

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

#### 5.1 Conclusion

This study concludes that the story possesses a beautiful unity of elements, which makes it profoundly meaningful. Overall, the novel maintains a sad and gloomy tone, shaped by Jude, the main character's past trauma, which ultimately destroys his life. Hanya Yanagihara portrays Jude's dark journey through multiple elements, one of the most significant being symbolism. Symbols serve as key components that enhance the novel's emotional resonance and depth, particularly in the exploration of *A Little Life*. The symbols used throughout the novel not only give Yanagihara's narrative greater significance but also reflect Jude, the protagonist, and his inner conflicts.

Numerous symbols in *A Little Life* carry significant emotional weight and can be grouped into distinct patterns. The pain and memory pattern includes scars, razors, blood, mirrors, and the bathroom, representing Jude's enduring trauma. The love and survival pattern—illustrated by books, Willem's presence, ice cream, and paintings—reflects moments of comfort, resilience, and connection. Finally, the isolation and fragility pattern, represented by the wheelchair, long sleeves, the color brown, and Jude's body, underscores his struggles as a queer man. Together, these patterns reveal how the novel explores the lasting impact of trauma, the ways people endure hardship, and the profound challenges faced by queer individuals.

Scars symbolize Jude's severe childhood trauma, which is the most prevalent theme of the novel. Razors represent his desperate attempt at self-control: he harms himself not to end his life but to silence the overwhelming thoughts caused by his traumatic past.

Mirrors reflect his deep self-hatred—he cannot bear to look at himself because he believes his body is filthy and corrupted—while long sleeves signify his shame and his desire to hide his suffering from others. Other symbols, such as blood, the wheelchair, the bathroom, the color brown, books, paintings, ice cream, Willem’s presence, and Jude’s body, also carry profound meaning. Collectively, they shape the themes of queer suffering, friendship, and resilience. Yet, this resilience ultimately becomes failed resilience, since Jude never fully recovers from his wounds and ultimately ends his own life.

These symbols are interconnected and contribute to the novel's strong sense of organic unity. They enrich the story’s emotional and narrative depth while reinforcing its central concerns. Each symbol plays a crucial role in developing the overall message, story progression, and character growth. Through this intricate symbolic framework, *A Little Life* illustrates the agony, fragility, and compassion of those who endure unbearable hardship, while also showing that past trauma can inflict lasting and irreversible damage.

## 5.2 Suggestions

The writer of this research found a number of symbols that support the ideas of *A Little Life*. Many literary components, including imagery, irony, paradox, language style, tone, and others, have not yet been thoroughly examined. Moreover, additional investigation can reveal additional underlying characteristics. Future scholars are thus urged to look into fresh facets that can improve and deepen our understanding of Hanya Yanagihara's work.