

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION

Post-traumatic stress disorder or PTSD can be experienced by a person who is going through a traumatic event. These events create a feeling of vulnerability, such as being violated. The condition of PTSD might bring somebody to face difficulty in processing emotions and thoughts correlated with the traumatic event. This case of PTSD is well portrayed in Phill Harrison's novel entitled *The First Day* through Sam, the protagonist character in the story.

There are four major symptoms of PTSD that Sam endures. They are re-experiencing, avoidance, mood and cognitive change, and arousal symptoms. Re-experiencing the traumatic events as one of the symptoms begins when Sam often gets nightmares and flashbacks, which remind him of the pain of his trauma. The avoidance symptoms of Sam's PTSD start when Sam intentionally avoids remembering the traumatic events which happened to him in the past and the person who became the source of his traumatic events. The mood and cognitive change symptoms are Sam's negative thoughts and emotions. He also feels self-enclosed. Last, Sam's arousal symptoms happen when he starts to lose his concentration, and he cannot focus on his activity in the office as his mind is always drawn to the likely appearance of Philip, the source of his trauma.

Sam's PTSD is caused by his half-brother's violence toward him, which left a scar on his cheek when he was a child. The incident of physical violence which he experienced as a child later became a trigger for his PTSD. The memory

continues to haunt Sam until he is an adult. Other than that, the lack support of the family environment also contributes to Sam's PTSD. In the past, Sam's parent had an affair which led to Sam's birth, but they were never married to each other. It causes Sam to grow up without the father figure he needed. Even when Sam got his violent abuse from his half-brother, his father only responded with silence and avoidance. It makes Sam unable to get emotional support and worsens his trauma. Then, Sam's mother, Anna, also contributes to Sam's PTSD. Sam's mother tends to prioritize relationships with married man. It makes Sam feel betrayed. In addition, the fact that many people around Anna do not even know that Sam is her son further worsens Sam's emotional wounds and makes him feel hurt.

The effect of Sam's PTSD is a condition where Sam always feels haunted by fear and helplessness. The fear consumes Sam, making him hyper-aware of his surroundings. Sam constantly feels as if danger is always around him. Then, Sam experiences helplessness because of the physical scar left by Philip. The scar Sam has often been burdened him, and whenever he sees the scar, he feels the pain and fear of his trauma. Moreover, another effect of Sam's PTSD is his tendency to distance himself emotionally from others. Sam prefers not to deal with other people to avoid emotional connections.

This research of PTSD suffered by Sam in Phill Harrison's *The First Day* provides insight into how psychological conditions are portrayed in fiction. Through the deep analysis of the symptoms, causes, and impacts of the trauma experienced by Sam in *The First Day*, this research may contribute to increase reader's awareness of trauma and how it leads to severe condition such as PTSD