

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

5.1 Conclusion

As a young child, physically and emotionally abused by her own mother, Ada and her younger brother Jamie managed to survive in their small and damp flat with their evil mother. They managed to escape and evacuated to the suburbs of London, Kent. There they met Susan Smith and from here Ada and Jamie's new life began. It all started from the first day they were at Susan Smith's house, Ada was known to have mental health issues, namely trauma. While living with Susan, Ada had begun to show symptoms of the trauma she had experienced and had managed to survive with the defence mechanisms she used to cope with the trauma.

First conclusion is that Ada suffered from post-traumatic stress symptoms after she and her younger brother James/Jamie moved in with Susan Smith, a new middle-aged woman living in a suburb called Kent. The first trauma symptoms that Ada experienced were intrusive symptoms, these symptoms have a big impact on a person's mind after experiencing a trauma, their mind will be filled with fear about memories of the trauma they experienced in the past, the author also found that Ada had difficulty sleeping and had nightmares and felt afraid and anxious when she saw something or an object that reminded her of Mam. The second symptom is avoidance, this symptom makes Ada try to avoid places that trigger her memories and make her lose control. The last symptom is arousal. Ada will suddenly have a panic attack when her emotions start to take over her body. Ada

will have a panic attack when her thoughts about Mam suddenly come back to her, at which point Ada will scream, go berserk and scratch her body.

The second conclusion is that this trauma clearly had an impact on Ada's psychological development. After all the cruel treatment from her own mother, Ada became quiet, had difficulty controlling her emotions and expressing her opinions, and found it difficult to interact with Susan because Ada thought Susan didn't want her because of her clubfoot. Ada also felt humiliated when she wore nice clothes from Susan. In addition, the author found four characteristics that indicated that Ada had experienced trauma: self-blame (always feeling guilty), fear, negative core beliefs (always thinking negatively about herself) and difficulty in relationships.

The last conclusion shows that Ada uses two types of defence mechanisms to overcome post-traumatic stress. Denial is an action she uses to think that if only she could walk, Mam would love her and introduce her to people, she is my daughter, she is not disabled and can walk without any shame, she always denies and thinks that Mam hates her because she can't walk, so to be sure of her thinking, Ada always learns to walk when Mam is not at home, so that she doesn't have to stay in the house all the time while her younger brother James is playing outside, at least she can look after her little brother from a distance if she can walk perfectly. The second self-defence mechanism Ada uses is regression. Ada uses this self-defence mechanism whenever someone touches her feet, to relieve the pain she feels when someone touches her feet, or when she has a panic attack and loses consciousness because of things or words that remind her of Mam. To

release her pent-up emotions, Ada rides Butter, the pony that belonged to Susan's deceased friend Becky.

Lastly, *The War that Saved My Life* is a novel that is worth reading for anyone of all ages, especially children, teenagers and the elderly. Through this novel, Kimberly Brubaker Bradley wants to convey courage. She wants readers to understand how complicated trauma responses can be. As far as themes, there are two; one is the idea that people should not be expected to feel ashamed of things they can't control, and the second is that what limits us in one way doesn't have to limit us in every way. (That's "my foot is a long way from my brain.") With the completion of this research, the author hopes to enrich information about psychological disorders for other related literary research in the future.

5.1 Suggestion

In this sub-section, I will give advice to researchers who are willing to take *The War that Saved My Life* as the subject of their research. There are many aspects of this novel that can be observed. One of them is a psychological approach. The author suggests that future researchers should investigate other psychological issues that can be found in this novel, such as how Ada Smith experienced trauma as a child as a result of living with her mother.