



**THE GUILT OF BEING A WORKAHOLIC WOMAN  
IN *LANDLINE* BY RAINBOW ROWELL**

**A THESIS**

**In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
the Sarjana Degree Majoring in English Department  
Faculty of Humanities Diponegoro University**

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## **PRONOUNCEMENT**

The writer truthfully confirms that she compiles this thesis by herself and without taking any results from other researchers in S-1, S-2, and S-3 and in diploma degree of any university. The writer also ascertains that she does not quote or take any material from other publications or someone's paper except for the references mentioned.

Semarang, 21 November 2016

Irmawati

## MOTTO AND DEDICATION

*You will never be happy if you continue  
to search for what happiness consists of.  
You will never live if you are looking for  
the meaning of life.*

— **Albert Camus**

*You have brains in your head. You have feet in  
your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction  
you choose. You're on your own. And you know  
what you know. And YOU are the one who'll  
decide where to go.*

— **Dr. Seuss, Oh, The Places You'll Go!**

*This thesis is dedicated to  
my beloved parents.*

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The writer realizes this thesis is not perfect, therefore she will be glad to receive any constructive criticism and recommendation to make this thesis better. Finally, the writer expects this thesis will be useful to the reader who wishes to learn something about workaholism and guilt.

Semarang, 21 November 2016

Irmawati

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## **ABSTRAK**

*Pada skripsi ini, penulis menganalisis sebuah novel dari Rainbow Rowell yang berjudul Landline. Novel tersebut bercerita mengenai seorang wanita yang sedang dalam kebingungan untuk memilih antara keluarganya atau pekerjaannya. Tujuan dari skripsi ini adalah untuk menganalisis dan menjelaskan rasa bersalah yang dialami oleh tokoh utama, Georgie McCool, beserta usahanya untuk keluar dari rasa bersalah tersebut. Beberapa teori yang digunakan dalam analisis skripsi ini adalah lima tahapan berduka (five stages of grief) dari Elizabeth Kübler-Ross dan teori rasa bersalah dari Guy Winch. Beberapa teori lain yang berhubungan dengan workaholism dan stereotipe wanita dari beberapa ahli juga digunakan di sini. Untuk menganalisis data yang ada, penulis menggunakan metode riset internet dan perpustakaan. Setelah melakukan analisis, hasil yang didapatkan adalah sang tokoh utama memiliki lebih banyak sifat maskulin daripada feminin. Sang tokoh juga mengalami disloyalty guilt yang membuatnya harus melalui lima tahapan berduka, seperti penolakan (denial), rasa marah (anger), tawar-menawar (bargaining), depresi, dan penerimaan (acceptance).*

*Kata kunci: rasa bersalah, tahapan berduka, workaholism, stereotipe.*

## **ABSTRACT**

In this thesis, the writer analyzes a novel by Rainbow Rowell entitled *Landline*. The novel tells about a woman who is in confusion to choose between her family and her job. The purposes of the thesis are to analyze and to explain the guilt that is faced by the main character, Georgie McCool, and her attempt to resolve the guilt. Several theories such as the five stages of grief proposed by Elizabeth Kübler-Ross and the theory of guilt by Guy Winch are used in order to analyze the issue. Other theories regarding workaholism and stereotypes of woman from various experts are also used. In order to analyze the data, the writer uses internet and library research. After conducting the analysis, the result shows that the main character of the novel has more masculine than feminine traits. She also suffers from disloyalty guilt, and it forces her to undergo the five stages of grief, such as denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance.

Keywords: guilt, stages of grief, workaholism, stereotype.

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of the Study

As time goes by, the form of literary works changes. In the past, famous authors wrote classic literature containing satire or protest toward the politics or culture. In the modern era such as now, famous authors mainly write about popular literature which is very different from the classical literature. Popular literature especially novel is now used as a media to temporarily escape from the routines. One of the popular and best seller novels is *Landline* by Rainbow Rowell.

*Landline* provides a story about a career woman who is in confusion to choose between her career and her family. This confusion creates a conflict inside the character, which can be analyzed deeply and thoroughly. As we know, nowadays it is common for a woman to pursue career. The woman may need to work because of economical reason or simply because she loves working. Therefore, the writer is interested to conduct a research entitled “The Guilt of Being a Workaholic Woman in *Landline* by Rainbow Rowell”.

### 1.2. Scope of the Study

From the many aspects that are available, the writer only focuses on analyzing the two internal aspects and several external aspects from the novel. The internal

aspects consists of character and conflict. As for the external aspects, the writer chooses to analyze the main character's dedication to work, the guilt faced by her, and also her efforts to resolve the guilt.

### **1.3. Research Problems**

There are several problems that can be found throughout the novel. The problems are listed as follows:

1. How far does Georgie dedicate herself to work?
2. What is the guilt faced by Georgie as a career woman, a mother, and a wife?
3. How does Georgie overcome her guilt?

### **1.4. Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study are connected to the research problems that have been stated above, they are:

1. To explain Georgie's dedication toward working.
2. To explain the guilt that is faced by Georgie as a career woman, a mother, and a wife.
3. To explain Georgie's efforts in overcoming her guilt.

### **1.5. Methods of the Study**

In this thesis, the writer uses psychological approach and the theory of stereotypes in order to analyze the novel *Landline*. Both the psychological approach and theory of stereotypes are focused on the main character of the novel, Georgie McCool.

As for the methods of data collecting, the writer uses library and internet research. It is resulting in the using of printed books and also e-books for theory references.

## **1.6. Organization of the Thesis**

The thesis consists of five chapters, which some of them are divided into several sub-chapters, those are:

### **CHAPTER I : INTRODUCTION**

This chapter contains the background and scope of the study, research problems, objectives and methods of the study, and organization of the thesis.

### **CHAPTER II : BIOGRAPHY AND SUMMARY**

This chapter contains the biography of the author and a brief summary of the novel.

### **CHAPTER III : THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This chapter contains the theories that are used to analyze the novel. Here, the writer explains about the intrinsic and extrinsic elements of the novel. The intrinsic elements are limited into characters and conflict. As for the extrinsic elements, the writer explains about the main character's dedication to work, her guilt, and also her resolution for the guilt.

#### CHAPTER IV : ANALYSIS

This chapter contains the analysis of the novel. The analysis is focused on the problems that have been mentioned in the research problems above.

#### CHAPTER V : CONCLUSION

This chapter contains the summary of the analysis. The writer concludes the analysis into several paragraphs only.

## CHAPTER II

### BIOGRAPHY AND SUMMARY

#### 2.1. Biography of the Author

Rainbow Rowell is an American author of young adult and adult contemporary novels from Omaha, Nebraska. Rowell was very focused and serious in school. During her youth, Rowell spent her time working for the school newspaper where she was an editor there. Rowell really likes reading and writing. Before writing novels, Rowell wrote for her school and college papers, for the city newspaper, and advertisements. Rowell graduated from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1995 and earned a journalism degree. At the age of 24, Rowell had become the youngest and the first female columnist at the Omaha-World.

For her novel, Rowell often writes about people who talk a lot, people who make mess in their life, and people who fall in love. Her first novel, *Attachments* is published in 2011. In 2013 Rowell published two young adult novels: *Eleanor & Park*, which is said to be an Eastern version of *Romeo & Juliet*, and *Fangirl*, a love and family story of a geek. Both were chosen by the New York Times as the best young adult fiction of the year. *Landline*, Rowell's fourth novel is published in 2014 and is chosen as 2014 best fiction novel in goodreads.com. Rowell's newest novel, *Carry On*, is published in 2015.

## 2.2. Summary of the Novel

The novel *Landline* told about Georgie McCool, a scriptwriter of a famous comedy TV show in L.A. The relationship she had with her husband, Neal, was not going well because she was too busy with her job. To balance everything, Neal decided to be a “house husband” who took care of their daughters and house chores.

In order to celebrate Christmas, Georgie and Neal had planned every single thing for their vacation to Omaha, Nebraska, the city where Neal’s mom lived. They also took their daughters, Alice and Noomi, with them. However, a week before Christmas, Georgie unexpectedly canceled the plan due to a sudden notification in her office that she had to make a new pilot script. If her pilot script got accepted, she would be granted a new TV show of her own. It was a rare opportunity and it would not happen twice, so she and Seth (her best friend since college) had to work a few days before Christmas. Neal refused to cancel the vacation and decided that he would still take Alice and Noomi to Omaha while Georgie stayed in L.A to work.

After Neal went to Omaha, Georgie felt really lonely that she refused to go home and preferred to go to her mother’s house, not far from her office. During Neal’s stay in Omaha, Georgie’s brain could not concentrate on working. She kept thinking about Neal and her daughters because Neal never called her, not even once. Georgie then decided to call Neal’s mobile phone, but Neal did not pick up the call. After a few more attempts failed, Georgie’s mind wondered whether she had done something bad to her family. She started being emotional, including getting angry

easily. Moreover, she did not feel comfortable with the situation around her mother's house.

When she was visiting her mother's house again, she remembered that she still had the yellow landline she had hid in her closet. In a hurry she plugged in the cable and started dialing Neal mom's landline. After a few rings, the phone was picked up, but what happen next was the landline acted like a time machine. Georgie was connected to Neal in 1998 where they were still dating and their relationship was in a breaking point. Georgie needed a few moments to realize that thing, and she did not tell it to anyone. Georgie then had the idea, she would keep calling "the past" Neal using the magic landline, hoping that she would know the reason why Neal proposed to her and also to fix their relationship. However, she was afraid that Neal was not the right person for her, and they were not meant to be together. Georgie was also afraid that Neal would better marry someone else, so Georgie begun to talk about things that made "the past" Neal angry and almost cursing. After the incident, Neal's landline could not be reached anymore.

Georgie panicked and then decided to fly to Omaha in Christmas Eve in order to catch up Neal. Her travel was very long due to a snow storm that made several flight being delayed and some were cancelled. Soon after she arrived in Omaha, Neal was surprised to see Georgie's arrival. They then talked about many things and Georgie told him the landline incident she had. Georgie's action also made her family become one again.

## CHAPTER III

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter contains the theory that is used for analyzing the literary work. The theory is generally divided into two: intrinsic aspects and extrinsic aspects. Intrinsic aspects consist of character and conflict. Extrinsic aspects consist of workaholism, stereotypes of woman, guilt, and grief.

#### 3.1. Intrinsic Aspects

##### 3.1.1. Character

Character is the person that takes part in a literary work. According to Holman, a character “is described not as an individualized personality but as an example of some vice or virtue or type such as a busybody, a superstitious fellow, a fop, a country bumpkin, a garrulous old man, a happy milkmaid, etc” (1960: 79). In the book *An Introduction to Literature and Criticism Theory*, Bennett explains about the requirements of a fictional character as described below:

The first requirement for such a character is to have a plausible name and to say and do things that seem convincingly like the kinds of things people say and do in so-called ‘real life’. The second requirement is a certain complexity. Without this complexity, a character appears merely ‘one-dimensional’, cardboard or (in E.M. Forster’s terms) ‘flat’ (Forster 1976, 73). To be life-like, a fictional character should have a number of different traits – traits or qualities which may be conflicting or contradictory: he or she should be, to some extent, unpredictable, his or her words and actions should appear to originate in multiple impulses. Thirdly, however, these tensions, contradictions, multiplicities should cohere in a single identity. (2004: 62).

In order to make a character as real as possible, the character must have the qualities of a living person. The qualities can be shown through the personality traits described by the author, either implicitly or explicitly. Howard Lauther explains that there are two kinds of character's traits: internal traits and external traits. The internal traits of a certain character are those traits that cannot be seen by the other characters. Meanwhile, the external traits are the traits that come from other character's observation (2004: 3, 33). As for the external traits, Lauther stated as follows.

How do the other people in the story see the character? This has nothing to do with a physical description of the character, e.g., the way he looks and dresses; instead, the question refers specifically to the character's behavior pattern. Now, whether another character in the story is observant enough to notice the behavior, or whether he has been placed in a situation that would allow him to see it, is of course another matter altogether. It is the writer who, in the name of plot development, must make that decision (2004: 33).

### **3.1.2. Conflict**

Conflict is a part of plot. In literature, conflict is a struggle between two or more forces that cause a tension. According to Holman, conflict is "the struggle which grows out of the interplay of the two opposing forces in a plot" (1960: 98). Conflict is divided into four and one additional point as quoted below.

At least one of the opposing forces is usually a person, or, if an animal or an inanimate object, is treated as though it were a person. This person, usually the protagonist, may be involved in conflicts of four different kinds: (1) a struggle against the forces of nature, as in Jack London's "To Build a Fire"; (2) a struggle against another person, usually the antagonist, as in Stevenson's *Treasure Island* and most melodrama (3) a struggle against society as a force, as in the novels of Dickens and George Eliot or (4) a struggle for mastery by two elements within the person, as in the restoration heroic drama or in *Macbeth*. A fifth possible kind of conflict is often cited, the struggle against Fate or destiny; however, except where the gods

themselves actively appear, such a struggle is realized through the action of one or more of the four basic conflict (Holman, 1960: 98).

Point 1 and 4 on the above quotation are included into the internal conflict. Meanwhile point 2 and 3 are included into external conflict. Both the internal and external conflicts will be analyzed later in the next chapter.

## **3.2. Extrinsic Aspects**

### **3.2.1. Workaholism**

The meaning of workaholism can be seen from its etymology. Workaholism comes from the word “work” and “alcoholism”. Therefore, workaholism can be said as a behavior where a person feels addicted to working. According to Robinson, workaholism has “an addiction in the same way that cocaine and alcoholism are addictions” (2007: 5). Workaholism is dangerous to a person’s mental and physical condition, as well as his relation outside the workplace. A workaholic person may have a high income and stable position at work due to his hard effort; however, his family relation may not be as good as his job. He tends to ignore his family and worships business matter above all.

In the book *Chained to the Desk*, the characteristics of workaholic are explained, as well as the characteristics of healthy worker as the comparison. The first characteristic is “workaholics tend to be separatists, preferring to work alone and focusing on the details of their work, to which their egos are attached” (Robinson, 2007: 17). A workaholic may work well in a team; however, he will work better alone because he has control in everything, as well as working in detail. On the other hand, “healthy workers can see the bigger picture and work

cooperatively with others toward common goals” (Robinson, 2007: 17). A healthy worker does not tie to his ego and is willing to listen to other people’s ideas. Also, he is focused on the bigger concept rather than details.

Healthy workers experience work as a necessary and sometimes fulfilling obligation; workaholics see it as a heaven in a dangerous, emotionally unpredictable world. Healthy workers know when to close the briefcase, mentally switch gears, and be fully present at a son’s Little League game or the celebration of their own wedding anniversary. Workaholics allow work to engulf all other quarters of life: sales reports litter their dining tables; their desks are covered with dinner plates; commitments to self-care, spiritual life, household chores, friends, partners, and children are frequently broken to meet work deadlines (Robinson, 2007: 17).

The above quote indicates that a workaholic tends to ignore other things than his work. If a workaholic were to ask to make a ranking based on his priority scale, then the first place would go to working. It means other aspects of life such as family, friends, including spiritual life will be placed second, third, fourth, and so on as they are not in his top priority. Social bonding, especially, will be placed lower because he does not feel the need to socialize often. Those aspects are of course important to a workaholic, but his desire of working and meeting the deadlines takes over everything resulting in the other aspects looking less important. This kind of thing is clearly different from what a healthy worker does. Even though he is busy, a healthy worker knows well that work is not everything. He will stop working when there is more important matter, such as family gathering. For a healthy worker, the job is important, but it is not his number one priority.

Healthy workers think about and enjoy whatever they’re engaged in at the present moment; workaholics think about working a disproportionate amount of time, even during social activities or leisure times, when their minds wander and obsess about work (Robinson, 2007: 17).

The above quote shows that a workaholic is always in a rush. Unfortunately, a workaholic enjoys that kind of hectic activity. Robinson even says that workaholics “seek an emotional and neurophysiological payoff from overwork and get an adrenaline rush from meeting impossible deadlines” (2007: 17). The busier a workaholic gets, the more he feels challenged. This makes a workaholic cannot enjoy leisure time. He hardly has time to relax and escape from work. Every person has to have holiday and time to off from work, however, a workaholic cannot enjoy them properly. He keeps working anytime and anywhere. This is surely in contrast with a healthy worker who knows the high time to work, as well as the high time to enjoy holidays.

In the past, people may associate workaholics to male workers only because women were usually at home and did household chores. However, modernization as well as gender equality slowly banish the boundary between men and women, resulting in the increases of female workers. Among those female workers, there are surely some of them who are workaholics. Thus, now workaholic is not limited to male or female anymore.

### **3.2.2. Stereotypes of Woman**

Generally, gender is divided into two: male and female. The division also shapes the term masculinity and femininity. “A masculine or feminine person is one who displays the characteristics prescribed by male and female sex roles” (Reinisch, 1987: 227). There are also several other gender identities aside from masculine and feminine, such as androgynous and undifferentiated. The other definitions of the

gender identity are written in the book *Masculinity/Femininity: Basic Perspectives* as quoted below.

Kaczala (1983) scored a child as (1) androgynous if she or he felt it was important for the same-sex peers to engage in both male and female-typed activities, (2) feminine if she or he felt it only important for the same-sex peers to engage in female-typed activities, (3) masculine if she or he felt it was only important for the same-sex peers to engage in male-typed tasks, and (4) undifferentiated if she or he felt it was not important whether a same sex peer engaged in either type of task (Reinisch, 1987: 274)

In this thesis, the writer will focus on describing mostly femininity, as it has always been connected to woman, and a little bit masculinity, leaving aside the other two gender identities. According to the roles, masculinity is identical to men, while femininity is identical to female. The traits of those two are also different, and mostly contradictory.

Are you aggressive, ambitious, analytical, assertive, athletic, competitive, decisive, dominant, forceful, independent, individualistic, self-reliant, and willing to take risks? If so, you are quite “masculine.” Are you affectionate, cheerful, childlike, compassionate, flatterable, gentle, gullible, loyal, sensitive, shy, soft-spoken, sympathetic, tender, understanding, warm, and yielding? If so, then you are quite “feminine.” What if you have traits from both lists? In that case, you may be androgynous (Coon, 2012: 378).

From the quote above, it can be concluded that being masculine is generally being strong and mostly involves physical activities. Meanwhile, being feminine is generally having soft and sensitive feeling, and also being more social.

Actually, there is no exact rule stating that a man should be masculine or a woman should be feminine. A man may be feminine, and a woman may be masculine, or vice versa because a trait is not something that is built overnight. It is the result of living one’s life for years as well as the influence of the environment

around him. A woman who possesses masculine traits is usually being called a “tomboy”.

On the basis of these items, a "tomboy" scale was constructed, representing a girl's willingness to play with boys, engage in rough and noisy play, fight occasionally, and enact masculine fantasy roles. To our surprise, the girls who were most feminine on the first scale were also somewhat more likely to be tomboys (Reinisch: 1987: 231).

From the above quote, it can be said that either male or female may have the traits of the opposite gender, and it is normal. However, there is one strong rule applying here, the public views. Public views play a great role on our life. It is also the public who builds the culture and opinion about gender roles including unwritten law of masculinity and femininity, as written on the quote below.

The arbitrary nature of gender roles is also apparent. A man is no less a man if he cooks, sews, or cares for children. A woman is no less a woman if she excels in sports, succeeds in business, or works as an auto mechanic. Still, adult personality and gender identity are closely tied to cultural definitions of “masculinity” and “femininity” (Coon, 2012: 377).

Femininity is often associated with females and its traits are also more or less the same with the stereotypes of woman. Stereotype itself is also a notion formed by the society or public and has fused with the culture. In the book *Masculinity/Femininity: Basic Principles*, several stereotypes of woman are described generally.

“Women were creatures of weakness and passion, men of power and rationality” (Reinisch, 1987: 13). This less rational behavior and lack in power may lead to another opinion where a woman is considered as less competent than a man. Such opinion mostly brings misfortune to woman in almost every aspect of life, for example, in politics. Supposing there is a presidential election in a country, and

each of the top candidates is a man and a woman. Both of them have many kinds of achievement in different fields and receive support from various groups. However, the female candidate may slightly fall behind in popularity and receiving votes only because she is a woman. Another reason is the public is afraid that she will not be able to lead the society well, even though she is smart and has been successful in many things.

In all cultures the type 2 definition of femininity embodies the idea of nurturance, and a consistently dimorphic behavior pattern is found (definition 1). That is, over a wide range of ages, and in many societies, females show more positive response to infants than do males, and spend more time caring for infants and young children (Reinisch, 1987: 230).

The above quote shows that woman is often associated with nurturance. It means that woman will be the one who takes care the family and children, as quoted in “women will be assigned baby-sitting duties. In adulthood, mothers are expected to be more involved in the care of their own infants than the fathers” (Reinisch, 1987: 230). All this idea makes woman viewed as being warm, gentle and understanding toward the other’s feelings, especially toward their children and family. Further, Reinisch explains about it as quoted below.

Men are viewed as more likely than women to be strong, to be the financial provider in a household, to be an engineer, and to be competitive. In turn, women are rated more apt to have a soft voice, to take care of children, to be a secretary, and to be able to devote themselves to others (1987: 290).

In the past, people also found it odd when a woman decided to be the financial provider in the household since she is also obliged to handle the family matters. However, being a working woman is common nowadays. Also, in other terms of behavior including conversing, a woman is viewed as a soft creature. She must speak in a soft manner rather than strong.

Similar to Reinisch, Beauvoir also talks about woman stereotypes. In her book *The Second Sex*, Beauvoir (1956: 650, 654) wrote that a woman "must become a passive thing, a promise of submission ... To a man it seems natural that it should be the wife who does the housework and assumes alone the care and bringing up of the children". In today's life, it is not an obligation to obey such stereotypes. Modern woman tends to struggle for getting equality to man. The problem faced mostly by the modern woman is choosing her professional interest or sexual life. Today's woman pursues career and knowledge, making her an independent woman. This may be a threat to man since the woman is slowly breaking the stereotypes. In order to keep the man's pride, the woman voluntarily lower herself so she will always be under the man. Later in the book, Beauvoir also talks about it as quoted below.

The more she seems to be getting ahead on her own the more her other chances fade; in becoming a bluestocking, a woman of brains, she will make herself unattractive to men in general, or she will humiliate her husband or lover by being too outstanding a success. So she not only applies herself the more to making a show of elegance and frivolity, but also restrains her aspiration. The hope of being one day delivered from taking care of herself, and the fear of having to lose that hope if she assumes this care for a time, combine to prevent her from unreservedly applying herself to her studies and her career (1956: 658).

Those woman stereotypes written above are the development of the culture in the past. In *The Cult of True Womanhood* which is a chapter from her journal titled *American Quarterly*, Walter (1966), explains that there are four virtues of women; pious, submissive, domestic, and pure. Each of the virtues should be possessed by a woman in order to be acceptable by the society. The four virtues are described as follows:

### **3.2.2.1. Pious**

Pious means religious. However, pious does not always identical with religion only. It may mean having a high morality. A pious woman holds to her religious belief and value stronger than a man.

### **3.2.2.2. Submissive**

The second virtue is submissive. Women are seen as those who are weak, dependent, and timid. Such thing happens because the women are positioned below the men who are considered more powerful.

### **3.2.2.3. Domestic**

The third virtue is domestic, which means that woman is originally at home, as well as taking care of domestic affair including husband and children. This point is the source of the idea of nurturance in woman's stereotype.

### **3.2.2.4. Pure**

The fourth and last virtue is pure. Walter (1966: 154) stated that without purity, a woman is "in fact no woman at all, but a member of some lower order". In the past, one of the reflections of a woman's purity was uninterested in sex. Nowadays, this purity also includes not using harsh and abusive language in everyday life.

From the four virtues explained above, only domestic and submissive that will be discussed further in chapter IV.

## **3.2.3. Guilt**

Everybody must have experienced guilt at least once in his lifetime. Guilt is very common in people. In the book *Guilt (Ideas in Psychoanalysis)*, Singh says that

“most commonly, people say that guilt ‘gnaws’, capturing the sense of something inside and inaccessible, attacking one relentlessly. Or it is a burden that one can never shake off” (1996: 4). On the other hand, Winch has different opinion regarding guilt.

Guilt is an extremely common feeling of emotional distress caused by the belief that we have done something wrong or caused harm to another person. We all fail to live up to our own standards from time to time and even the best of us can act in ways that offend, insult, or hurt someone, inadvertently or otherwise (2013: 103).

The guilty feeling itself may remain for days, weeks, months, even years. It depends on how deep the wrongdoing or harm a person has committed. The deeper the wrongdoing, the longer the guilt will probably last. An example is when a person cheated on a test. When the test is over, he feels guilty because he cannot do his best and chooses to cheat. This kind of guilt is considered as a mild guilt and the guilty feeling may disappear in just one or two days. It is different from when a person cheated on his wife. When one day he realizes his mistake and feels guilty, he may need a longer time than just two days to fix his mistake. Some severe guilty feelings even do not have an end.

Winch explains that a guilt that keeps lingering on a person can slowly affect his psychological state. In a worse case, it may become a toxic for a person’s mind and relationship (2013: 104). Most of the lingering guilt comes from relationships between people. When the relationship becomes worse, a guilty feeling may arise and bring unhealthy relation between them. This unhealthy guilt can be divided into three. They are unresolved guilt, survivor guilt, and separation or disloyalty guilt

(Winch, 2013). Each of the guilt has its own cause and result which will be explained as follow.

### **3.2.3.1. Unresolved guilt.**

The cause of this guilt is the person who suffers guilty feeling is not able to deliver a proper apology. Winch says that “although there are innumerable offenses that can elicit relational guilt, one of the main reasons our guilt might remain unresolved is that we’re much less skilled at rendering effective apologies than we tend to realize” (2013: 105). Another case is he has succeeded in apologizing properly, but the victim cannot completely forgive him because of the wrongdoing he has committed. Those failed apologies will result in guilty feeling that cannot be resolved.

### **3.2.3.2. Survivor Guilt**

Survivor guilt is “the terrifying guilt that one’s survival ‘proves’ that one failed as a human being to rescue those who died” (Singh, 2000: 9). It does not mean that the situation should happen directly between the person who bears guilty feeling and the other person who is dead. On the other hand, it may be because the person feels responsible toward the death of the other. For example, a wife has a big argument with his husband. The husband then drives his car on high speed in order to escape from the argument and unfortunately has an accident where he lost his life. The wife, who is informed about the incident, feels guilty for the husband’s death due to the argument they had. If only she does not argue earlier, his husband may still alive. Survivor guilt is difficult to overcome because “there are no actions

for which we must atone, no relationship ruptures to mend, and no outstanding apologies to be rendered” (Winch, 2013: 107).

### **3.2.3.3. Separation Guilt / Disloyalty Guilt**

Separation guilt and disloyalty guilt are close in meaning, but still different. Separation guilt is when someone is “feeling guilty about moving forward and pursuing our own life when doing so involves leaving others behind” (Winch, 2013: 107). For example, a person feels guilty because he has to move abroad to work because it means he will leave his family and friends.

Disloyalty guilt is the guilt that “arises when we feel such binding ties of loyalty to close family members or friends that pursuing our own goals or making choices that deviate from their norms and expectations makes us feel bad” (Winch, 2013: 107). For example, a son confesses to his parents that he is a homosexual. Most parents will find it disgusting because their son has deviated from the norms and religious belief. The parents then keep blaming the son without trying to understand him. Both side will feel betrayed by each other, however, it will also result in the occurrence of the son’s guilty feeling due to the burden his parents gave.

When a person feels guilty, he should try to apology to the victim. However, if the guilt keeps lingering for a long time, it can affect his mental health. In his book *Emotional First Aid*, Winch (2013) advised to do these three things in order to cure guilt: apologize, self-forgiving, and reengage in life.

The first step to do in order to cure guilt is learn to do an effective apology. Apologizing is easy, but forgiving is hard. A person with guilty feeling may apologize as soon as he does wrong; however, there is a big chance where the victim does not want to forgive him. Saying “I’m sorry” is not enough to fix one’s mistake. Therefore he should learn how to apologize properly, for example as quoted by Winch “Most of us conceive of apologies as including three basic ingredients: (1) a statement of regret for what happened; (2) a clear “I’m sorry” statement; and (3) a request for forgiveness—all of which must be delivered with sincerity” (2013: 122).

When an effective apology cannot resolve a person’s guilt, he should do the second advice. It is learning to forgive his own self. However, self-forgiving is not easy. A person should acknowledge and take full responsibility of his mistake before he can properly forgive himself. Below is the explanation from Winch regarding self-forgiving:

Although it is always preferable to receive forgiveness from the person we’ve harmed, when we are unable to do so, the only way to ease our torment is to forgive ourselves. Self- forgiveness is a process, not a decision (granted, it is a process that starts with a decision). We first have to recognize that we’ve beaten ourselves up enough and that our excessive guilt is serving no productive purpose in our lives and then we have to make the emotional effort necessary to work through it (2013: 129).

The last step is to reengage in life. People who experience survivor or separation or disloyalty guilt are advised to reengage in life, because they tend to blame and self-condemn themselves while the incident occurs out of his control. Winch says that “the best way to move past our guilt when we didn’t do anything

wrong is to remind ourselves of the many reasons it is crucial we do so” (2013: 136).

### **3.2.4. Grief**

Grief is one of the emotional feelings experienced by human. It is usually rooted from those who are dying. Overcoming a grief caused by death is as hard as overcoming a guilt. They are both similar. In the book *On Death and Dying*, there are five stages of grief: denial and isolation, anger, bargaining, depression, acceptance. These five stages of grief are explained as follows:

#### **3.2.4.1. Denial and isolation**

Denial is very typical defense mechanism to refuse a loss. It functions “as a buffer after unexpected shocking news, allows the patient to collect himself and, with time, mobilize other, less radical defenses” (Kübler-Ross, 2009: 32). At first, the person may experience a temporary shock due to the sudden news of death, but he will slowly recover. A person who automatically denies a death or his loss will usually isolate himself too.

#### **3.2.4.2. Anger**

Continuous denial slowly becomes anger or rage, as said by Kübler-Ross “when the first stage of denial cannot be maintained any longer, it is replaced by feelings of anger, rage, envy, and resentment” (2009: 40). The person feels almost everything is irritating to him. A small matter may become big because “wherever the patient looks at this time, he will find grievances” (Kübler-Ross, 2009: 41). He envies other people’s joy because he cannot do the same. He will do things to make

people paying attention and not forgetting him, such as raising his voice, complaining, and crying.

### **3.2.4.3. Bargaining**

Bargaining is mainly about postponement of a deadline. The deadline itself may be important events even death.

If we have been unable to face the sad facts in the first period and have been angry at people and God in the second phase, maybe we can succeed in entering into some sort of an agreement which may postpone the inevitable happening: "If God has decided to take us from this earth and he did not respond to my angry pleas, he may be more favorable if I ask nicely." We are all familiar with this reaction when we observe our children first demanding, then asking for a favor (Kübler-Ross, 2009: 66).

The bargain is usually made with God in exchange for additional time for those who are experiencing severe ill and on the verge of death as written in the quote above. However, there is a possibility where the bargain happens between people, again to postpone a deadline.

### **3.2.3.4. Depression**

Depression emerges in a person's mind when the denial he always performs cannot do him good anymore. It is a result of fear of separation from friends and family. People who are on the verge of death will mostly feel depressed as he cannot accept his fate.

When the terminally ill patient can no longer deny his illness, when he is forced to undergo more surgery or hospitalization, when he begins to have more symptoms or becomes weaker and thinner, he cannot smile it off any more. His numbness or stoicism, his anger and rage will soon be replaced with a sense of great loss. This loss may have many facets: a woman with a breast cancer may react to the loss of her figure; a woman with a cancer of the uterus may feel that she is no longer a woman. Our opera singer responded to the required surgery of her face and the removal of her teeth with shock, dismay, and the deepest depression. But this is only one of the many losses that such a patient has to endure . . . All these reasons for

depressions are well known to everybody who deals with patients. What we often tend to forget, however, is the preparatory grief that the terminally ill patient has to undergo in order to prepare himself for his final separation from this world (Kübler-Ross, 2009: 70, 71).

#### **3.2.3.5. Acceptance**

A person who has been through the previous stages eventually accepts the truth. The burden he was holding is gradually lifted from his shoulder and he will feel at ease. This is the stage of acceptance. By accepting his lost, it does not mean the person surrenders himself to the fate, as explained by a quote below.

Acceptance should not be mistaken for a happy stage. It is almost void of feelings. It is as if the pain had gone, the struggle is over, and there comes a time for “the final rest before the long journey” as one patient phrased it. This is also the time during which the family needs usually more help, understanding, and support than the patient himself (Kübler-Ross, 2009: 92).

Although grief is rooted from death, the five stages above may also be used in almost every life-changing situation, so it does not always all about death. The stages are general reaction towards negative situation, such as divorce, major loss, death of pet, etc. Grief can also be used for resolving conflict.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **ANALYSIS**

This chapter contains the analysis of the literary work. The aspects that are analyzed are the intrinsic and extrinsic aspects of the novel. The intrinsic aspect analysis consists of the analysis of character and conflict, both internal and external. The extrinsic aspect analysis consists of the analysis of Georgie's dedication to work, Georgie's deviation from the stereotypes of woman, the guilt faced by Georgie, and the resolution for Georgie's guilt.

#### **4.1. Analysis of the Intrinsic Aspects**

##### **4.1.1. Character Analysis**

From many characters in the novel, only three characters that are going to be analyzed in this thesis, they are Georgie McCool, Neal Grafton, and Seth. The other characters will not be analyzed because only those three that give significant progress in the plot of the novel. The analysis of the characters also includes their personality traits.

###### **4.1.1.1. Georgie McCool**

The first character from the novel *Landline* that is going to be analyzed is Georgie McCool. Georgie McCool is the main character of the novel. Since she was young, she has been interested in *The Spoon*, a kind of newspaper, as seen below.

She'd chosen the University of Los Angeles because of *The Spoon*. Well, and also because of the theater program, and because ULA was close

enough to her mom's house that Georgie could still live at home. But *The Spoon* was the main thing. It was Georgie's thing. She'd started reading it in the ninth grade; she used to save back issues and stick the front pages up on her bedroom wall (Rowell, 2014: 33).

*The Spoon* is the thing that inspires Georgie to write. Therefore, by joining *The Spoon*, Georgie hopes she can write like her favorite writers. Georgie's hope becomes reality when she works as a comedy TV show scriptwriter after she graduates from university. It is also the start of Georgie's dream where she wishes to have her own TV show.

Actually, Georgie comes from a broken home family. Her parents was divorced when Georgie was young. Georgie's mother then has a baby with another man. It is explained in the quotation below.

Heather was eighteen, a change-of-life baby—meaning, Georgie's mom had decided to change her life by sleeping with the chiropractor she worked for, and accidentally got pregnant at thirty-nine. Her mom and the chiropractor were married just long enough for Heather to be born.

Georgie was already in college by then, so she and Heather only lived in the same house for a year or two. Sometimes Georgie felt more like Heather's aunt than her big sister (Rowell, 2014: 21).

Because of that reason, Georgie's relationship with her mother is not in a good term. It may also be the reason of Georgie's aggressive and dominant behavior in almost every aspect of her life. More explanation about Georgie's traits will be explained in the next section about stereotypes.

#### **4.1.1.2. Neal Grafton**

The second character that is going to be analyzed is Neal Grafton. He is Georgie's husband. Coincidentally, when he is in university, Neal also works in *The Spoon* as a cartoon artists, as seen in "Neal was sitting at a drafting table. He had a penciled comic strip laid out in front of him, and he was opening a bottle of India ink"

(Rowell, 2014: 55). Since they work in the same place, Neal and Georgie slowly gets closer and finally becomes lovers.

Neal originally comes from Nebraska, but he lives in Los Angeles because he gets a scholarship to study oceanography in the same university as Georgie's. Since he comes from another state, he hates the atmosphere of Los Angeles. Actually, he also dislikes oceanography. However, since he fortunately gets the scholarship, he does not have another choice. Neal always wants to be back to his hometown. It includes when he is having a hard time with his study and wants to change direction. He tells Georgie that he wants to join the Peace Corps, as seen in the below quotation.

“Actually, I’ve been thinking about—” Neal glanced up at her, then looked down, licking his lips. “—I’ve been thinking about the Peace Corps.”

“The Peace Corps? Really?”

“Yeah. It’d give me something worthwhile to do while I figure the rest out.”

“I didn’t know there was still Peace Corps.”

“That or the Air Force,” Neal said (Rowell, 2014: 118).

Despite all of his wishes, Neal does not achieve what he wants. He deviates from his plans, because in fact, after he gets married to Georgie, he works in the medical field, as seen in “Neal was working in pharmaceutical research then. He’d thought about graduate school for a while but didn’t know what he wanted to study, so he got a job in a lab. Then he got another job in another lab” (Rowell, 2014: 221). However, the job does not last long. He quits his job when Georgie is pregnant.

Since Neal and Georgie becomes a couple, Neal devotes all of his love to Georgie. Neal is the one who always prepares the family’s dinner because he cooks well. He does not mind cooking and making food in the kitchen while Georgie is

relaxing. The proof can be seen from “Georgie had a regular spot on the kitchen counter, and Neal worked around it. He’d pour her too much wine—and feed her pieces of things before the rest of dinner was ready, blowing on the fork until the bite was cool enough” (Rowell, 2014: 40).

After he and Georgie have two children, he spends most of his time taking care of them and doing household chores. He does many things from decorating the house, cooking, gardening, and driving his children to school. It is unusual for a man to do such thing, but he does not complain. In addition, being at home makes the relationship between him and his children stronger.

Neal has a reserved personality trait. He is not the type of person who initiates a conversation or approaches people first, as shown in “Neal spent the whole night standing next to the fence and refusing to talk to anybody. Refusing on principle. As if making small talk—as if being polite—would be too much of a concession” (Rowell, 2014: 71).

Georgie’s friend, Seth, says that Neal is unfriendly because Neal keeps being quiet while working. In addition, he does not talk much with people he does not know. Seth even warns Georgie about Neal’s personality when Georgie tries to know Neal during their college days as written in ““I’m going to introduce myself. And tell him how much I like his work. “You wish you hadn’t,” Seth warned. He’s a scowler. He’s the least friendly hobbit in the Shire” (Rowell, 2014: 54). Neal actually has many friends; however, he is not good with new people. His unfriendly behavior is also described in “Neal didn’t like to be asked things. It made his jaw

tense. He'd give you a flippant answer. Like, whatever you were asking, it wasn't any of your business. Like nothing was anyone's business. Like nobody should ask question that didn't absolutely need to be answered" (Rowell, 2014: 42).

In contrary with his reserved and unfriendly personality, Neal is a fatherly figure who loves his family. He puts his family as his number one priority. Neal once says, "Taking care of my own child isn't a sacrifice. It's what parents do" (Rowell, 2014: 223). He is especially very close to his children and will always take care of their daily needs, even for small thing such as when her daughter is looking for her boots, as quoted in "'Daddy said I could wear my boots,'" Alice croaked. "Where are they?" Georgie whispered. "Daddy knows"" (Rowell, 2014: 16).

#### **4.1.1.3. Seth**

The third character that is going to be analyzed is Seth. In the novel, Seth's last name is not mentioned. Seth is Georgie's senior in college. They accidentally meet and know each other in *The Spoon*, where Seth is an editor there. It is mentioned in page 33 of the novel, as seen in "Seth was the first person she met there. He was a sophomore and already an editor, and initially he was the only guy on staff who'd make eye contact with Georgie at editorial meetings" (Rowell, 2014: 33). Now, Seth has become Georgie's best friend and her co-worker in her office.

Seth's appearance is described in "Seth was shiny and handsome—tall, with brown eyes and thick auburn hair—and he dressed like he belonged on the cover of an early Beach Boys album" (Rowell, 2014: 33). Seth's appearance has made him popular, especially around girls. He gets close to girls easily. In addition, Seth likes

to flirt. Therefore, Seth becomes a playboy who always flirts with girls even though he has a girlfriend. It can be seen from the below quote.

He liked to rest his head in her lap or on her shoulder. If he didn't have a girlfriend, she'd let him. (He almost always had a girlfriend.) Seth was a relentless flirt. Even with Georgie—maybe *especially* with Georgie. For the first few months after they met, she found all the attention thrilling. And then—when she realized that Seth flirted with everyone, and that he was usually *actively* chasing another girl—it was heartbreaking (Rowell, 2014: 53).

Even though Seth is a flirt, he is loyal to his friends. He is very attentive especially to his best friend, Georgie. He willingly cancels his date with his girlfriend, Breanna, in order to accompany Georgie, as seen in the following statement, “He got as far as the door, then spun around. “You know what? I’ll call Breanna. I can’t just abandon you like this. It’s going to be late, you’ll have to walk your car by yourself—”” (Rowell, 2014: 119). Although Georgie is an independent woman, Seth does not see her as one. Seth thinks Georgie is still a woman who needs to be accompanied and protected.

#### **4.1.2. Conflict Analysis**

##### **4.1.2.1. Georgie’s Internal Conflict Analysis**

Georgie’s internal conflict happens within Georgie’s self. It may be due to the clash between her roles as a career woman and a wife or a mother at the same time. The first conflict happens when Georgie receives the news that she has to work during Christmas vacation. As a wife and a mother, Georgie knows it is not right, so she surely refuses the idea. It is because Christmas is important for her

family. Therefore, she wants to ask for compensation from Seth in the following quotation.

“It’s Christmas,” she’d argued. They were in their office, and Seth was sitting on Georgie’s side of the big L-shaped desk they shared. He’d had her cornered.

“Come on, Georgie, we’ll still have Christmas—we’ll have the best Christmas ever after the meeting.”

“Tell that to my kids.”

“I will. Your kids love me.”

“Seth, it’s Christmas. Can’t this meeting wait?”

“We’ve already been waiting for our whole career. This is happening, Georgie. Now. It’s finally happening” (Rowell, 2014: 5).

However, as a scriptwriter, Georgie thinks connection is more important in order to reach higher level in her career. Therefore, Georgie agrees when she is offered a chance to write a pilot script for a new show. By doing so, Georgie hopes the new show she has planned will boost her career. It will include a raise in her salary because without doubt, the new show will go well. In addition, both Georgie and Seth have always want a show of their own. Therefore, Georgie thinks that it is an extraordinary chance that will not come twice, so she accepts the job offer. The only thing she has to do is convincing Neal to postpone their family vacation as quoted below.

“All we’ve got done is the pilot,” Georgie said. “We’ve got nine days to write four episodes and get ready for the meeting—it’s really lucky that we have some time off from *Jeff’d Up* this week.”

“You have time off because it’s *Christmas*.”

“I know that it’s Christmas, Neal—I’m not skipping Christmas.”

“You’re not?”

“No. Just skipping . . . Omaha. I thought we could all skip Omaha.”

“We already have plane tickets.”

“Neal. It’s a pilot. A *deal*. With our dream network” (Rowell, 2014: 5).

When she chooses work over family, Georgie feels relieved. She goes to work and jokes with her co-workers as usual. However, she feels something is

missing after that. When she goes back to her house, the atmosphere is lonely. Georgie's instinct tells herself that she misses Neal and her children. She tries to call Neal's cell phone, but he does not answer. She tries for several times, but none goes through. Georgie becomes worried. This is the conflict occurring within Georgie's mind whether or not she has made the wrong decision by letting her family left her alone for working.

Georgie started to call Neal on the way home that night, her phone plugged into the lighter—then she stopped. Neal hadn't picked up any of her calls, all day. The last time she'd talked to him was still . . . the *last* time she'd talked to him. Which Georgie still wasn't dealing with. Which she still couldn't accept. Georgie thought about her big, dark, empty house—her house that already felt haunted (Rowell, 2014: 83).

The last internal conflict of Georgie happens when Georgie and Neal has just married. During Georgie and Neal's early years of marriage, Georgie sees most of her friends at her age have already had a child. Of course the presence of a child is important in a married life. Georgie thinks by having a child, her marriage will be more colorful. Then, she tells Neal about that as seen in "The closest they'd come was on that first date, when Georgie said that she wanted kids and Neal hadn't argued" (Rowell, 2014: 221). However, when Georgie finally becomes pregnant of her first child, she regrets her decision. It can be seen from the below quotation.

“Georgie—“Neal took her hand. “—what’s wrong?”  
 “I don’t know what we’re doing,” she whispered. “I don’t know why we’re doing this.”  
 “Why we’re doing what?”  
 “Having a baby,” she said, glancing tearfully over the pink-swathed toddler (Rowell, 2014: 222).

Having a baby means having a good relationship in their marriage. However, on the other hand, they have no time to take care of the baby. The conflict is caused by Georgie's self that thinks having a child is a burden because both

Georgie and Neal are working. This is surely different from Neal who actually still encourages Georgie about having a child. Neal prefers to be unemployed than abandoning his child. It can be seen that Georgie's priority is her job, while Neal's priority is his family. That is why when Georgie is pregnant of their first child, Neal chooses to quit his job and becomes a househusband. Neal's action saves Georgie's selfishness because they keep the baby. It can be seen in the following quote.

The next morning he told her he was quitting his job.  
 "You can't quit your job," Georgie said. She was still lying in bed. Neal had brought her a mug of hot black tea and a plate of scrambled eggs.  
 "Why not?" he said. "I hate it."  
 "Yeah," she said, "but . . . do you even want to stay home?"  
 Neal shrugged. "You're going to be miserable if we put this baby in day care" (Rowell, 2014: 223).

#### 4.1.2.2. Georgie's External Conflict Analysis

Georgie's external conflict occurs between herself and people around her. Several people who are conflicting with Georgie are Seth, Georgie's mother's family, and Neal. The first external conflict that is going to be discussed is the conflict between Georgie and Seth. Georgie and Seth's conflict often occurs because Seth talks too much. It sometimes irritates Georgie. One of the proofs can be read in the following quotation.

"You're a delusion. We can't write four scripts before Christmas."  
 Seth didn't stop dancing. He pumped his chin and did a little lasso move over his head. "We've got till the twenty-seventh. That's ten whole days."  
 "Ten days during which I'll be in Omaha, Nebraska, celebrating Christmas."  
 "Fuck Omaha. Christmas came early."  
 "Stop dancing, Seth. Talk to me."  
 He'd stopped dancing and frowned at her. "Are you hearing me? *Maher Jafari wants our show*. Our show, remember? The one we were put on this earth to write?" (Rowell, 2014: 35)

Although Seth is Georgie's best friend and they have known each other for nineteen years, due to Seth's strong ideology, Seth never consider Georgie's opinion at all. According to the above quote, for example, he keeps convincing Georgie that the show is better than Georgie's family vacation. This thing of course annoys Georgie because she is married now and she needs to pay attention to her family. As a married woman, Georgie's tries to confront Seth's idealism. However, Georgie fails to do it. Georgie does not have another option but to do as Seth says because she admits and understands well that it is their dreams since a long time ago.

The second external conflict that is going to be analyzed is the conflict between Georgie and her mother's family. Georgie's mother's family is a mess. The relationship between Georgie and her mother, Dixie, is also not good. There are many reasons that make Georgie does not like Dixie. One of the reasons is Dixie unintentionally causes Georgie to be a broken-home girl who is overpowered by her ego. The other reason is that Dixie is fussy. Although Dixie sincerely worries and she wants to help Georgie, Georgie thinks Dixie's action is annoying. It can be seen from the quotation "Her mom always made a big deal about plane trips. And minor surgery. And sometimes just getting off the phone" (Rowell, 2014: 13). Here, Dixie acts as a parent who needs to control her daughter. However, in reality, Georgie often wins, and it results in Georgie's ignorance of her mother's advices. Most of the time, Georgie and Dixie argues about many things and Georgie will not let her mother to win the argument.

It is hard for Georgie to act nice around her mother's family especially when she is not close to them. Georgie rarely goes to her mother's house since she was in college. The conflict becomes worse when Dixie marries a man that is much younger than her, as seen in "It still made her uncomfortable when Kendrick tried to be fatherly with her. He was only three years older. *"You're not my dad,"* she sometimes wanted to say. Like she was twelve years old" (Rowell, 2014: 23). Due to the little age gap between Georgie and her stepfather, Georgie mostly responds coldly. Georgie's ego refuses to respect Kendrick as her stepfather. However, since Kendrick is always good to Georgie, she has no other option but to coldly respect him as a man.

The last external conflict that is going to be analyzed is the conflict between Georgie and Neal. Georgie usually has an argument with Neal, whether it is about something small or big. The major conflict between them in the novel is whether they shall go to Omaha for a family Christmas vacation or not. Georgie wants Neal to postpone the vacation; however, Neal refuses to do so because they already set the date and have plane tickets. Neal tries to convince Georgie as shown in the following statement.

"My mom's expecting us," he said.

"I know," Georgie whispered.

"And the kids . . . Alice sent Santa Claus a change-of-address card, so he'd know she'd be in Omaha."

"I know." She leaned over her plate. "But we can go see your mom next month" (Rowell, 2014: 6).

Neal tries using his mother as a reason to defend. However, Georgie always has a counter-attack for every of Neal's argument. He cannot fight back in order to win his own argument. Neal loses and wins at the same time. He is lost because

Georgie still holds to her decision and that she insists to work on Christmas so each of them has to spend Christmas separately in different States. However, Neal also wins because in the end of the novel Georgie finally gives up and realizes that she has done wrong by abandoning her family.

#### **4.2. Georgie's Dedication to Working**

Georgie is a woman full of ambition. She spends most of her time for working in her office. She finds her passion in writing after she joins *The Spoon* newspaper during her college days. She really likes being there, especially after she meets Seth, her senior at that time, as seen in “By junior year, Georgie and Seth were writing a weekly column together on page two of *The Spoon*. Georgie was finally starting to feel like she belonged on staff. Like she was good enough” (Rowell, 2014: 49). It is the beginning of Georgie's interest in writing. She is lucky for having met a person like Seth at that time, so she knows in which field she is good at.

Georgie's interest in writing becomes deeper as time goes by. Even after she graduates from college and gets married, she chooses to work in a TV station alongside Seth. She is given the job to be a scriptwriter of a TV show entitled *Jeff'd Up*, as seen in the quotation below.

After graduation, she'd stuck with Seth through five half-hour sitcoms, each one a little less terrible than the last. And now they finally had a hit, a huge hit—*Jeff'd Up*—and who cares if it was terrible? (Who cared, besides Georgie. And Seth. And the rest of the bitter, disillusioned writing staff.) Because it was a *hit*, and it was theirs (Rowell, 2014: 34).

Georgie slowly gets better in writing comedy since she does it together with her best friend, Seth. Both of them always make jokes together. That is the starting

point when Georgie's mind starts making thoughts about working harder every day, so she will have her own show.

Georgie works well during her early years of marriage, but things get worse when she is pregnant of her first child. Georgie does not want to stop working when the baby is born later. She wants to keep working as usual. Georgie forgets that working hard means less time for family. When she realizes it, she fully gives up her child's care to her husband, Neal. They actually argue about putting the child to a day care. However, Neal does not want their child to be put in there, so he volunteers himself to quit his job and becomes a househusband. He does it so that Georgie will not stop working as a writer. It can be seen from the following quotation.

“There isn't anything to think about,” he said. “I can do this. You can't. We don't need my paycheck.”

“But . . .” Georgie felt like she should argue, but she didn't know where to start. And, actually, she really, really liked this idea. She already felt better about the baby, knowing that it would be with Neal, that they won't be turning it (they didn't know the gender yet, but they'd settled on “Alice” or “Eli”) over to a stranger nine hours a day (Rowell, 2014: 223).

The situation continues even after Georgie's second child is born. Neal takes care of both of their children while Georgie works.

Aside from Georgie's ambition and dream as a writer, there seems to be other reasons why Georgie does not want to stop working. One of the reason is Georgie does not actually come from a rich family. Georgie's parents does not make that much money, as seen in the following quotation during Georgie's marriage day, “They'd tried to pay for the whole wedding themselves; her mom and Kendrick were already digging deep to buy plane tickets, and Georgie didn't want to ask

Neal's parents for help" (Rowell, 2014: 200). Now that Georgie is married, she has to struggle a little harder in order to keep the family's income. If she stops working, it means that they will not have as much money as they have at that time. Georgie unconsciously understand about this. Therefore, Georgie chooses to work even though she has to sacrifice her family.

Another reason is that Georgie does not like working at home or being a housewife. She may sound lazy, but she is diligent when it comes to working in the office. It is because she hates doing household chores. It can be seen from the quotation "That was back when Georgie still pretended to help. When she'd hang out in the kitchen with him and drink wine while she watched him slice vegetables" (Rowell, 2014: 40). Neal is the one who does all the household chores.

After Neal decides to be a househusband, Georgie has a lot of time to think about work. She barely worries about family matter because she has Neal who takes care of everything. It includes children and household chores. This kind of behavior results in Georgie being too comfortable in working. Georgie's dream is to have her own TV show, not just as a scriptwriter. Therefore, she sets her goal high. She puts her work above anything else. In order to realize her dream, she spends more time for working than for gathering with family. It means family's concerns will not be on her number one list. Georgie often comes home late when her children have already slept, so she only meets Neal during late night, as seen in "Neal was in a good mood tonight. Usually when Georgie got home this late . . . Well, usually when Georgie got home this late, he wasn't" (Rowell, 2014: 4).

Georgie is raised in a broken-home family where she does not receive much love and attention from her parents. Therefore, unconsciously, it also affects her daily life. She does not worry much about family. An example is found when Georgie can easily cancel her family vacation in order to work. No one forces her to do so actually, including Seth. Although Seth tries to sway Georgie's mind by saying "We've already waiting our whole career. This is happening, Georgie. Now. It's finally happening" (Rowell, 2014: 6), the decision is entirely on Georgie's hand. She can reject the job if she wants. However, if she does that, it may affect her future career. She chooses the job instead of the family vacation. Even Georgie's mother worries about Georgie's decision. She calls Georgie to make sure everything is okay.

"I talked to *Neal*," her mom said again. For emphasis. "He told me you guys are spending some time apart.

"*Mom*," Georgie said, bringing her hand back to the receiver. "Only the week.

"He said you were splitting up for Christmas."

"Not like that—why're you making it sound like that? Something just came up for me at work."

"You've never had to work on Christmas before."

"I don't have to work *on* Christmas. I have to work around Christmas. It's complicated." Georgie resisted checking to see if Seth was listening. "It was my decision."

"You *decided* to be alone on Christmas" (Rowell, 2014: 13)

From the above quote, it can be seen that Georgie insists that she is the one who chooses to work. She does not mind missing her family vacation even though it only happens once a year. This shows how much dedication Georgie has given to her job. In addition, Georgie really loves working, as seen in "And because some things were sacred. Not Georgie's life, but work—work was sacred. Seth and

Georgie checked their lives at the door, and they worked. And there was something really beautiful in that. Something freeing” (Rowell, 2014: 188).

### **4.3. Georgie’s Deviation from the Stereotypes of Woman**

Even though Georgie is a career woman, a wife and a mother at the same time, she is also a woman that is related to the concept of femininity. However, the fact does not say so. Most of the time, Georgie deviates from the concept of femininity. In her love life especially, Georgie is an aggressive woman. Georgie is being labeled so because mostly she is the one taking initiation in her relationship with her husband, Neal, even far before they got married. Georgie does not conceal her feeling towards Neal. She does what she really means and says. On page 132 of the novel, it is stated that people have never kissed Georgie first. The proof can be read in the following quotation.

She pulled Neal’s hand into her lap and turned to face him. And then, because never in her life had Georgie been able to wait for someone to kiss her first, she pressed her mouth into his cheek. Neal clenched his teeth, and she felt the pressure on her lips.

“Georgie,” he whispered. He closed his eyes and tilted his head toward her. She kissed his cheekbone from nose to temple, then rubbed her lips in his cheek again, wishing he’d smile (Rowell, 2014: 132).

During her youth, Georgie tries her best to get close to Neal. It is also a form of Georgie’s aggressiveness because she thinks Neal is interesting. She also wants to get his attention. It can be seen in “Somewhere other than The Spoon offices, clearly. God, God, God—it’s not like he’d led Georgie on. He’d never sought her out. It was always Georgie hanging off his drafting table, making eight-grade eyes at him. Neal hardly even looked at her” (Rowell, 2014: 135).

Aside from being aggressive, Georgie is a dominant woman. Her full of dominant behavior often annoys Neal because he has to grant what Georgie wants. Not only around her family, she is also dominant around her workspace. The proof can be seen from “Georgie stood up, reluctantly, found a dry-erase marker, and started updating their progress on the whiteboard. She actually really liked being the one who wrote things down. It was like being the decision maker” (Rowell, 2014: 49). Being a decision maker means being someone who takes a lead of a project. In other words, Georgie wants everything to be in accordance with her idea. This dominant behavior also leads to the stubborn personality that Georgie possessed. She will not admit her fault, again, because she is dominant.

As analyzed in the previous paragraph, Georgie is ambitious, aggressive, dominant, and stubborn. The four characteristics are not the traits of femininity. On the contrary, those are the traits of masculinity. It means that Georgie is a masculine woman, or it can also be said that Georgie is tomboy. There is nothing wrong with being masculine, because in reality, it does not change the fact that Georgie is physically a woman. However, due to the difficult time she has during her youth, she unintentionally develops more masculine traits than feminine.

Other than the concept of femininity, Georgie’s personality also deviates from the stereotypes of woman. First, Georgie is the financial provider in her household. Usually, financial provider is the role of a man. Georgie does not take this role unwillingly. On the contrary, she is the one who wants it since she does not want to stop working after she gives birth. Georgie wants to work. She wants to be a career woman to fulfill her dreams. Therefore, Neal does not have another

choice but to give what Georgie wants. They switch roles since then: Neal is the househusband, and Georgie is the financial provider.

Neal shrugged. “You’re going to be miserable if we put this baby in day care.”

“I’ll get over it,” Georgie said. Knowing that she would and feeling guilty about that, too.

“You don’t want me to stay home?”

“I haven’t thought about it, have you?”

“There isn’t anything to think about,” he said. “I can do this. You can’t. We don’t need my paycheck” (Rowell, 2014: 223).

The above quote shows that Georgie is the one who makes money in her household since Neal quits his job. By doing so, she is technically freed from doing household chores because Neal will be the one who takes care of them.

Second, Georgie does not assigned baby-sitting duties. All of her children are being taken care of by her husband, Neal. Georgie has very little meeting time with her children. The loss of Georgie’s role in baby-sitting duties results in the distant relationship between Georgie and her children, as seen in “On Saturday mornings when Neal left to run errands, the girls wouldn’t ask for breakfast until he came home. When they fell and hurt themselves, they screamed, “Daddy!”” (Rowell, 2014: 76). Generally, little children will call for their mother if they have a trouble. However, since the children are closer to Neal than Georgie, they call for Neal instead. This thing breaks Georgie’s heart. She feels like her children does not need her at all, and that they does not consider her as an important person in their lives, as seen in “Georgie was extra. She was the fourth wheel. (On something that only needed three wheels. The fourth wheel on a tricycle.) She’d be nothing without them. Nothing. But without her? They’d be exactly the same. And Neal . . . maybe Neal would be happier” (Rowell, 2014: 87).

Georgie also fails to fulfill the virtues of women saying that a woman must be pious, submissive, domestic, and pure. Georgie is not domestic type because she lets Neal to take care of the household while she works in a TV station. Georgie loses her domesticity here. In addition, Georgie is not submissive because she tends to dominate her husband with her selfish ideas. As for the two virtues, pious and pure, there is no mention about these in the novel.

#### **4.3. The Guilt Faced by Georgie as a Career Woman, a Mother, and a Wife**

As explained in the previous section, Georgie possesses more masculine traits than feminine. As a career woman and a workaholic, such deviation is not supposed to affect Georgie's life. However, the facts happen on the contrary.

After Neal leaves for Omaha, Georgie goes to her mother's house because she dislikes the emptiness of her own house. During Georgie's stay in her mother's house, Georgie is indirectly reminded of the warmth of a family. A family will not be complete if one of the parents is too busy or not present beside the children's daily life. Georgie forgets about this because she does not feel the warmth for a long time due to her parents' divorce. The memory of a warm family triggers Georgie's conscience. The conscience says that she should be present at any family event, and she cannot live far away from them. The conscience finally leads to a guilty feeling within her.

From the explanation in the previous pages, it can be said that Georgie is facing disloyalty guilt. This kind of guilt arises because Georgie fails to fulfill the wish of her family. The family's wish includes a woman must possess the quality

of woman, such as taking care of the children and being submissive to the husband. In addition, her family wants Georgie to be present at the family's vacation. However, Georgie fails to fulfill all of these. Therefore, she suffers from the guilt. The explanation of the causes of Georgie's disloyalty guilt are written in the following paragraphs.

First, Georgie's dominant behavior causes Neal to quit his job in order to let Georgie work. Therefore, Georgie will not worry about their children. Second, Georgie fails to be a good mother for her children. Georgie feels guilty because she is not present during the growing period of her children. She misses the golden age where her children learn about many things, and it results in the distant relationship within Georgie and her children. Third, Georgie feels guilty for not being a good wife.

As for the third guilt, it comes from the major conflict between Georgie and Neal that has been explained in the previous pages. This major guilt causes Georgie realizing all of her mistakes. It is when she takes the offer to work a week towards Christmas. Since she takes the job, Georgie and Neal decide to celebrate Christmas separately. It means Neal and their children fly to Omaha while Georgie stays in Los Angeles to focus on her work. Initially, Georgie feels fine. However, she slowly realizes that it is wrong to put aside her family, therefore she feels guilty afterwards.

The only thing Georgie can do in order to bring back the harmony of her family is to lower her own ego and to be submissive. It means she has to give up

her job, apologizes to Neal, and she presents in her children's life so that once again she can be a good woman, a good wife and a good mother.

#### **4.4. Georgie's Attempt to Overcome the Guilt**

Georgie suffers from disloyalty guilt that arises because she cannot fulfill her family's wish. She chooses to follow her own idea by working during Christmas. The guilt slowly becomes a burden in Georgie's heart and mind. The burden then affects Georgie's productivity in working, so she cannot concentrate well. Therefore, she needs a resolution so that she can live as usual again.

A method to overcome a guilt is by passing the stages of grief, they are denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. Georgie also passes these kinds of stages in order to resolve her guilt. The five stages of grief are explained as follows.

##### **4.4.1. Denial**

Georgie's denial stage is marked by Georgie's action that does not reflect her guilt at all. She works as usual in her office as if nothing happens to her. She talks with her co-workers with ease and she does not seem worry. It can be seen from the quotation below during a conversation between Seth and Georgie.

He settled against the desk, her side of the desk, next to her keyboard. "So . . ."

"So what?"

"So," he said, "they went to Omaha."

Georgie shook her head, even though the answer was yes. "It made sense. We already had the plane tickets, and I'm going to be working all week anyway."

"Yeah, but . . ." Seth nudged her arm with his leg. Georgie looked up. "What're you gonna do on Christmas?"

“I’ll go to my mom’s.” It was only sort of a lie. She could still go. Even if her mom wasn’t home (Rowell, 2014: 19).

The denial is also reflected when Georgie keeps trying to call Neal’s phone. She does it to make sure Neal is okay. It can be seen from “Georgie’d already tried to call Neal twice that morning on the way to work—she wanted something to replace their last stilted conversation in her head—but he hadn’t picked up” (Rowell, 2014: 31).

Georgie unconsciously denies that she has a quarrel with Neal, so she keeps calling Neal as usual. However, in fact, Georgie is quarrelling with Neal even before Neal leaves for Omaha. It is because Georgie selfishly wants to cancel their Christmas vacation. Another quote that shows Georgie’s denial stage can also be seen in “It was easier when they were working. Easier for Georgie to pretend that nothing was wrong” (Rowell, 2014: 73).

Georgie pretends to be fine. She does not tell anyone about what she is thinking. However, Seth knows that Georgie is not fine at all. Seth knows that Georgie worries about her family, but he does not mention it in front of Georgie. It is all reflected on Georgie’s appearance, as seen in “Georgie wasn’t any good that morning. Seth was pretending not to notice. He was also pretending not to notice her Metallica T-shirt” (Rowell, 2014: 48). Georgie wears the same clothes for several days. It indicates that she does not go to her house at all, even for changing clothes.

#### 4.4.2. Anger

Georgie keeps denying herself until she reaches a point where she feels tired of denying. During denial stage, Georgie calls Neal's phone and sends him texts but she does not get any reply. "As soon as she hung up, she felt like an idiot. Because of course he'd be interrupting something. That's why Georgie had stayed in L.A., because she couldn't be interrupted. *Fuck*" (Rowell, 2014: 47). The previous quote is Georgie's condition after her countless attempts to contact Neal are failed. Georgie gets a voice mail from Neal and she sends him one back. Since Georgie's call has never been picked up by Neal, she becomes angry and curses often.

Since she is currently living alone now, Georgie becomes more sensitive than before. She gets annoyed and angry easily. A simple example can be seen when her second daughter disobeys her when she phones her, as quoted in the following.

"Don't use your mean voice, Mommy." It was Noomi. Crying. Undoubtedly fake crying. Noomi almost never truly cried; she'd start fake crying long before she arrived at actual tears.

"I'm not using my mean voice, Noomi. How are you?"

"I'm just so sad."

"Don't be sad."

"But you're using your mean voice, and I don't like it."

"Noomi," Georgie said, in what probably *was* her mean voice. "I wasn't even talking to you. *Calm down*, for Christ's sake" (Rowell, 2014: 69).

In the novel, Georgie never swears in front of her children. It is the first time she swears. She does it because she is annoyed at her daughter words that accuses her using a mean voice when Georgie thinks she does not. Actually, Georgie can explain slowly about her situation to her daughter instead of using her mean voice. However, Georgie chooses not to.

### 4.4.3. Bargaining

Georgie's bargaining stage is marked by the finding of the magic landline in her old room. She finally knows that the magic landline is connected to young Neal, as seen from "By the time Georgie pulled into her mom's driveway, she was 100 percent sure that if she called Neal tonight from the yellow rotary phone, he'd picked it up in the past" (Rowell, 2014: 153). The realization comes to Georgie's mind after several trials on the landline.

The bargaining stage is mainly about postponing Neal's break up with Georgie, and at the same time, fixing Georgie and Neal's relationship. Therefore, she keeps using the magic landline. However, Georgie still wants to find the reason behind the magic landline. She also thinks about what to do with it, as seen in the quote below.

But *what if* . . . Christmas 1998. They fought. Neal went home. He came back. He proposed. They lived not-exactly-happily ever after. Wait, was *that* what she was supposed to fix? The not exactly-happy part? How was she supposed to fix something like that, *over the phone*, when she wasn't even sure it was fixable? ... (God, maybe she should test that theory, she could ask him to call her back . . . No. No way. What if her mom answered and started talking about Alice and Noomi and divorce? What if Georgie herself answered the phone back in 1998 and said something horrible and immature, and ruined everything? Nineteen-ninety-eight Georgie clearly couldn't be trusted) (Rowell, 2014: 113, 153).

Georgie also hopes the magic landline may give her an answer about her past and about her future with Neal, as quoted in "She felt weird even praying for things—because it didn't seem like she should ask God for something that wasn't already part of the plan" (Rowell, 2014: 123). However, in reality, a person cannot change his/her past. Georgie also knows about this. Therefore she keeps using the

landline in order to know the reason why Neal comes back to her in 1998, as seen in “Georgie couldn’t change the past—she could only talk at it. If Georgie had a proper time machine, maybe she could actually fix her marriage. She could go back to the moment that everything started to go bad, and change course” (Rowell, 2014: 219).

#### **4.4.4. Depression**

The depression stage faced by Georgie starts when she knows she has done wrong to Neal. She never understands what Neal really wants and feels, as seen in “Even on *good* days, Georgie knew Neal was unhappy. And that it was her fault. It wasn’t just that she let him down, and put him off, and continually left him waiting— It was she’d tied him to her so tight” (Rowell, 2014: 122). Dominant Georgie often presses Neal’s will and does not let him doing something he really wants. She only cares for her own wish and desire. Even though Georgie knows about Neal’s feeling, she still does it. However, after Neal is gone, Georgie keeps thinking about her past action and blames herself for not being a good wife. Subsequently, when starts doing it, she becomes more and more depressed. “God. *God*. This was how Georgie had ruined everything. By being really good at something. By being really good *with* someone. By retreating into the part of her life that was easiest. She started crying” (Rowell, 2014: 188).

Aside from the previous paragraph, there is another time when Georgie cries, for example when Georgie still wonders about Neal’s mind in the past. Georgie cries because they keep arguing over the phone. In order to know Neal’s

intention, she has to use the magic landline, which connects her to young Neal during college days. Therefore, in the present moment, she keeps calling Neal using the landline. The quotation below happens when the present moment Georgie calls young Neal using the magic landline which leads to Georgie's cry.

"I'm going to hang up now, Georgie. And we're both going to take some deep breaths. And when I call back, we're *starting over*."  
 "No."

He did it then.

Neal hung up.

Georgie tried to take a deep breath—it caught in her throat like a millstone. She dropped the receiver on the hook and wandered out into the hall, to Heather's bathroom. Georgie hardly recognized her own face in the mirror. She looked pale and witless, a ghost who'd just seen a ghost. She rinsed her face with cold water and sobbed tearlessly into her hands (Rowell, 2014: 245).

Generally, tears can be interpreted as a person's sadness or exhaustion, or in Georgie's case, depression. Georgie is depressed because she misses Neal and the children. Also, it is because Georgie does not have any chance to talk with Neal through his mobile phone and landline.

#### **4.4.5. Acceptance**

After going through the four stages of grief above, Georgie finally comes to her sense when she suddenly reminds of her happy days with Neal when they get married, as quoted in "She remembered that he was happy. She remembered the way he cupped the back of her head and said, "*From this moment onward. From every moment onward.*" God—had Neal really said that? Had she really only half-understood her own proposal?" (Rowell, 2014: 252). Georgie is too absorbed by her own depression that she forgets the happiness that she and Neal always have between some bad circumstances.

This is where Georgie's burden about her mistakes little by little becomes lessened. She wants to apologize. Since Neal's landline cannot be reached anymore, Georgie decides to fly to Omaha to apologize. She is too late actually, because it is Christmas Eve and almost all flights are full. However, she still tries her best and sacrifices everything in order to fix her mistakes. For example, when she intends to buy the plane ticket, she only has one option available, which is the most expensive ticket, as seen in "The ticket was exorbitantly expensive, but Georgie didn't blink. "You could fly to Singapore for this much," Estelle said" (Rowell, 2014: 271). Estelle is the airport officer on duty at that time.

Georgie does not mind spending much money as long as she can go back to her family. Her intention is clear: to have a happy Christmas with her family in Omaha. It can be seen from the following quotation.

With every step, Georgie felt more sure of herself. This was what she should have done ten minutes after Neal left last week. Flying across the country to reunite with your true love was always the right move. (Always.) (In every case.) Everything would be all right if Georgie just get to Neal. If she could hear his voice. If she could feel his arms around her (Rowell, 2014: 272).

In the acceptance stage, Georgie accepts all of her mistakes and the consequences she has for abandoning her family. After Georgie abandons her family, her life is empty. She is lonely because she cannot see the faces or hear the voices of Neal and the children. The consequences may be that Georgie's marriage is wrecked because of her foolish action for choosing her work over her family. Her children may also hates her after the incident.

Not only the consequences for abandoning her family, she now has a chance of degrading her working performance. Georgie leaves her job and her co-workers without any permission in order to meet her family. It means she abandons her pilot script that will help her to achieve her dream. Therefore, there is a possibility where Georgie and her co-workers fail to meet their expectation and results in the rejection of the new show. Georgie knows the consequences well yet she still makes her way to Omaha. After she arrives in Omaha, she is grateful for finally choosing her family over her job, as seen in “She was here. And it didn’t fix anything. It didn’t change anything. She still had her job. And the meeting maybe. She still had Seth to sort out—or not. Georgie hadn’t made any real decisions . . . But for once she’d made the right choice” (Rowell, 2014: 297). “The right choice” means Georgie’s family. She realizes her mistakes and her role as a wife and a mother, therefore she temporarily gives up her “career woman” title for her family.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSION**

In the novel, Georgie faces both internal and external conflicts. Georgie's internal conflict happens inside her own mind. Her mind is split between the roles of being a career woman and a wife or a mother. As for the external conflict, it happens between Georgie and people around her, such as Neal, Seth, and Georgie's mother's family. The cause of the external conflict is because Georgie has different way of thinking with other people.

Georgie dedicates her life to work more than she dedicates herself to her family. She really likes working, and it turns her into a workaholic that will do anything to keep her work on top. Also, from the discussion in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that Georgie has more masculine traits than feminine. Georgie's personality also does not fit the stereotypes of woman who is domestic and submissive. It can be understood because Georgie has various roles, such as a career woman, a wife, and a mother. However, Georgie cannot fully balance those three roles because she is a workaholic, so she prioritizes her job more than her family.

Since Georgie cannot fulfill the demands of being a wife and a mother, it triggers guilty feeling inside Georgie's self. Georgie faces disloyalty guilt toward her family for not being able to meet their wish. The guilt itself is a proof that shows no matter how successful a woman is, she cannot abandon her family. The proof also applies to Georgie as the guilt keeps lingering within her. It makes Georgie

lose her concentration and productivity during working. In order to banish the guilt, Georgie must sacrifice her ego of being dominant and change it into submissive, at least to her husband. Georgie also faces the stages of grief, including denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. Georgie passes all of the stages of grief with many difficulties and reunites with her family again.

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