

BINARY OPPOSITION AS THE CHARACTERIZATION IN CASEY WATSON'S *A BOY WITHOUT HOPE*

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Abstract: This study aims at examining the characterization of two main characters in Casey Watson's *A Boy without Hope* (2018) through the theory of binary opposition. Binary opposition is one of the theories of structuralism developed by Levi Strauss, which roots from the theory of semiotics introduced by Saussure. Aside from discovering the differences in the way the main characters are characterized, this study uses the plot of the story to discover whether the binary opposing characterization is maintained along the plot of the story. This study thus finds that binary opposition plays a significant role in character development throughout the plot of the story. However, this study limits its action only in observing the relationship between characterization and plot of the story, therefore, explorations on the paradigmatic viewpoints of the story and certain correlation among other intrinsic aspects and extrinsic aspects are suggested.

Keywords: *Binary opposition, literary criticism, structuralism*

INTRODUCTION

Characterization is one of the most essential foundations for writers in developing their story. As a writing technique, most writers attempt to create characters as unique individuals, not as stereotypes. Gioia and Kennedy (1995) define a character as presumably an imagined person who inhabits a story, although this definition raises certain exceptions. In George Stewart's *Storm*, the protagonist is the wind; in George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, the characters are animals. The characterization involves infusing human personalities, motivation, roundness, and dynamics of the personality.

Such dynamics are seen in a book entitled *A Boy without Hope* written by Casey Watson. The book tells how Casey Watson engaged herself in conflicts with a boy named Miller Green and how they resolved their conflicts. This book is a memoir since the writer wrote a story about herself in a certain period of her lifetime. Even though this book is a non-fiction, it is also considered a novel since according to Peck and Coyle (1993). It has a plot that shows the process of resolving certain problems, and some parts of the story are also made up to encourage readers' engagement towards the story. The writer can present an accurate picture of life and make more that the story is being told. Thus, the persons in the story were real. However, since the story is written in the form of a novel, this study identifies Casey Watson and Miller Green as characters that undergo the process of characterization in the writing.

Casey Watson's *A Boy without Hope* tells a story about a boy who grew up lacking affection from his nuclear family. Experiencing traumatic childhood such as being abused and neglected by his family left a deep wound to Miller's mental condition. Upon finding Miller on a railway track, alone and unclothed, Casey wanted to help him and foster him in her foster care house. Casey felt that she had a duty to foster mentally disturbed kids who considered difficult and hopeless at first impression. When Casey first met Miller and found out the reality about his distressful childhood, she felt doubt that this kid could ever heal and love at all.

On the other hand, Miller seemed to have no idea how to build meaningful relationship full of affection and compassion because of his abusive parents. When Casey decided to count herself in to help recovering Miller's trauma, she assured herself that she was more than capable of controlling Miller and thus healed him from his pain. However, Miller's change of behavior was not as Casey had expected.

The way Casey Watson developed her story inadvertently shows opposite personalities between the main characters' personalities. Such opposite characterization encouraged us, the researchers, to observe whether such opposition continues up to the end of the story. Using the theory of binary opposition, this study examines the characterization of two main characters in Casey Watson's *A Boy without Hope*. Furthermore, this paper limited the discussion to the way the main characters' personalities in Casey Watson's *A Boy without Hope* are characterized and developed throughout the plot of the story within the perspective of the theory of binary opposition. Concerning the techniques of characterization, it is going to be suggested in further studies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Structuralism began in France in the 1950s in the anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss (1908 – 2009) and Roland Barthes (1915 – 80). However, the root of structuralism is in the thinking of Ferdinand de Saussure (1857 – 1913) with

the theory of semiology or semiotics. Culler (2000) summarizes that instead of describing experience, the goal (of structuralism) is to identify the underlying structures that make it possible. Because of its interest in how meaning is produced, structuralism often treated the reader as the site of underlying codes that make meaning possible and as the agent of meaning. Furthermore, Barry (2017, 2020) argues that the essence of structuralism is the belief that things cannot be understood in isolation. Things have to be seen in the context of larger structures they are part of. The structures in question here are those imposed by the way of perceiving the world and organizing experience.

The anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss applied the structuralist outlook in the interpretation of myth. In interpreting an individual myth, he would place the individual story within the context of the whole cycle of tales connected with the origins of the myth. On this, the story and the cycle it is part of are reconstituted in terms of basic oppositions/binary oppositions: animal/human, relation/stranger, husband/son, and so on (Rivkin & Ryan, 2017). Concrete details of the story are seen in the context of larger structure. The larger structure is then seen as an overall network of basic 'dyadic pairs' which have obvious symbolic, thematic, and archetypal resonance, such as the contrast between life and art, male and female, town and country, telling and showing, etc. Thus, the theory of literary structuralism is a theoretical approach to literary texts that emphasizes the overall relationship between various elements of the text. Eagleton (1996, 2011) emphasizes that the relations between the various items of the story may be ones of parallelism, opposition, inversion, equivalence, and so on; and as long as this structure of internal relations remains intact, the individual units are replaceable. Thus, these items or elements only get their meaning in the relation, either the association relation or the oppositional relation. The studied relations can be related to micro texts (words, sentences), a wider whole (stanzas, chapters), and intertextual (other works in certain period).

METHOD

This study was conducted after reading a book entitled *A Boy without Hope* written by Casey Watson. This 229-pages book was originally published on October 25, 2018, by Harpers Collins publisher in the United Kingdom. The data source of this study is in the form of an electronic publishing or e-pub. As a literary criticism, this study was intended to identify and classify the different ways of characterization between the two main characters: Casey and Miller. As a literary criticism, this study approached the text objectively by only focusing on the text without considering the author, the universe, and the readers (Abrams, 1971). Among the objective theories, structuralism was selected to be utilized in this study since the theory envelops the theory of binary opposition. After discovering the data related to the characterization of the main

characters, using the perspective of binary opposition, this study classified the personalities into opposing personalities and classified them and observed on the development of the characters throughout the plot of the story.

The findings and the discussion of this paper are delivered based on the significant characterization of the main characters and based on the plot of the story: the exposition, the rising action, the climax, the falling action, and the resolution (Kennedy, 1987). However, several other details of the characterizations and the plot are not mentioned and thus are suggested for further research.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Exposition

Within the discussion of the findings below, the paper only focuses on several characterizations: age, health, ability to adapt, and knowledgeability. Firstly, in the exposition of the story, both characters are characterized as possessing different ages. Furthermore, even though the age is not explicit, but from the excerpt below, Casey is mentioned as having granddaughters.

Excerpt 1

I held two hot, sticky hands in mine- those of my two darling granddaughters, whom I was about to lead, suitably subdued, back into the dining room. (ABWH, p.1)

The excerpt above shows that Casey was old enough to be a grandmother, having "two darling granddaughters". It is different with Miller, who was still a child at 12 years old but physically small, as shown by the excerpt below.

Excerpt 2

Miller was definitely on the small side for twelve. He looked more like ten an impression already heightened by his strange, child-like antics and apparent lack of self-consciousness. And he had strange darting eyes that never quite looked directly into mine. His hair was dirty and matted, and in need of a good trim, and his clothes were far too small for him. Not for the first time, and I'd seen a lot of kids from all sorts of backgrounds- I wondered how a child who had been in care for so many years could look so urchin-like and disheveled. (ABWH, p.25)

The excerpt above shows how Casey perceived Miller's age and Miller's physical appearance when Miller came to the foster care. This study also found that Casey had the experience to deal with children with different backgrounds through the excerpt. Casey saw and expressed her opinion on Miller also emphasizes the findings on the different ages between Casey and Miller. Within the perspective of binary opposition, the data above show both characters' opposing ages that imply opposing experiences in life.

Secondly, both characters are characterized as possessing different ways in managing changes. Casey is described as a professional foster carer who felt that she needed to have a routine, but she did not. The excerpt below shows that Casey felt like she had similar traits with her son who had Asperger syndrome.

Excerpt 3

Change. Change is good. Change is necessary even. And, as a resilient foster carer, one might imagine it was something I coped with brilliantly. And, in the main, for most of the time, one would have imagined right. Because I did. Especially given that on the surface, our household never had a routine, not in the conventional sense.

But, deep inside, I knew I shared some of the traits of my Asperger's son.

Yes, I could cope with chaos easily, but only as long as certain things were set in stone. It wasn't necessarily visible, because my real routine simply bummed away in the background. The forefront of my life could be as messed up as it liked, as long as some things never changed, as long as what really mattered was set stone. (ABWH, p.8)

The excerpt above shows that she always needed routine, although she actually could manage changes in her work. The way Casey talked about her problems is also considered binary opposition, since the excerpt above presents how Casey showed a calm and registered characteristics to hide her Asperger-like syndrome. The topic of change was written differently regarding Miller's situation, as presented in the excerpt below.

Excerpt 4

'Miller was a little bit afraid of another move so quickly, so we had a teeny bit of a job convincing him to get into the car... 'But it's all okay now,' she trilled. 'We're finally on the road'. (ABWH, p.19)

The excerpt above was taken from Libby Moran, a social worker, telling Casey about Miller's reluctance to get into the car to go to Casey's foster care. In that day was also the day when Casey met Miller in person for the very first time. Libby's explanation about Miller's fear of things moving quickly shows that Miller was not accustomed to seeing cars or going outside of the previous house, thus making him difficult to change his perception when he had to enter the car.

Thirdly, both characters are characterized as having different health conditions. Although she was old enough to be a grandmother, Casey could manage her health and showed that she could do a lot of tasks, as shown in the excerpt below.

Excerpt 5

Birthdays, too, of course. Not to mention all the associated parties. Particularly those of my grandkids, in which my role was unchanging: chief entertainment officer, chief caterer and, invariably, chief bouncer as well. (ABWH, p.1)

The excerpt above shows how Casey, who is old but still active in various events, could do many things. It shows that Casey was still in good health although she was old. Meanwhile, the condition was different with Miller, who was still young but had some health problems, especially sleep problems, as shown in the excerpt below.

Excerpt 6

"So he's on medication to help him sleep then?" I asked Libby.

Oops - glad you spotted that,' she said, delving once again into her capacious bag, and pulling out a plastic bag with a tablet box inside it. 'Don't want to land you with another load of problems, do I? Though there's only a few days' supply in there, I'm afraid. You'll need to get in touch with your GP to get some more organized. He takes the maximum adult dose. She consulted her notes. Three per night, 7 p.m. (ABWH, p.23)

The above passage shows Miller's health condition that he had sleep problems. As a twelve-year old child, he had to take sleeping pills for the adult dosage. From both excerpts above, the study finds that each character is characterized also provides binary opposition. The old-age characteristics mostly imply health issues in reality but, in the story, Casey is characterized as old but healthy, while the young-age characteristics mostly imply vitality and health in reality but, in the story, Miller is depicted as young but not healthy with lack of sleep.

Lastly, what needs to be underlined from the excerpts above is the way Casey saw Miller. Casey perceived Miller as an unhealthy child coming from abusive parents in need of her help, while Miller was just a child being a child not knowing what he wanted because of the unhealthy ways of parenting from his parents. Casey knew she wanted to help him while Miller did not know whether he needed help. On this fact, the binary opposing knowledgeability of both characters are also important to be reckoned in this study.

From the findings above, in the exposition of the story, both characters possess binary opposing characteristics within themselves and between themselves. The table below shows the binary opposition between both characters.

Table 1. Binary opposition of the characterization in the exposition of the story

Characterization	Casey	Miller
Age	Grandmother old	Twelve-year-old
Ability to adapt to change	Adaptable to change	Unadaptable to change
Health	Strong and healthy	Lack of sleep and unhealthy
Self-Awareness	Knowing of what she wanted	Unknowing of what he wanted

The Rising Action

Within the rising action, there are also several aspects to be focused on in this paper. These aspects have not been discussed in the previous section and are assumed to exist due to the conflicts between both characters that rise in the story.

Firstly, both characters are characterized differently as in the aspect of thoughtfulness. Based on the situation in the story, Casey and her husband, Mike, had a foster care house that foster children who needed shelter. One of them is a boy named Tyler, as mentioned in the excerpt below.

Excerpt 7

Mike walked up to Miller's side, making the most of the disparity in their sizes. Mike was a big man – six foot three-and Miller was short and skinny. 'Come on, lad,' he said, standing close but being careful not to touch him. 'Forget social workers for tonight, hey? Let's go in and meet Tyler. Then you can have a look at your room before settling in for the night. How does that sound?' (ABWH, p. 25)

The excerpt shows that both Casey and Mike were very thoughtful to be able to make their house as a foster care house for children. In addition, the excerpt shows that Miller had been prepared a room that he would share with Tyler, another foster child in the house. In contrast, Miller was characterized as an ignorant child, as shown in the excerpt below.

Excerpt 8

It was just before two when I was awoken by the sound of banging. And as I sluggishly dragged myself from sleep into alert mode, I soon worked out it was coming from Miller's room. I lifted the duvet back and padded across the landing to investigate, only to find he was bouncing up and down on his bed, fully upright, as if practicing for a trampoline tournament. He giggled like a toddler when he saw me. (ABWH, p.30)

The excerpt above shows that Miller, who had a history of sleep problems, could not fall asleep in his room. Then because of his difficulty in sleeping, he busied himself enjoying the new bed, doing whatever he wanted, ignoring other people and the time for other people to rest and sleep. The study also finds that Casey was starting to be disturbed by Miller's actions from the excerpt. What needs to be underlined in this finding is that Miller's ignorance comes from his childishness and innocence when he found freedom as he giggled, finding the activity was amusing. Thus, Casey and Miller are characterized oppositely based on the thoughtfulness aspect based on those excerpts above.

Secondly, in the aspect of patience, the two characters are characterized differently too. This is in relation with the different age characteristics. Casey is characterized as a wise and patient woman, as shown in the excerpt below. The situation of the excerpt is that Casey was on the driveway taking Miller to town to buy necessities and to get closer to Miller. On the way, Miller was asking a lot of questions like a child who had never got a chance to ask questions before.

Excerpt 9

I managed to meet his eye, even if only briefly. 'Goodness me,' I said. 'One question at a time, please, Miller. And maybe it should wait till we get into town, eh? There are lots of new road works and I don't want to end up in the wrong lane or something. Okay? And could you stop yanking my seat back while you're talking, please?'

'Okay,' he said. (ABWH, p.62)

The excerpt shows that Casey is characterized as holding down her anger by saying "Goodness me". Since she knew there would be troubles if she did not concentrate on the road they should be taking, she chose to put down her anger by explaining the troubles and requesting Miller to hold down his questions using the word "please". However, as previously mentioned that Miller is characterized as a child being a child, he is characterized as a childish and impatient child as implied in the situation above and shown in the excerpt below.

Excerpt 10

I crossed the road, but as I did so he sprinted a few yards down the street. 'New game or I'm gone,' he said.

I walked towards him. Again, he sprinted off a few yards.

I carried on walking. 'We didn't say anything about buying a game, Miller,' I told him. 'And do you really think that this kind of behavior will get you anything?'

"Well, I'll stop if you say you'll get me one." (ABWH, p.66)

The excerpt above shows that as a child who did not have a normal childhood, Miller felt that Casey, her new mother, could buy him a new game in a game shop. The excerpt also shows that Casey did not have any plan to buy him a game. When Miller's impatience rose, he gave Casey a choice that he would go away from Casey's foster care house if he did not get the game. As one of the conflicts arising in the rising actions, this excerpt implies that Casey did not feel content being in Casey's foster care because he did not get what he wanted. However, since Casey did not eventually buy him the game, the conflict rises to the point where Casey and Miller did not interact to each other. However, the way they expressed their emotions are also different, as the below excerpt shows.

Excerpt 11

Mike did try he went up twice to suggest a kick-about, or a bike ride but though Miller was at least chastened enough not to give him any backchat, all his answers had been mumbled, grunting versions of 'no', and on one occasion he'd even been back in his duvet cocoon, despite the warmth of the afternoon, too apathetic even to fire up the telly. (The PlayStation, naturally, was now off-limits.)

Yes, he'd come down for food, but it was joyless and mostly silent, all of us, I decided, too busy inhabiting our own private universes of disgruntlement. (ABWH, p. 71-72)

The excerpt shows that Miller is characterized to be more expressive in action than Casey in expressing unhappiness. Miller was unhappy because he did not get the game that he wanted, while Casey was unhappy because of Miller's childish behavior. Miller expressed his unhappiness by doing unhappy things, while Casey chose to be silent but watching him. Such characterization is assumed to be related to the different age aspect of both characters, and the way they handle unhappiness in life.

From the findings above, in the story's rising action, both characters are characterized as possessing binary opposing characteristics and between themselves. As the previous finding shows that the narrative of "knowing what you want" becomes the narrative of the story, becoming the conflict in the story. The table below shows the binary opposition between both characters in this rising action.

Table 2. Binary opposition of the characterization in the rising action of the story

Characterization	Casey	Miller
Thoughtfulness	Thoughtful	Ignorant
Patience	Patient	Impatient
Emotional expression	Silence, no action	Silence, with actions

The Climax

Within the climax of the story, there are also several aspects to be focused on in this paper. These aspects have not been discussed in the previous section and are assumed to exist due to the conflicts between both characters that reach the climax in the story.

As previously mentioned, that Casey is characterized as showing silence with no actions in expressing her unhappiness, and Miller is characterized as showing silence but with actions, this characterization becomes the starting point of the climax of the story. The climax of the story deals mostly with the inability of both characters in communicating to each other. This aspect is communication style aspect. As shown in the excerpt below, Casey is characterized as using indirect communication style.

Excerpt 12

But it seemed my strategy - to leave Miller to stew while I counselled Tyler and tidied the kitchen - was going to bear fruit. When I put my head round the living room door twenty minutes later, and told him it was now time to leave, I didn't get so much as a peep of protest in response. No, he didn't exactly leap up in a state of excited anticipation, but he did, thank goodness, follow the pair of us out to the car. Indeed, his only protest was a silent one, in that he wouldn't properly put on his trainers; just slopped out with them untied and squashed down at the back, under his heels.

Okay, I thought. Leave it. Let him score that small point. Because getting him into the car- and with the child lock deployed-was by far the biggest, most important one. (p.101)

The excerpt above is taken from the situation when Casey was trying to ask Miller to go to school. Since they were not talking to each other, Casey chose to talk to Tyler loudly when she counselled him so that Miller could hear from the living room. When she asked Tyler to come to school, she found that Miller was also following her request. While Miller is characterized as a silent person who is more direct in action. In the previous parts of the story, he was characterized as using direct communication style when he asked Casey to buy him a game. But when he did not get what he wanted, he showed silence but still provide direct actions. The excerpt above shows that Miller understood what he was told to go to school, so he directly followed Casey and Tyler into the car.

Excerpt 13

Shaken, yes – there was absolutely no doubt about that – but still not sufficiently stirred. He just glared back at me, his eyes darkening, his gaze fully focused. ‘I. Never. Took. Them.’ he said evenly. ‘I. Didn’t. Go. In. His. Room.’

I shook my head in frustration. ‘Miller, like Ty said, there is no one else in the house, so if they’re gone, then you most certainly did take them.’ I held his gaze. ‘And now is your opportunity to tell me the truth. So stop this right now and just tell me where they are.’

He turned away from me, and for a moment I felt an urge to yank him physically back to face me. It wasn’t only Tyler he had managed to goad into the thought of physical violence. ‘I hate this house,’ he said, as he too stomped back towards the house. ‘I can’t wait to start school so I can get out of here!’ (140)

The excerpt above is taken from the situation where Tyler lost something in the bedroom and blamed Miller for taking it. Since Tyler lived longer than Miller in the house, Casey was inclined to trust Tyler. The excerpt shows that Casey’s emotion was rising as she discovered that Miller had been very determined to be as he wanted. Casey was at the point of doing physical violence to Miller, but the existence of Tyler stopped her. On the other hand, Miller is characterized as determined that he did not take Tyler’s things. He used short words to emphasize his directness in speaking what he believed to be the truth. However, since he felt that he did not get any trust, he communicated his feelings that he hated the house and wanted to get out of the house. Based on this discussion, the excerpt shows that Casey was characterized as having a hard time understanding Miller. She is characterized as a person who had provided everything for Miller, but Miller did not give something back. At this point, the aspect that is being binary opposed is the aspect of desire: Casey wanted Miller to be her good son, but Miller did not want to be her son.

The other aspect that becomes significant in the climax is the aspect of thoughtfulness about trauma. After expressing her anger to Miller about what he did to Tyler's things and discovering him smoking a cigarette, Casey couldn't find Miller in his room but later on found him in a closet. At this point, she realized that she made a mistake on expressing her anger to Miller that made Miller re-experienced his trauma with his real parents.

Excerpt 14

'Miller, sweetie, was this when you were little? Did you get closed in a cupboard? Was it when you lived with your parents?'

Silence. 'It's okay, love, I won't speak, then. I'll just sit here for a bit. It's okay for you to talk by yourself.' (ABWH, p.150)

The excerpt above shows that Casey tried to gain Miller's attention by saying "love" and provided him a space to talk. Then he told stories about how he could end up locked in a closet because of his mistakes when living with his parents and grandparents. What needed to be underlined in this excerpt is that Miller seemed to realize what triggered his trauma while Casey had not realized that what triggered his trauma is not only the parents but also the grandparents, especially his grandmother.

From the findings above, in the climax of the story, both characters possess binary opposing characteristics and between themselves. As the previous finding shows that the narrative of "knowing what you want" becomes the narrative of the story, becoming essence in the climax of the story. The table below shows the binary opposition between both characters in the climax.

Table 3: Binary opposition of the characterization in the climax of the story

Characterization	Casey	Miller
Communication style	Indirect	Direct
Desire	Wanted Miller to be a good son to her	Did not want to be Casey's good son
Realization of Trauma	Did not realize that what she did triggered trauma	Realized that what Casey did triggered trauma

The Falling Action

Within the story's falling action, there are also several aspects to be focused on in this paper. These aspects have not been discussed in the previous section and are assumed to exist due to the realization between both characters that reaches the falling action in the story.

After discovering that Miller had burnt Tyler's things, made Tyler went out of the house, had been keeping a knife, and made fire in the house, Casey chose to send her away for the summer holidays. At this point, Casey is characterized as thinking that Miller was becoming a burden to her and her family, and Miller is characterized as realizing that thought.

Excerpt 15

'So you are sick of me,' he'd retorted. 'I knew you were. Hah. And you just said it.' He crossed his arms over his chest. He sounded pleased with himself.

'No, I'm not,' I corrected. 'But I tell you what I am, Miller. I am at a loss. To understand why you want to make me sick of you. Why you keep wanting to stop people trying to help you.'

'I don't need help. I just want to be left alone!'

And, at that moment, it was the hardest thing not to grant him that very wish. (ABWH, p.184)

The excerpt above shows that Casey is characterized as having the most problems in the story. She is characterized as unknowing of what Miller needed most and she just thought of herself and her family without realizing that everything did not make Miller happy. Miller is characterized as realizing what he wanted to do to make himself happy, that is being alone. Based on this finding, the aspect being opposed is value: family value and individualism value.

After spending several days with Mavis, another foster carer, Miller is characterized as having changes in behavior. He seemed to have realized that he is not a child anymore and understood that he needed to learn about things, although the way he learned things was not as normal as other children would do. On the other hand, Casey is characterized as not having changes in behavior. She still treated Miller as a child as presented in the excerpt below.

Excerpt 16

'That's fine, love,' I replied. 'Then into bed and off to sleep, okay?'

Now he did look up, presumably because he was surprised I hadn't taken the bait. I smiled at him. 'Sleep tight. Hope the bed bugs don't bite.'

'God. I'm not five,' came the muttered response. (ABWH, p. 204)

The excerpt above shows that Casey is characterized as a woman who needed to show her feeling of affection the Miller, while Miller is characterized as a child who did not need affection. This is in accordance with the previous finding about the aspect of desire. Casey still wanted Miller to be in her care, but Miller did not seem to care about it. However, at last, Casey realized that she had to focus more on her family, not on Miller, as presented in the excerpt below.

Excerpt 17

'Yeah, well, I have a lot of thinking time. Mum, the nicer you try to be to him, the worse he seems to treat you. Perhaps, I don't know, he just doesn't fit well in a family. Perhaps he needs not to be in one. Have you ever thought of that? Anyway, he's gone now,' he said, as he set about making coffee. 'And I'm off to meet Denver, so you can have some of your precious "me time". So will you go and grab your rubber gloves and cleaning bucket or shall I?' (ABWH, p. 207)

The above excerpt shows that Casey is characterized as realizing her priority in life with the help of Tyler. She seemed like the Miller's fragility blinded her and could help her and provide her family. However, the reality was not that simple. Miller was characterized as a very different child coming

from an abusive family and having trauma for affection. She seemed to expect that Miller would be happy with her and her family, but Miller seemed to not expect any affection from anyone because of his traumatic experience.

From the findings above, in the story's falling action, both characters are characterized as possessing binary opposing realizations. In this part, the most important realization is the realization of what Casey and Miller wanted. The table below shows the binary opposition between both characters in the falling action.

Table 4: Binary opposition of the characterization in the falling action of the story

Characterization	Casey	Miller
Self-Awareness	Tried to push Miller to accept her love	Realized that he was better to be left alone
Treatment	Treated Miller like a child	Did not want to be treated like a child
Affection	Affectionate to Miller	Did not like to be the object of affection
Expectation	Expected to have Miller as a part of the family	Expected to not have any family

The Resolution

Within the resolution of the story, there are several aspects of characterization that binary opposed between both characters. Firstly, the aspect of guilt is being binary opposed in this part of the story. After realizing that Miller did not want to be treated as a child and did not expect love from her, she consulted Christine, another social worker that convinced her that Mavis is suitable for Miller, as she emphasized in the excerpt below.

Excerpt 18

'Forgive my bluntness, Casey, but that's all true. They don't. Which is not to say society should, or has, given up on him. Just that, for some kids, other solutions, other situations, need to be found. If there's to be any hope of that sad state of affairs being corrected, that is. You know, I was a bit bemused that you seemed so keen to take him on, to be honest. I mean, I know it was an emergency situation, which tends to colour things. But, given your lovely family, and not least your commitment to your youngest son, Tyler, I was genuinely shocked that you were so keen to take him on.' Where did I start? Because I was already doubting that I was in the right frame of mind? Because John was leaving? Because I wanted to prove to

his successor that I was some kind of fostering superhero slash legend? Because I was trying to prove that to my flagging self? (ABWH, p. 218)

The above excerpt shows that Casey is characterized as feeling guilty for being left by another child named John. She also wanted to show to, herself, Miller, and the other social workers that she could be a superhero in saving Miller into her foster house. But in reality, through the perspective of the other social worker, Casey realized that Miller did not want superhero and did not feel guilty of what he did since he is characterized as not requiring affection.

Secondly, the aspect of acceptance of reality becomes an important binary opposition in this part of the story. At the beginning of the story, Casey is characterized as eager of being Miller's mother looking at Miller's condition at the time, while Miller is characterized as unknowing of what he wanted, whether he wanted a family or not. Now, in the end of the story Casey is characterized being more relaxed to accept that Miller only need a foster carer, not a mother. Miller is characterized as being wiser to accept the conditions that he had two foster carers, Casey and Mavis, as being shown by the excerpt below.

Excerpt 19

And who knew? So far, our shared arrangement has worked out. There is no pressure and the logistics of it are more or less left to us carers. If Mavis has plans for Miller on a particular weekend, she phones in advance and lets us know, and similarly, if something comes up for us, we give as much notice as we can and rearrange. It also means that even if we've had Miller one weekend, if Mavis is having a struggle with him, she can ring us and ask for us to do an extra night or two.

And, to our delight and surprise, Miller seems to be thriving with this set-up. One might think that someone with such an appetite for control, would hate the uncertainty and the constant moving around, but he doesn't. It seems he actually prefers to be in the midst of chaos. Organised chaos at least, at least when he's not in school, whose routines and order, and dependable structure, he seems to love. Not so queer as folk, eh? But perhaps the whole 'family as gold standard' idea isn't for everyone. When not in school, he is still a paid-up member of the resistance, and this must be linked directly to his childhood. No matter how we professionals think that order and structure is the only way for some of these kids, it clearly isn't. They rebel against it because it isn't their norm; confrontation is their 'comfort blanket' and they still crave it, no matter how bad it seems to us. (ABWH, p. 221)

The excerpt above shows that both Casey and Mavis were held responsible to the fostering of Miller. Casey especially is characterized as realizing that family is not for everyone. On the other hand, Miller accepts more in having two foster carers, Casey and Mavis. By having two foster carers, Miller is characterized as having a change of personality, as being wiser and more affectionate as shown in the excerpt below.

Excerpt 20*Dear Ty*

I hope you have a lovely Christmas and I bet Casey and Mike get you a well nice present. I wish I could buy you what I want to get you, Ty, I promise I do. And one day, when I'm rich though my hacking and stuff, I will get you the best new guitar that money can buy, I swear down! I have done a lot of bad things, and some of them to you and your family, but my biggest mistake was cutting your guitar strings. I wish I had never done that. I wish I could take it back. If I could pick a brother it would be you. Merry Christmas and see you in the New Year.

Miller x (ABWH, p. 221)

The above excerpt is Miller's letter to Tyler. As shown by the excerpt, Miller was starting to feel guilty of what he did in the past. The excerpt also shows that there is a growing affection within Miller that he showed by saying that he loved Tyler as a brother. This act surprised Casey somehow. With all the troubles that she had faced with Miller, she expected that Miller would not change, however, Miller changed. Thus, this aspect of expectation is the last aspect being binary opposed in this part of the story.

From the findings above, in the resolution of the story, both characters are characterized as possessing binary opposing realizations. In this part, the most important realization is the expectations. The table below shows the binary opposition between both characters in the resolution.

Table 5. Binary opposition of the characterization in the resolution of the story

Characterization	Casey	Miller
Guilt	Felt guilty for being unable to provide love for Miller	Did not feel guilty of what he did to Casey and the family
Acceptance	Accepted the situation that Miller did not need family	Accepted the situation that he had two foster carer
Expectation	Expected Miller to be stagnant as a troubled boy	Surprised everybody by showing affection

CONCLUSION

The small findings show that, through the structure of the plot, binary opposition becomes significant in presenting the character development of the main characters. One aspect of the use of first-person point-of-view is also important to be underlined in the findings since it develops the narrative to bring the readers to follow Casey's sequences of emotions are seen. Still, Miller's sequences of emotions are unseen throughout the story. Such method of storytelling also shows how Casey was characterized positively while Miller was more characterized negatively. Such way of narrative is also considered as binary opposition. What needed to be underlined is that both characters are at

different psychosocial stages and different ways of looking at reality. Therefore, further studies are suggested to be conducted on those aspects.

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