

## Bella's Anxieties in *the Twilight Saga: New Moon*

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### ABSTRACT

This paper tries to deal with the causes of Bella's anxieties and the ways Bella overcomes them in *The Twilight Saga: New Moon*. To analyze the causes, I use two theories of anxiety; they are reality and neurotic anxiety. The two causes of Bella's anxieties are insecure environment and traumatic experience. Bella uses four defense mechanisms to overcome her anxieties. They are denial, sublimation, acting out, and fixation. Bella denies her reality anxiety by denying her loneliness in the insecure environment. Besides, she uses acting out in order to release her reality anxiety and convert it to pleasure and satisfaction. Then she sublimates her anxiety into something useful, through studying. She is also fixating her anxiety to overcome both her reality and neurotic anxiety.

**Key words:** Reality anxiety, neurotic anxiety, denial, sublimation, acting out, fixation

A lot of films or novels nowadays use fantasy fiction as their genres. One of the fantasy fiction novels is *New Moon*. It tells most about vampires who can predict future and run faster and shape shifting (man into wolf). There are three interesting things to analyze *New Moon*. First, it is because *New Moon* is very popular. It becomes popular because it tells the story about something that people expect to be in their lives such as someone who can have some abilities like flying, running very fast and also travelling time to time or predicting the future. Second, it is because the writer of the novel is the famous American author, Stephenie Meyer who often writes fantasy and science fiction novels. The last thing is because *New Moon* has an interesting background to be written. The way how she starts to write this novel is quite interesting and unique. She starts writing this novel after she awoke from a dream that starred a human girl and a handsome vampire talking in a meadow. From this image in her mind, she started to write down what she imagined their conversation would be about and thus began the *Twilight Saga*.

This paper shows the analysis of the causes of Bella's anxieties and the ways Bella overcomes her anxieties. According to Freud, there are three types of anxiety; they are reality, neurotic and moral anxieties. In this paper, the analysis is focused on two types of the anxiety which are reality and neurotic anxiety. Reality anxiety is a painful emotional experience resulting of the perception of danger in the external world (S. Hall, 1979, p. 63). A danger can be anything that threatens to harm the person. The insecure environment and the traumatic experience become the causes of Bella's anxieties. In order to cope with her reality anxieties, she uses defense mechanisms; they are denial, sublimation, and acting out. Then, according to Freud, neurotic anxiety is aroused by a perception of danger from the instinct (S. Hall, 1979, p. 64). Neurotic anxiety usually happens unconsciously. The traumatic experience becomes the causes of Bella's neurotic anxieties. As the result, Bella experiences nightmares. Nightmares are the types of dreams that are commonly associated with experiences, experienced by the dreamer as trauma (Truda, p.1). In order to cope with neurotic anxiety, Bella uses fixation.

### THE CAUSES OF BELLA'S ANXIETIES

There are two main causes of Bella's anxieties. First, it is her insecure environment caused by the threat of dangerous vampires. The second is her traumatic experiences from the past because of almost being killed by vampires.

#### Bella's Insecure Environment

One of the causes why Bella feels anxious is the insecure environment. According to S. Hall, insecurity is a danger followed by failure and punishment (S. Hall, 1979, p. 94). It means that insecurity can also make people feel anxious. When the environment threatens to harm someone,

she or he will suffer from the reality anxiety. In *The Twilight Saga: New Moon*, The insecure environment in Bella's life is both inside and outside the area where she lives. The insecurity happens to Bella's personal life and in social life.

Firstly, the insecure environment in Bella's personal life happens during her trip to hill at Forks and at Jacob's house in La Push. The insecurity comes from the threat of the dangerous vampires. It makes Bella's distracted from her normal life. She feels such in terror every day. She cannot go outside freely since the vampires are running after her and she does not know exactly where they are. This condition makes her insecure with her environment. The threat that causes the environment becomes insecure is the real thing which is happened in Bella's life. There is nothing she can do to resist the harmful situation away from her environment that is successful in making Bella suffers from the reality anxiety. It can be seen when she travels alone and one of the dangerous vampires comes to kill Bella. Her feeling of insecurity is shown by Bella's attitude when the vampire threatens her. She is breathless, desperate to distract the vampire, taking a furtive and stagger step back. This attitude of insecurity also shows her anxiety to the threat that is coming right after her. Bella's irresistible anxiety can be seen in her reaction after the vampire is gone. She cannot think and move; her arms and legs are shaking and she cannot move the horror, showed how afraid she is. This is clearly shown that Bella is suffering from the reality anxiety since the threat and danger are coming from Bella's outer world.

Secondly, the insecure environment in Bella's social life also leads her to suffer from the reality anxiety. The insecurity is also experienced her father, Charlie, her best friend, Jacob, and strangers at Forks. This insecurity makes Bella more insecure with the environment. In her everyday life Bella keeps on worrying that the vampire will come to her house. It can also harm her father. She keeps on worrying everyday that the house where they live is not safe. She feels that the situation is under her control if it is happened to Charlie. She is afraid that her father, who is sleeping besides her, will also be killed by the vampires. As shown in the following quotation,

"The tremors rocked me until my teeth chattered" (Meyer, 2006, p. 250).

Her anxiety is shown by her reaction of tremor that makes her teeth chattering. In this case, the reaction of Bella is caused by the condition of the environment which is also insecure for her father, Charlie. It means that the insecurity of the environment towards her father makes Bella suffer from the reality anxiety.

Moreover, the threat also puts her best friend, Jacob in danger after he commits himself to protect Bella. Bella's insecurity can be seen in the following quotation,

"None of us were safe! Jacob the very least of all, if he was trying to put himself between Victoria and Charlie... between Victoria and me" (Meyer, 2006, p.316).

It clearly shows Bella's insecurity feeling. The statement that no one is safe whether Jacob protects her or not, shows that she already feels insecure towards the environment. She cannot even imagine the situation if Jacob is also getting involved between her and Victoria. Imagining that, Bella starts to feel anxious. She feels it is not safe for Jacob to get involved in her problems. She does not want Jacob to get hurt by the vampires because of her.

Furthermore, Bella feels more insecure because of the killing of some strangers at Forks. The strangers are also attacked by the dangerous vampire, Victoria. The threat that also harms strangers, makes Bella more insecure towards the environment as can be seen in the following quotation,

"[...] Victoria was here (312). Looking for me. Killing strangers in the woods." (313).

It shows that the insecurity does not happen only to Bella but also to strangers at Forks. Knowing that, Bella's anxieties emerged. The reactions of Bella after she knows about the strangers, who are killed by the vampire, show her anxiety. She is unable to speak and sweating a lot. In this condition she starts to suffer from reality anxiety.

### **Bella's Traumatic Experience**

Trauma is the experience that suppresses someone with anxiety. Trauma can become the cause of someone who suffers reality and neurotic anxiety. The traumatic experiences which are experienced by someone in the past are usually experiences of helplessness. In other word, if later the same person experiences any situation which threatens the person to the state of helplessness, she or he will start to feel anxious like in the past (S. Hall, 1979, p. 64). Trauma can become the

causes of neurotic anxiety if it triggers someone to develop the sense of being endangered (Freud, 1920, p. 344) and it will be followed by nightmares as the outcome of her/his neurotic anxiety. Besides the insecure environment, Bella's traumatic experience also becomes the causes of Bella's anxiety. In the *Twilight Saga: New Moon*, Bella's trauma makes her suffer from the reality anxiety and neurotic anxiety.

First, the traumatic experience almost being killed by the vampire makes Bella afraid of talking about James and her memory last spring, that is, Bella Swan, is almost killed by a dangerous vampire, James. Bella's state of helplessness is when she experiences again the fear of being chased by vampire and it reminds her about the nearly death experience. It is difficult for Bella to resist the feeling of fear in her nearly death experience. Because of that helplessness, she starts suffering a trauma. It can be seen on Bella's struggle to forget and avoid the memory at the time she was bitten. In this case, Bella's conscious mind reminds her of the fact that last spring a vampire was running after her and tried to kill her. The experience when she was bitten stayed behind her conscious mind. When someone asks her about this experience, Bella is consciously afraid and feels uncomfortable toward her nearly-killed experience. The vampire's bite and the physical pain that she felt are hidden in her unconscious mind. To resist the feeling of anxious that will come after, Bella brings the memory back to her unconscious mind before it comes to her conscious mind. Once she tries to remember the memory, she starts to feel dizzy and she will try not to remember it because it is uncomfortable. This action shows that she experiences trauma; and her effort to deny her past life's memory is the outcome of her anxiety toward her past experience which is real. Therefore, the traumatic experience of being nearly killed makes Bella suffer from the reality anxiety.

Secondly, the traumatic nearly-killed experience causes Bella to bring the sense of almost being killed back. Bringing back the sense of almost being killed shows that Bella suffers from the neurotic anxiety. The sense of almost being killed makes her suffer and bring her to the moment when she is almost killed by James last spring. It is actually something not real because it is Bella's own perception that she is in danger. The danger does not actually exist at that time she feels. In this case, Bella's past experience of almost being killed makes her over anxious in her own house. It shows that Bella suffers from the neurotic anxiety. As Freud said in *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis* that,

“Many persons who cannot be termed ill show this tendency to anticipate disaster. We blame them for being over-anxious [...]. A striking amount of expectant fear is characteristic of a nervous condition which I have named “neurotic anxiety” (Freud, 1920, p. 344).

The sense of almost being killed can be seen when Bella is alone in her house. She thinks about a trick that might be settled by the vampires like what James did last spring. She anticipates the danger that actually does not exist. It means that Bella is in the helplessness condition of trauma when she can only feel afraid without doing anything. Furthermore, her body starts shaking and frizzing, imagining that only her and Victoria are inside the house. Bella's sense of being nearly killed shows that she suffers from neurotic anxiety.

Thirdly, the traumatic experience of almost being killed also makes her suffer from the neurotic anxiety through nightmares. The trauma of being nearly-killed becomes worse and it appears in Bella's nightmares. In this case, Bella's nightmares are the expression of the anxiety in her real life or reality. Her anxiety is the anxiety towards the vampires who are going to kill her like James did before. When Bella has nightmares, she is already experiencing the neurotic anxiety. It comes to the neurotic since the nightmares happen outside her conscious mind. The anxiety of Bella's traumatic nearly-killed experience has already forgotten in her conscious mind. It shows in the dream that she is running searching for something. It refers to her nearly-killed experience before when she was running looking for James, as the following quotation says,

“I ran with desperate haste to find the sadistic vampire who wanted to torture me to death, James, [...]” (Meyer, 2006, p. 18).

The abandoned memory of James comes into her unconscious mind when the protection shield of Bella's conscious mind is getting weak when she is sleeping. In this case, Bella's unconscious mind pushes the memory back to the surface, trying to make Bella experience the same pain she

wants to avoid in reality through nightmares. Bella's nightmares show that Bella suffers from the neurotic anxiety toward her traumatic nearly-killed experience.

### **BELLA'S WAYS TO OVERCOME ANXIETIES**

In this part, shows the analysis in the ways Bella overcomes her anxieties using Freud's theory on defense mechanisms. Four defense mechanisms' theories used are denial, sublimation and acting out.

#### **Bella's Denial**

This part describes how Bella overcomes her anxiety by denying her fear of being alone. People who are suffering from reality anxiety usually use denial to run from the facts and problems they face in reality. Denial makes someone run from something that she/he does not want to be happened in her/his life. In *Twilight Saga: New Moon* Bella uses denial to refuse her experiences of being left alone. In this situation when the environment becomes more insecure for her, she is left by her boyfriend, Edward. Bella's denial happens several times before Edward leaves her. To deny, for Bella, means to run from the experience that she will be left and find herself alone.

First is Bella's denial of being left alone in the insecure environment. Feeling anxiety of being left alone appears before Edward leaves her. The insecure environment makes her need Edward to protect her from any threats that is come from the dangerous vampires. The environment condition makes her suffer from the reality anxiety. The anxiety of Bella becomes greater at the time Edward decides to leave her alone in this insecure environment. At that time she realized her own knowledge that Edward will leave her, she starts denying her anxiety of being left alone. When she realizes that Edward will leave her, she tries to distract her anxiety and pretend that she does not know everything. In order to suppress the feeling of being left alone in this insecure environment, she denies the truth that she has already known. She starts to make herself innocent with her own thought "*It was what I wanted, I reminded myself*" (Meyer, 2006, p. 67). This statement describes how she denies her feeling of anxiety. She tries to agree with Edward's decision that he will leave Bella. In this situation she uses denial to deny her own anxiety that it is something bad that will happen. At last she feels panic as the result of her anxiety.

#### **Bella's Sublimation**

Bella sublimates her anxieties of being alone in her insecure environment through some activities. Being alone in the insecure environment makes her more suffer from reality anxiety. Being alone makes Bella experience an uncomfortable feeling and thought toward herself like hallucination/imagination of something bad will happen. She also builds her own perception of danger that the vampires come to her. The fear is too much for her to handle; that is why, she tries to find other things to do to distract her thought, feeling and energy from anxieties. Her effort to transfer the anxieties feeling into positive/acceptable activities is called as sublimation.

Firstly, Bella sublimates her anxiety by studying. It will directly help her get a good mark at school. The unbearable feeling of anxieties makes her suffer in thinking about it every day. She starts to find other activities that can help her reducing the anxiety. The first sublimation happens by doing her study early before the exam. It is a good effort not to remember about the thought and feeling of anxiety. Her effort to distribute thought and feeling of anxieties into something useful shows she sublimates her anxieties. Even though the test will be on next week, she decides to transfer her energy to something good for herself rather than to think about the anxieties she has. She has no intention in Math but she tries to learn and read it; as the result, she gets low A that she never got in Math before. Channeling her energy to do something positive rather than to think about her anxieties, makes her have a positive manner too. She keeps on making herself busy to distract her negative and acceptable thought and feeling toward her anxieties. In this condition, Bella sublimates her anxieties through studying Calculus and Math to help her to get a better score at school.

Secondly, Bella sublimates her anxiety by avoiding of being alone through social activities. In order to stay away from her anxieties of being alone in the insecure environment, she starts mingling with other people even though it is not her hobby to get involved in the society. Bella

always tries to find some excuses to run from the problems and distract the feeling of being alone in the insecure environment. Her anxiety of being alone is shown by the statement

“[...] filling up the long silences, and so the awkwardness continued” (Meyer, 2006, p. 350).

The word “awkwardness” shows that being alone can make her feel uncomfortable. The feeling of being alone makes her wander about something bad. She realizes that being alone is not good for her. That is why, she sublimates her anxiety through some social activities like making conversation or hanging out with someone. These several activities become her ways to channel the feeling of anxieties into some useful activities.

### **Bella’s Acting Out**

The third defense mechanism used by Bella to overcome her anxieties is acting out. Acting Out is performing an extreme behavior in order to express thoughts or feelings that the person feels incapable to express it out. When a person acts out, it can act as a pressure release, and often helps the individual to feel calmer and peaceful once again (Grohol, 2007).

In *New Moon*, in order to express her anxiety, Bella uses acting out to release the feeling of her anxiety toward her insecure environment. Bella tries to find any ways to make her safe and comfortable. She compensates her feeling to suppress the feeling of fear into the feeling of satisfaction through some dangerous things like cliff jumping and motorcycling.

Firstly, in order to reduce the feeling of anxiety towards her helplessness feeling of the insecure environment after Edward’s leaving, Bella does cliff jumping. Bella realizes the thing that she will do is a stupid and reckless thing but she still chooses to do it because she does not have any other ways to reduce the feeling of anxiety and she suddenly thinks if some dangerous things can help her to reduce it. This happens when Bella feels that the problems are too much to bear. The Edward’s leaving and the insecure environment, suppress her to do some dangerous and reckless things. The feeling of satisfaction can be found at Bella’s statement “the pain was already easing” which shows that Bella’s acting out takes away her fear and converts the anxious feeling into satisfaction feeling as also seen in the following statement,

“Yes! I was proud of myself as I plunged deeper into the freezing black water. I hadn't had one moment of terror—just pure adrenaline. Really, the fall wasn't scary at all.” (Meyer, 2006, p. 359).

It illustrates Bella’s expression of satisfaction after she did cliff jumping. Even though Bella knows that cliff jumping is something very dangerous and stupid to do, she allows herself to do it in order to get more adrenaline that can compensate her anxiety.

Secondly, she expresses her anxieties toward her need in Edward’s presence through motorcycling. She does motorcycling in the slippery mud road which is very dangerous. She does it herself even though she is afraid of riding motorcycle. She inspires herself to do it instantly without knowing how to ride motorcycle. Her decision to ride motorcycle shows Bella’s acting out in order to express her anxieties toward her need of Edward’s presence. She needs Edward’s presence to make her safe in the insecure environment. When she does motorcycling, she consciously rushes her motorcycle. Her conscious decision to rush her motorcycle in the wet slippery road shows Bella’s acting out. As the result, her need of Edward’s presence is fulfilled when she starts hallucinating Edward’s voice in her head. As the result she feels enthused and brave.

### **Bella’s Fixation**

The fourth defense mechanism that is used by Bella is fixation. In order to cope with her anxiety caused by her traumatic experience, Bella fixates herself. After she experiences traumatic experience and lives in the insecure environment, she is confused whether she will go along with the situation or not. There are a lot of dangers and threats that make her afraid of continuing her life. She is afraid of changes in her life and she decides to make the same experience which can make her safe and comfortable with her own life.

First, Bella’s trauma of having a nearly-killed experience makes her fixate her life not to go back to human life. The nearly-killed experience by James is being repeated by some dangerous vampires. The following quotation shows her effort to leave her human life which has already filled with so many dangerous and harmful things that trigger her to feel anxious.

“I turned my back on the gaping emptiness and hurried to my truck. I nearly ran. I was anxious to be gone, to get back to the human world. I felt hideously empty. . . .” (Meyer, 2006, p. 162).

Bella is anxious to go back to her dangerous and harmful life.

Furthermore, in order to fixate her anxieties and not to go back to human life, she starts avoiding people around her. She lives in her own world inside her house. She starts ignoring her school life and her society life and keeps herself alone without having a relationship with others. Because she realizes that once she is close with her friends, she will also endanger her friends. She ignores her friend Jessica. The next quotation shows her fixation not to go back to human world.

“It had been weeks, maybe months, since Jess had even greeted me when I passed her in the hall. I knew I had offended her with my antisocial behavior [...],” (Meyer, 2006, p. 99). It shows her attitude towards her best friend Jessica by ignoring her after Edward’s leaving. She thinks it is useless for her to go back to human life where she cannot find any peaces again.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings in the analysis, there are two important things for to learn from and cope with their anxiety. They are their anxiety and acceptance. Firstly, every person has her/his own unique anxieties. Many people say it is difficult to resist anxiety away from their lives and some will try to escape from their problems of fear. The findings in the analysis show the knowledge on their anxiety’s symptoms which encourage them to understand where anxiety comes from and how to cope with it. Knowing the causes of anxiety will reduce the anxiety. Secondly, instead of running from or escaping the anxiety and becoming the victim of anxiety, it is better to experience the anxiety. It is something natural and general for people to experience anxiety. Accepting anxieties will help the person to think positively.

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