

# CLARITY

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## ABSTRACT

This creative project is a romantic suspense novel that tells about the emotional bond of a cruel psychopath, Lukas, who kidnaps people and commits drug exploitation on them, and Sharon, who is one of his victims. To develop the plot and the characterization, I used four theories: Psychoanalysis, Antisocial Personality Disorder, Stockholm syndrome and Dream Analysis. The themes are about perception, exploring that of the psychopath's false perception about people's lives, and purpose, in which we explore both the psychopath and the victim's contradicting purpose. This novel will also explore the topics of drug exploitation, factors that trigger Stockholm syndrome to the victim, and the syndrome's effects to both the psychopath and victim. These are to assist me in conveying my purpose of writing this novel which are to raise the ever-growing issue of kidnapping and drug abuse, so that people could raise their guard more; also, for the people to know the underlying causes of a problematic person's actions, so they are not quick to judge.

*Key words:* Kidnapping, drug abuse, psychopathy, Stockholm syndrome, romantic suspense

## INTRODUCTION

There are a lot of forms of creative writing besides novel, which are poetry, screenplay and short story. However, writing a novel contains a much greater opportunity for self-expression than the other works. The privilege and full control of creating and describing everything that appears in the novel, from the most general to the most specific things, are all in the palms of the novel writers' hands. The writers play with various forms of sentences made up of lyrical language and imageries, such as metaphors and similes. Thus, when I see a more advantageous opportunity to express myself more through the story, play with words and see what it can do to people, and as an avid reader of novels myself, I chose to write a novel for my final project.

In this life, people can never escape from the hands of crime. Based on the 2015 Crime Statistics released by the Indonesian Central Bureau of Statistics, there are a total of 325,317 crime cases that happened throughout Indonesia in 2014, which means that in every one minute and thirty-six seconds, a crime was committed with 131 people out of 100,000 were at risk of being affected (BPS, 2015, p. 17). There are nine types of crimes, which are crime against lives, physical bodies, indecency, freedom, right of ownership, right of ownership with violence, narcotics, fraud and public order (BPS, 2015, p. 20-21). In this novel, I would like to raise the issues of kidnapping, which belongs to the category of crime against people's freedom, and narcotics.

Firstly, I would like to discuss the crime of kidnapping. Kidnapping may be done for ransom, where the kidnapper asks for a certain amount of money in exchange for the freedom of the one being kidnapped; or for other exploitations. The latter may be about forced sexual exploitation, where people are kidnapped and forced into working in the sex industry; forced labor exploitation, where people are forced to work all the while not getting paid; forced drug exploitation, where they are forced to be tested on unknown drugs (UNODC, 2016); or to be kept by the kidnapper to satisfy their sexual desire. Drug exploitation is more in the uncommon side, but I will explore more about this issue in my creative work.

Kidnapping is no doubt, one of the crimes that we should be more aware of due to the increasing number of cases. The kidnapping rate in Indonesia has reached a total of 1,092 cases happening throughout 2012 to 2014 (BPS, 2015, p. 37). Not only could it affect children, but adults can also be a kidnap victim. Polda Metro Jaya stated that in every seven kidnapping cases that are reported, four of them involved victims ranging from teenagers to adults, while the other three cases are child kidnapping (Santoso, 2015). Looking at the numbers of kidnapping cases with whatever motives behind them, which is not a few, people should increase their alertness more because it could happen anywhere and anytime, even under their own noses.

Secondly, I would like to discuss the crime regarding narcotics. According to 2015 Indonesian Crime Statistics, the number of drug-related crime had increased, rising from 17,932 to 19,280 cases throughout 2010 to 2014 (BPS, 2015, p. 24). The rate does not decrease even though people have been told the dangers of drug abuse and even witness the crime that it causes. Drugs are related to crime in multiple ways. Some of the problematic crimes that are associated with drugs are shoplifting, property crime, drug dealing, violence and aggression, and driving while intoxicated (Fry et al, 2007). However, the crimes that deal with drugs most directly are the usage, possession, manufactory, or the distribution of drugs classified as having potential for abuse, such as cocaine, methamphetamine, and marijuana (ncjrs.gov). Budi Waseso, the head of the Indonesian National Anti-Narcotics Agency (BNN), declared a state of emergency in relation to drug cases in Indonesia. Among the 5 million drug abusers, 40-50 people died every day. Moreover, the state losses due to drugs reached Rp 63.1 trillion (Santosa, 2016).

Looking at the overwhelming numbers of cases, victims and state losses, a question will appear: why do so many people abuse drugs? According to dr Andri, SpKJ, FAPM, a psychiatrist with a speciality in the field of psychosomatic and liaison psychiatry, there are two general reasons: seeking for happiness and calmness. Illegal stimulants like ecstasy and marijuana can raise the effects of excessive happiness or euphoria, heightened spirit and sense of tireless, increased concentration and confidence; while illegal sedatives like marijuana and alcohol can provide calmness (Andri, 2015). Knowing the facts that these illegal drugs are dangerous to the human body, and that many people have died because of it, this is a very serious case where people's lives and well-beings are at stake, and people should increase their efforts in dealing with the drug abuse cases.

However, in the midst of kidnapping and drug abuse cases, I would like to spark a love interest between the kidnapper and the kidnap victim in my story. It is the starting point of the romance inside the novel, which hopefully could increase the reader's interest and soften the tense flow of the story.

The captor in my story would have a psychopathic tendency where he suffers a personality disorder where he could not differentiate what is considered right or wrong. He does not feel pity towards somebody's suffering and he does not feel guilt when he takes their lives. A psychopath is also a master manipulator who is characterized by antisocial behavior, very little empathy, bold behavior and lack inhibitions (Edwards, 2015). When someone who has this tendency surfaces, a lot of people quickly put all the blame towards them without knowing the underlying reasons as to why they did that in the first place.

However, amidst all the mental instability and abnormal behavior of the psychopath, the victim still could develop sympathy and positive feelings towards him. This abnormality is called the Stockholm syndrome. In some cases, victims are affected even to the extent of defending the captor and supporting their reasons and behaviors (Carver, 2014). Special treatments and revelation of the captor's past could be some of the reasons Stockholm syndrome may develop. This is an uncommon phenomenon that occurs in the society, and I have not found any real case regarding Stockholm syndrome in the context of kidnapping in Indonesia yet. Nevertheless, I will include Stockholm syndrome inside the one of the characters, where the victim shows positive feelings towards the captor who robbed her from her freedom and even tested illegal drugs on her, because I would like to show the possibility of this case happening in Indonesia in the future. The absence of Stockholm syndrome-related cases does not rule out the possibility of them happening.

In this creative work, I would like to explore the problems of what happens after someone is kidnapped, why the kidnapper is trapped in a psychopathic behavior, why the victim develops love relationship with the kidnapper, and what the effects of Stockholm syndrome to the kidnapper and the kidnap victim are.

The purpose of this creative work is to raise the issue regarding the kidnapping and drug abuse cases that could happen anytime around us, so that people could raise their guard more. However, the more specific purposes that I want to show through this novel are the further exploitations after someone is kidnapped, mainly drug exploitation, the exploration of past events that can trigger psychopathic behavior from the captor, what triggers the development of Stockholm syndrome in the kidnap victim, and the effects of Stockholm syndrome to both the captor and the kidnap victim.

To develop the plot and the characters, I used four theories that will explain the behavior of the characters in my creative work, which are psychoanalysis theory by Sigmund Freud and Antisocial Personality Disorder (ASPD) to analyze the psychopathic behavior of the kidnapper, Stockholm syndrome to analyze the psychological changes of the kidnap victim, and dream analysis, also by Sigmund Freud.

Firstly, the psychoanalysis theory argues that the human behavior is affected by the relation between the conscious mind and the unconscious (Cobarrubias, 2013). Conscious mind is where the current contents that people actively think of reside. It is also called as the working memory and is easily accessed all the time. The preconscious mind, which is located between the conscious and the unconscious, contains the things people are not currently aware of, such as knowledge, memories, wishes, and feelings. It is available for easy access when needed. However, human cannot access the unconscious mind at all. It includes the suppressed desires, emotions, or instincts. This theory of human consciousness developed into what we know now as The Psyche, which consists of three component parts of the mind: the id, ego and superego. The id, which is located in the unconscious part of the mind, is the human primitive instincts. The superego, also located in the unconscious and is the moralist and idealistic personality, usually opposes them. The ego stands between the two, where it attempts to negotiate between id and superego to satisfy them both realistically and in a socially acceptable way (Boundless, 2015).

Freud believed that the three components of The Psyche are always in a constant battle throughout the human life. The adult behavior appears as a result of these internal struggles throughout their childhood. Abnormal psychological condition could be the result when the id that is stronger than the super ego, made worse by the painful or traumatizing past events that also resides in the unconscious part of the mind (Boundless, 2015). I would use this concept in developing the plot where the kidnapper's past events are revealed to explain his behavior. His hurtful memories and the emotions caused by them are all suppressed in his unconscious mind, which would be discovered gradually throughout the story.

Secondly, I would use Antisocial Personality Disorder (ASPD) to explain the psychopathic behavior of the captor in my novel. It is a personality disorder characterized by the lack of empathy, guilt, and remorse for their behavior; disregarding the rights and feelings of others as well as morally right or wrong behavior; and the superficially charming and manipulative nature to achieve their needs and desires (Skeem et al, 2011, p. 96).

In entertainment industry and media, psychopathy is perhaps the most dramatized and talked about mental condition. This was shown by the immense popularity of psychopathic fictional characters and intensified by the extreme real cases of serial killers that have triggered the interest of the public. This popularity in media leads to the public misconceptions of the definition of a psychopath. It has more or less correct general definition of a psychopath, which are lack of empathy and feeling for others, selfishness, lack of guilt, and a superficial charm that manifests exclusively to manipulate others. However, not all psychopaths are destined to lead a life of merciless serial killers having thirst for blood. The main characteristics of a psychopath do not revolve around violence, but around selfishness, manipulation and lack of empathy. It is true that some psychopaths use these to commit crimes, but others rely on their manipulative nature and the ability to charm for other things besides crime and violence; for instance, making their way up in the business world, and many psychopathic individuals have no histories of violence (Skeem et al, 2011: 97; Lilienfeld, 1994 as cited in Skeem et al, 2011, p. 97).

I would use these characteristics of a psychopath as explained above in developing the captor's personality. However, he does not find satisfaction in torturing his victims physically like other blood-thirsty, violent psychopaths, and he does not have any desire to fulfill his sexual urges because his true and only intention throughout the story is to create the 'perfect drug'. In order to achieve this, he uses his psychopathic nature to do whatever it takes including experimenting dangerous substances on innocent people without considering their lives.

Thirdly, I would use Stockholm syndrome to explain the behavior and psychological changes of the kidnap victim. It is a psychological abnormality when the abused victim develops an emotional bond with their abuser. This syndrome does not only happen in hostage situations, but also in other situations such as in family, romantic or interpersonal relationships where the abuser is in control or authority (Carver, 2014). Usually the syndrome is caused when the captor or abuser

shows the victim a small act of kindness, the revelation of the abuser's past which can increase the victim's sympathy, and special treatments from the abuser. The stages of the syndrome's development are obeying the captor in order to stay alive, getting to know the captor and his underlying reasons of his actions, identifying herself with the captor, sympathizing with the captor and developing an unexpected bond with the captor.

Finally, I would use Dream Analysis theory from Sigmund Freud to analyze the dreams that the psychopath and the kidnap victim have. Freud stated that dreams are the gateway to understand the unconscious part of our mind, wherein lies the suppressed wishes and urges from the id. He believed that everything human does and thinks are affected by the unconscious mind at some level. However, in order to live in a civilized society, usually people have a tendency to hold back and suppress those urges and impulses created by the id in the unconscious part of the mind. These urges and impulses should be released in some ways, and one of them is through dreams (Schredl, 2008, p. 44). I would include this theory in my creative work through the dreams that the characters have. The ones that the psychopath has are about his suppressed desires and feelings he has felt over the years. Both the psychopath and the victim would also have flashback or memories that turns into a dream. Showing dreams is important to know their unconscious minds and the conflicts that the Psyche has although it is in the symbolic form.

In developing my creative work, I have done some researches which result in primary and secondary data. I obtained the primary data through interviews and consultations with some scholars who specialize in certain topics, which are psychology, pharmacy, and law. For my secondary data, I have read some novels which specifically discuss the topic of Stockholm syndrome and psychopathy, and also novels that belong to thriller genre. I also read psychological journals to enrich my research.

## **I. DESIGN CONCEPT**

The genre of my creative work would be the combination of psychological thriller and romance, which results in creating a romantic suspense plot. The reason I chose these genres is because I want to include a love story to soften the flow of a suspense-filled plot, so not only is it about a boy meets girl and cliché romance, but also a darker story with elements of suspense added.

Firstly, psychological thriller is a sub-genre of the thriller genre in which the protagonist and antagonist fight in the battle of wits rather than physical, and it emphasizes the unstable mental and emotional state of its characters. The protagonist may have to experience elements of terror such as dread, anxiety and fear, and elements of horror such as revulsion, trauma and shock. In order to face the villain and solve the situation, the protagonist should also rely on their mental resources, usually through mind games, deception and manipulation, not on physical action in typical thrillers (Sicoe, 2012). Both the protagonist and the villain will face head-on through continuous mind games, deception and manipulation to demolish each other's mental stability. The winner is when one of them outwits the other, and their mental wall finally breaks down.

Secondly, romance is when the plot includes the love story between the two main characters. Romance novels should have a central love story where it explores the story of individuals who fall in love and their struggles to make the relationship work. It also should have an emotionally satisfying and optimistic ending, where their struggles and the risks that they take are rewarded with emotional justice and unconditional love (rwa.org).

This novel is intended for young adult and adult readers due to the presence of the heavy crime that deals with the loss of people's lives, psychopathic behavior of the character and drug abuse. This novel is also for, but not limited to, people whose second language is English, and for those who like to read romance with a twist.

Regarding the narration, I was actually inspired by some of the characters in various crime, action and thriller movies. The first time I got the idea of a psychopath in a drug trafficking field was when I saw the character Oleg Malankov (played by Sam Spruell) in the movie Taken 3. He looked like a psychopath to me, who is a very manipulative person and does not care a little bit about other people's lives. At that moment, I was wondering: "What if a guy like him falls in love? How will he treat her? How will he think and act?" and that is when the character of a psychopathic kidnapper in

my story created. I was also inspired by the character The Count Vertigo from DC's Arrow TV series. He is a villain who kidnaps and tests illegal drugs on people, and many have died because of that experiment and drug circulation. This inspired me to create a plot where a psychotic pharmaceutical genius does the same thing on people.

However, my story would be different from that of Arrow's and Taken's because the issues discussed in this creative work are not only about kidnapping and drug exploitation, but also the development of a very unlikely relationship between two people. The readers can notice the gradual emotional development of the two main characters along the novel and finally see the reward of their hardships at the end.

There would be two main parts in my creative work, which are the present day and the flashbacks of the kidnapper's past. They will appear alternately, filling the missing parts of the story and explaining the behavior of the characters inside the novel. I would open this creative work from the middle part of the story, in which this process is called "in medias res", a Latin phrase which means "in the midst of things" (Bureman, 2014). The reason I begin the story from the middle of the plot is that I intend to catch the readers' attention and arouse their curiosity regarding what happened before this point of the story. They would know the events as they are gradually explained in the later chapters. Overall, this novel has 224 pages with Times New Roman font size 12, double spaced, and the paper size of A4 (21.0 x 29.7 cm).

This creative work has two themes. The first is about perception, which is a conscious understanding of something. Because my main character has a psychopathic tendency, he has a conscious understanding is that it is fine to take other people's lives so long he can get what he wants. He does this without feeling any empathy or considering it as a crime. Another theme is purpose. The psychopath has a clear purpose since the beginning, which is to make a perfect drug, while the victim then realizes that her purpose is to convince him this drug will not succeed. She then feels she wants to fix him, which results in them struggling to make an unusual relationship work. They will be put in very unlikely circumstances to fall in love, and there are also many ghosts from their pasts that haunt them. However, they will learn to get through all that, and the readers can clearly see their hardships and efforts.

## **II. SYNOPSIS**

Lukas, a young and genius but psychopathic pharmacologist, is developing a new kind of highly addictive drug to achieve what he calls as 'the perfect high'. To test the effectiveness of the new drug formula, he kidnaps people to experiment on them. Every one of them died because of the failed experiment due to overdose or the body system rejecting the drug, and many more people died because he sells some to the market. But still, he could not care less about them. What he does is perfecting the formula and testing it on the kidnapped people.

At one point, the drug test is finally a success on Sharon, a university student who is kidnapped when she is walking home from campus at night. Because she is a successful product, he intends to keep her for a while, wanting to test more of the drug. All while he is working on the drug, she keeps watching him. She actually wants to know what actually happened that made him this way. By asking various questions and involving in talks, she finds out that his past is darker than any darkness, so he becomes to be the man he is right now. Many times the idea of his irreparable self passed her head, but she cannot bring herself to abandon such brokenness because she cares for him more than she thinks.

After a test that very nearly killed Sharon, Lukas finally realizes his feelings towards her, that she is more than a lab rat. Their interactions all those times open his heart, and create an unexpectedly strong emotional bond. However, with all his sordid experiences from the past, he feels like he does not deserve her, especially after all the horrible things he has done, so he lets her go. Sharon, already attached to Lukas more than she knows, tries hard to look for him after months of recovering. They finally meet each other, and Sharon forgives him.

## **CONCLUSION**

During the writing process of this novel, I have encountered a lot of hardships and also opportunities. Writing a novel is not as easy as one thinks. It is not simply making characters, put

them in a story and the end. There are a lot of detailed and careful thinking and planning inside, and without them, it would not be finished well. I worked hard in researching everything I need to develop this question into a story. I learned about kidnapping and drug abuse cases in Indonesia which has increased a lot in the last few years apart from people's also increased efforts to deal with them. I learned about the characteristics of a psychopath and the causes, and that made me rethink before judging other people, because they have a story that I am not aware of. I learned about Stockholm syndrome, the words I only came across once or twice from a song, but it is a true occurrence in the world. I learned about the danger of combined drugs, which the details, such as the drug names, unfortunately could not be shown in this novel. I also learned to write better. I realize I am still lacking tremendously, but I can see improvements in my writing as I work on this novel and learn from the best writers out there. I also learned a lot about Surabaya, about the places and the buildings there to be made reference of the location in my story. I am originally from Pontianak, so I am not familiar at all with the whole city of Surabaya. I went around town and pay close attention to the building designs to give ideas in describing the settings in my novel. I learn to make this story as real as possible by inserting real life places and issues.

In the future, I am planning to improve the quality of this work and send it to a publisher. I have full realization that this novel is far from perfect, but I will try my best to polish it, one of them by paying more attention to the details in the story that I have not had the opportunity to include, such as the details on Sharon's family and further interactions between Sharon and Lukas. I would also fix the grammatical error, the use of language, and add more description to the plot to improve the story and the easy flow of reading. After careful thinking, I might make a sequel about Lukas and Sharon's relationship, continuing where this novel left off. This will focus more on the romance genre and the details of their struggles in maintaining the difficult relationship.

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