

## Trauma: A Trigger for Victims to Become Perpetrators in the Novel *Confessions* by Minato Kanae

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### Abstract

This research reveals the traumas that trigger victims from being traumatized to being traumatized perpetrators. Minato Kanae's *Confessions* tells how murderers deal with the trauma of what they have done, and what makes them want to kill. In this case, to deal with their trauma, the characters in the novel commit crimes that also trigger trauma for the victims. Thus, the perpetrator has his own trauma so that he commits the crime. The novel shows that the trauma a person faces is the cause of the deprivation that arises from losing something precious that must be fulfilled. To explore the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator in this study, the theory of Atonement initiated by Stephen Frosh is applied. The victim and perpetrator in this study are in a very biased position where the perpetrator can be the victim and the victim can also be the perpetrator. This shows that when experiencing loss, humans are traumatized and in this case, to fulfill the shortcomings they have, the trauma must be transformed into another form. However, the way of transforming trauma owned by the characters in this novel is the focal point of the discussion which is then explored with the theory of Loss and Absence initiated by Dominic La Capra. In this case, trauma, the causes of trauma, and the transformation of trauma owned and carried out by the characters in the novel are explored through the narratives provided by the novel. Thus, in analyzing the novel, this research uses the Close Reading method so that it can detect all the messages hidden by the narratives built in the novel. The results that emerge from the discussion in this study are that the perpetrator who must take responsibility for his crime must bear a new trauma, the crime of murder is a mistake that cannot be forgiven except with commensurate accountability, and the trauma that arouses the desire to kill.

**Key Words:** trauma, perpetrators, victims, lack, atonement.

### Introduction

The relationship between perpetrators and victims is very controversial. However, when living in a society, each individual must have solidarity attitudes so that the data relates well to each other. In this case, a perpetrator of a crime has injured the victim of the crime, but to remain in society the perpetrator must still apologize and also be forgiven by the victim. This consideration is based on the perpetrator and victim both having trauma. This argumentation by Frosh in his book which discusses the responsibility of the perpetrator and the victim, where the perpetrator must realize his mistake and apologize. Meanwhile, the victim has the responsibility to forgive the perpetrator on the basis of solidarity (Frosh, 2019). Perpetrators commit crimes because of something that drives them, whether it is based on their own desires or encouragement from other things, such as job demands, self-defense, and so on. In this case, the perpetrators who have goals to commit a crime based on the demands of their desire or work will have their own trauma.

The discussion about perpetrators and victims who both have trauma, it can be interpreted that trauma is what drives individuals to commit crimes. This can be illustrated by the example of

a robber who robs someone because he has a financial shortage, or someone whose job is a hit-man, such as an executioner, mafia, and so on. Or it can also be another case, when someone commits a crime to seek the attention of others. These people can be categorized as perpetrators. But after committing the crime or killing they still have traumatic recordings in their memory. As the victims who certainly feel deep trauma when they lose someone they love. In order to deal with their trauma, individuals tend to transform their trauma in various forms. In transforming trauma, each individual has different ways, such as writing, painting, or doing other activities that they feel can help them deal with their trauma. Thus it can be connected that when someone does something to deal with their trauma it is a form of effort in transforming their trauma.

In this study, the novel *Confessions* by Minato Kanoe shows that the transformation of trauma carried out by the characters, namely Moriguchi Yuuko, a junior high school teacher who has lost her son who died by drowning in a cold pond, because he was killed by two of her own students. Meanwhile a character named Watanabe Shuya who is one of the students who killed Moriguchi's daughter. In the novel Watanabe Shuya has the trauma of losing his mother who left him when he was a child. While the character Naoki who is also one of the murderers who later experienced enormous trauma after committing the murder of Moriguchi's daughter, named Manami. From the three characters who have a connection with each other in creating trauma from one character to another, it shows that the perpetrators and victims are both traumatized by each other. The novel is also a remarkable work for winning several convincing nominations in Japan, such as *The Japanese Bookseller Award* (2002), *Shonsetsu Suiri New Writers Prize Award* (2007), *American Library Association Alex Award Best Adult Book That Appeal to Teen* (2015). This novel has also been adapted as a movie in 2010 in the same title. The complexity in the construction of the plot of this novel is very chic, besides that the arrangement of the characters' points of view in this novel is also interesting because it does not only apply one point of view but almost all characters have a point of view in the novel, so this novel can be said to have a very unique focalization. Thus, the reading of the trauma of each character in this novel can be studied clearly. Moriguchi with the trauma of losing her daughter, Watanabe Shuya with the trauma of losing his mother, and Naoki with the trauma of losing himself as a good son and loved by his mother for killing a child.

Several literature reviews that discuss the novel *Confessions* by Minato Kanoe considered as the reference for this study. Research that explores the characters and characterizations of the

novel which are then related to social conflicts is shown by (Khurrohman, 2020; Pide, 2022; Sejahterawati & Noorman, 2019; Amalina, 2017). The literature reviews show that the novel written by Minato Kanae is a literary work that can be analyzed through various theories and perspectives. In this study, the novel is examined from the phenomenon of trauma that occurs in the novel. The discussion of Melancholia may also be mentioned in the analysis of research written by (Amalina, 2017), but the discussion in that research only touches on the main character, Moriguchi and takes the material object from the form of transfer of the novel, namely the film with the same title. Thus, the element of novelty in this study that uses the same material object as previous studies is the discussion of trauma experienced by other characters and interconnected with each other. The traumatic relationships owned by these characters show the transition from perpetrators to victims and victims to perpetrators.

Meanwhile, several literature reviews that use trauma theories also inspired this research in applying theories about trauma to material objects. Trauma theory applied in several forms of material objects, one of which is prose, can be found in (Fernanda, 2017; Asri, 2020; Dewiana, 2011; Arofah & Rokhman, 2020; Nurdaryana & Saraswati, 2020; Wardhani, 2014). In these previous studies, trauma therapy was applied in the form of trauma experienced by the characters in the novels chosen by the researcher. The upheaval of trauma experienced by the main character is very interesting and has been studied by many researchers. However, in this study, the trauma experienced by the main characters in a novel can lead them to be labeled as perpetrators and victims. In previous studies, the discussion of trauma focused more on victims and ignored the trauma experienced by the perpetrators. Thus, the novelty in this research is the study of trauma experienced by perpetrators and victims, then the transfer of labels from perpetrators to victims and the transfer of labels from victims to perpetrators.

From the discussion above, several points of problem formulation can be drawn that will be thoroughly explored in this research. The formulations of these problems, namely (1) in the novel *Confessions* by Minato Kanae shows that the perpetrators who could be as victims, (2) murders committed by teenagers - which should be considered as the same cases caused by adults - in the novel *Confessions* by Minato Kanae are crimes that cannot be forgiven, except with commensurate accountability, (3) in the novel *Confessions* by Minato Kanae shows that murder is a form of desire fulfillment that can transform trauma. Thus, these problem formulations are the compass for analyzing Minato Kanae's *Confessions* in this study.

This research focuses on the perpetrators and victims. The perpetrator is the one who creates the trauma while the victim is the one who feels traumatized by the crime committed by

the perpetrator. In relation to the discussion in this study, Moriguchi is someone who feels the trauma of losing her child but at the same time is also a person who has postmemory. Frosh argued that “postmemory is different from memory itself because it is not formed through a process of recall but through actively constructive processes, and whilst these are components of all memories, postmemory is first and foremost an ‘imaginative’ process, an act of identification and creative response (Frosh, 2019: 14).” Thus, Moriguchi has her own memory of her dead daughter who was murdered, but at the same time, Moriguchi is deeply traumatized by the loss of her daughter. Therefore, Moriguchi has an intertwined role where she is a postmemory who must forgive her crime students, and also a person who is traumatized by loss.

In relation to the discussion of offenders and victims, Frosh also negotiates the theory of acknowledgement and responsibility. The theory discusses matters related to apologizing to criminals. In this case, Frosh discusses that apologizing to criminals is a form of empathy. However, Frosh quotes Derrida that apologizing is only for unforgivable mistakes.

“But Derrida has something more in mind than this. He thinks that forgiveness only makes sense in relation to something that has been done that cannot be forgiven easily; that is, a struggle has to take place to lift this experience out of the ordinary and into being an encounter that is truly, even religiously, other. This claim, that forgiveness only means something when it is not logical, when it stands outside what Derrida (p. 39) calls ‘the ordinary course of history, politics, and law,’ is especially to the point when egregious crimes are considered – crimes which in many respects seem, exactly, unforgivable.” (Frosh, 2019)

In the novel, the characters Watanabe Shuya and Naoki are the perpetrators of the murder of a child from their own teacher. In this case, Moriguchi must be able to place herself as a mother and as a teacher of these perpetrators. But, the law does not apply to juvenile offenders. This further explains the hatred embedded in Moriguchi's mind. It is a dilemma for her to forgive the two students but it is true that forgiveness is only for unforgivable mistakes. However, the trauma makes the forgiveness only existed in symbolic level. Therefore the crimes committed by both of Moriguchi's students needed their own accountability when they did not realize that what they did was a high crime. However, there is something very ironic when connecting Moriguchi's position as a teacher and the perpetrators as students. In the general view of Japanese society in the novel, Moriguchi is the perpetrator because she cannot educate her students properly. Frosh argues that under certain circumstances, the perpetrator can become the victim and the victim can become the perpetrator. This raises the question, who should apologize and who should forgive?

“There is also the problem of how to work out when a perpetrator’s admission of culpability is being made in good faith, or when it is a political expedience or itself a mode of denial (‘I am sorry for what I did, but it wasn’t so bad ... others were worse ... in accepting my guilt I have atoned for what I did ... continuing to seek redress or punishment makes me a victim now ...’). How does one know, how can one ever know, whether an expression of remorse

is truthful; and even if one judges that it is, on what grounds does that commit one to offer forgiveness? And on whose behalf can forgiveness be given?" (Frosh, 2019)

Thus, when the meaning of forgiveness becomes vivid, the perpetrators and the victims also become vivid. The perpetrators could be forgiven as long as they get their punishment—the responsibility they should pay, then when the punishment oppress them and bring trauma, they could be a victim. Afterwards the label perpetrators switched to the executors.

In addition to the discussion of perpetrators and victims, this research also applies the theory of Absence and Loss initiated by Dominic LaCapra. LaCapra negotiates that Absence is a state in which an individual feels the loss of something that does not actually exist (the absence of an absolute) is really the loss of absolute nothingness. "In this sense, absence is the absence of an absolute that should not itself be absolutized and fetishized such that it becomes an object of fixation and absorbs, mystifies, or downgrades the significance of particular historical losses." (LaCapra, 2014: 50-51). Loss, on the other hand, is a loss caused by a person or thing going missing. This refers to objects or people that can be recorded by history, the missing is a real thing. "By contrast to absence, loss is situated on a historical level and is the consequence of particular events. The nature of losses varies with the nature of events and responses to them. Some losses may be traumatic while others are not, and there are variations in the intensity or devastating impact of trauma." (LaCapra, 2014: 64). When compared between Loss and Absence, it can be said that loss is the originator of trauma that really gives a special impression to the victims of loss. Something else happens when Absence turns into Loss. LaCapra negotiates that when absence becomes loss, it will also turn into lack, which is related to the past, present and future. Loss is the past while lack is a form of the future, because in this case the trauma sufferer cannot fulfill himself with something that has been lost. "Loss is often correlated with lack, for as loss is to the past, so lack is to the present and future. A lost object is one that may be felt to be lacking, although a lack need not necessarily involve a loss. Lack nonetheless indicates a felt need or a deficiency; it refers to something that ought to be there but is missing." (LaCapra, 2014: 54). The connection to the characters in the novel *Confessions*, they experience their own loss so that they have their own deficiencies that must be filled. Thus, the turbulence between the victim label and the perpetrator label can be triggered by the deficiencies they have and how to fulfill their deficiencies that can be observed and categorized as trauma.

This research applies the Close Reading method. Determining the trauma in Minato Kanae's *Confessions* requires careful reading. In this close reading method, everything that is ambiguous and implied in the novel can be read. This was initiated by (Greenham, 2019) who mentioned that Close Reading is the process of enjoying reading while still paying attention to the

complexity of the text. The complexity of the text that is considered in Close Reading is the points that are potential things contained in the text. In this case, these points refer to information that is explicit or implicit in the text, such as the traumas experienced by the characters in the novel, and the forms of activity that show the characters dealing with their trauma. The information is certainly contextual and is an important thing to discuss. Thus, in uncovering the trauma in the novel, this method can dive letter by letter that hides the points of trauma and everything that is ambiguous.

## Results

### The perpetrators who become victims and the victims who become perpetrators

Confessions by Minato Kanae explores the complex emotional trauma experienced by its characters. The story revolves around Moriguchi, a single mother and junior high school teacher who grapples with the responsibility of caring for her students and her own child. The Japanese educational culture expects homeroom teachers to take care of their students outside of class, adding to Moriguchi's burden. Another character, Watanabe Shuya, is a bright student with a dark past, as his biological mother abandoned him when he was young. Lastly, Naoki, a spoiled child without any particular talents, struggles to gain recognition from his peers. These three characters have intricate relationships with each other. Moriguchi, who is also a victim herself, seeks revenge for her daughter's death by targeting her students. The weaknesses in her teaching methods push her towards vengeance rather than continuing her teaching career.

*“Memang benar, saya mantap mengundurkan diri karena kematian Manami. Namun, saya tidak akan mengundurkan diri seandainya kematian Manami benar-benar murni kecelakaan. Saya akan tetap menjadi seorang pengajar demi menghalau rasa sedih, juga demi menunjukkan penyesalan atas kesalahan yang telah saya perbuat. Jika demikian, mengapa saya mengundurkan diri? Manami bukan mati karena kecelakaan. Dia dibunuh oleh murid kelas ini.”*

(Kanae, 2021)

*Saya ingin membunuh A dengan menyetrumnya. Juga ingin menenggelamkan B. Akan tetapi, meski saya melakukan itu, Manami tidak akan kembali. Mereka berdua pun juga tidak akan bisa bertobat dari dosanya. Saya ingin mereka tahu berat dan pentingnya sebuah nyawa. Dengan mengetahui hal tersebut, saya ingin keduanya memahami beratnya dosa yang telah mereka perbuat, kemudian hidup sambil memikulnya. Jika demikian, apa yang harus saya lakukan?*

(Kanae, 2021)

When Moriguchi became a teacher, she could not carry out her act of revenge. Likewise, the perpetrators of murder will not get the punishment and accountability they deserve. In this case it indicates that to forgive someone who has killed or made a fatal mistake is very difficult. Moriguchi, who is a victim of a criminal, can become a criminal as well when she takes revenge on Naoki and Watanabe Shuya. The shifting of labels from victim to perpetrator indicates that there is flexibility for each traumatized individual. As such, trauma is a powerful trigger for perpetrator and victim



labeling as it severely disrupts the emotional state of each individual. But, Moriguchi is basically a good teacher. She does not want her students to become individuals who are not responsible for their mistakes and do not realize that what they have done is not trivial. In this case, there is a hidden reconciliation made by Moriguchi towards his students. When she lets her student become a suspect that no one knows about, the student will make even more fatal mistakes in the future. Thus Moriguchi has reconciled through her revenge against the perpetrators of her daughter's murder. In addition, the legal system is also important to the process of shifting the label from victim to perpetrator and the form of covert reconciliation formed by Moriguchi to the perpetrators. The Japanese legal system, which does not punish juvenile offenders under 14 years old, makes juvenile offenders seem impervious to the law. In this case, Moriguchi's students, who are the perpetrators of the crime, will not be punished even though they have killed their only child. This relates to what Frosh negotiates, that there are indeed some privileges for some people to be forgiven and free from accountability, namely people who have power, people who are protected by the law, part of political members, and also loved ones (Frosh, 2019). In this case, teenagers are individuals who are still protected by the law. Therefore, if something happens in their lives, adults are responsible for their mistakes.

*Kalian semua berusia 13 tahun, bukan? Kalau begitu apa sebenarnya yang dimaksud dengan usia itu sendiri? Pasti masih segar di ingatan kalian tentang Kasus Pembunuhan Lima Orang Anggota Keluarga di Kota T terjadi Agustus tahun kemarin. Sepanjang liburan musim panas, pelaku nya mencampurkan sedikit obat terlarang yang sepertinya dia ketahui dari novel misteri-ke dalam makan malam keluarganya. Lalu, dia menuliskan gejala gejalanya di blog setiap hari. Sang pelaku merasa tidak puas, karena gejala yang muncul sepertinya jauh lebih ringan dari apa yang dibayangkannya. Jadi, dia pun mencampurkan ra cun sianida ke dalam kari makan malam mereka, membunuh orangtua, kakek-nenek, serta adik laki-lakinya yang masih kelas 4 SD. Pelakunya adalah siswi kelas 1 SMP, saat itu berusia 13 tahun dan merupakan anak pertama keluarga tersebut. Kalimat terakhir yang dia tuliskan dalam blog-nya adalah, Setelah mencoba ini dan itu, memang pada akhirnya yang paling manjur itu sianida. Kasus ini kemudian diangkat besar-besaran oleh televisi dan koran selama beberapa hari.*

(Kanae, 2021)

*Alasan saya tidak ingin berbicara dengan polisi mengenai kebenarannya adalah karena saya tidak ingin menyerahkan hukuman A dan B pada hukum. A yang memiliki nafsu membunuh, tapi tidak mengeksekusi secara langsung. B yang menjadi seorang eksekutor, tetapi tidak memiliki nafsu membunuh. Meski saya membawa mereka ke polisi, bisa-bisa keduanya malah tidak akan dimasukkan ke lembaga pe masyarakatan. Bisa-bisa mereka cuma dijatuhi masa percobaan, dan bahkan mungkin akhirnya dibebaskan, karena pada kenyataannya mereka tidak bersalah menurut pengadilan.*

(Kanae, 2021)

These quotes illustrate that the shifting of labels from perpetrator to victim occurs when the perpetrators of juvenile crimes are legally protected. At this point, Moriguchi as their homeroom teacher, who is an adult, would be an easy target to be made a suspect. Moriguchi, who is an educational figure, could be accused of failing to educate his students if he revealed that they were

the perpetrators of his daughter's murder. If this happens, the perpetrators will not reach acknowledgement. When they do not realize their mistakes, they will not be able to take responsibility for everything they have done.

Thus, it can be concluded that the shifting of labels from perpetrator to victim and victim to perpetrator is an emotional and legal process. In this discussion, Moriguchi, who is a victim, can turn into a perpetrator when she avenges her daughter's death. The label shift from victim to perpetrator because she wanted to avenge her daughter's death was a form of covert reconciliation carried out by Moriguchi because she had a responsibility as a teacher.

*Aduh, maaf ya, sekeliling saya jadi ribut sekali. Saya rasa suara mobil patroli dan sirene sudah mulai terdengar di tempatmu. Watanabe-kun, bom yang kau buat dan tanam di sekolah itu tidak hanya saya jinakkan. Saya meletakkannya di tempat lain. Tadinya saya berharap kau tidak memencet tombol pemicunya. Akan tetapi, kau malah memencetnya Bom itu bukannya tidak meledak. Saya tidak tahu seberapa besar ledakan yang kau perkirakan, tapi kekuatan ledakan nya ternyata bisa menghancurkan separuh gedung beton Saya percaya pada bakatmu, dan jika saya tidak segera melarikan diri ke tempat yang jauh, saya pun bisa jadi gawat. Universitas K Fakultas Teknologi, jurusan Ilmu Elektroni ka, Laboratorium Nomor Tiga. Di sanalah tempat baru bagi bom tersebut. Kaulah orang yang membuat dan memencet pemicunya. Nah, Watanabe-kun, inilah balas dendam. Tidakkah kau merasa bahwa ini adalah langkah pertama untuk memper baiki hidupmu?*

(Kanae, 2021)

This quote is the closing of the novel. Moriguchi's revenge on his students is a form of reconciliation that leads them to acknowledgment. Thus, her students, who are the perpetrators of the murder, can take responsibility for what they have done in their adolescence. Then the transfer of labels from perpetrators to victims occurs to juvenile offenders. This is because juveniles are individuals who are immune to the law. Thus teenagers are not required to take responsibility for their mistakes, but the responsibility is transferred to adults.

The points discussed above show that the forgiveness discussed by Frosh in his book is not just an apology. If reviewed and studied more deeply, the forgiveness is in line with the accountability that must be carried out by the perpetrators of the crime. But in this case, if power has intervened in the process of reconciliation and awareness of guilt, forgiveness is just a form of formality. Hence Moriguchi's attempt to separate her case from the authorities in order to be free from the power that blunts the responsibility of the juvenile offender.



## Killing is an unforgivable crime

In the discussion at this point, Derrida's idea assumes that forgiveness is only for an unforgivable mistake. Even the apology is only a form of empathy from the victim to the perpetrator. In this discussion, Naoki is one of the perpetrators of the murder of Moriguchi's child who cannot forgive himself before he can take responsibility for what he has done to Moriguchi's child. In this case, Naoki has also reached acknowledgment because of what Moriguchi has done in her last meeting-the declaration that he and Watanabe Shuya are the perpetrators of her child's murder, and this is an inevitable truth-so that he realizes that he must take responsibility for what he has done.

As explained earlier, Naoki is a spoiled child who is loved by his mother. At this point according to Frosh, people who have love or are loved will be easy to forgive and relieve their responsibilities. But in this case Naoki felt that his actions could no longer be forgiven unless he was arrested by the police and accounted for everything he had done with Watanabe Shuya.

*Baru saja Terada, si guru bego itu, datang Lalu dia melakukan sesuatu yang gila. Di depan gerbang, dengan suara keras dia menyebar-nyebarkan berita bahwa Naoki tidak pergi ke sekolah. Suaranya bergema sampai bisa di dengar oleh para tetangga. Ditambah lagi, dia menyerahkan kartu ucapan yang ditulis oleh teman sekelasnya. Ada pesan seperti ini yang ditulis dengan spidol merah besar-besar. semua orang, Tidak sendirian, meski dunia ini brutal, Pasti sEMua Bisa UNtuk janh lebih bahagia! Mungkin ini maksudnya sandi yang dikerjakan dengan cermat, dikerjakan dengan cantik dan penuh hiasan. Meski Terada tidak sadar, aku segera tahu. Bukankah kalau semua huruf kapitalnya digabung, bunyinya akan menjadi "MATI KAU PEMBUNUH"? Naoki adalah pembunuh. Pembunuh yang sampai dibodoh-bodohi oleh manusia tak berguna menggunakan pesan olok-olok yang tidak punya akal dan budaya seperti ini.*

*(Kanae, 2021)*

The quotation shows that a murderer is a serious criminal. Everyone who witnessed the testimony of Moriguchi would have taught him a lesson. But because Naoki had realized his mistake (acknowledgement) he asked to take responsibility for everything.

*Meski aku tidak mau percaya pada kebenaran kejam yang aku dengar dari Naoki, aku yakin kali ini dia tidak berbohong. Aku adalah ibu Naoki. Kalau cuma ditanya anakku berbohong atau tidak, tentu saja aku tahu.*

*"Kau melempar anak itu ke kolam setelah dia membuka mata, itu karena kau takut, kan?"*

*Aku bertanya berkali-kali, berkali-kali, kepada Naoki yang memberikan pengakuan mengerikan itu. Aku tahu aku in ibu yang bodoh. Akan tetapi, setelah aku mengakui bahwa anakku melakukan pembunuhan, aku berharap agar alasannya membunuh itu berasal dari rasa takut. Namun, Naoki tidak mengiakan hal tersebut.*

*"Kalau Ibu ingin percaya seperti itu, silakan saja." Dia mengotot seperti itu, sampai akhir dia tidak memberitabuku alasan dia membunuh putri Moriguchi. Bahkan, mungkin karena lega telah mengakui*

*semuanya, dia terlihat pasrah. Setiap kali membuka mulut, dia selalu berkata dengan nada manja, "Kita pergi ke polisi, yuk."*

(Kanae, 2021)

The quote indicates that every perpetrator who has reached acknowledgment in this regard will realize that he is wrong and will take responsibility for everything he has done.

In this case Naoki is a traumatized perpetrator. He experienced melancholia, so he was never able to get out of his trauma, other than he could take responsibility for everything he did. In the trauma perspective initiated by LaCapra, Naoki experienced a process of absence into loss, basically he did not lose anything, he only lost his identity as an innocence. This causes Naoki to act out or keep circling with his trauma so that he cannot get out of his trauma.

*Rasanya Naoki sudah mencuci bersih kebaikan hatinya yang melebihi orang lain itu bersama dengan baju zirah kejurokannya. Naoki yang aku cintai itu sudah tiada. Dia kehilangan hatinya sebagai manusia. Hanya ada satu hal yang bisa seorang ibu lakukan terhadap putranya yang pasrah menjadi pembunuh.*

(Kanae, 2021)

*Aku larut ke dalam lumpur, tubuhku bergeleguk tenggelam Mata, telinga, hidung, mulut-lumpur itu masuk ke semua lubang. Sesak, sesak, tak bisa bernapas.*

*Mah mati, mati, mati, mati, mati, mati, mati,*  
*timatimatimatimatimatimatimatimatimatimatima matimatimatimatimatimati....*

*Nggak mau mati, nggak mau mati, nggak mau mati, nggak mau mati nggak mau mati...  
nggak mau mati nggak mau mati*

*Nggak mau, nggak mau, nggak mau, nggak mau  
nggak mau takuttakuttakuttakuttakuttakuttakuttakut...*

*Siapa pun, tolong... Tempat aku membuka mata ternyata bukan surga. Me mang sudah benar-benar kacau balau, tapi jelas-jelas ini kamarku. Aku masih hidup, masih bernapas. Aku bisa menggerakkan kaki dan tanganku. Tidak... benarkah aku masih hidup?*

*Aku keluar dari kamar, turun, dan ternyata Ibu tertidur tertelungkup di atas meja. Benar, ini adalah rumahku. Aku pergi ke kamar mandi, kemudian melihat sosokku di depan cermin di atas wastafel.*

(Kanae, 2021)

The quotation indicates that Naoki is a traumatized perpetrator. He experiences melancholia because he cannot escape his trauma. This is because he lost his identity as an innocent person.

Therefore, this can be concluded that killing is an unforgivable crime. The perpetrators of murder can be traumatized both directly and indirectly. This also relates to the person who forgives the murderer. According to Frosh, the perpetrator of the murder can be forgiven but it is only in the form of empathy, and when the victim can think that the perpetrator of the murder can realize his mistakes and realize that it is his humanity that was lost and has returned again. At

this point Naoki realizes that his humanity has been lost and it can be concluded that even he himself cannot forgive himself, because he feels traumatized by what he has done.

### **Killing as the fulfillment of desire**

In regards to the above discussion, this discussion is still about murder. This discussion will focus on the character Watanabe Shuya, an abandoned child by his mother. This character is a unique character because to deal with his trauma he transforms his trauma into a crime.

*MATI! Itulah yang kupikirkan dari lubuk hatiku. Rasa malu berubah menjadi hasrat untuk membunuh. Inilah saat nya melakukan pembunuhan yang seharusnya menjadi alat ku untuk memiliki arti. Itulah saat rencana ini jadi sempurna.*

(Kanae, 2021)

The quotation indicates that there is a desire to be recognized through killing. In the novel, Watanabe Shuya was left by his mother when he was a child and he wanted to meet his mother through the sensation he created. He thinks that by making a sensation by killing, his mother will notice him through the mass media.

The discussion also shows that Watanabe Shuya's lack of his mother triggered prolonged trauma. Watanabe Shuya is always looking for where his mother is and he wants to feel fulfilled by his mother. Unlike Naoki's case where he was traumatized by the murder, Watanabe Shuya felt fulfilled by the murder. This murder is an acting-out form of Shuya's trauma of being abandoned by his mother.

*Apa pun yang kau pikirkan, sifatmu itu adalah hasil kar yamu sendiri yang tidak ingin diakui oleh orang lain selain ibumu. Perbuatan dosamu itu bukanlah salah orang lain, melainkan salahmu sendiri. Meski demikian, andai ada orang yang bertanggung jawab selain dirimu, bukankah orang itu adalah ibumu? Wanita itu adalah orang yang menyiksa seorang anak saat keinginannya tidak terpenuhi, yang hati nya membeku ketika akhirnya keinginannya terwujud, dan setelah itu, meninggalkanmu tanpa tanggung jawab sama sekali.*

*Sikap seenaknya sendiri itu, benar-benar mirip sekali denganmu, ya. Kau menanam bom untuk membalas dendam kepada ibumu. Begitu, bukan? Jadi, kau membalas dendam dengan cara membunuh banyak orang yang tidak ada kaitan nya denganmu?*

*Saat kau membunuh Manami juga begitu. Hatimu cuma tertuju kepada ibumu, tapi yang kau buat sengsara malah semua orang selain ibumu.*

*Jika di dunia tempatmu tinggal itu cuma ada kau dan Mama yang kau cintai, bunuhlah Mama. Saya tidak bisa membiarkan seorang pengecut berbuat seenaknya sendiri sambil berkoar-koar.*

(Kanae, 2021)

The lack experienced by Watanabe Shuya led him to the point where he had to kill. The lack is also triggered by the loss he experienced when he was abandoned by his mother.

The loss experienced by Watanabe Shuya is a form of trauma that leads him to murder, so that he feels fulfilled, assuming his mother will look at him. Because when losing something that fulfills life will lead individuals to try to fulfill themselves. Meanwhile, when connected to the concept of the Oedipus Complex, Watanabe Shuya's character is not ready to be separated from his mother-both symbolically and not-therefore he feels the emptiness caused by this lack.

## Conclusions

Trauma is the trigger for an average individual to do things that are out of the ordinary. In a very dilemmatic case like that experienced by Moriguchi, who is a mother and a teacher. As a mother of a child who was murdered by her own students, she is of course deeply traumatized. But on the other hand she has the responsibility to educate her students who have committed crimes in a lawless world to teenagers. The treatment chosen by Moriguchi is a kind of permanent treatment, where he can release all his trauma by giving certain lessons to his students who are perpetrators of crimes. In addition, he also brings awareness to his students who have acted unjustly and want to escape their responsibilities. This treatment was triggered by the trauma of losing her child, so that she as a victim would also become a perpetrator, if she did not have the goal of reconciliation in disguise. In addition, the poor state of the law can trigger the transfer of the label of perpetrator to victim. This is shown by the fact that adolescents are immune to the law and adults are responsible for their mistakes.

Then the beloved one can easily escape the responsibility that he has to do. Naoki's case proves that when the perpetrator has reached an acknowledgement of his guilt, he will still fulfill his obligation to take responsibility. Naoki, who was mama's favorite son, experienced deep trauma because he killed a child. Trauma that arises from losing his identity as an individual with innocence.

Watanabe Shuya's case was an acting-out of his trauma that led him into a bad situation. It was his desire for his mother's attention and recognition that led him to kill. When naoki felt guilty about his actions and he decided to take responsibility for his mistakes. Contrast this with Watanabe Shuya who makes a more fatal mistake. When killing becomes a desire fulfillment then murder is no longer an unforgivable crime but a very serious crime, because the perpetrator no longer has a human spirit and has lost empathy. Thus, trauma in this study is something that can

trigger unexpected and unusual events. Minato Kanae's novel *Confessions* shows that trauma is something that can trigger various things. Such as killing, playing victim - making the victim the perpetrator - depending on the state of the law and society in that place, and so on. On the other hand, trauma is also something that can destroy power - in the context of this research is the law - because it can undermine Japanese law that exempts adolescents from accountability for their crimes. This hel appears through Moriguchi's treatment in dealing with his trauma and fulfilling his obligations as a teacher.

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