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Examining Dreams versus Reality in Patrick Ness's *A Monster Calls* Through The Lens of Sigmund Freud

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Declaration

I, Bahloul Messaouda, declare I am the only author of this master dissertation entitled “Examining Dreams versus Reality in Patrick Ness's *"A Monster Calls"* Through the Lens of Sigmund Freud” and supervised by Mr. Chemmouri Mourad, hereby declare that this research is my own work and has never been submitted or presented before for any academic institution or university for any degree.

Dedication

First and foremost, I thank Allah for granting me strength to succeed in writing my dissertation.

I dedicate this work to those who were very close to my heart, my loving and sweet mother and to my father who never got the chance to see or witness this journey, for their prayers of day and night that paved the way for me to have this success and honour.

To my close brothers Moussa, Hakim, Khaled and Mehdi for their constant source of support and understanding.

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Abstract

This dissertation explores the interplay between dreams and reality in Patrick Ness's "*A Monster Calls*," with particular focus on the protagonist, Conor O'Malley's, psychological journey. This study analyzes Conor's internal conflicts, particularly through Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory's concepts of the id, ego, and superego. This study highlights how Conor's encounters with the Yew Tree Monster in his dreams reflect his struggles with his mother's illness. These dream sequences are crucial in understanding Conor's inner conflicts and emotional turmoil. The methodology includes a close reading of the novel and an analysis of relevant secondary sources on Freud's theory. Findings suggest that Conor's dreams serve as a therapeutic tool, helping him confront and process his fears and grief. The novel illustrates the significant role of dreams in Conor's psychological growth, providing insights into the therapeutic potential of dream analysis in literature.

Key words: Dreams, Reality, Psychoanalysis, Grief, Psychoanalytic Theory.

Table of Contents

Declaration	i
Dedication	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Abstract	iv
Table of Contents	v
General Introduction	1
1. Statement of the Problem	3
2. Rationale of the Research.....	3
3. Aims and Objectives.....	4
4. Main Research Question	4
5. Methodology	4
Chapter One: Theoretical Framework	6
Introduction	7
1. Introduction to "A Monster Calls" book and Genre	7
2. Young Adult Literature	9
3. Brief biography on Patrick Ness	11
4. Overview of Patrick Ness's Works	12
4.1. Chaos Walking Trilogy 2008-2010	13
4.1.1. The Knife of Never Letting Go (2008)	14
4.1.2. The Ask and the Answer (2009).....	14
4.1.3. Monsters of Men (2010)	15
5. Significance of Dreams versus Reality	16
Conclusion	17
Chapter Two: Investigating the Interplay between Dreams and Reality	19
Introduction	20
1. The Concept of Dreams versus Reality in Literature	20
2. Exploring Freudian Psychoanalytic Theory in Literature	22
3. Analysis of Key Concepts	24
3.1. Id	24
3.2. Ego	25
3.3. Superego.....	25
3.4. Unconscious Mind	26
4. How Dreams Reflect Reality and Vice Versa.....	26
5. Examining Literary Techniques Used to Portray Dreams and Reality.....	28
5.1. Symbolism	28
5.2. Metaphor	29

5.3. Allegory.....	29
5.4. Stream of Consciousness	29
Conclusion.....	30
Chapter Three: Psychoanalytic Analysis of “A Monster Calls”	31
Introduction	32
1. Part One: Analysis of Conor O'Malley's Psyche	32
1.1. Examination of Conor O'Malley's Character	33
1.2. Applying Freudian Psychoanalytic Theory to Conor's Behaviour and Emotions.....	35
2. Part Two: Navigating Dreams and Reality in the Novel	37
2.1. Analysis of Dreams versus Reality in "A Monster Calls"	38
2.2. Summary and Plot Analysis with a Focus on Dream vs. Reality.....	39
2.3. Evaluating How Dreams Contribute to Conor's Psychological Journey and.....	40
Conclusion.....	41
General Conclusion	42
Works Cited	48
الملخص	54

General Introduction

Background

"A Monster Calls" is a novel by American-British author Patrick Ness. The novel revolves around teenage Conor O'Malley's emotional and psychological struggle with his mother's fatal illness and his subsequent journey of self-acceptance and personal growth.

Patrick Ness was born in 1971 in Virginia, U.S., where he was raised until 1999, when he moved to London, UK, and has lived there ever since. Ness has written thirteen published works, ranging from short stories to books, young adult novels, and screenplays, for which he has won a number of awards for his literary skill, provocative storytelling, and complex characters (Ness).

Ness is a renowned author who gained widespread popularity and recognition for his carefully crafted characters and storytelling style. Among his notable works, the *"Chaos Walking"* trilogy and *"More Than This,"* all further solidify his reputation as a master storyteller who skillfully links fantastical elements with profound human experiences (Umme). Ness's *"A Monster Calls"* received widespread acclaim from critics and fellow authors. The Daily Mail hailed the book as "Exceptional," while the Times magazine deemed it "Outstanding." The Independent magazine praised it as "Brave and beautiful," highlighting its emotional depth and narrative strength. Renowned American author and YouTuber John Green added to the praise, describing Patrick Ness as an "insanely beautiful writer" (Ness, *"About me patrickness.com"*). These praises collectively emphasize the novel's impact and the powerful storytelling of its brilliant author.

The book, belonging to the young adult magic realism genre, discusses realistic emotional and psychological themes like loss, death, and grief, and its main theme is the interplay between dreams and reality. Moreover, it contains magical elements like the Monster, which is supposed to be a yew tree that comes to life and visits the protagonist at particular times of the night. The novel

is told through a third-person limited point of view, an interesting choice By Ness to allow the readers to experience the events as they unfold from the perspective of Conor.

1. Statement of the Problem

In this novel, Ness explores the psychological journey of a young boy who struggles to accept his mother's illness. The main theme is the complex interplay between dreams and reality, which reveals Conor's inner conflicts, fears, and desires. However, a gap exists in understanding the role of his dreams within the story and how they reflect and influence his psychological state. The specific role of dreams in shaping Conor's journey needs to be more examined.

Additionally, applying Freudian psychoanalytic theory to "*A Monster Calls*" remains unexplored. This study addresses this research gap by investigating the interplay between dreams and reality, its impact on Conor's psyche, how literary techniques portray dreams and reality, and how they contribute to the narrative and character development.

2. Rationale of the Research

This study's rationale is to explore the concept of dreams vs. reality in the chosen novel. This concept is particularly relevant in "*A Monster Calls*," where Conor's nocturnal meetings with the Yew Tree Monster reflect his inner conflicts and repressed fears. Understanding this duality through the lens of Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory offers a comprehensive framework for analyzing the psychological dimensions of the novel.

3. Aims and Objectives

This research aims to explore the complex and intriguing relationship between dreams and reality in "*A Monster Calls*." It aims to understand how this relationship shapes Conor's psychological journey and apply Freudian psychoanalysis to both Conor's psyche and the novel.

4. Main Research Question

How does the interplay between dreams and reality in Patrick Ness's "*A Monster Calls*" influence Conor O'Malley's psychological and emotional journeys? What insights can Freudian psychoanalytic theory provide in understanding Conor's journey?

5. Methodology

This research uses an analytical method and relies on primary and secondary sources. The primary source is the novel "*A Monster Calls*," secondary sources include scholarly articles, critical essays, and works on Freudian psychoanalysis. The research relied on a literature review of existing literature on dreams versus reality in literature and Freudian psychoanalytic theory. Moreover, the textual analysis section of the study closely reads the novel, focusing on dreams and their impact on the narrative. Additionally, the theoretical section applies Freudian concepts to analyze Conor O'Malley's psyche and his interactions with the dream world. This methodology is essential for the research because it enables the thorough analysis of the novel, its themes, and the protagonist from a Freudian psychoanalytic point of view.

This thesis is divided into three chapters covering a significant section of the work. Chapter one establishes the basic knowledge of the novel and Freudian theory by providing a plot summary, author biography, dreams vs. reality in literature, and Freudian psychoanalysis background.

Chapter two investigates the complex relationship between dreams and reality, analyzing Freudian theory concepts and how to apply them to literary works and exploring dreams and reality in literature; the third chapter provides a thorough Freudian analysis of the protagonist and themes in *"A Monster Calls."*

Chapter One: Theoretical Framework

Introduction

A mother plays an essential role in every child's life, a central point discussed in "*A Monster Calls*" that the book revolves around. The first chapter of this study discusses the novel's events in general. This section gives readers a vivid image of the whole story and helps them gain a clear and comprehensive overview of the plot. Additionally, this chapter discusses "*A Monster Calls*" as a Young-Adult novel and the details referring to this kind of fiction without overlooking the essential part in every piece of writing: the author. This chapter focuses on Patrick Ness, his biography, and his many literary works. Similarly, the chapter sheds light on the central theme of the whole work, Dreams versus Reality, and deeply discusses its significance in literature. Furthermore, a section of the first chapter is dedicated to an essential background on Sigmund Freud and his Psychoanalytic theory to understand the research's purpose entirely.

1. Introduction to "*A Monster Calls*" book and Genre

"*A Monster Calls*" by Patrick Ness is a Young Adult novel categorized into the magical realism genre. It explores themes like hope, love, and loss. In his work, Ness discusses the story of young Conor O'Malley, who has been suffering from reoccurring nightmares since the first time he learned of his mother's illness. While the story does not mention the actual name of the illness, it hints at different signs, like her hair falling off, in addition to other clues, it was fully understood that she had cancer.

One day, after experiencing the same nightmare, Conor sees a strange visitor. At the same time, at 12.07 am, the Yew Tree Monster comes to him as he sees it from his bedroom window. The Monster does not come to hurt Conor; it just suggests telling him three short stories the Yew Tree experienced several centuries ago. After the third one should be Conor's opportunity to share

the fourth story. The Monster continuously visits Conor at 12:07 am to narrate his stories one by one each night it chooses at the same time.

Conor's life takes a serious turn as he lives through the difficult time of his mother's illness as it starts to fall apart. At that time, his mother's health becomes rapidly worsens. Consequently, his grandmother, whom he dislikes, starts to plan his life with her since his mother's days are numbered. Afterwards, he grows apart with his closest friend, Lily, after she accidentally tells his entire school of his family situation. Additionally, Conor's non-existing relationship with his father who live far away from in the States with his new family, adds to his feelings of alienation and loneliness. Conor's life becomes progressively harder and more difficult to navigate. By the end of the three stories, the Monster wants to hear the fourth story that is Conor's nightmare. Conor resists the Monster's request but eventually gives up and is forced to face his nightmare.

The Monster directly changes the setting and places Conor in his nightmare, in which he begins to panic. In his nightmare, Conor's mother appears standing next to the cliff. Another monster grabs her and drags her by the feet down the cliff. Conor quickly grabs her hands as she begins to slip, Conor holds on as strongly as his young body can. After much physical resistance and emotional distress, Conor is forced to let go, falling to her demise and he turns to the Monster weeping for his actions as the Monster tries to explain his actions are only a reflection of his feelings of guilt. The Monster thereby forces Conor to face his nightmare, his feelings, and his actions. This nightmare is not a rare occurrence as Conor relives this horror most nights, all while trying to hide his fears from others and does not want anyone to know because he believes that he is the only person capable of holding on to her. In reality, Conor did the opposite of letting her go.

In fact, despite not believing in the possibility of his mother's death, he keeps clinging to her and remains persistent. Conor wanted her to be relieved of her pain so that he could get rid of

the nightmare that haunted him every night. His yearning for her relief is what made him believe he deserved to be punished. These complex feelings are where the main story lies.

By the end of the nightmare, the Monster shows Conor the complexity of humans, how they struggle to process their feeling, feeling drained after struggling for so long, and how it is inevitable to let them go eventually. After the confrontation with the Monster, Conor naps by the Yew Tree and wakes up at the right time when his grandmother arrives to take him to the hospital. There, Conor holds his mother's hand in the presence of the Monster that's only visible to him, the smell of death closing in to his mother as he finally finds the strength to face his fears and allow himself to grieve losing his mother (Umme).

2. Young Adult Literature

Chris Crowe made courses that discussed his experience as a teacher to remove the ambiguity of what people think about Young Adult literature (YAL) and tried to correct their misconception, which led some parents and teachers to classify YAL as children's literature and consider it only for a certain category like teenagers. Even libraries always made a special place for YAL books but only allowed them for classical literary works. Sometimes, they likely conclude that young adult literature is typically aimed at preteen girls because there were 250 titles on the rack. However, most of them were *Babysitter*, *Sweet Valley Twins*, *Babysitter Club*, and others (Crowe).

Young Adult Literature is a genre that is different from Children's Literature. It appeared in the twentieth century when teens became a significant economic force in the 1930s and rose to prominence in the 1960s. The concept of "young adult literature" is naturally fluid since its core terms "young adult" and "literature" are dynamic, evolving with cultural and societal changes.

During the late 1960s, when it first became popular, it referred to realistic literature set in a contemporary (rather than imagined) current world dealing with concerns, crises, and living conditions relevant to young readers aged 12 to 18. With the growing significance of visual communication, this definition has expanded to include pictorial elements; this is particularly correct when offered in combination with text, as in the case of picture books, comics, and graphic novels. The term "Literature," used to denote fiction, has come to a broader range of new works, which expanded to include new forms of literary nonfiction and poetry, including novels and booklength works in verse.

According to the number of titles evaluated by a major journal, the number of books published for those readers has also grown, possibly by as much as 25 percent, due to these increasingly expansive words. In the same vein, industry expert Albert Greco claims that between 1999 and 2005, sales of young adult books rose by 23%. Since the mid-1990s, young adult literature, written initially as a genre composed mainly of romances and problem novels, has matured into a form of writing that encourages innovation, experimentation, risk-taking, and creativity (Jones).

Young adult literature refers to publications created for readers aged 12 to 18. It frequently acts as a bridge from middle-grade reading to adult fiction. It tells readers stories that are often more complex regarding emotion and content. Books designed primarily for adults but appealing to younger readers can also be considered YA fiction. In contrast, young adult literature (commonly known as YA fiction) covers many of the same adult fiction subjects. Furthermore, the primary protagonists are usually youngsters or teens dealing with issues and facing challenges that differentiate them from adult fiction. Young adult fiction can use any genre, span all genres, and blend them; it can also be contemporary or realistic. Many people believe that YA topics are simpler than those in adult novels. Similarly, the themes used are often alike. What distinguishes one from

the other is how these themes are explored. For instance, both young adult and adult literature can examine romance. On the other hand, adult fiction tends to be more about finding "the one," while young adult fiction is often about first love and highlights its experience (Munarriz).

3. Brief biography on Patrick Ness

Patrick Ness, born on October 17, 1971, is a British-American writer, journalist, and lecturer in London. He has dual citizenship, obtaining British citizenship in 2005 while retaining his American citizenship. He was born at the Fort Belvoir army base near Alexandria, Virginia, where his father served as a drill sergeant in the US Army. His early years were spent in Hawaii until age six, followed by a decade in Washington State. He later moved to Los Angeles to study English Literature at the University of Southern California. After completing his degree, Ness worked as a corporate writer for a cable company. He published his first story in *Genre* magazine in 1997 and began working on his first novel before relocating to London in 1999. Since then, he has authored several novels, including "The Knife of Never Letting Go," his first book for young readers, which received numerous accolades such as the Book-trust Teenage Prize, the Guardian

Award, and the 2008 James Tiptree, Jr. Award. It was also shortlisted for the 2009 Carnegie Medal. In January 2010, he won the 2009 Costa Book Award in the children's book category for "The Ask and the Answer." Ness has taught creative writing at Oxford University and contributed reviews and articles to *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Times Literary Supplement*, *The Sunday Telegraph*, and *The Guardian*. He is among the few authors to have won the Carnegie Medal twice for "A Monster Calls" and "Monsters of Men." He has served as a Fellow of the Royal Literary Fund and was the inaugural Writer in Residence for the Book-trust (Chaos-walking Wikipedia "*Patrick Ness*").

4. Overview of Patrick Ness's Works

Ness's debut novel, "The Crash of Hennington," was published in 2003, followed by his short story collection, "Topics About Which I Know Nothing," in 2004. His first young adult novel, "The Knife of Never Letting Go," won the Guardian Children's Fiction Prize in 2008. "The Ask and the Answer" and "Monsters of Men" succeeded this book, forming the Chaos Walking trilogy.

Additionally, Ness wrote three short stories set in the Chaos Walking universe: the prequels "The New World", "The Wide, Wide Sea," and "Snowscape," which takes place after "Monsters of Men." These short stories are available as free-to-download e-books and were included in the 2013 UK print editions of the novels. "A Monster Calls" began with Irish writer Siobhan Dowd, who had outlined the story before her death from cancer in 2007. After Dowd's passing, Ness was asked by Walker Books, where they shared an editor, Denise Johnstone-Burt, to complete the story based on her notes. Ness's only guideline was to create a book he believed Dowd would have liked. Jim Kay was commissioned to illustrate the book, and they completed it without meeting. Ness won the Carnegie Medal, and Kay won the companion Kate Greenaway Medal for their work, marking the first time a single book received both honours.

On May 7, 2013, it was announced that Ness had authored "Tip of the Tongue," the May e-short featuring the Fifth Doctor and Nyssa as part of Puffin's series of eleven Doctor Who e-shorts celebrating the show's 50th anniversary. His fourth young adult novel, "More Than This," was released on September 5, 2013, and later made the shortlist for the Carnegie Medal in 2015. "The Crane Wife," Ness's third adult novel, was published on December 30, 2014.

In 2014, Ness gave the keynote speech at the Children's and Young Adult Program of the Berlin International Literature Festival. "The Rest of Us Just Live Here" was published on August 25, 2015, in the UK, Ireland, Australia, and New Zealand, and on October 5, 2015, in Canada and

the United States. On October 1, 2015, the BBC announced that Ness would write a Doctor Who spin-off titled "Class." The resulting eight-part series aired on BBC Three's online channel in late 2016 but was cancelled after one season. Ness's novel "Release" was published on May 4, 2017, and he described it as his most personal and intense book. In June 2021, Ness was reported to be working on a prequel script for the Napoleonic Sea adventure movie "Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World," based on the works of Patrick O'Brian. In addition to writing and reviewing for The Daily Telegraph, The Times Literary Supplement, The Sunday Telegraph, and The Guardian, Ness teaches creative writing at the University of Oxford. Furthermore, being the inaugural Writer in Residence for BookTrust, he has been a Fellow of the Royal Literary Fund.

Ness was chosen as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature in 2023 ("Patrick Ness Biography")

4.1. Chaos Walking Trilogy 2008-2010

Described by Publishers Weekly as "one of the most significant works of young adult science fiction in recent years," the Chaos Walking trilogy consists of three highly acclaimed novels.

This trilogy is a series of young adult dystopian novels by award-winning author Patrick Ness. The trilogy's title originates from a notable quote in the first book (part 1, chapter 4): "The Noise is a man unfiltered, and without a filter, a man is just chaos walking." The narrative focuses on Todd Hewitt, a boy from Prentiss town, and his companion, Viola Eade. The first book begins just a month before Todd's thirteenth birthday. The plot follows Todd's journey through the New World as he seeks answers and challenges the schemes of Prentiss town's Mayor, David Prentiss. Patrick Ness has described "The Knife of Never Letting Go" as focusing on the theme of flight, "The Ask and the Answer" as addressing tyranny, and "Monsters of Men" as exploring the concept

of war. Additionally, the series delves into mature themes such as gender politics, redemption, the nature of war, and the often-blurry line between good and evil (Chaos-Walking Wiki – Chaos Walking Trilogy).

4.1.1. The Knife of Never Letting Go (2008)

"The Knife of Never Letting Go" is a dystopian novel set on an alien planet called "New World," where Todd Hewitt, about to turn thirteen, must flee his settlement of Prentiss town. In this town, only men live, believing all women perished in a war with native aliens who broadcast their thoughts uncontrollably due to a "Noise germ." Todd discovers a silent area in the swamps, previously unknown to him, and finds Viola, a girl immune to Noise. Together, they evade pursuit and confront Mayor Prentiss, who seeks control of New World. Todd eventually surrenders to Mayor Prentiss to protect Viola (Paden).

"The Knife of Never Letting Go" is narrated in the first-person by Todd, the protagonist, who speaks directly to the reader throughout the story. Todd's narration is intimate and includes personal reflections and emotional appeals, asking the reader not to judge him during vulnerable moments. His language is influenced by his upbringing in Prentiss town, where formal education was rejected, resulting in phonetic spelling and unique expressions. This distinctive style adds depth to Todd's character and provides a gritty, authentic tone to the narrative ("The Knife of Never Letting Go Summary").

4.1.2. The Ask and the Answer (2009)

It is the second book; in Patrick Ness's novel "The Ask and the Answer," young protagonists Todd Hewitt and Viola Eade find strength in their love amidst escalating conflicts in a new town. Separated by their adversaries—David Prentiss and Mistress Coyle—they reunite to confront the oppressive leaders. Despite their efforts to overthrow Prentiss and Coyle, their plans are disrupted

by new threats. Prentiss interrogates Todd for Viola's identity to gain favor with incoming settlers, while Viola, recovering from a gunshot, seeks information about Prentiss's plans. As tensions rise, Viola aligns with Coyle after witnessing injustice, leading Todd to realize they must take control from unfit leaders and forge their own path ("The Ask and the Answer Summary").

In this narrative, told through alternating first-person perspectives of Viola and Todd, each chapter is distinctly marked by the character's name and differentiated by unique fonts. This dual narration is pivotal as Viola and Todd frequently find themselves separated, and their individual experiences profoundly shape their reactions and choices. While a third-person omniscient narrator could have conveyed the events, the use of first-person perspectives provides a more intimate and personal exploration of their distinct viewpoints and journeys throughout the story ("Patrick Ness Writing Styles in The Ask and the Answer").

4.1.3. Monsters of Men (2010)

In the thrilling conclusion of the Chaos Walking trilogy, tensions escalate as an army of Spackle and The Answer's forces converge on New Prentiss town. Todd releases Mayor Prentiss to aid in defense, while Viola tries desperately to warn incoming settlers. Amidst battles and betrayals, Todd takes command and navigates fragile alliances. Peace negotiations are fraught with peril, with unexpected twists and personal sacrifices. Ultimately, Todd and Viola face off against the increasingly unstable Mayor Prentiss in a dramatic showdown by the ocean, leading to poignant resolutions and heartbreaking losses. The novel concludes with Todd's uncertain fate, his consciousness fluctuating as Viola remains steadfast by his side, hoping for his recovery and their reunion ("Monsters of Men Plot Summary").

The novel unfolds through first-person perspectives of three characters: Viola, Todd, and the Spackle known as 1017 or The Return. Viola shares her journey with the scout ship and

interactions with Mistress Coyle's followers, while Todd details his experiences under Mayor Prentiss' leadership. This dual narrative is essential as it depicts opposing human factions. The Spackle's viewpoint, through *The Return*, provides a unique third dimension, offering insights into the native alien species' experiences and motivations, enriching the overall narrative with diverse perspectives (“Patrick Ness Writing Styles in *Monster of Men*”).

5. Significance of Dreams versus Reality

Psychoanalytic therapy involves re-narrating an individual's life, highlighting the importance of the unconscious and thought processes. This approach posits that awareness of these processes is therapeutic and crucial for mental health. Psychoanalysis emphasizes motives, particularly those that are hidden or disguised, which aids in understanding literature on both the level of writing and character actions. It focuses on the subject, exploring the relationships between meaning and identity about psychic and cultural forces. Psychoanalysis is essential in contemporary understandings of reading, meaning, and the relationship between literature and culture (Mahroof 41).

Dreams and reality are two contrasting concepts that frequently intersect in our lives. Dreams stem from our imagination, desires, and aspirations, while reality represents the actual state of things.

While dreams can offer hope, motivation, and inspiration, reality keeps us anchored in the practical aspects of life. This essay delves into the relationship between dreams and reality, exploring how they can complement and conflict. Dreams often ignite our longing for adventure and discovery, urging us to venture beyond our comfort zones and embrace new experiences. Whether it involves traveling to distant lands, embarking on a career change, or a journey of self-discovery, dreams compel us to explore the unknown. However, it is essential to recognize that

dreams alone are insufficient; they must be grounded in reality, considering practical factors such as financial resources, responsibilities, and feasibility.

Another pertinent aspect is Aesthetic Criticism. Dreams frequently involve imagining a more beautiful and ideal world, prompting us to appreciate and envision the aesthetic dimensions of life. Whether through artistic creation, interior design, or personal style, dreams inspire us to celebrate beauty and aesthetics. Nevertheless, reality often imposes constraints and limitations that challenge our artistic aspirations. By navigating the interaction between dreams and reality, we can strike a balance between artistic expression and pragmatism.

Moreover, dreams intersect with the realm of Mental Health. They can offer an escape from the pressures and stresses of everyday life, providing a source of hope and optimism. However, when dreams diverge too far from reality, they may lead to disillusionment, frustration, and potential mental health issues. Maintaining a healthy equilibrium between dreams and reality is crucial, ensuring our aspirations are attainable and conducive to our psychological well-being. In summary, dreams and reality are intricately intertwined in multifaceted ways. While dreams inspire us, kindle hope, and drive our quest for exploration, they must coexist harmoniously with the practicalities of life. Aesthetic criticism and mental health intersect significantly with dreams and reality, underscoring the importance of balancing artistic vision with practical considerations and safeguarding our mental well-being. By navigating this delicate equilibrium, we can pursue personal growth, fulfillment, and a meaningful life journey (Richards).

Conclusion

The analysis of "A Monster Calls" by Patrick Ness reveals the profound impact of a mother's role in a child's life, encapsulating themes of love, loss, and the struggle between dreams and reality. Through the character of Conor O'Malley, the novel intricately weaves a narrative that

dives into the psychological torment and emotional growth of a young boy facing the imminent death of his mother. This study's first chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the novel's events, offering readers a vivid image of the plot and its central themes. "*A Monster Calls*," as a piece of Young Adult literature, is a testament to the genre's ability to tackle complex and mature themes. The novel is a prime example of how YA fiction transcends mere storytelling to address profound issues relevant to young and adult readers. Through his masterful storytelling and deep psychological insight, Patrick Ness creates a narrative that resonates on multiple levels, making it a significant work in the realm of YA literature. Patrick Ness's biography and his work, especially the Chaos Walking trilogy, further underscore his prowess in writing for young audiences. His ability to blend elements of magical realism with intense emotional and psychological themes makes his works compelling and thought-provoking. Much like "*A Monster Calls*," the trilogy explores the depths of human emotion and the complexities of growing up in a challenging world. The second chapter of this study investigates the complex relationship between dreams and reality. The chapter provides a comprehensive explanation of the two concepts and their significance in literature and relevance to Freud's psychoanalytic theory.

The second chapter first examines the concept of dreams versus reality in literature, explores Freudian psychoanalytic theory and its application to literature, analyses key concepts in psychoanalysis such as the id, ego, superego, and the unconscious mind, discusses how dreams reflect reality and vice versa, and finally examines the literary techniques used to portray dreams and reality.

Chapter Two: Investigating the Interplay between Dreams and Reality

Introduction

Dreams and reality have a unique connection that has always inspired and fascinated authors and readers alike. In literature, narratives depict interesting stories that usually blur the lines between dreams and reality, where the unconscious mind is linked with the conscious world.

The second chapter explores the complex interplay between dreams and reality within literature. This research examines this interaction relying on Freudian psychoanalytic theory and aims to provide a deeper understanding of the psychological complexities of the human experience. Moreover, the chapter includes investigating the concept of dreams versus reality in literature and navigates through various literary techniques employed to depict the intersection of inner worlds and external realities. The research's approach relies heavily on Freudian Psychoanalysis Theory to explore vital concepts such as the id, ego, superego and unconscious mind; this attempt is to clarify their significance in comprehending the subconscious forces that shape human behaviour and perception. Moreover, this chapter studies the relationship between dreams and reality by exploring how the subconscious manifests in the conscious world. This part of the research attempts to uncover the symbolic language used to express inner truths and externalise them by carefully analysing the literary techniques used by authors to depict dreams and reality in literature.

1. The Concept of Dreams versus Reality in Literature

Literature frequently inspires exciting explorations of the duality between dreams and reality and motivates readers to look closely at the profound aspects of human consciousness. Literary works across various cultures explore the complicated interaction between these two realms. They often employ them as main themes to inquire into existential issues, psychological dilemmas, and the fundamental nature of subjective perception. For example, in "The Metamorphosis" by Franz Kafka, the protagonist deals with identity, alienation, and the lines

between dreams and reality (Vasquez, 2021). Another work that deals with similar themes is "The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle" by Haruki Murakami, a Japanese novel in which the protagonist embarks on a journey to find his missing wife as he encounters dreamlike events and struggles to differentiate such events from reality. This novel deals with identity, subconsciousness, and dreams vs. reality ("The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle, Haruki Murakami").

At the heart of this study lies a fundamental question: What is reality? Reality is subjective because everyone views it differently based on their experiences, opinions, and feelings (BautzePicron 52). On the other hand, dreams are a place where the subconscious speaks, reasoning and reason are less clear, and imagination rules (Bautze-Picron 10–12). Literature thrives in this liminal place, creating stories that move between the real and the imagined.

Literary works often depict the interaction between dreams and reality using different literary techniques. Symbolism, metaphor, allegory, and surrealism are among the literary techniques that authors use to help capture the intricate nature of dreams and their influence on human consciousness. Literature, spanning ancient myths and folklore to modern and postmodern novels, is a reflective tool that strives to capture the essence of reality and the complex human mind.

When authors compose narratives on dreams vs. reality, they frequently discuss the inherently tense connection between these two worlds. Dreams, usually ethereal and symbolic, often challenge reality and test its stability, making both characters and readers question the truth and how well they see it. On the other hand, reality acts as the stabilising force that provides the traditional nature of dreams with a sense of structure and context.

One of the best literary works that best describes the explorations of dreams vs. reality is Lewis Carroll's "*Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*." Alice's journey down the rabbit hole is how the author invites the readers to a wonderfully magical world in which logic and reason are subverted. In this world Carroll created, the laws of reason are left behind in the real world outside the rabbit hole, and reality is constantly changing, making it difficult to define (Quinton). The novel explores the subconscious mind's complex structures that blur the distinction between reality and dreams to finally reveal fundamental truths regarding existence, autonomy, identity, and reality. The concept of dreams vs. reality in literature is frequently connected to broader philosophical questions about human nature, perception, and consciousness.

2. Exploring Freudian Psychoanalytic Theory in Literature

Freudian Psychoanalytic theory has had a significant impact on literature and literary analysis. Sigmund Freud developed psychoanalytic theory during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It suggests that childhood's unconscious desires, demands, and inner conflicts heavily influence human behaviours. Researchers and academics frequently use this theory to better understand the complex human mind, as depicted in literary works.

Freudian Psychoanalytic theory is a tool to analyse characters, narratives, and themes by exploring unconscious motivations and desires. Characters transcend their status as mere symbolic figures on book pages; they become mediums for examining and analysing the complex aspects of the human condition. Literary scholars use critical analysis and interpretation to determine the hidden meanings between the lines of various literary works and reveal the subconscious drives that shape character behaviour and narrative intentions.

The id is one of the most essential concepts in Freud's theory. The id is the primary natural drive of the psyche; these drives include pleasure and survival (Freud, *The Ego and the Id* 14, 19). The literary characters that usually have issues with their id urges show signs of irrational or impulsive behaviour and challenge social norms. One good example of such characters is Shakespeare's "Hamlet", in which the main character, Hamlet, faces inner struggles and indecisiveness that can be analysed as his id fighting against the restraints of his superego (superego is the moral conscience).

Another concept in Freud's theory is the ego. The ego mediates between the id, superego, and the external world. It tries to maintain psychological balance by balancing different needs (Freud, *The Ego and the Id* 5-6). Characters in literature who have to deal with their ego and confront external conflicts are depicted as people who try to understand themselves and struggle to reach their full potential by balancing their needs despite facing external conflicts.

Another concept in Freud's theory is the superego, also called moral conscience. This concept represents the social norms, beliefs, and ethical standards determining how they should act (Freud, *The Ego and the Id* 28,29,34). In literature, characters face moral issues and struggle with guilt or shame. They also have to deal with their superego. Many of the conflicts and drama in literature result from the inherent tension between the id's urges and the superego's limitations, which shows the complexities of human morality.

The psychoanalytic theory places its focus on how the unconsciousness shapes human thinking and behaviour; as Freud asserts, dreams, slips of the tongue, and many manifestations of the subconscious can show hidden aspects of the psyche such as deep desires, fears and concerns (Petocz pp. 151–153; 168). Writers use literary devices like metaphors and symbolism to depict how the unconscious mind works and encourage readers to look behind the apparent meanings and

read between the lines. Freudian psychoanalytic theory provides a great tool to interpret characters, themes, and narratives and explore the complexities of the human psyche as portrayed in literature. Researchers and academics could gain a deeper understanding of the universal truths of the human condition and the timeless appeal of literature as a mirror reflecting the depths of the human mind.

3. Analysis of Key Concepts

Freudian Psychoanalysis Theory is one of the many ways to investigate the complex human psyche. This theory provides insight into the relationship between the conscious and the unconscious aspects impacting human behaviour, feelings, and thinking. This section examines Freud's more critical psychological concepts and how they relate to literary analysis.

3.1. Id

Freud defines the id as the primitive and instinctive part of the psyche that is mainly driven by pleasure. It operates based on achieving immediate gratification of desires and neglecting any regard for social norms or consequences. The id is characterised by impulsiveness, strong desires, and seeking to fulfil human primal needs like hunger, thirst, and sexual gratification (Freud, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* 53–54).

In literature, authors create characters who struggle with id impulses and manifest irrational behaviours. Such characters could act on their basic instincts, are driven by their primal desires and impulses, and disregard the consequences of their actions. Analysing these traits and how these characters portray the id would provide much-needed insights into the raw aspects of human nature and the tension between instinctual desires and social limitations.

3.2. Ego

The ego mediates between the id, superego, and external reality, striving to balance conflicting demands while maintaining psychological balance (Freud, *The Ego and the Id* 32). It operates on the reality principle, seeking to satisfy the id's desires in a socially acceptable manner. The ego employs defence mechanisms such as repression, denial, and rationalisation to manage internal conflicts and cope with external pressure (Freud, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* 4, 10).

In literature, protagonists often navigate the complexities of their egos as they confront external challenges and internal conflicts. The characters' journeys symbolise the struggle to achieve oneself and balance inner complexities with external social pressures. Analysing these struggles and characters results in a deeper understanding of the ego and its depiction in literary works.

3.3. Superego

Freud defines the superego as representing the internal moral conscience, including social norms, values, and moral codes that influence human behaviour. The superego serves as a regulator of morality, determined to uphold moral principles and ideals (Freud, *The Ego and the Id* 33–34). Freud asserts that the superego carries guilt, shame, and anxiety as a response to supposed moral wrongdoings, thus shaping individual behaviour and moral decision-making (Petocz pp. 223–24).

In literature, the superego manifests in characters struggling as they confront moral dilemmas and feelings of guilt or shame. The link between the id's impulses and the superego's restrictions ignites much of the conflict and drama in literary works, offering insight into the complexities of human morality and ethics.

3.4. Unconscious Mind

According to Freud, the unconscious mind holds all the repressed memories, desires, and emotions that influence conscious thinking and behaviour. The unconscious acts as a storage for primitive urges, trauma, and any unresolved conflicts that can significantly alter human behaviour (Freud, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* 19–20). As Freud asserts that dreams are the "royal road to the unconscious" because, along with slips of the tongue and many other subconscious manifestations, they are the gateway through which the unconscious mind can be accessed (Hendrika 40; Freud, "The Interpretation of Dreams." 59).

Symbolisms and metaphors are standard literary devices that authors frequently use to depict the unconscious mind and encourage readers to read between the lines and discover deeper meanings. Analysing how literary characters portray unconsciousness provides valuable insights into the deeper aspects of the psyche and complex human behaviour.

4. How Dreams Reflect Reality and Vice Versa

The interplay between dreams and reality is one of the most exciting themes to analyse in literature. Since dreams are a product of the unconscious mind, they frequently reflect a person's aspirations, fears, and concerns. Reality, on the other hand, influences the themes and content of dreams and also shapes people's behaviours and thoughts.

Dreams usually revolve around subjects from reality, such as incorporating familiar faces, places, and events into the dreaming process. Dreams' actual content is most likely influenced by recent experiences, unresolved issues, or deeply rooted feelings in the waking hours of the day. Moreover, dreams act as a form of fulfilling an individual's wishes that offers an outlet for desires

or secret fantasies that are either repressed or unattainable in reality (Bautze-Picron pp. 95–96, 6, 14).

Through psychoanalytic theory, Freud suggests that dreams are a window into the unconscious mind, allowing all suppressed thoughts, emotions, and impulses to surface in symbolic form (Hendrika 40,49). By analysing the content and symbolism of dreams, psychologists and literary scholars alike seek to understand the workings of the psyche and the motivation that drives human behaviour.

On the other hand, reality and waking life influence the content and theme of dreams and shape people's behaviours and thoughts in waking life (Hendrika 53–54). External incentives like stress, trauma, or concern can heavily influence the dream world and manifest as nightmares, anxiety dreams, or reoccurring bad dreams. Chronic stress, for example, could cause people to have chaotic dreams filled with conflict and feelings of helplessness, reflecting the stressful environment they are experiencing in their waking life.

Moreover, cultural, social, and environmental factors play a significant role in shaping the content and symbolism of dreams. People from different cultures display unique dreams and symbols related to their experiences (Strauss). Accordingly, social norms and expectations can also impact dreams and reflect social attitudes regarding gender, sexuality, and identity.

Literature is filled with examples of dreams reflecting reality and vice versa. In "The Metamorphosis" by Franz Kafka and "The Great Gatsby" by F. Scott Fitzgerald, dreams act as metaphors for the existential anguish and social alienation experienced by the protagonists. Likewise, in Patrick Ness's "A Monster Calls," dreams and nightmares both become a means to

explore the protagonist's inner confusion, turmoil, and emotional struggles in the face of trauma and unprocessed grief.

The relationship between dreams and reality is complicated, as it contains many psychological, cultural, and literary aspects. Dreams reflect reality and offer hints into the workings of the human psyche and the unseen depths of unconsciousness. Similarly, reality influences the themes of dreams and shapes individuals' experiences in their waking lives. Exploring the dynamic interplay between dreams and reality provides deeper insights into the human condition and the mysteries of the mind.

5. Examining Literary Techniques Used to Portray Dreams and Reality

Various literary techniques are often used to represent dreams and reality in literature. These techniques, such as stylistic devices and narrative structures, are used by writers to distort the lines between the conscious and unconscious worlds, thus creating a liminal place where dreams and reality meet. Critical literary techniques are used to analyse this section of the research.

5.1. Symbolism

Symbolism, a powerful literary device, adds deeper meanings to characters, objects, and events. Authors usually use this device to arouse emotional tone and thematic depth and clarify the complex interaction between dreams and reality (Fadaee 20–21). In Fitzgerald's "The Great Gatsby", for instance, the green light at the end of Daisy's pier represents Gatsby's unfulfilled ambitions and goals, thus capturing the elusive nature of the American Dream. This light is an object that symbolises Gatsby's hope regarding Daisy and also carries an emotional tone, as it evokes his feelings for her.

5.2. Metaphor

Another effective literary technique is using metaphors to communicate intangible concepts and feelings. Authors often use metaphorical language to depict the dreamlike features of reality, blurring the boundaries between the two (Fadaee 20–21). For example, in William Shakespeare's "Macbeth," the famous line "Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage" metaphorically represents the transitory nature of existence and the deceptive nature of reality.

5.3. Allegory

Allegory is another literary technique; characters, events, and settings represent abstract ideas or moral principles. Authors often employ allegorical storytelling to explore themes related to dreams and reality, using symbolic narratives to convey deeper truths and extract hidden meaning (Unger). In George Orwell's "Animal Farm", for example, the farm animals represent the different social classes and political ideologies and act as symbolic representations of the realities of power and corruption

5.4. Stream of Consciousness

Stream of consciousness is a remarkable narrative technique that genuinely captures the continuous flow of thoughts in the mind of a literary character (Noor et al. 107–09). Authors often use stream-of-consciousness narration to depict the subjective experience of dreams and reality, immersing readers in the inner mind of the protagonist.

For example, in James Joyce's "Ulysses," the stream-of-consciousness narration allows readers to experience the fragmented thoughts and disillusionment of the protagonist, Leopold Bloom, as he walks the streets of Dublin thinking.

Conclusion

This exploration of dreams and reality in literature uncovers a deep connection. Freudian psychoanalytic theory investigates crucial concepts like the id, ego, and superego, revealing how they shape characters and narratives alike. The study then reviews how dreams mirror and are influenced by reality, revealing them as windows into the subconscious. Lastly, it explores the literary techniques employed to portray these themes, such as symbolism and metaphor. The following chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section explores the protagonist's psyche, Conor O'Malley, while the second chapter analyses the novel's concept of dreams and reality.

Chapter Three: Psychoanalytic Analysis of “A Monster Calls”

Introduction

Patrick Ness's "*A Monster Calls*" is about a young 13-year-old boy named Conor O'Malley dealing with his emotional struggle in accepting his mother's cancer diagnosis and possible death. Conor battles with the idea of losing his mother, thus beginning an emotional and psychological journey to reach self-healing. The novel blurs the line between Conor's dreams and reality and plays with the interplay between dreams and reality, thus providing psychological depth and emotional complexity. This chapter applies Freudian Psychoanalytic Theory to analyse the protagonist's psyche and unveil all the character traits and inner conflicts. This section of the research uses psychoanalytic to explore Conor's subconscious desires and unresolved issues and how they shape his behaviour and self-discovery journey.

1. Part One: Analysis of Conor O'Malley's Psyche

Conor O'Malley, the protagonist in Patrick Ness's *A Monster Calls*, is a well-crafted character who portrays the complex human psyche in all its depth. This section of the research employs Freudian psychoanalysis to examine the complexity of Conor's inner world, character traits, and inner conflicts.

As Freud suggests, the psyche is a source of constant inner conflict between the id, ego, and superego. The id represents unconscious desires and instincts, the superego represents moral standards, and the ego mediates between the id and reality. Freud suggests that repression plays a key role in the psyche, and it operates unconsciously, with the ego and superego playing crucial roles in managing internal conflicts to protect a person from distressing thinking (Petocz pp. 109–11). Accordingly, Conor's psyche is a complex structure of feelings and experiences that are shaped by the pending fact that his mother is dying and everybody is trying to ease his pain. One of the

main inner struggles that Conor refuses to admit or face is what eventually leads him to break down as he faces the truth about his mother's terminal illness.

Analysing this character will uncover multiple layers of vulnerability, guilt, turmoil, and confusion that Conor goes through during the events of this novel. Each of the feelings adds a layer to Conor's subconscious desires and unresolved conflicts, all reflected in his troubled behaviour and emotional outbursts. By peeling each of the layers of his psyche, this research will understand the motivations behind his actions and the profound impact of his internal struggles on his external reality.

1.1. Examination of Conor O'Malley's Character

To properly understand Conor's psyche, it is essential to investigate his character traits, motivations, and inner conflicts.

Conor O'Malley is portrayed as a multifaceted character with numerous feelings and experiences contributing to his personality's depth and intrigue. Throughout the novel, he is continuously shown to be a sensitive, impressionable, and thoughtful young boy who is dealing with the fact that his mother might be dying of cancer.

Although Conor is only 13 years old, he shows a remarkable sense of resilience and strength, especially in facing his mother's illness and the subsequent emotional turmoil, with courage and determination. Conor cooks, cleans, takes out the trash, gets himself ready for school, and manages to do all this in the early morning hours without waking his sick mother. His strength and determination are also further demonstrated by his constant belief that his mother will be okay if she just takes her medications and remains strong. Of course, this belief is also a little delusional

and too optimistic considering her serious condition, and Conor tries to repress this knowledge to shield himself from experiencing this pain.

Another character trait is Conor's genuine feelings of isolation and loneliness. Throughout his school days, he struggles to connect with other kids and even teachers. On some days, he goes through entire days without even speaking to anyone, as the other kids avoid him, and teachers do not expect any homework or classroom participation from him in an attempt to be understanding of his condition. This treatment adds to his feelings of alienation as everyone tiptoes around him.

Moreover, Conor experiences all his inner conflicts, which manifest in his interaction with people around him and his internal monologues, which provide readers with a chance to examine his emotional turmoil and thinking.

The primary motivation driving Conor is his need to find a coping mechanism to deal with his mother's condition and the possibility of her demise. Conor's desperate desire to hold on to his mother and refusing to lose her are more motivations that drive him. In addition to his deep fear of letting his mother slip away from him, Conor was initially too hesitant to accept the possibility of her death. However, throughout the novel, his motivations progress even further while he struggles to understand his inner conflicts and feelings of love, loss, fear, acceptance, and closure.

Furthermore, many important characters in the novel, including the grandmother, father, and the Monster, influence Conor's drives, with each interaction offering him new challenges to his understanding of life and death.

The inner conflicts Conor O'Malley faces mainly revolve around his mother's cancer diagnosis and her approaching death, his struggles between feelings of denial, anger, compromise, desperation, and hanging on to the hope of a miracle. Conor's feelings of guilt add to his internal

struggle; as he battles these conflicting emotions, he also wonders if he is the one responsible for his mother's sickness somehow. Moreover, Conor faces the challenge of trying to balance out his desires with the expectations of others, which also adds to his inner conflicts and makes him feel inadequate and seek validation from others.

Patrick Ness's protagonist, Conor O'Malley, is described with depth and emotional complexity. The character's main issues are his mother's illness and his fear of abandonment as he battles inner conflicts and tries to accept his reality. This study investigates the character qualities, drives, and inner conflicts to reveal Conor's emotional journey in facing loss, fear, death, and denial.

1.2. Applying Freudian Psychoanalytic Theory to Conor's Behaviour and Emotions

This part of the research explores Freudian Psychoanalytic analysis of Conor O'Malley's character, emotions, and consequent behaviours. From a Psychoanalytic point of view, the current study provides a view into the human psyche since the protagonist's character deals with realistic experiences and valid emotions of grief and loss. Through the protagonist, this novel covers significant emotional issues such as fear of loss, abandonment, death, and subconscious desires. As previously mentioned, Freud asserts that the psyche is divided into the id, the ego, and the superego. Conor O'Malley's psyche will be analysed according to Freud's division of the psyche.

Freud suggests that the id is the part of the psyche that contains human primal desires and drives and mainly operates on the principles of getting pleasure, survival, and avoiding pain (Freud, *The Ego and the Id* pp. 10-14). Applying this in Conor's case, the id represents his unconscious, deep, emotional responses and desires. Conor's id motivates his feelings of denial and anger towards his mother's illness as a defence mechanism to protect him from feeling other

unmanageable feelings like fear or sadness. His id is protecting him from his painful reality and manifesting his deep desire for everything to return to normal before his mother's diagnosis. This concept manifests in Conor's inability to admit his frequent nightmares, his denial of his mother's serious condition, and his refusal to discuss his mother's illness with anyone.

Freud claims that the ego works as a mediator that balances the id's desires and external reality. The ego operates to provide the id's desires in a morally and socially acceptable way (Freud, *The Ego and the Id* 6). Conor's ego is evident in trying to manage the id's desires (denial and anger) and express them appropriately while maintaining a sense of normality in his chaotic life. The ego thus helps Conor channel his anger towards anyone except his mother, such as his classmates for avoiding him, his grandmother for taking care of his mother instead of him, and his father for abandoning him. Additionally, the ego helps Conor keep and externalise his denial by allowing him to remain in denial about his mother's serious condition to shield him from being overwhelmed by the pain of grief and loss. Denial is a tricky defence mechanism because of how unstable it could be; Conor realises there is something wrong but refuses to admit or face it, making denial only a temporary shield. Despite all his troubles, Conor's denial forces him to try and keep any normal sense in his life by keeping a brave face and continuing his daily life; for example, Conor keeps acting normal as teachers and peers treat him differently, allows kids to bully him, manifesting a need to cope in his interactions with the Monster persona he created as an attempt to make himself confront his feeling and the truths he was avoiding.

The superego embodies the inner moral compass and ethical code. This concept represents social norms and expectations (Petocz 224). Basically, the superego acts like a conscience that guides behaviour and dictates right from wrong. Applying the superego to Conor's character manifests as his feelings of guilt and blaming himself for his mother's illness and perceived failure.

Conor believes that he failed his mother by his inability to ease her suffering and feels guilty for secretly wanting to wish her suffering would come to an end. He sees these feelings as betraying his mother, causing his yearning for punishment. Thus, he subconsciously conjures the yew tree as a final attempt to heal himself, confront his feelings, and accept his mother's painful reality.

This novel has heavy emotional and psychological tensions arising from Conor's id, ego, and superego interplay. As the id pushes Conor towards feeling angry and denying his reality, his superego punishes him and guilt him into confronting reality. At the same time, the ego tries to externalise his id appropriately and accept reality simultaneously. The Monster's stories are tales to guide and help Conor reconcile all the conflicting sections of his psyche, thus leading him to a complete understanding of his emotions and subsequent actions.

Each section of Conor's psyche plays a significant role in shaping his feelings and triggering his behaviours. Understanding how these parts interact and impact each other helps us understand Conor's journey from a psychoanalytic perspective. His id represents his raw feelings and desires, his ego manages these feelings and finds a realistic outlet for them, and his superego enforces moral codes, leading him to confront his fears and denials. Resolving his inner conflicts and accepting his feelings and reality ultimately leads Conor O'Malley to character development and contributes to his emotional growth.

2. Part Two: Navigating Dreams and Reality in the Novel

Dreams vs. reality is a recurring motif in "*A Monster Calls*," woven seamlessly into the narrative to underscore Conor O'Malley's emotional journey and psychological turmoil. By carefully examining key instances where dreams intersect with reality, we uncover layers of meaning and symbolism that enrich our understanding of Conor's inner world.

2.1. Analysis of Dreams versus Reality in "*A Monster Calls*"

This novel contains numerous examples of the interplay of dreams and reality. One significant case is the Yew Tree Monster in Conor's dreams. This tree is beside a church facing Conor's kitchen window, overseeing a graveyard. At precisely 12.07, the tree usually comes to life and speaks to Conor, who continuously struggles to differentiate whether it is a vivid dream or real. As the story progresses, the Yew Tree Monster leaves physical proof that it is more than a figment of Conor's imagination, and it leaves behind leaves and scratches, making it impossible to dismiss its presence. As it becomes increasingly clear that the Monster could be real, the lines between dreams and reality become more blurred, thus distorting Conor's subconscious fears and the reality of his mother's illness.

Conor's nightmares are a manifestation of his inner fears and concerns, in which his dreams frequently have odd and upsetting images reflecting his deep-rooted anxiety, abandonment and loss of his mother. With the narrative evolving, his nightmares become increasingly intense, reflecting the increasing emotional turmoil he feels during his waking. In a sense, his nightmares are becoming a part of his waking life, and vice versa, thus blurring the lines between his dreams and reality.

Despite Conor dreaming of chilling and bizarre events, they do not overshadow the harsh reality Conor has to live in his waking life. "*A Monster Calls*" depicts how his mother's illness has a devastating impact on Conor's psychological state of mind and describes the nature of his raw feelings and the changes he has to go through in coping with her hospitalisation. While Conor initially conjures the Yew Tree Monster as his own way of seeking solace in his dreams, he eventually finds himself forced to confront the painful reality of his mother's weakening health and

the inevitability of her death in real life, thus making his dreams and reality two means to one end that is to help him face his fear and process his grief.

Dreams vs. reality is a central theme in this novel that adds to the emotional depth and accentuates the transitional phase Conor is experiencing. This theme helps readers relate to Conor and better understand his journey. The Monster symbolises Conor's yearning for guidance; he called this Monster to teach him how to accept and process his grief. Likewise, the recurring nightmare he experiences symbolises his deep fear of losing his mother. This nightmare provides a closer look at Conor's psyche and emotional state of mind.

2.2. Summary and Plot Analysis with a Focus on Dream vs. Reality

"*A Monster Calls*" by Patrick Ness is the story of a young boy trying to cope with his mother's illness. The story unfolds as Conor begins to experience vivid nightmares that reflect his harsh reality, inner fears, and deep desires. His dreams seem to intensify as his daily life becomes increasingly complex, emotional, and chaotic, thus playing a critical role in shaping Conor's psychological state and the narrative's direction.

The story starts with Conor's frequent nightmares, which he does not allow himself to think about and tries to shrug off. This is the first time the Yew Tree Monster visits him; this Monster comes in the form of an ancient yew tree, only bigger and taller, and speaks in coded messages and gloomy warnings. Interestingly enough, Conor was never afraid of this monstrous entity. Initially he believed it was only a dream. However, the persistent presence of the Monster and the physical evidence forced Conor to confront his inner conflicts and reach the truth about this Monster and the real reason it came to him.

As the story goes on, Conor's dreams become progressively connected to his waking life, further blurring the line between his dreams and his reality. The Monster's visits and discussions influence Conor's emotional journey, compelling him to accept his deepest fears and confront his insecurities. Conor's interactions with the Monster help him deal with his emotional turmoil and lead to the fundamental issue of his mother's approaching death.

Many of the plot's key events happen in Conor's dreams, revealing the deep layers of his psyche and psychological state. These dreams offer a place where Conor can work through his grief and find meaning in his life during the pain and despair he endures in his waking life. Basically, his dreams provide an escape from his current situation, a refuge from his harsh reality where he can safely express his feelings and thoughts without fearing judgment or punishment.

Dream scenes are smoothly incorporated into the narrative adding layers of symbolism and metaphor. Each of Conor's dreams, from his nightmares to the strange Monster visits, offers closer looks at his subconscious mind and psychological turmoil, serving as a powerful instrument to highlight themes of loss, acceptance, and the transformative power of storytelling.

2.3. Evaluating How Dreams Contribute to Conor's Psychological Journey and Character Development

As already established, dreams are crucial in shaping Conor O'Malley's psychological journey and character development as they offer a refuge for him to unload his repressed feelings. Conor's dream is the tool that allows him to understand his inner conflicts and process his mother's sickness to reach emotional maturity and psychological stability.

One of the main aims of Conor's dreams is to provide a setting in which he can process his grief and confront his innermost fear of loss and abandonment in a safe environment created by his

subconscious. The Yew Tree Monster, for example, represents Conor's deep fear of losing his mother and reflects his subconscious concern for her illness. When Conor is forced to confront the Monster and his nightmare finally, he is also forced to confront his denial and the inescapable possibility of his mother's death.

Moreover, dreams represent an escape from the painful reality of Conor's waking life and allow him to escape into his own imagination, creating an alternate world in which Conor controls his life and feelings. The Monster's visits represent Conor's need for solace and guidance during his most vulnerable time. These interactions give him valuable knowledge regarding himself and life in general, giving him the strength to face his fears and accept his mother's fate.

On Conor's psychological journey, dreams play a crucial role in his character development and personal growth as they reveal the true depth of his troubles. Through living the alternative reality in his dreams, Conor learns to face his fears, accept his feelings, and process his grief. This experience makes Conor a stranger, more resilient, and stable in facing hardships.

Conclusion

"*A Monster Calls*" depicts a journey of psychological growth and emotional turmoil that resulted from a young boy's final acceptance of the tragic fate of his mother. By examining dreams vs. reality in this novel through dream analysis, this study offers insight into the protagonist's inner conflicts and emotional issues regarding his mother's worsening condition. This analysis explores Conor's complex emotional journey to process his inner struggles finally. The novel dives into the complex interplay between dreams and reality by discussing the blurred lines between Conor's dreams and reality. This study thoroughly analyses the psychological depth and emotional complexity of Conor's journey.

General Conclusion

This research uses Freudian psychoanalytic to examine the interplay between dreams and reality in Patrick Ness's *"A Monster Calls."* This study started by establishing the basics for the analysis; the first chapter introduced the novel with a summary and a biography of the author, then it discussed dreams vs. reality in literature to contextualize this concept, and finally, it provided background on Freud's psychoanalysis. Chapter two links the theoretical concepts to the research's aims and provides detailed definitions and examples of relevant concepts such as the id, ego, superego, symbolism, and the concept of dreams in literature. The final chapter is divided into two parts; the first applies Freud's psychoanalytic theory to the protagonist's psyche, and the second applies an analysis of dreams vs. reality in *"A Monster Calls."*

The duality between dreams and reality is a common theme in literature. Authors usually employ this theme to explore the subconsciousness and examine the internal conflicts of their characters. In *"A Monster Calls,"* Ness intentionally employs dreams as a literary device to advance the plot and as a crucial element to uncover the protagonist's deep psychological issues. The vivid dreams that Conor experiences provide readers with a chance to look into his psyche and blur the lines between his reality and dreams by revealing his concerns and inner conflicts.

The psychoanalytic theory provides a solid basis for understanding the psychological and emotional depth of Conor's life. Freud suggests that the psyche is divided into three parts: the id, ego, and superego. The id is the source of pleasure and functions to fulfill desires. The reality principle governs the ego and mediates between the id and the external world. The superego, representing internalized societal norms and morals, strives for perfection and imposes guilt.

In *"A Monster Calls,"* Conor's id is evident in his raw, unfiltered emotions and desires, such as his anger and denial about his mother's illness. His ego attempts to balance these desires with the harsh realities of his life, often resulting in internal conflict and stress. The superego, meanwhile,

imposes feelings of guilt and responsibility, further complicating Conor's emotional landscape. This dynamic interplay between the id, ego, and superego is central to understanding Conor's psychological journey throughout the novel.

Dreams in this novel serve multiple purposes; for example, they act as a coping mechanism for Conor to allow him to deal with his unprocessed anger and frustration in a symbolic dream-like way. The frequent Monster visits at precisely 12.07 am symbolize the need to resolve his internal struggles and confront his feelings. The Yew Tree Monster represents two critical things. First, it is a manifestation of the deepest fears. Secondly, it is a figment of Conor's imagination, both of which guide Conor through telling symbolic tales that reflect his feelings and experiences.

Dreams are used in this novel not only as a fantasy motif but also as an integral part of Conor's reality. As the story progresses, the dreams further reflect his deepest thoughts and feelings and shed light on his psyche. The disturbing frequent dreams reveal the intensity and severity of his feelings and psychological confusion and help him deal with and process all his inner conflicts.

The plot skilfully links Conor's dreams to his real life, blurring the lines between fantasy and reality. The dream scenes in this novel parallel Conor's waking life events and demonstrate how his psyche is dealing with the pain and confusion of his mother's sickness. The tales told by the Monster do not seem to resonate with Conor initially, but they reveal profound truths about his situation and emotional state. The symbolism in these stories allow Conor to view his experiences from different points of view and helps him process his feelings. Consequently, these dreams are a therapeutic instrument that guides Conor to achieve a sense of self-awareness and acceptance.

While Conor struggles with his stressful life, his dreams are his only escape and safe haven to express his fears and deep desires. The presence of the Monster in his dreams forces Conor to

face the feelings he has been suppressing for so long, which helps his growth journey. The book's theme of dreams and reality shows the importance of dealing with a person's inner conflicts and processing feelings to reach inner peace.

The Monster that Conor subconsciously conjured facilitated his emotional journey and guided him through his chaotic psychological path. By escaping to his dreams, Conor finally had to face and express his previously suppressed feelings of anger and frustration. This step was essential to healing after releasing his unexpressed feelings, which allowed him to confront the reality of his mother's fate. This step was only possible thanks to the Monster's insistence on forcing Conor to confront his fears, face reality, and deal with his feelings.

At the end of the novel, Conor eventually accepts his mother's fate and starts to openly grieve over her condition; this change proves the power that his dreams had on his behavior and feelings. With the help of the Monster, Conor finally reaches the stage where he can acknowledge and accept his feelings, emphasizing the healing powers of embracing one's subconsciousness. The ending, where he faces his fears and deals with his feelings, is the final step where Conor finds a sense of closure and can begin healing from the turmoil he endured,

This novel effectively uses dreams vs. reality to explore psychological themes and character depth. The scenes incorporating dreams in this novel are not only for dramatic effects but are an essential part of Conor's emotional journey to reach self-healing; Freudian psychoanalysis helps readers understand the interactions between Conor's id, ego, and superego and how their interplay shape his feelings and behaviours. Dreams are how Conor processes his grief and accepts his reality, leading him to emotional depth and acceptance.

The current study demonstrates how dreams are a literary tool that uncovers the human subconscious. Analysing the subconscious mind allows authors to reveal the depth of their character's feelings. "*A Monster Calls*" is an excellent example of how dreams help individuals resolve feelings of sadness, loss, acceptance, and grief. Patrick Ness uses Conor's journey to demonstrate how dreams can heal and provide an escape from reality. He gives readers a deep understanding of how the psyche functions during an emotional crisis.

This research's findings are significant in literary studies as they emphasize the importance of psychoanalytic analysis in interpreting complex literary narratives. Freud's ideas on the psyche and its different parts apply perfectly to Conor's psyche and reveal his inner conflicts and his emotional struggles. Freud's concepts reveal how authors use dreams as literary devices to reflect reality and create ways to explore the intersection between psychology and literature, showing how psychoanalysis completes literary analysis.

Furthermore, the current study powerfully shows how literature can help individuals recognize their personal issues and find appropriate healing. Readers can easily relate to how Conor's dreams provided an outlet for his grief and conflicts; thus, individuals can find a similar space to explore their own psychological struggles in psychological literary works like "*A Monster Calls*." This novel is an important reminder to address a person's inner conflicts as a way for personal growth and healing.

Further studies could be conducted to explore the impact of the secondary characters' role on Conor's emotional journey and psychological turmoil and how they help or hinder the path to his growth. Another area worth investigating is a psychological analysis of grief among adolescents and how accurate this novel is in depicting the stages of grief and its impact on teenagers. Moreover, future researchers could analyse how "*A Monster Calls*" employs mythical elements to portray real-

life issues, investigate how myth and reality are depicted in other young adult novels to address similar themes, and how these novels deal with trauma and healing.

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الملخص

تستكشف هذه الأطروحة التفاعل بين الأحلام والواقع في رواية "وحش ينادي" لباتريك نيس، مع التركيز بشكل خاص على رحلة بطل الرواية كونور أومالي النفسية. وتحلل هذه الدراسة صراعات كونور الداخلية، لا سيما من خلال مفاهيم نظرية التحليل النفسي لسيغموند فرويد المتمثلة في الهو والأنا والأنا العليا. تسلط هذه الدراسة الضوء على الكيفية التي تعكس بها مواجهات كونور مع وحش شجرة الطقسوس في أحلامه ومعاناته مع مرض والدته. وتعتبر هذه الأحلام حاسمة في فهم صراعات كونور الداخلية واضطرابات العاطفية. تتضمن المنهجية قراءة متأنية للرواية وتحلي للمصادر الثانوية ذات الصلة بنظرية فرويد. تشير النتائج إلى أن أحلام كونور تعمل كأداة علاجية تساعد على مواجهة مخاوفه وأحزانه ومعالجتها. وتوضح الرواية الدور المهم للأحلام في نمو كونور النفسي، مما يوفر نظرة ثاقبة للإمكانات العلاجية لتحليل الأحلام في الأدب.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الأحلام، الواقع، التحليل النفسي، الحزن، نظرية التحليل النفسي