

Hero and Antihero in Nella's Character in *The Lost Apothecary* Novel by Sarah Penner

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Abstract:

This Study aims to analyze hero and antihero archetypes are find in Nella's character in *The Lost Apothecary* novel by Sarah Penner. Carol Pearson's hero archetype which is used to analyze the hero and antihero archetypes in Nella's character. The data of this research are divided into primary and secondary data sources. Primary data source is from the novel written by Sarah Penner entitled *The Lost Apothecary*. Then, the secondary data source are from books, journal article, and other legitimate sources. There are two results of this research. The first result is the hero archetype in Nella's character, that are; the innocent, the warrior, the caregiver, the sage, the orphan, the magician, the seeker, the destroyer, the ruler, the creator, and the lover. The second result is antihero archetypes in Nella's character that are traumatized, gender bias, and misuse. This analysis reveals that although Nella functions as a hero through protective actions, she also performs dangerous actions by creating poison to take revenge against the men who hurt them.

Keywords: hero; antihero; character; archetype

Abstrak:

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis arketipe hero dan antihero yang terdapat pada karakter Nella dalam novel *The Lost Apothecary* karya Sarah Penner. Hero archetype Carol Pearson yang digunakan untuk menganalisis arketipe hero dan antihero pada karakter Nella. Data penelitian ini dibagi menjadi sumber data primer dan sekunder. Sumber data primer adalah dari novel karya Sarah Penner yang berjudul *The Lost Apothecary*. Kemudian sumber data sekundernya berasal dari buku, artikel jurnal, dan sumber lain yang sah. Ada dua hasil penelitian ini. Hasil pertama adalah arketipe hero pada karakter Nella, yaitu; lugu, sang pejuang, sang pengasuh, sang bijak, sang yatim, sang penyihir, sang pencari, sang penghancur, sang penguasa, sang pencipta, dan sang pecinta. Hasil kedua adalah arketipe antihero pada karakter Nella yang mengalami trauma, bias gender, dan penyalahgunaan. Analisis ini mengungkapkan bahwa meskipun Nella berfungsi sebagai pahlawan melalui tindakan protektif, ia juga melakukan tindakan berbahaya dengan menciptakan racun untuk membalas dendam terhadap orang-orang yang menyakiti mereka.

Kata kunci: pahlawan; antipahlawan; karakter; arketipe

INTRODUCTION

A hero is someone who is glorified as someone who has made great contributions to the region, country, or even the world. Heroes not only sacrifice their time and energy, but



heroes are also willing to sacrifice their lives for the benefit of the nation and state. Refieta (2021: 637) “A hero represents the ideal of a citizen who transforms goodness into noble actions in society, bravely facing danger by sacrificing himself for the common good.” An example of hero in the real world is Nelson Mandela, where he fought for the right of black people in South Africa and against the very discriminatory apartheid system. After 27 years in prison, he chose to lead the nation through reconciliation rather than revenge. Meanwhile, an antihero is a hero whose values conflict with what is expected of a hero. They basically want to do good, but they do not have moral values and straight intentions. In short, antiheroes can do good, but they do not hesitate to kill people to achieve their own goals.

The Lost Apothecary (2021) is intriguing novel with historical fiction and mystery genre; it tells the story of a dark and very mysterious apothecaries. The core of the story in the novel is Nella, a character who has two personalities; hero and antihero. Nella runs a secret apothecary shop that only a few women know about. In her shop, Nella makes her own poison to distribute and sell to women who are trying to be free from their men or their husband who oppress them. “Her tinctures (concentrated herbal extracts, which also feature the occasional dose of rat poison) can make a man problem disappear” Bryce (2021).

Having personality that do not reflect a hero does not mean that a character in a literary works can be a villain. Many people think that antihero characters are the same as villains, basically these two things are different things. An antihero is a character who acts like a hero, but the values are completely at odds with the hero. Antihero can play an important role in a literary work, because they provide a different point of view and make us as the readers think about whether it is good or bad. A villain is a character who usually plays an antagonist role in a literary work. The villain character is usually depicted as an evil figure who wants power and wants revenge. The villain has an arrogant, cruel, and selfish nature. Bergstrand & Jasper (2018: 4) note that villain is nasty and strong enough to threaten others, adding urgency to defeating them.

In this research, the researcher intends to investigate archetype of hero and antihero in Nella’s character in the novel *The Lost Apothecary*. In this novel, Nella has two personalities, namely hero and antihero. Unlike traditional heroes in general, Nella displays several attitudes and beliefs that are often morally questionable because they lead

to evil. “These anti-heroes, who possess characteristics that can be seen as both good and evil, follow their own agenda to achieve an outcome they think is just, regardless if it is against the law to do so” Burnett (2016). These things challenge the traditional hero model and position Nella as an antihero character, that is a character whose approach is not like a traditional hero and breaks the heroic norms that people expect. Even though what Nella did was considered a negative thing, where she created poison to kill a men, Nella has several personalities that show her heroism. Among them are Nella’s desire to protect fellow women and Nella’s expertise in making poison because she has extensive knowledge.

Related studies that discuss antiheroes through characters and characterization in a literary work are no longer new. A research from Pane & Murni (2015) examines the antihero in the movie entitled *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*. They focus on the main character, namely Charlie Kelmeckis. The research results show that there are four antihero characterizations in Charlie’s character. Another research is from Adiasa (2023) who analyzes the novel entitled *Six of Crows* by Leigh Bardugo. He focuses on one of the characters in the novel, namely Kaz Brekker. The research results show that there are five antihero traits in Kaz Brekker. The next research is from (Perez, 2018) who analyzes hero and antihero in sports. He focuses on the aesthetic and ethical reflection of athletes as antihero and heroes on sports. Although related research has examined antiheroes in literary works and there is research that examines heroes and antiheroes in the field of sports, there seems to be a lack, namely examining the archetypes of heroes and antiheroes in literary works, which were not found in previous research. Based on the explanation above, the research question of this study is what hero and antihero archetypes are found from Nella’s character in *The Lost Apothecary*?

LITERATURE REVIEW

This research uses Carol Pearson’s theory (1991) to analyze the hero and antihero archetype in Nella’s character. Pearson categorized 12 hero archetypes in her book entitled *Awakening the Heroes Within: Twelve Archetypes to Help Us Find Ourselves and Transform Our World*. The 12 hero archetypes include the innocent, the warrior, the caregiver, the sage, the orphan, the fool or the jester, the magician, the seeker, the destroyer, the ruler, the creator, and the lover.

The innocent is the part of a person who believes in the life of himself or others, someone who believes in the goodness of others, has an optimistic and hopeful nature. The warrior is a hero who has the courage and strength to protect people, they do not hesitate to face obstacles. Pearson (1991) explained, “Such heroes have courage and subscribe to high ideals, and they are willing to risk their very lives to defend their kingdoms and their honor or to protect the weak from harm.” The caregiver is a hero who has a caring attitude towards others without prioritizing rewards, they often sacrifice themselves for the welfare of others, they are full of attention and compassion. The sage is a hero who is wise and always seeks the truth through the knowledge, and usually he gains insight from life experience, a hero seeks the truth to free them from suffering. The orphan are heroes who tend to feel lonely and lost, because of their desperate situation and loss of hope, they often need help from other people because they do not have parents or family. The fool or the jester is a hero who has a humorous nature who responds and faces challenges with laughter and jokes. The magician is a hero who can change things in mysterious ways, save the world with magical powers. The seeker is a hero who likes exploration to find things that are their goal, could be search for knowledge or meaning of their life that will improve the quality of their life. The destroyer is a hero who is willing to embrace change and perhaps force them to destroy something old to create something new, even greater. The ruler is a hero who wants to protect everyone to live comfortably, bring peace and be responsible for maintaining order. The creator is a hero who wants to create new things can be ideas, inventions, etc. The lover is a hero who longs for the love and affection of a relationship, they can establish a close emotional relationship, they will protect and pursue true love.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research is conducted with a descriptive qualitative method. A descriptive qualitative method is a method that aims to provide a detailed and comprehensive account of a phenomenon or event. Nassaji (2015) discuss that qualitative research is broader and usually involves collecting rich data from multiple sources to gain a better understanding of each participant’s perspectives, opinions, and attitudes. The data of this research are divided into primary and secondary data sources. Primary data source is from the novel written by Sarah Penner entitled *The Lost Apothecary*. Then, the secondary data source is

from books, journal article, and other legitimate sources. In collecting data, there are several ways that researchers do, including: The researcher read the novel repeatedly and intensively to find the true meaning of the story and the researcher chose the data related with hero and antihero archetype in the Nella's characters in the novel.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the findings will be discussed to answer the research question. There are two main points in these findings. The first point relates to the hero archetype found in Nella's character. The second point relates to the antihero archetype found in Nella's character.

The Hero Archetypes

The Innocent

The innocent is the archetype of a hero who has confidence in their life and is confident in other people. They believe in the goodness of others, and have an optimistic and hopeful nature. In this context, Nella's character realizes that her prejudice against the girl named Eliza who came to her apothecary shop was inappropriate because she was still young. Then after a long time, Nella began to open up and was amazed at the writing of the letter and began to believe that Eliza was a different girl from the others as evidenced by her courage in coming to Nella's apothecary shop. When the girl smiled and greeted Nella, Nella's decision to respond in a friendly manner also reflected positive character and believed that Eliza was not as bad as she thought, "In an instant, I felt a fool for having sensed any doom in the blush-colored letter written by this child. I wondered, too, about her beautiful penmanship at such a young age." (Penner, 2021: 24).

The quote above reflects the hero archetype, namely the innocent, because Nella shows a condition where she let go of fear and suspicion, then shifts to a more optimistic view and trusts other people, in this case a young girl named Eliza. In this quote, Nella feels guilty and feels that she is stupid, because she previously suspected that Eliza had bad intentions and thought that Eliza was going to the wrong place. However, after observing the Eliza's appearance, the way she behaved, and her beautiful writing, Nella then changed her view, she was convinced of Eliza's kindness and innocence. These are all typical characteristics of the innocent, an archetype that believes in the good in others and

has an optimistic attitude. Nella shows that she is starting to grow trust, confidence, and hope towards Eliza, instead of maintaining fear and suspicion.

The Warrior

The warrior is a hero who have the courage and strength to protect others, and do not hesitate to face various obstacles. In this context, Nella reveals that her determination is not only to protect women by providing safe poison, but she also has the courage to face the stigma, and the consequences of her actions. Nella also explained that although she sells poison, that is not the only thing she offers in her apothecary shop. Nella got a question from Eliza, a twelve-year-old girl, who asked if Nella only sold poison. Nella firmly answered:

I do, but poison is not all I sell. The women who have been here for deadly remedies have seen the extent of my shelves, and some have whispered of it to their most trusted friends. I dispense all sorts of oils and tinctures and draughts—anything an honorable apothecary might require in her shop. (Penner, 2021: 26)

The quote above is included in the hero archetype, namely the warrior, because it reflects a Nella character who is brave and responsible in providing choices and benefits for others. Here Nella not only sells poison, but also provides various potions and other medicines that can help overcome various health problems. Nella also showed courage in facing the stigma and prejudice that emerged about her shop, especially the society's view of her job as an apothecary who sold poison. Nella firmly emphasized that although she sells deadly and dangerous products, she also has healing items to sell as well, which reflects the attitude of the warrior who is ready to face challenges and is ready to protect and serve.

In addition, the statement "poison is not all I sell" shows that she is also committed to providing protection. She strives to protect women from dangerous disease and other negative impacts by providing a selection of healthy herbs. This illustrates the values of the warrior as well, where she also fights with greater principles, in this context the safety and health of women. In this way, she can act tough by prioritizing women's welfare amidst the stigma attached to her and the dangerous products she sells. The combination of her courage to face stigma, her commitment to protecting women, and her desire to provide better choices, all of them indicate a very strong warrior.



The Caregiver

The caregiver is a hero who has a caring attitude towards others without prioritizing rewards. They often sacrifice themselves for the welfare of others, full of care and compassion. In this context, Nella describes herself as a caregiver when she cares about Eliza's mental and emotional health, showing how Nella protects and looks after the well-being of others. In Nella shop, she is still teaching Eliza to really understand how to use her poisonous eggs. Reminds her to serve the eggs at their hottest, so he does not realize what is going on, perhaps under gravy or pepper sauce. After Nella explained to Eliza how she prepared and served the poisonous eggs to her mister, Nella always made sure that Eliza understood what she was saying, and Nella added: "I suggest you do not permit yourself to see him after this." (Penner, 2021: 38)

The quote above shows that Nella's deep concern for Eliza's welfare. She advised Eliza not to see the man who would become the victim after Eliza put poison in her food, who was her own master. Nella acts as Eliza's protector, preventing her from experiencing traumatic experiences that might haunt her. This is a characteristic of caregiver, who always try to protect someone from pain. Nella also shows a great sense of responsibility for the actions that Eliza will take. She was aware that the action she was about to take was dangerous and risky, so Nella advised her not to look, emphasizing how difficult the situation. Even though what Nella conveyed was tense and dangerous, Nella showed strength in her gentle attitude, as seen in the way she conveyed this to Eliza. This shows that a caregiver can give advice with compassion and attention.

The Sage

The sage is a hero who has wisdom and always seeks the truth through science, usually obtains knowledge from life experiences. In this context, Nella realizes that her wisdom does not only lie in her skills in concocting potions or poison at the apothecary, but her wisdom lies in a deep understanding between humans, which is obtained from her life experience. When Nella was alone after her mother left her, she only thought that Nella's expertise was only in her apothecary shop which sold medicines to cure illnesses, because only that apothecary shop along with Nella's experience that her mother had taught her about making medicine was a legacy from her mother. Gradually a man named Frederick entered Nella's life, she felt happy and fell in love with him, "Whereas I'd once thought myself skilled in only the intricacies of my apothecary shop, I soon realized my

expertise in other techniques, the release between two bodies, a remedy that couldn't be found in the vials lining my walls." (Penner, 2021: 39).

The quote above is included in the archetype of the sage Carol Pearson, because Nella shows the development of wisdom gained from her life experiences. As the sage, Nella not only understands the world from the perspective of her work environment as an apothecary, but she also gains deep insight into human relationship. She realized that her skills extended beyond concocting potions, but also encompassed the emotional and physical dimensions of love and intimacy, which she had not been able to find in her apothecary shop. This shows that life and all its complexity, provides lessons that are not available in her vials of the potions, but in interaction with fellow humans. This deep view illustrates how Nella began to understand the world at large, like a sage who gained wisdom from various experience.

The Orphan

The orphan are heroes who tend to feel lonely and lost, because of their desperate situation and loss of hope, they often need help from other people, they are trying to find their place in the world, despite feeling isolated. In this context, when Eliza left Nella's shop, Nella thought for a moment about the arrival of a little girl which she thought was strange because a girl her age had received orders from her mistress to take poison. But at the same time Nella felt happy about Eliza's presence which brought a little joy to Nella. "I was grateful for the momentary gaiety she brought into my otherwise cheerless shop of poisons." (Penner, 2021: 41)

The The quote above reflects the themes of loneliness, isolation, and loss that are often experienced by characters with this archetype. In this quote, Nella describes the characteristics of The Orphan through her reflection on how a brief interaction with Eliza provided a little happiness in her generally gloomy life. By calling her shop a "cheerless shop of poisons," Nella shows her gloomy and sad emotional state. Nella's life is filled with loneliness, and the joy Eliza provides is temporary and limited. Nella's awareness of this brief moment of joy emphasizes how rare and precious this experience is for her, reinforcing the theme of alienation that is central to the archetype of The Orphan. While this joy does not change Nella's underlying condition, it provides a moment of solace in a world that feels emotionally empty.

The magician

The magician is a hero who has the ability to change things in mysterious ways and save the world through magical powers. In this context, "the magician" is not just a magician, but also a symbol of positive power that can defeat evil and protect others, especially in difficult situations. Nella is someone who makes poison, which can kill someone, but only to kill men, not to kill women. However, one day Nella had a customer named Lady Clarence, who apparently wanted to buy poison to kill her husband's mistress, not to kill her husband. However, Nella refused the request, because she only made special poison to kill men and protect women, "I had been asked several times to dispense a poison that would be administered to another woman, but I had refused these customers without question. No matter the underlying betrayal, no woman would suffer at my hands." (Penner, 2021: 90).

The quote above shows that Nella reflects the archetype of the magician because she has the power and ability to create poison that can take a person's life, but Nella is also able to control and use it with a sense of responsibility. She only makes poison for men, not for women. Even though she had received many requests for poison for women, Nella would not make it and she would not let a woman die with her hands. Her knowledge of poisons gives her significant power, but she chooses to use it thoughtfully, adhering to her values and principles. The careful balance between the ability to create profound change and the conscious choice not to harm those of her own kind highlights her role as a Magician who uses her talents not only for personal or superficial gain, but also to maintain a moral integrity that aligns with the essence of the archetype.

The seeker

The Seeker is a hero who has an interest in exploration to achieve certain things, both the search for knowledge and the search for the meaning of life that is expected and can improve the quality of their life. In this context, Nella shows her interest when she sees the baby, feeling connected to that moment because it shows her search for new experiences to rediscover happiness in her life. When Nella was on her way to find and collect beetles and had to cross the river Thames, she boarded a boat because of an offer from a family member; a husband and wife and their baby. Finally, Nella was able to rest her body on the boat for a while. Nella recalled her memory of the time when she was happy because she had been pregnant with a child before, but subconsciously while she

was daydreaming, Nella continued to stare at a baby in front of her, then the mother offered Nella to hold the baby, “I flushed, having not realized that I was staring at the child. ‘Yes,’ I whispered before I knew what I was saying. ‘Yes.’” (Penner, 2021: 71)

The quote above can be categorized into the seeker, because it reflects the emotional and inner search experienced by Nella. Nella unconsciously shows her long-hidden desire for an emotional connection, which stems from her experience of being a mother-to-be and the trauma she experienced from losing her unborn child. Without Nella realizing it, she longs for and tries to find a replacement or mirror for the happiness she experienced when she was pregnant with her child. This reflects the meaning of life from the process of healing past emotional wounds, where she tries to feel the happiness again that has been lost from her life. Nella subconsciously responds to her deepest desire to seek and regain feelings that once gave her satisfaction and meaning in life, which is in line with the exploration carried out by a seeker.

The destroyer

The destroyer is a hero who is willing to accept change and perhaps force them to destroy something old to create something new, even greater or can destroy something to avoid harm and save good. In this context, Nella indicates that she has full authority in determining who she has the right to help and who she destroys, to avoid greater losses. When a woman named Lady Clarence wanted to buy the poison powder to kill her husband's mistress, Nella refused, because of Nella's principles she would only sell poison to kill men. Then, Lady Clarence told Nella that Nella was a murderer and Nella had no right to say she was a helper and protector of women. Nella was surprised by this and then it occurred to Nella when she was deceived by Frederick, it turned out that she was just Frederick's mistress the entertainer of a man that she could not have completely. Then, Nella said to Lady Clarence: “It is my business only who I choose to help and who I choose to hurt. I will not sell you this powder.” (Penner, 2021: 91)

The quote above reflects the characteristics of the destroyer, because with full awareness, Nella makes the decision to destroy or damage something for the greater good and avoid potential danger. Here, Nella refuses to give poison to Lady Clarence and throws the poison into the fire, over which she has control to decide who she has the right to help and who she will destroy. This action shows that Nella has stopped potential danger. The Destroyer in Pearson's theory dares to face change, often by destroying or

eliminating old things to create new things, or preventing greater destruction by stopping risky actions. Nella, taking the decision not to sell the poison powder, chose to stop the opportunity for Lady Clarence to commit further criminal acts against her fellow women, even though Nella's actions might be considered detrimental to those who wanted to buy the poison. This is in line with the concept of the destroyer as an agent who destroys things to protect good or save life.

The ruler

The ruler is a hero who wants to protect everyone so they can live comfortably, create peace, and have the responsibility to maintain order. In this context, Nella's action of opening the door and inviting Lady Clarence to enter her shop illustrates an attitude of altruism and concern for others. When Nella was doing her work behind a hidden wall, suddenly behind the wall there were panicked cries and banging on the wall, Nella peeked at it, it turned out that Lady Clarence had come to Nella's shop and her attitude made Nella worried, "I opened the door quickly and ushered her in ..." (Penner, 2021: 146)

The quote above shows Nella showing quick and decisive action when Lady Clarence arrives in a panic. Immediately, she opens the door and invites Lady Clarence to enter, an action that reflects the strong leadership traits possessed by the type "The Ruler," who can act in crisis situations to maintain control and order. With this simple action, Nella confirms that she has complete control over what happens. The ruler is often responsible for leading and ensuring that order is maintained. In this case, Nella plays the role of shop manager who keeps the situation under control, even though Lady Clarence arrives in a panic. Then Nella invited Lady Clarence into the room, Nella provided protection and looked after a potentially chaotic situation. This action reflects the responsibility carried out by the ruler who wants to always ensure that everything remains safe and under control, especially in his environment.

The creator

The creator is a hero who has the ambition to create new things, whether in the form of ideas, discoveries, or other forms of innovation. In the novel *The Lost Apothecary*, Nella makes a clever design on a jar with only a delicate carving of a small bear. This aims to ensure his anonymity and protect him from possible tracking. When Lady Clarence told all the chronology, in the end it was her husband who died not her husband's mistress. Then Nella asked where the jar containing the powder poison was. Luckily it was still

stored in Lady Clarence's kitchen cellar and she promised Nella she would throw the jar away in the night. Nella sighed and was grateful that the jar was hidden.

But even if it were found, not all would be lost; this was precisely why the jars and vials about my shop were naked, save for the small engraving of the bear. 'Though it is not traceable to me,' I urged, 'best to get rid of immediately. (Penner, 2021: 149)

In this quote, Nella shows traits such as creativity, strategic planning, and innovation in facing various risks. The Creator archetype refers to an individual who creates something new and meaningful, in this context, not only as a work of art or invention, but also as a practical solution to protect oneself from external threats. Nella has created something that ensures that the bottles she uses are unrecognizable. By leaving the jars in her shop unlabeled, unless they had a small engraving of a bear, she creatively protected her identity if the bottles were discovered by authorities. This is strategic planning inherent in the archetype of The Creator, who often thinks ahead in planning the impact of the results of his work, and ensures that these results remain safe and controllable. With all this in mind, the line can be considered a representation of The Creator archetype, showing how Nella utilizes innovative and strategic abilities to create wise solutions and protect herself from possible harm.

The lover

The lover is a hero who longs for love and affection in a relationship, able to build a close emotional relationship, and tries to protect and pursue true love. Here, Nella shows her love and sense of responsibility towards Eliza, she remembers her past, being loved by her mother who had died. When Eliza sobbed and felt guilty towards Nella, because she had mistakenly and carelessly taken the jar to put Lady Clarence's poison powder. Nella wanted to be angry with Eliza but it was not entirely Eliza's fault because Nella herself did not direct Eliza when choosing an empty jar. Nella could only calm Eliza so that she would stop crying, "Shhh,' I whispered. 'Shhhhh.' And as I rocked her forward and back, forward and back, I was reminded of baby Beatrice. I closed my eyes and put my chin on Eliza's head." (Penner, 2021: 153).

The quote above shows Nella calming Eliza who feels sadness and fear. Her gentle actions such as whispering "Shhh" and rocking Eliza's body show a deep level of empathy and affection. Characters in the concept of The Lover tend to have a strong instinct to protect the people they love, both physically and emotionally. With this, Nella's emotional

protection towards Eliza is clearly visible, especially when Eliza is filled with anxiety. Apart from that, the emotional attachment and touching affection between Nella and Eliza is further realized when Nella places her chin on Eliza's head, a physical gesture that indicates the deep bond between Eliza and Nella. In these conditions, there is not only comfort, but also memories of a similar relationship that Nella had experienced with baby Beatrice whom she met on the boat. This highlight's Nella's ability to build strong and loving emotional relationships, which is one of the hallmarks of "The Lover."

In analyzing Nella's character in *The Lost Apothecary* researchers found that Nella does not reflect the archetypes of The Fool or The Jester. Nella faces her life with a deep level of seriousness, trapped in a reality full of challenges and suffering. In the historical and social context that surrounds him, he does not have the freedom to be playful or joke around belittling the situation at hand. Instead, Nella prefers to focus on her search for meaning and identity in an oppressive world, rather than the characteristic lightness and humor commonly associated with The Fool or The Jester. The deep awareness and emotions experienced by Nella confirm that she is an individual who fights hard against injustice and seeks freedom, not someone who relies on humor to face difficulties.

The Antihero Archetype

Traumatized

The trauma that Nella experienced was rooted in love that turned into betrayal, illustrating how fragile Nella's emotional bonds are and how a decision she makes can change everything. When, Nella lost her mother, she felt lonely and she inherited her mother's shop as an ordinary apothecary shop, but when a man named Frederick came and Nella fell in love with him, it did not take long for things to become revenge because what Frederick did really hurt Nella's heart. Finally, Nella killed Frederick with the poison she made. Since then, her shop has become a shop that is different from other apothecary shop, "I couldn't have known that mere months after falling in love with him, I would dispense a fatal dose of rat poison to kill him. The first betrayal. The first victim. The beginning of a stained legacy." (Penner, 2021: 39)

This quote emphasizes how the love that Nella has, which was previously considered a source of hope and healing for her, has transformed into a driver of destruction. By creating a deadly poison, Nella experiences deeper loss and a sense of helplessness, resulting in a cycle of trauma that is very difficult to overcome. This adds complexity to

the antihero character who is often caught up in the consequences of destructive actions. Furthermore, the statement ‘the beginning of a stained legacy’ indicates that Nella’s actions not only had an impact on herself, but also resulted in wider consequences. As an antihero, she creates a legacy that is tarnished not because of evil intentions, but because of her inability to deal with the trauma and pain she faces. This situation illustrates the moral dilemma often faced by antihero characters.

Gender bias

Nella limits herself to making the poison she offers only to women who want revenge or erase the presence of men in their lives, indicating that Nella’s antiheroic actions focus on resistance to patriarchal domination. The poison she gave not only served as a means of murder, but also as a tool to return power to women who had been betrayed by men. “Besides, this woman’s letter implied betrayal, and betrayal was why I began to dispense poisons in the first place—why I began to carry the secrets of these women, to record them in my register, to protect and aid them.” (Penner, 2021: 69)

The quote above shows that Nella provides poison that is rooted to this day because of the experience of betrayal that she experienced from men. This shows that her actions were not solely driven by a desire to commit murder, but were a response to the injustice experienced by herself and other women. As an antihero, her actions are born from personal wounds and experiences of injustice experienced by women in their lives with men. Nella’s goal in the sentence ‘to protect and aid them’ emphasizes her goal to protect women who are marginalized or who suffer because of men’s actions. She emphatically does not offer her poison to everyone, but rather exclusively helps women in the context of revenge for betrayal by men. This reflects a strong gender bias in her actions, as she provides no assistance to men and only seeks revenge against those who have harmed women.

Misuse

As an apothecary, Nella has deep insight into how to make medicines that can heal. However, instead of using her skills for positive medical purposes, she also misused his knowledge to create a poison that was deadly to humans. Nella herself admitted that her register was proof of this, “My register was proof of it; interspersed among the deadly tonics were also many healing ones.” (Penner, 2021: 26).

The quote above shows that the misuse of Nella's knowledge is clearly visible, where she could mix tonics that can heal but also uses her knowledge to create deadly poisons. This abuse arose because she not only used her knowledge for positive purposes such as healing, but also for negative actions such as murder. This reflects the misuse of knowledge or skills that should have a positive and healing impact on people in need, but is diverted for purposes that harm other people. This displays a characteristic often found in antiheroes, where they may have good intentions but how they achieve their goals often involve morally questionable actions. In this, context, Nella uses the same skills to take someone's life with poison.

CONCLUSION(S)

Based on the novel *The Lost Apothecary* which has been analyzed, the researcher found that there are 11 hero archetypes, that are: the innocent, the warrior, the caregiver, the sage, the orphan, the magician, the seeker, the destroyer, the ruler, the creator, and the lover. Meanwhile, one criterion was not found, namely the fool or the jester. This shows that Nella's character operates in a very serious and heavy context. Behind all that, Nella also has an antihero side. The trauma she experienced from Frederick's betrayal led him on a path of revenge. Known as a poison maker, Nella uses her knowledge to avenge her hurt in the most extreme way. She chose to protect abused women with a poison she created, while simultaneously destroying the men who hurt them.

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