as a form of coping mechanism to release her repressed desires. Talking about this case of Lily, Camille Abegail R. Riva and others state: "Through sublimation, people can transform unwanted impulses into something just like an outlet that is harmless and often helpful. . . . In Lily's case, it is her Ellen Diaries that serves as the object and Ellen DeGeneres as the person wherein Lily releases her anxiety. This type of defense mechanism is called displacement" (8). The extract clarifies how Lily has been using Ellen Diaries as the world of wish fulfillment by expressing her internal thoughts, feelings, secrets, and inner conflicts. Such an expression has been helping her release the anxiety. Whether it is her first love with Atlas or the conflict with Ryle, Lily expresses this by writing letters to Ellen DeGeneres. Her writing not only

helps others to look at her internal thoughts, conflicting wishes, and deeper understanding but also helps her to reflect on her own past experiences, emotions, and decisions. As she feels relief by expressing her emotions, sentiments, and secrets through writing, filling the pages of her diary has been used as her coping mechanism. Having nobody closer to her with her to share her thoughts and feelings while being in a conflicting mental state or some sort of pain or problem, she selects writing as if her addressee Ellen listens to her, understands her, and consoles her. For instance, while returning to her home, she met Katie on the bus. Katie talked about Lily's relationship with Atlas, "Jusus, Lily. Did he brainwash you? He was a dirty, thieving homeless kid who was probably on drugs. He used you for food and sex and now you're defending him?" (*It Starts with Us* 134). Katie's comment about the Lily and Atlas's relationship as well as the rumor in their community made Lily sad and frustrated but there was no one to listen to her stories. At that point, Lily wrote to Ellen, "Now my head hurts, but I knew the only think that would make me feel better is if I finally got it all out on paper" (*It Starts with Us* 135). Lily's confession regarding her selection writing suggests that it has become an intimate friend for her particularly to express her internal feelings, tensions and pains. She feels consoled by expressing her inner thoughts. At the same time journal writing also has become a lance for the readers to see her personal growth and development besides giving an outlet to her internal conflicts, fears, desires, and emotions.

Besides anxiety and traumatic experiences, Lily expresses her feelings through writing a diary when she is excited. She expresses her love for Atlas and the depth of her emotions she shared with him. For example, explaining the first kissing scene with Atlas, she writes:

He pushed me on my back and pressed his hand against my cheek and kept kissing me. It just got better and better as I grew more comfortable. My favorite moment was when he pulled back for a second and looked down at me, then came back even harder. I don't know how long we kissed. A long time. So long, my mouth started to hurt and my eyes could not stay open.

When we fell asleep, I am pretty sure his mouth was still touching mine. (*It Ends with Us* 144)

Following the narration of this kissing scene, Lily expresses her memories and sentiments elaborating on many other kissing and sexual scenes and activities. Even in the absence of Atlas, she reads pages of descriptions of past love-making scenes. The second novel, for instance, is full of either Atlas reading Lily's diary entry or Lily reading Atlas's expressive writing in response.

Like Lily, Atlas also writes a diary particularly while expressing his inner feelings towards Lily although there is a difference between the ways they write. It is because Lily addresses Ellen DeGeneres even if the issue is for Atlas and his love. Unlike this, Atlas directly addresses Lily and expresses his internal thoughts and feelings. His extreme desire to possess Lily is expressed through such writings. While writing her, he addresses her as if she is in front of him quite similar to the way Lily feels having Ellen in front of her while writing her. For example, expressing his vows to share all the pains and happiness, he writes:

In my heart, I believe we're going to leave here today and face a journey together that's full of hills, valleys, peaks, and canyons. Sometimes you're going to need me to hold your hand down the hills, and sometimes I'll need you to lead me up the mountain, but everything, from this point forward, we're going to face together. It is you and me, Lily. In good times and bad, for richer

or poorer, in sickness and in health, in the past and forever, you are my favorite person. Always have been. Always will be. I love you. Everything that you are. (*It Starts with Us* 319)

Atlas's expression gives a clear picture of how he uses writing as a means of expressing his inner thoughts and feelings. His commitment to living together putting hands in hands replicates how Atlas has employed journal writing to express his feelings and feelings towards Lily. It has become a means of sharing his inner thoughts and emotions more conveniently than being physically together.

Hoover presents journal writing to explain the characters' inner psychological state of affairs to the readers. At the same time, it has also been employed for a special role of bridging the gap between Lily and Atlas which further supports the story development. Lily and Atlas come to know each other's internal feelings, emotions, and sentiments through their writings. Lily knows how Atlas loved her by reading the journal he wrote expressing his love while Atlas comes to know how much love Lily has for him by reading her journal entry and remembers the early days. Narrating it, he states, "And I want to read another entry. . . . Every word she wrote is taking me right back to when we were teenagers. . . . I eventually read a passage that I'm almost positive is leading up to our first kiss" (*It Starts with Us* 80). Remembering the past love and lovemaking, Atlas develops an additional desire to possess Lily. He comes to know that during their separation, Lily wished him to meet her and take her with him almost in the same way that he wished to have her all the time. The revelation of their dedicated love helps them win the sentiments of each other even after years of separation, thereby bridging the gap. The hidden desire to possess each other has been contributed by expressive writing that both Lily and Atlas go through. Going dating, meeting each other frequently, talking to each other in

Messenger, eagerly waiting for the text message going to the parties together and many more are the conscious activities of Atlas and Lily. They are encouraged to undergo these activities by the meaning or the message they interpret by reading each other's journal writings of the past. All these activities and efforts, however, are the developed form of their unconscious desire to possess each other that they developed long ago when they were forcefully separated. The forcefully suppressed desire to have each other is revealed through present activities.

Unveiling from the Unconscious: Material Gain as the Driving Force

The life of modern people has become so complex that multiple things are in the connection with their necessity either possible to be fulfilled or impossible. As a basic line of psychoanalytical theory, the role of repressed desires in shaping people's activities and behaviours is commonly accepted. However, there are not only the libidinal desires working as the underlying casual factors for human activities, choices and performances. Rather, the pursuit of material wealth and maintaining financial successful life has become one of the major targets of people in the present capitalistic society instead of just striving for the fulfillment of unconscious bodily desires. Capitalistic values orient people in material gain although "people whose values center on the accumulation of wealth or material possessions face a greater risk of unhappiness, including anxiety, depression, low self-esteem . . ." (Kasser 23). The unfulfilled material desires are repressed often motivating individuals for material achievements although they may remain unknown about the underlying motivations at play.

Attainment of material satisfaction is one of the influencing factors to bring Atlas and Lily closer to each other. Besides bodily desire, it is the matter of fulfilling material needs. The journey begins with Atlas's initial helpless condition having no

any home to take shelter in and the source to fill his stomach. Lily appears as resourceful providing him not only food and clothes but also sexual satisfaction. She is the only person to help Atlas survive. He becomes closer to her and desires to have her throughout his life. Being thankful to her, he promises, “When my life is good enough for you to be a part of it, I will come find you. But I do not want you to wait around for me, because that might never happen” (*It Ends with Us* 213). By ‘good life’, Atlas means materially good. It is the life of having wealth, owning property and managing material prosperity. After his separation with Lily, Atlas involves in multiple fields often losing the hope of getting reconnected with Lily. However, the motivation of material gain makes him to invest his efforts in earning money. Under the influence of the underlying desire of earning money, he begins hotel and restaurant business with success. As an owner of the restaurant and hotel, he gets material success. Looking at an article about Atlas’s success in restaurant business, Lily reads, “The owner, Atlas Corrigan, is a two-time award-winning chef and also a United States Marine. It’s no secret what the acronym for his highly successful restaurant, Bib’s, stands for: Better in Boston” (*It Ends with Us* 263). Atlas’s material success makes Lily attracted to him even if she is in Ryle’s relationship.

After initially separated with Atlas and before being reconnected with him, Lily comes into Ryle’s contact. Ryle is a neurologist with a bright career. Although she does not become interested in him in the beginning, she accepts him and also sleeps with him. She is convinced as he seems materially successful. Everything is fine but the problem begins when Atlas comes into the scene with more success than that of Ryle in terms of material attainment. Ryle is only a doctor while Atlas is the owner of the restaurant where Lily, Ryle and Lily’s mother go to have food. Ryle’s material position is feeble in front of the material position of Atlas.

Ryle has an option to make his material position good. He is offered a good job in Minnesota at the Mayo Clinic. He could have earned better and uplift his material position, if he had accepted the job at the Mayo Clinic. A good job means the way of obtaining a materially prosperous life that majority of people desire to have in the present capitalistic world. But Ryle sacrifices his job for the sake of Lily saying, "I told you I wanted to be the best in my field, Lily. I told you this the first night we ever met. It was one of my naked truths. But if I have to choose between working at the best hospital in the world and making my wife happy . . . I choose you. You are my success. As long as you're happy, I don't care where I work. We'll stay in Boston" (*It Ends with Us* 247-248). Ryle's understanding is that living with Lily makes her happy. He becomes emotional but forgets the fact that emotion does not work in the capitalistic society when money matters much. Lily also promises to be faithful to Ryle but unknowingly goes in Atlas's contact by receiving his call, welcoming him at her flower shop, accepting food he offers her and going to date with him. She does not realize her own fault for the declining conjugal relationship. Rather she blames Ryle as an abuser when he becomes angry for her increasing closeness to Atlas. At a point, he promises to be changed and act as per her desire. But Lily does not have any interest in whatever he promises or becomes. Her coveted interest to be departed from Ryle and united with Atlas. She says, "I do not care if you have changed, Ryle. I hope you have. But it is not my responsibility to test that theory" (*It Starts with Us* 110). Under the influence of Atlas's material position, she divorces Ryle no matter he pleads her not to leave him.

Like Atlas's earlier inclination towards Lily, Lily's present is dependent on Atlas. It is just like what Lily writes in the journal, "We had just been two people who helped each other when we needed it and got our hearts fused together along the way"

(*It Starts with Us* 130-131). 'Helping each other' stands for material support instead of merely an emotional and sentimental connection. It is also the matter of helping each other with whatever is necessary such as food, clothes and money. This is what Lily does when she has dispute with Ryle. Atlas has the capacity to give her shelter in her critical times just as she supported him when he was in critical situation. It makes Lily permanently abandon Ryle and shift herself at Atlas's house. Atlas's material power and position makes him successful to possess Lily while Ryle fails in both having a good material position as well as having Lily throughout his life.

Real Self versus Ideal Self: Navigating the Tussle

The concept of the real self versus the ideal self provides an insightful analysis of the principal characters Lily, Atlas and Ryle in Hoover's *It Ends with Us* and *It Starts with Us*. It sheds light on their internal conflicts and growth throughout the narratives since each of these characters navigates a tension between true self and the idealised version. Replicating how they sometimes undergo the influence of their realities regarding who actually they are, and sometimes how they act as per their idealized version of what they should be, it reveals the dynamics of human selves along with reiterating the need of resolving the conflict between real and ideal selves.

Lily's real self is constructed from her past having both an abusive household and her genuine love for Atlas. As a witness of her father's abuse of her mother, she perceives love, conjugal life and personal freedom particularly the need of breaking the chain of abuse in her own way. The development of her character and her relationship with Ryle is primarily shaped by this ground reality. Besides this, her childhood closeness and genuine love for Atlas form her real self influencing her future realities. She was fifteen when she met Atlas, helped him and brought him to her bed. He became her close friend not only to share her inner thoughts, feelings and

emotions particularly when her parents used to have conflicts but also to make love. It grew her intense love for him causing her to desire him throughout her life as stated by herself, "I'll love him until I die, because he was a huge part of my life" (*It Ends with Us* 323). Deeply imprinted into her psyche, Atlas's love came to be an unavoidable and unforgettable part of her life shaping her real self although it undergoes the conflict with her ideal self particularly under societal pressure.

Lily's relationship with Atlas is obstructed by her father's intervention. The presence of father figure represents the presence of social, moral and ethical values. As a representative of this aspect, Lily's father acts to save "his little girl from the homeless boy who manipulated her into having sex with him" (*It Ends with Us* 216). Lily is separated from Atlas and she also follows societal expectation and moral values. She suppresses her love for Atlas and later on marries Ryle that stands for her shift from real self to ideal self. She begets a baby often idealising her relationship with Ryle to be pleasing and romantic. Grown up as a witness of her father abusing her mother, Lily wishes a harmonious conjugal life and idealises a distinct relationship with Ryle. She also finds Ryle matured in sex in comparison to other boys she had sex within the past and says, "The few who came before him were all boys-nervous hands and timid mouths. But Ryle is all confidence. He knows exactly where to touch me and exactly how to kiss me" (*It Ends with Us* 122). Encouraged with this sexual satisfaction, she not only imagines Ryle to be her best partner but also idealises him to be different than rest of the people including her abusive father. Desiring Ryle to be an ideal partner and a protective husband is a part of Lily's ideal self formed based on the creation of an imaginative world against her childhood abusive household. She also promises to be faithful in love and tries to feel happy with her life. Expressing her feeling, she states, "I'm married. I have a great husband.

An awesome house. My best friend just happens to be my sister-in-law and I'm about to be an aunt" (*It Ends with Us* 254). As expressed in the extract, Lily imagines having an idealised life with Ryle. She says, "He's not like my father. He can't be. He's nothing like that uncaring bastard" (*It Ends with Us* 185). Her argument reflects a strong belief on Ryle to be the opposite of her father. This idealisation of love ultimately shapes her ideal self.

Both Lily and Ryle are deviated from the path of ideal lover and beloved. Ryle turns out to be abusive while she also does not remain faithful. She blames Ryle as an abuser but does not reflect up on her own activities. It is quite similar to what Horney, in *Neurosis and Human Growth*, says about the general tendency of the neurotic person:

Instead of making his own efforts, for instance, with regard to human relations, the neurotic insists that others should adjust to him. Instead of putting himself into his work, he feels en-titled to having it done for him. Instead of making his own decisions, he insists that others should be responsible for him. Therefore his constructive energies lie fallow, and he actually is less and less a determining factor in his own life. (159-160)

As clarified in the extract, the neurotic people expect others to adapt their needs instead of having self-responsibility. Lacking practical aspirations, they remain passive even in carrying out their life activities and demand external agencies to do their things. Lily has an identical as she expects Ryle to be an ideal partner while she does not appear faithful. She suggests him to take stress management classes but does nothing to reduce his stress. At a point she tries to appropriate Ryle's anger as a response to her dating with Atlas and says, "Maybe Ryle deserves to be angry" (*It Starts with Us* 107). Despite having this consciousness that a woman with a baby of a

man is not supposed to date another man, she remains unstable in maintaining societal expectations.

Lily's material reality obstructs her ideal self. Idealising a frank, friendly and romantic relationship with Ryle, she shared her naked truth regarding her past love with Atlas saying "the first guy I ever had sex with was homeless" (*It Ends with Us* 21). This idealised frankness incites her conflict with Ryle instead of leading for romantic relation. Her inability of attaining an idealised relation reiterates Horney's argument that "Nobody can function, or even live, under such conditions. The individual must make, and does make, automatic attempts at solving these problems, attempts at removing conflicts, allaying tensions, and preventing terrors" (*Neurosis and Human Growth* 176). Horney's claim is on the impossibility of normal psychological state of mind and activities without balancing real and ideal selves. Lily's conflicting relationship with Ryle particularly when she idealised a perfect and romantic relationship by sharing the hidden secrets justifies Horney's claim. Instead of appreciating her frankness, Ryle goes on abusing Lily by suspecting her increasing connection to Atlas.

Trapped in the conflict of real self and ideal self, Lily finally searches solution that is attainable. She divorces Ryle and adopts Atlas as it gives her life a new direction. Instead of searching for perfection, she accepts her genuine love and practical aspirations. This is the reason that Lily's mother admires this choice. She says, "I admire the choices you've made for her" (*It Starts with Us* 212). Lily's choice is not only adequate for Lily alone but also for her daughter. By adopting Atlas, Lily accepts her true self measured in terms of the reality that Atlas is non-abusive and supporting. Even after having divorce, Ryle purposes her for reunion but she rejects. She states, "His life would be easier if I took him back. . . . But my life wouldn't be

easier” (*It Starts with Us* 110). Thinking at the case putting her at the center replicates the intervention of her practical bent of mind which is based on her actual reality. Her choice is not only guided by her repressive desire of possessing Atlas but also by the future of her daughter. She says, “I can’t afford to allow anyone to break me anymore. I have a daughter I need to be whole for” (*It Starts with Us* 208). She leaves Ryle also because she does not see any chance to make her daughter’s future bright by staying with him. At this point, she is practical rather than an ideal thinker. It is an assimilation of true desire, genuine love and practical aspirations. In other words, it is her quest for true love and harmonious life possible only with Atlas. At a point, she states, “This kiss is hope. It’s comfort and safety and stability. It’s everything I’ve been missing in my adult life, and I am so happy Atlas and I have each other again, I could cry” (*It Starts with Us* 185). It gives a clear picture of how Lily was missing Atlas and his love, and how much happy she becomes at present having him with her. Trying to maintain a perfect relationship with Ryle despite having genuine love for Atlas replicates her efforts to maintain ideal self but the act of adopting Atlas shows her acceptance of true emotion, genuine desire and internal reality. It brings the resolution of the conflict between real self and ideal self, thereby setting her personal growth and comfortable life a step ahead.

Like Lily, Atlas undergoes the conflict between his real self and ideal self until he finally resolves the conflict by balancing his ideal aspirations and real capabilities. He develops his genuine love for Lily after meeting her at the age of eighteen. Lily’s love and support gives him the strength to survive and visualise his colourful future. She is resourceful providing him food, clothes as well as sexual satisfaction. It is quite natural and common that he desires to possess Lily throughout his life. Based on this ground reality, Atlas constructs his real self. Slowly and gradually, he goes on

developing an ideal world and imagines becoming an ideal lover capable to preserve her, give her life stability, and keep her happy. With this ideal thought, for example, he secretly enters into her room to console her particularly when she suffers the conflict of her parents. It can be understood when Lily narrates, “He reached over and tucked my hair behind my ear. I liked it when he did that and I suddenly wasn’t nearly as mad anymore. . . . I don’t know how he calmed me down without even talking, but he did” (*It Ends with Us* 65). Besides presenting Lily’s admiration of Atlas’s power to calm her down and release her pain, the extract replicates Atlas’s eagerness to support Lily and be her savior from any sort of suffering or worry. Despite having this idealised version of his love, he encounters a different reality. He is caught red handed in Lily’s bed and is beaten by her father. If desiring to be an ideal lover and be her savior is the part of his ideal self, the punishment for his immoral act of sleeping with Lily is the part of his real self.

After his separation with Lily, Atlas suppresses his love for her. He adopts social norms and values, and concentrates on generating economy to lead a distinct life. He becomes the owner of the hotel and restaurant and earns award as a renowned chef. He states, “I opened Corrigan’s, honestly. I decided to take more of an ownership role and less of a chef role. I still cook several nights a week, but a lot of my time goes to keeping them both running on the business side” (*It Starts with Us* 51). He gains much of what he needs as an ideal man in the society. He happens to meet Lily again in Boston and yet attempts to value societal expectations. He tries to keep a distance similar to the one he did in the past when he went on searching her in her college. Regarding it, Atlas states, “I began walking toward you when someone came up behind you. A guy. He dropped to his knees next to you and when you saw him, you smiled and threw your arms around him. Then you kissed him. . . . I left

after that” (*It Ends with Us* 303). It replicates how Atlas tried to create distance with Lily particularly when she was engaged with somebody else. It is his inclination to the ideal self and a desire of being an ideal man. He tells a lie that he has another girlfriend and wishes not to intervene her relationship with Ryle although he happens to come back from this position later on.

Despite striving to suppress his unwavering love for Lily, Atlas’s ground reality pushes him back from this idealism. He feels impossible to live in happiness without her. The irresistible voice of his internal reality makes him aware of his actual reality leading him to balance his ideal self with the real one. Horney states that the conflict between the real self and pseudo self disappears with the awareness of the actual conditions of life and makes the person realise the actuality reality (*Neurosis and Human Growth* 178). Along this line, Atlas becomes aware of the intensity of their love for each other and says, “No one on this earth loves me like you do” (*It Starts with Us* 271). He feels how he loves her for “years and years and years” (*It Starts with Us* 271) and accepts the intensity of his love. It makes him motivated to search his happiness along with Lily. When he sees the wounded forehead of Lily, for example, he confronts Ryle and takes her to his house when there is the possibility of Ryle assaulting her. The call of his unconscious makes him defend Lily when she navigates some sort of difficulties. These are the evidences of his acceptance of real self no matter it is against the existing societal expectation and moral values. He becomes a successful business person pursuing his ideal self while he possesses his desired person at the end coming back to his real self. His ability of balancing real self and ideal self makes him surpass all the boundaries and posit him in the position of a successful man.

Like Lily and Atlas, Ryle undergoes the conflict between real self and ideal self although his position is distinct as he fails to bridge the gap between these selves and give adequate resolution to his internal conflict and tension. He is lagging behind in gaining both his idealised position of a neurosurgeon and his dearest person Lily.

Ryle expects to have a reputed position as a neurosurgeon. Idealising his image as a perfect, confident and stable professional, he says, “Anyone can have children. Anyone can get married. But not everyone can be a neurosurgeon. I get a lot of pride out of that. And I don’t just want to be a great neurosurgeon. I want to be the best in my field” (*It Ends with Us* 22). It replicates Ryle’s perception of neurosurgery as one of the supreme professions and his imagination of having the top position in it. The ambition of having the best position in the field of neurosurgery instead of obtaining the basic competencies is the part of his ideal self. Driven by the societal standards of getting massive success, he imagines having power, prestige and admiration in his field although he never obtains it. By rejecting the job offer in the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota, for example, he loses the best career of his profession. He could have obtained a good position in neurosurgery as well as economically sound position if carried out a practical decision. He loses his dream due to his inability to balance his ideal self with his ground reality.

Besides obtaining professional success, Ryle imagines to have an ideal version of his conjugal life that consequently makes him forget what he has to do to be a successful professional. It can be seen when he rejects the job in Minnesota, the best opportunity of his life. He avers, “. . . if I have to choose between working at the best hospital in the world and making my wife happy . . . I choose you. You are my success. As long as you’re happy, I don’t care where I work. We’ll stay in Boston” (*It Ends with Us* 248). Ryle idealises Lily to be his everything. She rejects leaving

Boston and Ryle follows her choice by prioritising her happiness over his prestigious career opportunity. Staying with Lily and making her happy is the part of his ideal self. It makes him redefine his success in pursuing his career as per her desire and support. Expressing his ideal thought regarding his success due to Lily's support, he says, "It's easy being with you. I can still have career I've always wanted, but you made it ten times better with the way you support me. When I'm with you, I feel like I get to have my cake and eat it, too" (*It Ends with Us* 173). As revealed by the extract, Ryle imagines having professional success, harmonious life, and conjugal satisfaction due to Lily. Besides revealing his gratitude towards his wife, he expects an ideal future to be under his access with Lily's support.

Similar to his professional loss, Ryle's conjugal life also comes to an end due to his inability in resolving the tussle between his real self and the idealised version. His inability to control his anger and abusive behaviour ruins his married life. Horney further states that people under the guidance of ideal self are often "compelled to leave the direction of their lives to others instead of taking it in their own hands. They will feel lost when left to their own resources" (168). Her claim is that the domination of ideal self makes people to suppress their decision making power and rely on others in selecting life options. They feel helpless when they are abandoned. Imagining a perfect life with Lily, Ryle follows her choice of staying at Boston instead of moving to Minnesota. He feared to be abandoned due to her increasing connection to Atlas. As a reaction, he becomes abusive although his abusive act brings irrecoverable loss instead of the real solution. Ryle's condition is like an individual who strives to "protect himself from the disruptive power of the conflicts by finding pseudo solutions" (Horney, *Neurosis and Human Growth* 175) but such solutions generate additional problems as but not the actual solutions.

Ryle strives to reflect at his behaviour but fails to take the right direction in right time. He begs pardon each time he abuses Lily as a way to bridge the gap created by his abuse. He says, “I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m sorry” (*It Ends with Us* 235) after abusing her since he rationalises the ideal role that a husband is not supposed to abuse his wife. With this, he expresses the intensity of his regret for abusing his wife and pleads for forgiveness. He realises the ideal role of a husband and avers, “You are my wife. I’m supposed to be the one who protects you from the monsters. I’m not supposed to be the one” (*It Ends with Us* 241). Even if he frequently apologises to adhere the societal expectations and personal ideals that he should meet, he continues abusive pattern each time he feels threatened by her connection to Atlas. It is quite ironical that he expresses his awareness regarding what he should do and yet repeats the same abusive pattern. This mixture of self-awareness and guilt is the byproduct of the continuous tussle of his real and ideal selves that he fails to adequately balance. Lily divorces him and adopts Atlas at the end. Despite desiring an ideal life, he becomes the victim of the conflict of these two selves and left to bear the consequences.

CHAPTER IV
CONSCIOUS DECISIONS AND ACTIVITIES UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF
UNCONSCIOUS

Through the presentation of the principal characters Lily, Atlas, and Ryle guided by their unconscious, Hoover's novels *It Ends with Us* and *It Starts with Us* replicate how human life and activities are influenced and guided by their unconscious desires, motives, impulses, inner conflicts, and neurotic fears. Besides external forces like socio-politico-cultural, economic, and other aspects of human life, a person's life is affected by the internal psychological aspects of human personality. Hoover justifies this point by showing the characters unknowingly undertaking the decisions and activities under the influence of their unconscious mind. They go through a different course of action but ultimately happen to be driven by the desire to possess and fear to lose. Lily and Atlas, for example, try to maintain distance by forgetting the past. Lily marries Ryle while Atlas also lies that he has a girlfriend. Despite their initial effort to maintain distance from each other, they strive to possess their first love which was repressed when they were forcefully separated years back. Similarly, Ryle becomes abusive to Lily as a reaction to his fear of losing her in case she becomes closer to Atlas although he begs forgiveness each time he abuses her and promises not to abuse her anymore.

Hoover presents Lily developing her initial sympathetic view towards Atlas into a deep physical love that increases as time passes causing her desire to have him throughout her life. But this desire is forcefully suppressed as she is separated from Atlas while Atlas is beaten down with a baseball bat by Lily's father and is taken to the hospital. Lily's father stands for superego or rationality that obstructs irrational activities and pleasure seeking tendency. Lily and Atlas's act of staying in a room at

night and making love without marriage represents how they are under the influence of pleasure seeking tendency of id. The forceful separation due to Lily's father's role suppresses their love for each other although the repressed desire keeps on influencing their activities. Atlas, for instance, leaves an imprint on Lily's unconscious mind just like the way she has imprinted a tattoo on her body under his inspiration. The forgotten desire gets revealed as she happens to meet Atlas again in Boston despite being in Ryle's relationship. She decides to be faithful to Ryle but unconsciously gets affected by her past relationship and desire to possess Atlas. She marries Ryle and conceives a baby for him and yet happens to be closer to Atlas which causes conflict with Ryle. She feels ashamed of taking shelter at Atlas's house but again stays there. She interprets three cases of pushing as unforgivable abuse. She could help Ryle in anger management, particularly by stopping her connection with Atlas to abolish the cause of Ryle's anger itself and try to make her conjugal life happy. But she does not see this option in her life and divorces Ryle. Finally, under the motivation of regaining her first love, she adopts Atlas as if it is the only option in her life. In Lily's case, Hoover replicates the dynamics of the unconscious incorporating the repression of desire and its revelation. Her conscious decisions and activities are influenced by her unconscious motivations and impulses.

As an illustration of the resolution to the repression, Hoover presents Atlas's rigorous struggle for intimacy with Lily, a person of his strong desire. Although she marries Ryle and begets a baby girl for him, Atlas continues his efforts to be reunited with Lily as they were in the past before her father caught them red-handed. It does not mean that Atlas is ignorant of social, moral, and ethical norms and values. When he happens to meet her at Bib's hotel and restaurant in Boston after a long separation, he tells a lie that he has a girlfriend. He does it thinking to keep a distance as getting

attachment with another person's girlfriend or wife is not socially and morally acceptable. He has made economic progress since he was separated from Lily years back and has become the owner of the restaurant. Having his personality and economic status, he could marry any girl of his status and live happily. But he does not pay any attention to it. Rather, he frequently calls Lily, visits her flower shop, serves her lunch, takes her to the parties, and goes on dating. It was Lily who not only inspired him to live and a destination to possess but also sexually satisfied when he was helpless long ago. He thinks to keep his distance from her as she is married but being guided by the internal desire he stands in-between Lily and Ryle that causes her divorce. Atlas thinks that he is just helping Lily but it turns out to be the cause of her separation from her husband that finally paves the way for Atlas into Lily's life. In the tussle between rational and irrational or ethical and unethical aspects of human personality, the second part wins in his case but this victory is at the cost of the destruction of Lily's conjugal life with Ryle.

As an important part of the analysis of the novels, Hoover can be observed dealing with the role of neurotic fear in determining an individual's decisions and activities. She presents Ryle under the influence of neurotic fear and unconsciously fighting against this threat. Being guided by the fear that his wife can abandon him, Ryle acts unconsciously and abuses her. As she is the source of pleasure and satisfaction, he desires to have her throughout his life; he sacrifices everything for her including a better career in Minnesota at the Mayo Clinic. But her closeness with Atlas makes him fearful. Under the influence of his fear of losing Lily, he impulsively reacts and pushes her against the ground. He asks forgiveness each time he abuses her after getting consciousness but again becomes abusive if he finds any evidence of her closeness to Atlas. He knows that his impulsive behaviour and abuse can worsen the

situation and yet repeats such activities. In peaceful and conscious thinking, he promises to be a protective husband. He scolds himself and laments for the abuse but he forgets everything when he sees her connection with Atlas. He realises what he does only after doing it. Ryle's impulsive behaviours and abusive activities are not part of his conscious choice but the result of his neurotic fear of losing his dear wife. His failure to adequately manage his impulses results into the loss of his dearest wife from his life forever.

The novels also consist of the use of journal writing, a part of literature, as a world of wish fulfillment. Hoover makes her two principal characters Lily and Atlas express their internal thoughts, feelings, emotions, observations, and conflicting wishes through journal writing. By addressing Ellen DeGeneres, a famous comedian and television host best known for "The Ellen DeGeneres Show," Lily has been sharing her secrets, dilemmas, conflicting wishes, tensions, and plans. This is not a direct communication but just an imagination and Lily has just been writing in her diary. However, she feels writing a journal is having a direct communication with Ellen and feels fresh. On the other, Atlas chooses expressive writing in the form of journal writing dedicated to Lily and feels refreshed by expressing his internal thoughts, feelings, and emotions in writing. With the journal writing of both Lily and Atlas, Hoover has exemplified the important role of expressive writing in helping the characters to give an outlet to their internal feelings, conflicts, motives, and unconsciously repressed desires.

Hoover has also presented the role of wealth and material gain behind the success and failure of the characters in possessing the object of their desire. Although she has not elaborated this case in the level that she has dealt with the case of repressive libidinal desires particularly through the role of the major characters like

Lily, Atlas and Ryle, the act of Atlas striving to possess Lily in his life replicates his internal desire that he developed when she was resourceful for him. It is the replica of his inclination towards fulfilling the material needs. At the same time, Lily's departure from Ryle's life and adoption of Atlas is not only because Ryle is abusive. It is also because of her desire for material sophistication. Atlas's material progress in hotel and restaurant business motivates Lily to marry him.

Offering different cases of the conflict between real self and ideal self, Hoover tries to justify the need of balancing them for successful life. She can be observed presenting Lily and Atlas constructing their real self having genuine love for each other and then moving to their own ideal worlds. Undergoing different conflicting situations due to the tussle between their real and ideal selves, they finally come back to their real self appearing capable not only to resolve their internal conflicts but also to possess each other at the end. Unlike this, Hoover presents Ryle failing to balance these forces. This failure obstructs him from obtaining both the best position in neurosurgery as well as an idealised version of his conjugal life.

The analysis replicates that human behaviours and activities are influenced not only by conscious choices but also by the repressive desires, motives, impulses, inner conflicts, and neurotic fears particularly collected in the unconscious. As the motivation to fulfill the libidinal desire influences people's behaviours and activities, the analysis of such activities and behaviours could replicate the unconscious state of mind. In this case, the analysis of those behaviours and activities can lead to the discovery of what sort of desires and wishes are in the unconscious of people. By studying the undertaken activities and performed behaviours, literary analysis of the texts either novels, dramas, journals, diaries or memoirs, or anything else that deals with an individual's inner desires, feelings, or psyche could work as a window to look

at their psychology. It is the evident regarding how Psychoanalysis as an important part of literary criticism is useful in discovering the inner psychological state of mind either of the authors or that of the characters employed in the literary texts. It promotes the practice of looking at the underlying causes of the manifested activities instead of responding merely based on the manifestations, thereby fostering to set the things into the right order by addressing the underlying causal factors.

In this sense, human beings are biologically programmed entity. They have different desires, underlying motives and impulses. These biologically determined innate qualities remain in the unconscious but are guided by the pleasure seeking tendency. They keep on seeking their outlet. Human beings also have invented law, court, justice, morality, ethics and such other rational institutions and discourses. There is always tussle between rational and irrational forces as the rational forces try to control the irrational ones. Normal life is possible if libidinal desires are properly channeled out or sublimated. The impulses need to be given outlet being under ethical and moral values. The external rational forces have to be respected while the internal forces also need to be given adequate outlet. In other words, there should be the balance between rational and irrational discourses. If human beings do not understand their impulses, they suffer. When libidinal desires and impulses are not properly channeled out or sublimated, they begin to take different roots: creative root and destructive root. Creative root consists of the creation of art, literature, painting, dancing, performance and many other things while destructive root can cause the person undergo either certain kinds of neurosis or schizophrenia sort of things. In this context, it is important to study human psychology particularly the way the unconscious desires, wishes, and impulses affect individuals' decisions and activities.

Recommendation of the Study

Despite significantly contributing in the area of analysing the unconscious forces influencing the undertaken activities, it is limited in the analysis of Hoover's two novels *It Ends with Us* and *It Starts with Us*, a few relevant secondary texts, and dozens of research articles. It has analysed the case of three principal characters Lily, Atlas, and Ryle. Against this background, this study recommends further studies to be conducted incorporating a sufficient number of literary texts and analysing the connection of latent and manifest forms of human desires and impulses. It also recommends the inclusion of minor characters' cases and other issues of psychoanalysis such as the notion of Oedipal complex and Electra complex. Likewise, the study recommends the analysis of the novels considering the way they offer perspectives on societal issues and real-world challenges faced by individuals in contemporary society. The analysis of how the novels replicate issues like domestic violence and complex relationships, for example, can be obtained in the light of the New Historical perspective that considers how the texts represent the reality of the contemporary socio-politico-cultural and economic contexts from which the texts are produced.

Besides analyzing the literary texts, the study also recommends for the analysis of cultural texts in the light of psychoanalytical perspective as it gives a critical interpretation and analysis needed to uncover the deeper meaning. The excavation of deeper meaning helps to improve understanding, thereby bringing adequate cultural changes and improvements. The cultural tensions and tussles could also be resolved with such an analysis. Likewise, this perspective also could be utilised in analyzing political activities going on in the society. The political leaders could be observed using political propaganda to manipulate the mass. By tapping

people's unconscious desires, anxieties and enticement, they try to get public favor or vote. In some cases, they become biased such as in distributing the resources and formulating the policies. By offering insights into the unconscious mental state, psychoanalysis could reveal the underlying aspects of such political activities.

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