

# SELF-IDENTITY CRISIS IN TRISHA ASHLEY'S *EVERY WOMAN FOR HERSELF*

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## ABSTRAK

Artikel ini berkaitan dengan *Self-Identity Crisis in Trisha Ashley's Every Woman for Herself*. Pembahasan berfokus pada penyebab krisis jati diri oleh karakter utama dan juga dampak dan cara karakter utama dalam mengatasi krisis identitas diri. Dalam menganalisa krisis identitas diri penulis menggunakan kombinasi antara unsur intrinsik dan ekstrinsik yaitu disiplin ilmu psikologi dan sastra. Metode penelitian yang digunakan oleh penulis berdasarkan penelitian perpustakaan dan menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dalam menganalisa data. Hasil temuan menunjukkan penyebab dari krisis identitas diri, dampak dari krisis identitas diri dan cara mengatasi krisis identitas diri karakter utama dalam novel. Temuan analisa krisis identitas diri menunjukkan bahwa krisis identitas berpotensi membawa dampak buruk bagi pribadi yang mengalaminya dalam kehidupan sosial mereka.

**Kata kunci:** *krisis identitas, penyebab krisis identitas, dampak krisis identitas.*

### 1.1 The Background

The novel is the expression of the writer about the whole world, about what happened in this world by making it an art in the written text that has its characteristics. The novel is also a work that portrayed characters in the works by making conversation and has a plot. The novel is one of many literary works that read by people around the world and it is not difficult to find or get a novel.

*Every Woman for Herself* is a novel by Trisha Ashley. It tells about the main character's self-identity crisis. Identity is about individual personality. Everybody has his/her own identity. It means each individual has a different character. The novel tells the readers about the main character, Charlie, who finds her true identity in every problem that she

faces. Starting from her divorce, her sorrow after the divorce, the way she searches for her-self-identity, her perception about romance, and her decision to love herself by doing her hobby in arts and painting.

After reading Trisha Ashley's *Every Woman for herself*, the writer has a great interest to know more about self-identity crisis especially the causes of self-identity crisis, the impacts of self-identity crisis and the way to cope with identity crisis after being divorced. The writer chooses this novel as the object of the study. The novel being analyzed educates how divorce influences self-identity.

### 1.2 The Problems

The problems that the writer would like to analyze are as follow:

1. What are the causes of Charlie's self-identity crisis in Trisha Ashley's *Every Woman for Herself*?
2. What is the impact of Charlie's self-identity crisis in Trisha Ashley's *Every Woman for Herself*?
3. How does Charlie cope with a her-self identity crisis in Trisha Ashley's *Every Woman for Herself*?

### 1.3 Theoretical Approach

The theoretical approach is the way that someone does to find the result of the research that she/he makes. In doing the research, there are two kinds of theoretical approaches that can be used, they are intrinsic and extrinsic approaches. There is a statement by the experts about the intrinsic and extrinsic approaches.

According to Kasim (2003:60)

"Intrinsic approach is an analysis of literary work based on the text-only without relating to other disciplines of knowledge either social or political conditions. While the extrinsic approach combines the analysis by using the text or literary work and other disciplines such as philosophy, psychology, history, social and political, etc."

In this thesis, the writer used the combination of the intrinsic and extrinsic approaches to support the analysis and also uses psychological theory. The writer also reads some books and takes supportive material from the internet relating to the story itself.

### 1.4 Definition of Psychology

The word "psychology" was formed from two Greek words. The first, psyche, originally meant "breath" but later acquired the additional meaning "soul", because breathing was thought to indicate that the soul had not yet left the body, and

later still (during the seventeenth century) broadened further in meaning to include "mind". The equivalent Latin word anima, from which the English words "animal" and "animate" are derived, also started life meaning "breath" and later evolved the additional meaning "mind". The second Greek word, logos, originally meant "word" and later expanded in meaning to include "discourse" and eventually "science". According to its Greek roots, therefore, psychology is the science of the mind. According to *Wikipedia Dictionary*, "Psychology is the science of behavior and mind which studies about human thought and behavior"

(<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychology>)

Psychology is the science that studies the mind of individual humans. It can be categorized as the Theory of Human Mind that will explain what humans think. To analyze this research problem, the writer also uses psycho literature to help the writer to know the human mind and perception in facing problems.

### 1.5 Definition of Identity and Identity Crisis

Identity is the illustration of who the person is, it talks about humans themselves and the characteristic of a person that will image itself accurately. Identity is also a part of psychology that has a relation with sociology. Generally, it talks about the meaning of identity, not the specific meaning in terms to classify the part of identity. It is because human identity is influenced by their environment and social life. According to Erik Erikson in *Identity Crisis in Adolescence in Perspective* (1970: 56)

"Identity as "a relatively constant emotion of self-cohesion", that is although people have common needs and interests, they are different and need to have

independence, consistency, and integrity in their actions and motivations. Identity is a logical rule specifying that certain activities leave objects or situations unchanged.”

In psychology and sociology, identity is about human perception and expression in their life or their social life. While psycho literature and socio literature refers to the people mind and perception to live their life in society. The better developed this structure is the more aware individuals appear to be of their uniqueness and similarity to others and their strengths and weaknesses in making their way in the world. The less-developed this structure is the more confused individuals seem about their distinctiveness from others and the more they have to rely on external sources to evaluate themselves.

Identity crisis is the condition that humans feel that they are nothing in this world. Confusing and doubting themselves in any situation and feel like they cannot analyze about themselves and forget about their characteristics and their uniqueness as a human being. Identity crisis is still a problem for every human being in this society. Starting from the teenager, adult, or even for someone who searching for an identity. According to Erik Erikson (1970:88) identity crisis is the failure to achieve ego identity during adolescence. It is also a period of inner conflict during which one examines one's value and makes decisions about life roles. The search for identity and self-identity crisis does not only happen in adolescence but also for adulthood by experiencing something that ruins their life and makes them need to find their self-identity.

### **1.6 Theory of Identity**

Through the process of self-categorization or identification, an identity is formed. Why we need an identity? It almost becomes a question when someone

turning into part of adolescence. Identity is needed because it will explain people about who you are, your characteristic, and your uniqueness. There is a theory about identity that said if, in identity theory, the core of identity is the categorization of the self as an occupant of a role, and the incorporation, into the self, of the meanings and expectations associated with that role and its performance (Burke 2000). These expectations and meanings form a set of standards that guide behavior. Besides, the naming within identity theory includes all the things (including self and others) that take on meaning concerning our plans and activities. More recently, identity theorists have drawn on this meaningful relationship between persons and things to incorporate the concept of resources (things that sustain persons and interactions) as a central component in identity processes. Much of the meaningful activity within a role that is governed by an identity revolves around the control of resources this feature as much as anything, defines the social structure. In general, one's identities are composed of the self-views that emerge from the reflexive activity of self-categorization or identification in terms of membership in particular groups or roles. Thus, although the basis of self-classification is different in the two theories (group/category versus role), theorists in both traditions recognize that individuals view themselves in terms of meanings imparted by a structured society.

Stryker's Identity Theory (2008) has been the dominant perspective on self and identity within structural symbolic interactionism for the past four decades. Identity Theory sees a multifaceted self-composed of multiple identities arranged hierarchically in an identity salience structure. The more salient an identity, the higher is the probability of its being invoked in an interactional situation that allows some agency or choice. The

salience itself is based on two dimensions of one's commitment to the identity: interactional and affective. Interactional commitment is the extensiveness of the interactions a person has in a social network through a particular identity (e.g., the number of persons one interacts with based on the identity). Affective commitment is a person's emotional investment in relationships premised on the identity (e.g., how emotionally close others in the role relationship are to the individual). Note that Stryker's use of the term "commitment" is more multidimensional and less psychological.

According to Erikson, people progress through a series of stages as they grow and change throughout life. During each stage, people face a developmental conflict that must be resolved to successfully develop the primary virtue of that stage. He was interested in how social interaction and relationships affect development and growth. As they transition from childhood to adulthood, teens may begin to feel confused or insecure about themselves and how they fit into society. As they seek to establish a sense of self, teens may experiment with different roles, activities, and behaviors. According to Erikson, this is important to the process of forming a strong identity and developing a sense of direction in life. Although the identity crisis is most pronounced during adolescence and gives that age its stage name, identity issues remain a lifelong concern. A redefinition of one's ego-identity emerges quite commonly when major role changes occur, such as when college freshmen leave home and have to make their own decisions, often for the first time. Other issues that tend to renew identity concerns are one's first job, marriage, and parenthood, the death of one's parents, divorce, unemployment, serious illness, widowhood, and retirement. The ability to cope with these later identity issues that result from major changes in one's role in

life may depend on the degrees of success with which one has mastered the adolescent identity crisis or even for adulthood. In this analysis, the writer chooses to use Erikson's theory to analyze the problem of an identity crisis.

### 1.7 The Characteristics of Identity Crisis

In facing life, identity crisis may occur in every condition of human life. Starting from bad experiences or events in life, adolescence, role confusion in facing the social, romance, and then feeling alienated from the society because of the human perception about his/herself. As Erikson says identity is the illustration about who the person is, about humans themselves, and the characteristic of a person that will image itself accurately. To give clearer information, identity crisis has its characteristics, they are:

1. Role confusion. This stage may occur during adolescences but in some events, people in adulthood can feel the same thing based on their experiences. Role confusion makes people questioning their life about who I am and what can I be? The question will make people insecure about their life.
2. Feels isolated. In this stage, when people facing an identity crisis they are afraid of rejections such as being turned down or our partners breaking up with us. They are familiar with pain and to some of us, rejection is so painful that our egos cannot bear it.
3. Doubtful. In this stage, an identity crisis will make people asking for themselves. Can I make my life count? That question will make people doubt themselves and then they cannot create a comfortable life inside and outside their life.

The statement above related to the meaning of identity crisis when people feel

confused, despair, and lack of their sense of identity. It is normal for people if they are questioning themselves about who they are, their role, and their function in their social life. The important thing in this stage, people who feel the characteristic above should quickly prepare to cope with what they are feeling and find a way to cope with it to avoid the impacts of the identity crisis that they faced.

### **1.8 The Causes of Identity Crisis**

Once in human life, there will be a time for the human who insecure or feels that she /he asked their identity in their life. Asking their life about who they are, what they have to be, and what they should do. In this case, an identity crisis as the insecurity of the human mind or soul is occurred by reasons. According to Erik Erikson, there are some reasons why identity crisis occurs, they are:

1. Individual psychology that perceives if they are bad creature and useless in this world.
2. Identity crisis occurs during adolescence, it happens because it is the time for people to realize themselves in the present and their position or role in social life at that time or even for the future.
3. Parental values influence people's perception of the way their family treats them. If they are treated badly by their family they will have less belief, carelessness, asking for their life what should to do and influence their mind, soul, and their characteristic in social life.
4. Bad experiences in life. A tragic moment or something that makes people afraid about the past may influence people's identity and ask for themselves. If they deserve for the world or not. Bad experiences such as divorce, a transition from childhood to adulthood, alienated by some

accident, how society treated them, etc.

The bulk of research tends to indicate that persons who have identity crises especially those who have had them and successfully resolved them are superior to the others on various dimensions. Someone will ask their life, what is this? What life means to be? And so many questions that confusing the human mind and life to faces their life through an identity crisis.

### **1.9 The Impacts of identity Crisis**

In facing an identity crisis there are must be an impact on humanity itself. Confusions, asking his/herself, stress, and many more can influence identity to become a crisis. As Erik Erikson has delivered that identity crisis influence human itself and makes human different than before. According to Erik Erikson, there are some impacts of the search of self-identity crisis, they are:

1. Always think that she/he is useless in this world and does not deserve any chances in this world.
2. Less believe in him/ herself and do not know what to do next in his/her life that makes her/him in confusion.
3. Losing self-confidence in doing or starting a new thing or even the hobbies that she/he likes.
4. Become alienated because she/ he is treated badly by the social or by the people around there include her/his family.

As Erik Erikson said that identity crisis does not only attacks people in adolescence but also in adulthood who has bad experiences in their life. It means that the impact of identity crisis can ruin someone's life if there is no treatment to cope with the crisis of identity. Taking care and respect for each other is a must

thing to do to help people in their crisis of identity.

## 2.1 The Way to Cope with Identity Crisis

In facing an identity crisis, Marcia (1966) conceptualizes the identity crisis as they struggle to adopt an ideology and choose a career or something that someone likes the most. This can be broken down into a two-step process. The first involves resolving issues of *value* just like believe in self and accept his/herself or life completely without feeling insecure and doubtful. The second addresses the *instrumental* issue of how to put one's values and goals into practice, like doing your hobbies, starting a new positive activity, and facing problems in life patiently. It is conceivable that the first step could be passed if the person has foreclosed values. Resolving the value aspect of an identity deficit is probably the more difficult of the two this stage tends to require protracted and detailed rumination, as the adolescent and adulthood attempt to question and doubt each possible value and belief to ascertain which ones hold up. Family role and the open-minded social environment is needed the way to cope with an identity crisis in someone's life. Make someone alienated is not true and kills the human mind and soul. By taking care more and respect each other will increase someone's personality become better and makes humans think that they are worth it in their own life and even for the social and this world.

## 2.2 Data Analysis

The data for this analysis were taken from Trisha Ashley's *Every Woman for herself* which is published in 2002. The data are collected by reading, underlining, and understanding the sentences in the novel that show the writer about the self-identity crisis. In this novel, the main character is Charlie who is trying to find her identity and facing her self-identity

crisis. The main character will show the answer to the problem of the study based on her story about finding her identity and facing a self-identity crisis.

*Every Woman for Herself* is a story of a wife whose husband wants to divorce because it is the only way that they can do to make their life easy and normal. The main character in this novel is Charlie, who is confused about her life because of the divorce. She becomes single, broken, and approaching 40 that she wants to come back to her childhood home and starts her new life as a single woman there. Then, she finds that she needs to fix the confusion that causes her need to find herself her-self-identity by doing something that she likes the most. Although she finds a man who wants to share his life with her, then Charlie decides to change her perception in romance and prefers to spend her time by doing her hobby in arts like writing and painting that is why she calls it's every woman for herself.

## 2.3 The Causes of Charlie's Search for Self-Identity Crisis

As the writer explains the causes of identity crises that focus on a human self, are individual psychology based on the human mind and soul, facing adolescences, parental value and the last is bad experiences in human life. The main character needs to find her true self-identity because of the factors that make her self-identity becomes critical. In the first chapter of the novel, the reasons why the main character needs to find her identity, and her identity become crisis will be explained. The reason for the main character's self-identity crisis is divorce. It also makes her need to find out her identity to know what she will do next. Her bad experiences in divorce make her self-identity critical and the way the people around her perceive the divorce and her character that has no real friend also makes her confused. How her family treats

her because of her choice to separate from her husband are the reasons for parental values of her self-identity crisis.

At first, Charlie already feels sad about her husband, Matt wants to get a divorce. Charlie and her husband feel that they have an abnormal life as wife and husband because they live separately, Charlie in Yorkshire and Matt in Saudi.

**“We've been grown apart since I've been taking these foreign contracts, and I've come to realize that this will be best for both of us. We can divorce right away since we've been separated for more than two years.**

‘How can we be separated when you’re here? I asked, trying to get my head around this concept.

‘But I’m not really here, am I?’ he said impatiently. ‘I’m in Saudi.

‘But, you’re back for quiet long holidays between contracts-and you said it would be better if I stayed here.’

‘You would have hated it- you know you don’t even like leaving the house, let alone the country.’

‘But that’s just York- it’s got the wrong short of outside.

I’m fine at home.’

‘This is your home.’

I meant Upvale and Blackdog Moors.’

‘You seemed eager enough to run away from it with me.’

‘That was love, and unplanned pregnancy, and father.’

‘Matt said earnestly, ‘Charlie, it isn’t that I’m not fond of you...’

(Ashley, 2002:2)

From the quotation above it can be seen that Charlie is sad when she hears what her husband says about their marriage and then chooses to get a divorce as the best way for them. A complete marriage is what all couples want and need, even they have to live apart but the

relationship should not apart. The divorce makes Charlie confused about what to do next with herself even her life because Charlie is not a person who has many friends and makes her look alienated.

“It was very late when I woke the next day, strangely tired, aching and disorientated.

**For a few heart-stopping moments I couldn't remember where I was, then my eye fell on the glass of disgusting liquid on my bedside table, now separated into a layer of sludge topped by clear green, and it all came back to me in Glorious Technicolor, along with my sanity.**

Perhaps, my vocation in life was to become a hermit and never leave the house, or speak to anyone outside my family, ever again”

(Ashley, 2002:176).

Because of her feeling of being alienated and how her husband treated her, she feels difficult to find a way for herself to heal her sadness in divorce and makes her self-identity in crisis. She says that her life is freely punctuated with lost. “My recollections were freely punctuated with loss. Lost mother, lost virginity, lost babies, lost husband, lost in space” (Ashley, 2002: 2).

After asking for a divorce, Charlie's husband, Matt, makes her like she makes her husband a bank account and it makes Charlie feel quite sick. Thinking that she lost her family, she loses herself by perceiving that she is a bad creature. It can be seen through this quotation:

“It’s just that I’m not getting anything out of this marriage,’ he continued.

**‘You make me sound like a bank. What were you expecting to get out? More than you put in?’**

‘At least, there are no children to complicate things.’ He said, which a

very low blow was. He was starting to make me feel quite sick.  
'I'm sorry it's come to this Charlie, but we really can't go on'  
(Ashley, 2002:3).

After having a long talk with her husband, Charlie chooses to be back in her childhood home with her family and tell them about the divorce. Her family looks like they do not care about Charlie's divorce that makes Charlie lose her mind to find out the way out of the divorce. Charlie is sick and she ruins her life by thinking that she is nothing and always in sadness even when she is at her own home with her family, she thinks that she is a stranger. "But, it will never be the same again,' I said sadly, for now, I did feel like a disposed of person. I was blowing' in the wind" (Ashley, 2002:23).

There is a woman named Angie as Matt's friend but not for Charlie because she has no real friend. And then, there is Greg as Angie's husband and also Matt's friend but still, not for Charlie. There is an incident that makes Charlie feel insecure about herself based on her bad experiences in an accident that kills Angie's husband unconsciously. It makes Charlie psychologically thinks, that she is useless and always says that she is a murderer, thought actually. Besides the divorce, killing someone unconsciously is also Charlie's bad experience that makes her need to know who she is and finds that she will get a better life soon even she has to try hard for it. Her thought ruins her brain and her soul. Her characters become blank for everything that she does. This quotation shows how Charlie perceives herself and her life"

**"Anyway, I didn't feel I deserved anything anymore.**

All I could think of was that ghastly thud as the pan connected with Greg's head, and I was tortured with wondering whether I could have

prevented it: I mean, when I hit him, I wanted to him- so was it an accident? Was there a moment when I could have diverted the fatal downward swing?

**I didn't think so, but I wasn't sure. And feel like a murderess- I had killed someone"** (Ashley, 2002:32-33).

Based on the information above, it is seen that the cause of the self-identity crisis of the main character is her bad experiences in her life. The main character does not accept her life by being single at forty and as a murderess although everybody says that it was an incident.

Charlie's sadness becomes worst when she knows that her husband wants the divorce because her husband wants to get married again with another woman that has been pregnant by Matt. What a great disaster for herself to know the news about her ex-husband. It makes Charlie angry and hard to calm herself. The way Angie tells her about that bad news makes Charlie feel pity for herself and still, the words useless and does not deserve anything in this world sticks in her brain.

"Sort of getting your own back, though, after Matt ditching you for that nurse in Saudi, 'she suggested.

I turned and stared at her. 'Which nurse? He said there wasn't anyone else!'

**'Well, he would say that, wouldn't he? But, I thought you knew. He asked you for the divorce because she got pregnant, and he is going to marry her if she can still fit in a wedding dress. God, is she huge! Perhaps its twin, she's big enough for..."**

"I could short of vaguely hear her voice going on and on, alarmed and rising, but it sounded far away, probably because I was on my knees

on the cold stone flags, and some poor woman was howling, No! No!' It sounded like me.

**'Poor old Charlie,' part of me said sadly. She's having a bad day, but I wish she'd shut up.'**

'Charlie?'

Someone scooped me up, rigid and resisting, and held me in strong, warm arms. 'Charlie, what's the matter?'

'We were just talking, and then she went mad!' Angie said.

'What have you done to her? 'Mace voice demanded angrily.

'I haven't done anything! I only came to apologize.'

'You must have said *something!*

'Only that her ex-husband was getting married again- his girlfriend's pregnant. I suppose that upset her because she never had any-kept miscarrying all the time. But I didn't know she'd carry on like this!" (Ashley, 2002:214-215).

From the quotation, it can be concluded that Charlie does not know that her ex-husband, Matt leaves her for another woman. How angry Charlie is to hear that. She has lost her chances to become a mother and then hears that her ex-husband will become a father by another woman. Charlie feels that she is a poor old woman. And then Charlie cries to know about it. She feels down that she lost her chance to become a mother but on the other side her husband will get the chance. Charlie relaxes by being in Mace's arms. Mace is a man that soon will marry her. She feels so much better in his arms.

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From the quotation above, Charlie still says that she is a poor old woman and feels sad to be like that. When Angie explains about Charlie's ex-husband want to get married and has a baby, Charlie cries a lot but there is Mace North that tries to heal Charlie's sadness and cares about Charlie and asking Angie what she has been done to Charlie.

Angie says that Charlie and Matt having a *friendly* divorce because Charlie will get maintenance from Matt but Charlie looks like she does not care and decides to come back with her family. She feels like she was dreaming and then back into reality when she woke up.

"I'm not falling apart,' I assured her, which I wasn't, because nothing lately had seemed at all real. **I wasn't sure if I'd been living in a dream world for years and just woken to reality, or vice versa.** Sleeping Beauty in her jungle. 'Actually, I feel more as if I'm

imploding – hurtling inwards on myself.

There'll be a popping noise one day, and I'll have vanished, like a bubble.'

'You poor thing! I knew I was right to come back.

**But look on the bright side, darling – you and Matt having a *friendly* divorce, so it will go through really fast. Then she's going to pay you maintenance, although I don't suppose you'll need much because you'll just go back to that insane-sounding family of yours.**

(Ashley, 2002: 215)

From the quotation above, Charlie is in pain deep inside her heart, she also hurting inwards of herself. Even she will get a friendly divorce that the process will be so fast, it still makes her in pain.

#### **2.4 The Impacts of Charlie's Search for her Self-Identity Crisis**

Searching for a self-identity crisis is still a problem nowadays. Not only in adolescence but also adulthood identity crisis can appear. The human mind, less belief in self, losing self-confidence, family role, and become alienated are influence this term in social life. The impact of the self-identity crisis in this novel is shown when the main character, Charlie, feels that she never changes and it was her mistake is she still likes that and changes her husband's life into an alien.

'As Joni Mitchells says, you don't know what you've got till it's gone. I only knew what I had to start with.

Or did I only know what I *thought* I had to start with?

**Or did I have what I thought I had but had somehow swapped it for an alien? Could live with me for so**

**long have *returned* him into an alien?**

**He was right about one thing- he'd changed, but I didn't think I had very much.**

That was my mistake

I took stock of my innermost feelings and discovered there weren't any: I was blown egg, all shell, and void.

You might have heard the sea if you'd put your ear to me, but that was about it"

(Ashley 2002:6).

From the quotation above, it can be seen that Charlie is surrender by herself, thought that the changes of her husband is her mistake and realized that she did not change and look like she was a blown egg, all shell, and void. Charlie also cannot afford a change because she does not care about herself even for a simple change for her styles to become prettier when her friend Miss Grinch suggested her.

'You should start wearing prettier colors than black,'

Suggested Miss Grinch, who had been pursuing thoughts of her own.

**'I don't have anything else. Most of my clothes come from charity shops and jumble sale anyway.'**

**'Time for a change.'**

**'I can't a afford a change''**

(Ashley 2002: 38)

From the quotation above, it can be seen that Charlie still in pain, surrender that she would not change and does not deserve it.

The impact of the self-identity crisis in this novel is also shown when the main character, Charlie faces her problem in the divorce and think that herself a murderess who killed a man in an accident. At first, her sister is sure that Charlie would fix her problem but Charlie's thought of being a murderer and her experience in the divorce

makes her think that she still does not change. Losing herself, her family, and her desire for her hobbies even for starting a new job, she always says that she does not deserve it.

**“You’ve got to live on something until you paint again, so---“**

**‘If I ever paint again,’ I said pessimistically.**

She ignored that, so I’ve got you a part-time job, starting Monday.’ ‘Helper in the Rainbow Nursery down the road. You don’t know if - they started a sort of self-sufficient commune in Hoo Hall, and there is a progressive nursery attached.’

**‘Do they know I’m a murderess?’**

**‘You’re not a murderess, and the accident didn’t make the national headline, so probably not.’**

**‘Oh, Em, I don’t think I can do it. I don’t know anything about children and---‘**

‘You can try, then maybe something else will turn up, or you’ll start painting again”

(Ashley, 2002:44).

From the quotation above, Emily, Charlie’s sister tries to help Charlie to fix her problem but Charlie’s perception makes her insecure and hard to do something new instead she is pessimistic about her hobby to paint again.

Day by day pass and Charlie tries to follow the nursery in the Rainbow Nursery. There are a lot of friends there that want Charlie to live her life as a woman in general. They want her to socialize and make friends with the children there. One day, there is a man named Mace North. He is an actor and a man who loves her daughter named Caitlin. Caitlin is one of the active children in the rainbow nursery and she likes Charlie because Charlie takes care of her in the nursery. Charlie chooses to focus on her confusion and being alienated even

there is Caitlin wants to interact and play with her, she still wants to focus only on her confusion. Seeing Caitlin and take care of her reminds Charlie of her losing chance becomes a mother to make Charlie is in pain.

“One by one the little gremlins passed me, homeward bound in their monster carriers. The only ones walking up the hill were the actor and Caitlin, and they didn’t catch me up until I was nearly home.

I heard the thump of small feet behind me and then Caitlin was embracing my legs again. I nearly fell over. **When she held her arms out to be picked up I did, and hugged her, though I didn’t know what I’d done to deserve it. Still, it did make me feel a bit less of a witch and also suffer a sharp pang of regret for my lost chances of motherhood.** A sort of strange, low pain inside.

Maybe my heart was in the wrong place.

**‘Are you crying” asked Caitlin anxiously.**

**I smiled. No, it’s the cold making my eyes water”**

(Ashley, 2002:90).

The quotation above shows that Charlie is in pain but she tries to hide it from Caitlin. She always thinks that she does not deserve anything even for a simple action to take care of a child and get the child’s attention. The way she feels that she does not deserve anything is the impact of the self-identity crisis that she faces.

What a bad decision to lose a friend like Caitlin although she is a child. Her father, Mace North, is also really kind to her. She decides to stop working at rainbow Nursery and her sister Emily finds a new job for her. Trying any job for

Charlie will help Charlie to find her way for her searching for her self-identity crisis. Charlie still does not believe that Caitlin likes her and is still wondering herself what to do next with Caitlin and Mace North. Charlie thinks Mace North does not like her, although Caitlin does. It is shown in this following quotation:

“I’ve got you another job,’ Em said casually.’ what do you mean? What sort of job?”

‘Caitlin’s nanny. Mace took her away from the Rainbow Nursery because she didn’t like it, and now he’s finding it hard to concentrate on writing his play, so he needs someone to look after her in the morning while he works.’

**‘But he doesn’t like me!’**

**‘I don’t know why you think that – and anyway, Caitlin likes you; she said she wanted you. It’ll be fine. You can bring her to the personage, and take her for walks and things.** You’re starting at nine-thirty tomorrow, and he’s going to pay you London wages”  
(Ashley, 2002: 115).

Still, Charlie is not sure that Mace North likes her. She still remembers what happened in the past that soon she thinks that it will ruin her life and lose her self-confidence directly. This is why she is insecure about herself if there is someone likes her.

Charlie still thinks that Mace North does not like her. Honestly, it is because Charlie loses her self-confidence to face the people around her because of her bad experience that she kills Greg by an accident of the frying pan.

**“But, Em, he saw me bashing melons the other day – he can’t want someone he thinks is loopy. And he can’t know about Greg’s either! You must force him to offer**

**me the job.’** ‘Of course, I didn’t force him. I just suggested it when I popped in with some melon and ginger jam,’ she said, slightly self-consciously. ‘He probably thinks you have to bash the melons as part of the process of something. He didn’t mention it, anyway. And I don’t think anyone around here other than the family know about Dead Greg. It only made your local paper, after all, thanks to the earthquake and the lurid sex-murder trial” (Ashley, 2002: 116).

On the same day when Charlie talks to her sister Emily, she has enough thinking about the man even she says that Mace North is a good man. When Mace stares at her and smiles at her, she still feels like usual. Thinking that it means nothing for her life after her experiences in the divorce that ruins her life and makes her lost in every side of herself but soon trying to overcome everything and realizes that it is not good enough to do the same thing as the past.

“He is... interesting-looking and he has a very attractive smile.

‘Hmm, ‘Em said, staring at me. ‘Why’s he smiling at you?’

You don’t want him, do you?’

**‘No, I’ve gone off men permanently, except family, of course. And I don’t mind the vicar, he’s rather sweet.**

Otherwise, even casual sex seems pointless now I can’t get pregnant anymore.’ ‘What have you got in your jumble bags? She asked, changing the subject, to my relief. I was not a rival for anyone’s affections; I’d been through the sex/marriage/dwindling sex/divorce cycle already; I didn’t want to repeat the whole damned thing with anyone else, even temporarily”  
(Ashley, 2002: 112).

The impacts also go on Charlie's life, she is still in sadness although Mace, a man who loves her, says that he wants to share his life with her Charlie cannot accept it, poor old Charlie is the part of her life, hearing her ex-husband will have a baby also hurts her.

"I could short of vaguely hear her voice going on and on, alarmed and rising, but it sounded far away, probably because I was on my knees on the cold stone flags, and some poor woman was howling, No! No!"

It sounded like me.

**'Poor old Charlie,' part of me said sadly.** She's having a bad day, but I wish she'd shut up.'

'Charlie?'

Someone scooped me up, rigid and resisting, and held me in strong, warm arms. 'Charlie, what's the matter?'

'We were just talking, and then she went mad!' Angie said.

'What have you done to her?'

Mace voice demanded angrily.

'I haven't done anything! I only came to apologize.'

'You must have said *something!*

**'Only that her ex-husband was getting married again- his girlfriend's pregnant.** I suppose that upset her because she never had any-kept miscarrying all the time. But I didn't know she'd carry on like this!'

'Didn't you? Well, I think you've done enough. Get out before I throw you out!'

There's no need to be like that when I came round here in a good faith to apologize. And after all, she *did* kill my husband!'

There was the tapping of high heels and a slammed door, but it seemed to be happening somewhere else, beyond all the awful sobbing.

**I cried myself out, curled up on the bed in Mace's arms while he stroked my hair, and murmured**

**shooting things... and eventually, I stopped sobbing on a hiccup, and lay there, feeling exhausted, but much better"** ( Ashley, 2002:215-216).

What Charlie's perception about herself as a poor old woman by hearing about her ex-husband makes her cry and Mace North tries to heal Charlie's tears by holding Charlie in his warm arms and asks Angie to go because he knows that Angie says something that makes Charlie cries. At the time, Charlie feels safe in Mace's arms.

## 2.5 Charlie's Way to cope with the Search for Her Self-Identity Crisis

When someone feels alienated, insecure, doubtful, and thinking that her life is useless, a thought that suicide is better than living life will appear. But luckily Charlie does not think the same way and tries to solve her problem of crisis identity that she faces. After saying her perception about men to Emily, Charlie wants to start her new life by doing her hobby again, making friends with people around, writing a magazine, and starting a painting and living her life as a happy single woman.

**"I expected people to tell you this sort of thing all the time,' I finished.**

**'Not really, 'he answered thoughtfully. 'Still, I hope you are now truly satisfied that you didn't mean to kill this Greg?'**

**'I am now, . . . and even the noise was right. It felt – cathartic.'**

'Good, Accept that what happened wasn't your fault, and although it will hard to live with the memory of it, it was just an accident brought on by his action. 'I only hope his wife, Angie, accepts that too. She was feeling very bitter and vindictive towards me after the inquest, and

she's sent me poison-pen-type letters threatening to come here and tell everyone about me. I expect she's left a million nasty messages on my mobile too, only, of course, you can't get a signal within five miles of Upvale, so I've left it switched off since I came home" (Ashley, 2002:117-118).

From the quotation above, Charlie starts to accept herself within her bad experiences in murdering Greg. She tries to change her mind that she is not a murderess but it was an accident. Although she is afraid that Greg's wife, Angie is still looking at her as a murderess, Charlie tries to be optimistic that one day, Angie will accept that it was an accident.

Charlie feels that her life changes slowly but she has significant life that helps her to start her new life. She has started painting again and her family supports her. She also socializes with people around her. Charlie feels that she begins to find her new life and tries to paint Jessica, her stepmother as the first model of her coming back in painting as she tells Chris, her cousin.

**"I sat back in the old wooden rocking chair and everything suddenly looked subtly different, as if it had all shifted in space slightly and become brighter. I felt reborn. A slightly dazed new phoenix Charlie arising from the ashes of the old nest.**

**'Do you know, Christ, I think I could paint again? I'm going to paint Jessica down the old well.'**

'Oh? I understood from Em you only painted the jungle.'

'I do, but Jessica's going to be at the heart of the next one, far, far down a well, looking up.'

'Yes, and once I'm painting I won't need another job.'

'Em's got me a temporary one, looking after Mace North's little girl in the morning while he writes, but I expect the cottage is just a whim" (Ashley, 2002:118).

Charlie begins to find her self-identity by doing one of the loveliest things in her life that are painting. Spreading her skill in painting is not only about nature in the jungle but also human. She also tries to tell people around her about her bad experience as a murderess to know people's assumptions about her and decides to accept anything that people say about her. It seems like Charlie tries to cover herself with confidence and asks Gloria, one of her family members to do so and wants to know what Gloria thinks about her decisions.

**"I decided to speak to Gloria and see what she thought.**

**And I'd made up my mind that I was going to tell Mace North about Dead Greg before he found out from someone else.**

If he didn't want me to take care of Caitlin after that, it was fine by me" (Ashley, 2002: 119).

Charlie cares about Caitlin. That is why she needs to say the truth to Mace, so she will be safe in taking Caitlin with her if one day Mace hears about the Dead Greg from anyone else. Charlie should tell the truth by herself. Charlie also becomes a caring woman to the people around her just like Mace North and his daughter Caitlin that his ex-wife, Kathleen, wants to take Caitlin with her to America. It means that Charlie has begun her new life and new things to do in her life. This quotation will show how Charlie cares about Mace North and Caitlin.

"Mace was taciturn next morning, but that was all alright because Caitlin talked enough for all of us. I didn't think he was brooding over what his ex-wife had said, though,

because it was probably something she'd thought up in the heart of the moment.

He did seem to be a devoted daddy, whatever Gloria said about his reputation, while I couldn't say I was impressed by Kathleen's maternal instincts. But she's got some, or she wouldn't want to take Caitlin to America with her.

**Mace short of loomed in the kitchen doorway and glowered while I helped Caitlin into her teddy suit and made sure her willies were on the right feet"**

(Ashley, 2002:129).

After taking care of Caitlin, Charlie is on her way home and surprised at home by an article that his other sister, Anne sent her. That is good news for her that her article *Skin Old Northern Woman* will be published soon.

"Anne gave me an article she'd written for *Skin Old Northern Woman*, to be published anonymously, which read more like one of her war correspondents reports than anything. But, I was deeply touched by it and felt I understood Anne more than I'd ever done.

'Anne, 'I said, 'the magazine isn't going to be published at all- I'm just doing this for fun.'

'Yes it is, Chaz, and I will see to that. It's the sort of thing that should be published, if only once"

(Ashley, 2002:137-138).

Although Charlie is happy to know that the article will be published, she says that she just writes it as her desire for her hobby in writing and doing it fun. It can be concluded that the search of her self-identity crisis is starting to be better. She gets her hobby in writing again and doing it with fun. "Vaddie said, I looked

different, and my change of hair color and clothes made me look years younger and twice as pretty, which was kind of her" (Ashley, 2002:184).

Charlie's change is also felt by her cousin, Vaddie. She changes and then wants to give something for her father and Jessica. She thinks that she never does anything better for her father and her stepmother, Jessica so she decides to give them a gift as their wedding present by painting Jessica's picture on her canvas. Charlie really changes and becomes better, she is near to enjoy herself and find herself and know what supposed to do next, heal her confusions, and taking back her characteristic and her uniqueness in her desire with her hobbies.

"For once, it was actually quite good to be driving over the moors to somewhere away from Upvale.

A day away would let me push my confused feeling about Mace behind a locked door. It would also give me a chance to turn over in my mind what was likely to happen if Father did indeed marry Jessica.

From what he said about nothing changing it was clear he hadn't thought it through. The day he married Jessica, it would be like shaking a kaleidoscope: the parts would be the same, only they'd all be in entirely different places in the relation to each other, some not even touching.

**Nothing was ever going to be the same again.**

Vaddie fell on my paintings with cries of great joy. She loved what by now had become the *Jessie Down the Well* series, and when I told her, that the first one would be on the cover of *Skin Northern Woman* she ordered a personal copy in advance and said she'd like a whole stack to put on the desk, sale or return, under the actual picture featured.

**I'd decided not to sell that one, but give it to Father and Jess as a wedding present, assuming she actually managed to pull it off"** (Ashley, 2002:183-184).

She really enjoys her hobby, now she only focuses on her hobby without thinking any significance at all. The significance that influences her personal life by saying that she is changed and find her life in facing the divorce. It can be seen in this quotation:

"I'd been spending almost all the daylight hours painting minute barbarian warriors on horseback being sucked into vortexes of savage greenery, like warped Persian miniature.

**It was very enjoyable. And no, I was not going to think about the significance at all"** (Ashley, 2002: 186).

Charlie's life becomes better when she looks at Angie who is coming to her room while she is painting. An apologizes to each other make them realized that the dead Greg's was an accident and then their problem is done. This quotation will show that between Charlie and Angie there is no problem anymore:

"Later, I truculent Angie walked into my veranda as I was painting, without so much as a knock on the door or even a quick graffiti scrawl.

**She planted herself in front of me and said aggrievedly, I've got to say I'm sorry, and I'm going to forgive you. I'll be leaving Upvale soon and going on a cruise.'**

'Good for you,' I said relaxing my defensive grip on the palette knife. 'I hope you have fun- a lot more fun than trying to run me over, anyway.'

**'Sorry I called you a whore, sorry I called you a murderess,**

**sorry I tried to kill you,' she reeled off as if reading down an internal list of Twenty Apologies for the obsessed.**

'That's all right,' I said. 'I'm desperately sorry I killed Greg, and I always will be. Is that it?'

She examined her conscience-nicotine yellow, ragged edges- and found it reasonably clear. 'Yes, I think so. Well, that's that done!'" (Ashley, 2002:213-214).

After all the sorrow that Charlie passed, Charlie wants to dedicate herself to her life. Even Mace asks her to marry him but she decides to be single then. Soon, when Charlie said that Mace needs to follow Charlie's rule if one day she wants to marry him, Mace accepts it but Charlie still wants to be single.

"Charlie, you should marry him while you can!

'No point. I won't leave Upvale ever again, but he will soon tire of it and go back to London permanently, we come from two different worlds,' I added tritely. 'We've nothing in common.

'If pagans can marry vicars, artists can marry actors, 'Em said. 'Marry him and bend him to your will- we'll all help you.'

'Come on, does he look bendable to you? And name me an actor who's been married to the same woman for more than five minutes,'

There was a long thoughtful silence.

**Anyway, I don't want to live his life, I want to live my own. I'm going to stay in Upvale, and paint, and maybe the magazine will sell so many we can publish it regularly – say six issues a year or something. I'll be happy and successful, which is the best short revenge on Matt that I can think of"** (Ashley, 2002:225-226).

Charlie cannot hide that she really loves Mace but still, she is on her perception to be a single woman

“Do you want me?”

‘**You know I do, but...well, I want to leave my life, not be a minor satellite orbiting yours**’ (Ashley, 2002:280).

“Mace, If I marry you, you must promise me one thing, ’I told him seriously.

‘Anything, he agreed, with one of those devastating smiles.

‘Then, just don’t turn in to an alien, as my first husband did.’

‘Did he do that? Must have been a defense mechanism.’

‘What do you mean? Are you insinuating that I—’

‘You’re an impossible woman, but I’m not turning into anything except a devoted- and probably jealous-husband.

If that’s alien, you’ll just have to get used to it.’

‘I think I can live with that.’

‘I’m not giving you an alternative darling, he said, pulling me even closer and kissing me again.

What could I do? I’d done my best to resist, but clearly, in a situation like this it was every woman for herself!” (Ashley, 2002: 302).

This story shows the writer that life is a balance when Charlie has struggled in living her life with the divorce, she tries to find the new life that makes her born again. Getting back her desire in hobbies, socializing with people, having someone who loves her are enough for Charlie to get her Identity back. Now she is not useless, she deserves everything and her experiences become her strength in living her life. As she said before that she lost mother, lost virginity lost babies, lost husband, lost in space but then she said,

first comes marriage, then comes divorce, then it’s every woman for herself.

## 2.6 Conclusions

1. *First*, the cause of Charlie's self-identity crisis is the divorce as her bad experiences that she faces, finally make her confused about her life. Because she lives to depend on her husband Matt. *The second* is her other experiences become a murderess by an accident that makes her feel that she take someone's life and always says that she is a murderess. *The third* is her psychological perception about herself that she is useless and she is a bad creature. She does not deserve anything in this world and categorized her life is freely punctuated with loss. Lost mother, virginity, family, and even loss of herself.

2. The impact of Charlie’s self-identity crisis

In this part, *the first* impact of the self-identity crisis that Charlie's faces are she becomes alienated from society because she has no real friends or few friends that understand her about the divorce. *The second* is, Charlie still thinking that she does not deserve anything and feeling useless because she is a bad creature and cannot afford a change and becomes pessimistic in doing her hobby in art and painting.

3. Charlie’s way to cope with her self-identity crisis

*First*, Charlie decides to take back her life by doing her hobbies in writing and painting, socialize with people around her not only people in her family but also people around where she lives and decides to change her perception about men that she will not repeat the circle of marriage that ruin her life. *The second* is, she decides to

enjoy her life as a single woman without marriage and dedicates her life only for herself, that's

why she said that its time for every woman for herself.

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