



**An-Najah National University
Faculty of Graduate Studies**

**LOSS, BEREAVEMENT AND DEFENSIVE
MECHANISMS IN NADA JARRAR'S *DREAMS
OF WATER* AND NATHAN HARRIS'S *THE
SWEETNESS OF WATER***

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**This Thesis is Submitted in Partial of the Requirements for the Degree of Master
of Comparative Literature, Faculty of Graduate Studies, An-Najah National
University, Nablus, Palestine.**

2025

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Dedication

To all of those people who encounter the destiny of life, the loss in all of its colours every day, every minute and second.

To all of those people who bereave for years and years in memories.

To all of those people who stand face to face against the flames of wars.

To all of those whom the loss bites their flesh and leaves scars that no surgeon or medication can perfectly conceal.

Acknowledgments

Grateful to Dr. Bilal, the supervisor who is patient and supportive despite everything. Grateful to my friends who stand next to me in this long year and still, believing in me to accomplish the best and Thankful to my close family members who are eager to achieve calmness after my success.

Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that I submitted the thesis entitled:

LOSS, BEREAVEMENT AND DEFENSIVE MECHANISMS IN NADA JARRAR'S *DREAMS OF WATER* AND NATHAN HARRIS'S *THE SWEETNESS OF WATER*

I declare that the work provided in this thesis, unless otherwise referenced, is the researcher's own work, and has not been submitted elsewhere for any other degree or qualification.

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16/06/2025

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Abstract

Drawing on psychoanalytic theories of loss, bereavement and coping strategies outlined by Freud and Butler, this thesis depicts the images of grief, mourning and trauma in Nada Jarrar's *Dreams of Water* (2007) and in Nathan Harris's *The Sweetness of Water* (2021). Moreover, the thesis will use the postcolonial theory defined by Homi K. Bhabha and Edward Said (1994) to show that colonialism has a hand in causing bereavement and in changing the colonized people, especially in the issues related to identity and freedom. Furthermore, I employ Foucault's writings on scars to show that wars leave wounds, which will not coalesce over time. I employ Feminism and Eco-feminism as well to argue that civil wars traumatize people, especially women. However, it is argued here that women use coping mechanisms to push forward the pain of loss better than men. Nonetheless, the bereaved people likewise the characters in both novels continue living with empty spaces, love ties and future hopes.

Keywords: Bereavement, loss, grief, mourning, trauma, cope, Jarrar, Harris.

Chapter One

Introduction & Theoretical Framework

1.1 Summary of *Dreams of Water*

During the Lebanese Civil War, Bassam, the young guy got kidnapped by unknown men. After Bassam's abduction, his mother Waddad and his sister Aneesa cannot live with uncertainty of his death. Aneesa leaves to London seeking a new identity, new self as a result of this loss. Whereas Waddad starts searching for her son, looking for any clue behind his disappearance until she finds a coping mechanism to ease the grief and mourn. Affected by Druze beliefs on the idea of reincarnation, which means the soul of the deceased moves to another still alive body, Waddad reincarnates Bassam in the persona of the kid, Ramzi. At the end of the novel, Ramzi returns to his family leaving Waddad and Aneesa in the sea of hope waiting a rescue from a new person who will fill the gap of loss.

1.2 Summary of *The Sweetness of Water*

During the American Civil War, Caleb, his name means brave, was thought to be killed during this war, but suddenly returns back home after escaping from the Confederate army out of cowardice! Caleb's temporal loss affects his parents, George and Isabelle, psychologically and on a long term. George decides to work in his land as he does not want another loss in his life. He employs two newly freed brothers from slavery, Prentiss and Landry, to plant his land. While Isabelle grieves and mourns in silence. After Caleb's sudden return, George continues working with the two men, yet the whole life of the family changes and the novel ends with Isabelle being alone, hoping to meet the lost one day.

1.3 Loss & Bereavement

Bereavement is the process of sadness and sorrow following the death or the departure of beloved ones, following a great loss that you did not expect. To bereave is to be deprived of someone or something in life; "the term has been given a meaning wider than that implied in survivorship following death - for example, following divorce, separation, loss of body parts or significant object" (Warren, 1981, p. 78). Therefore, "Bereavement refers to the period after loss during which grief and mourning occur" (Brown, 2012, p. 44),

which indicated that bereavement period is crucial to endure in order to ease the burden of such loss through living the grief and the mourning experiences. On one hand, grief refers to the internal responses to loss, which can vary between sadness, yearning to be with the lost person, drowning in thoughts, memories, anxieties and anger moments. Herman Feifel argues that “with regard to expression of grief, we are increasingly cognizant that it is not a sign of weakness or self-indulgence. Rather, it reflects a necessary, deep, and normal human need we all have” (Feifel, 1977, p. 11). Therefore, via those emotional indicators of grief, griever may feel numb, lonely and guilty whenever losing anybody or anything. The grief in Jarrar's *Dreams of Water* initially spotted in the numb with disbelief about the death of Bassam after being kidnapped by unknown governmental members during the Lebanese Civil War. Bassam's sister, Aneesa, “saw a psychic after she left home, in the hope that he would tell her something about the truth behind her brother’s disappearance” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 19), such doubt changes the visage of grief.

Whereas, the grief in Harris's *The Sweetness of Water* firstly detected in the loneliness of George in the woods after hearing about the death of his only son Caleb during the American Civil War. Feeling lonely is a part of the grieving process. Feifel adds that “along with idealization and assertions of love and loss. We should also provide room for expression of anger, guilt, even relief, at the death of someone intimate” (Feifel, 1977, p. 13)., which are also the significances in the grieving period. On the other hand, mourning is the external response to loss, mourning is an expression of the pain of loss through wailing, crying or wearing black. Sigmund Freud said that mourning is a “painful dejection, cessation of interest in the outside world, loss of capacity to love and inhibition of all activity” (Freud, 1917, p. 244). *The Sweetness of Water* starts the initial paragraph with “an entire day had passed since George had spoken to his wife” (Harris, 2021, p. 3), the day he went into the woods since the morning after hearing about the death of Caleb from his best friend, August. The mourners suffer; they have no engagement in daily tasks as before, no attempt to find alternatives and no ability to work in anything apart from thoughts about the lost. Aneesa does not concentrate in her translation work and George “found himself, as had been the case since the preceding day, reflecting on his son” (Harris, 2021, p. 8), just focusing on the lost kin.

1.4 Loss in Wartime

Wartime is a tensed period, no matter how much lasted or who defeated. Freud pointed out that non-combatants suffer from mental distress caused by “the disillusionment which this war [World War 1] has evoked, and the altered attitude towards death which this-like every other war- forces upon us” (Freud, 1915, p. 275). This feeling of disappointment emerges from the expectation that all wars might be ceased and all nations might find alternative ways to maintain peace within each conflicts, but such expectation proves its impossibility until this day. Moreover, Freud argued that people who stay at home during wartime expect to receive news about losing one from their beloved. Therefore, Freud highlighted that “the confusion and paralysis of our activities from which we are suffering is essentially determined by the fact that we cannot retain our previous attitude towards death” (Freud, 1918, p. 18), people usually maintain their position towards denial. Freud believed that it is not reasonable to deny death anymore as thousands of people are falling due to wars.

Coincidentally, *Dreams of Water* and *The Sweetness of Water* focus on loss, grief and bereavement caused by wars, more particularly civil wars in Lebanon and America. Both novels give an image about the situation during the Lebanese and American Civil Wars and about the features of the Post-Civil War period. The unsafe areas with news about who does not survive the war and who returns. Edward Said argued that “class, political upheavals, shifts in economic patterns and organization; war: all these subjects... are enfolded within recurringly renewed structures, visions, stabilities, all of them attesting to the abiding dialectical order represented by Europe itself” (Said, 1994, p. 47), these subjects conquered the world. Said (1994) believes that “the consequences of colonialism are still persisting in the form of chaos, coups, corruption, civil wars, and bloodshed, which permeates many ex-colonies” (Hamadi, 2014, p. 39) and these days witness several similar situations. Jarrar (2007) “dramatizes the psychological damage that Lebanon's civil war has caused and continues to cause for the Lebanese people” (Rahmouni & Abu Amrieh, 2023, p. 47) even after the war. Civil wars, as any other brutal wars in the world, play a crucial role in enhancing the sense of identity loss, national and racial identities. Loss during conflicts makes the image of the self and the other float to the scene,

overwhelmed with all the changes the war might cause. Yet, every loss calls for a coping strategy, a mechanism of moving on.

1.5 Loss & “Grief Work”

The different faces of loss reflect different responses, the sweetness out of bitterness. Life will not continue as used to be before the incident of loss, but bereaved persons must choose to live again. Balk (2004) says that;

Bereavement sunders not only our relationship with someone who has died but fundamentally challenges our very humanity. We recover our humanity as a function of both reframing and relearning our place in the world, our relationships with others, and our relationship with ourselves (Balk, 2004, p. 370).

Not by forgetting the deceased, indeed, but rather by supporting the self to continue. Thus, the painful truth lays in acknowledging that “one cannot change the fact that a loved one has died or the circumstances of his/ her death, but one can change the way one goes about coming to terms with the loss of this person” (Stroebe, Schut, & Boerner, 2017, p. 11), one must work to be able to live with loss. “Grief work” theory, which was proposed by Freud and later scholars referred to it as the mourning process, is the essence of coping. Firstly, grief work demonstrates “people whose loved ones had died needed to work through the loss, with the final outcome being to detach emotionally from the deceased and let go of hopes for the future relationship” or such grief turn to pathological case, which needs psychological therapy (Becker & Knudson, 2003, pp. 6-7).

Loss is not a facile situation to neglect and it needs various strategies to be able to cope and survive within a period of time. Freud mentioned that “although mourning involves grave departures from the normal attitude to life, it never occurs to us to regard it as a pathological condition and to refer it to medical treatment. We rely on it being overcome after a certain lapse of time, and we look upon any interference with it as useless or even harmful” (Freud, 1917, pp. 243-244). Freud asserted that both grief and mourning are not states but rather processes, with focus on the deterministic of “being overcome after a certain lapse of time” (Freud, 1917, p. 244). This indicates that the griever or the mourner works toward moving on even in tough times, wartimes.

Men and women respond differently to loss, Maram Masarwi mentions in her book that “gender is a significant variable in the way people cope with bereavement” (Masarwi, 2019, p. 29), men and women express anguish in different ways. Both grieve and mourn, based on various internal and external emotions, in addition to surrounding cultural obligations regardless of the cause of this loss, for example, men simply should not cry.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

The thesis introduces a broad frame of loss and its psychologically aftermath with connections to traumas, wars and identity issues emerged in postcolonial period. *Dreams of Water* and *The Sweetness of Water* focus on loss in wars and loss in life with several descriptions of grief and mourn. The first chapter introduces the topic and the framework used in the analysis. The second chapter uses psychoanalytical and postcolonial theories to illustrate the grief of Aneesa and her mother, Waddad, in *Dreams of Water* after losing the brother and the son, Bassam, during the Lebanese Civil War (1975 to 1990). In addition, Isabelle in *The Sweetness of Water* and her husband George lose their son, Caleb, in the American Civil War (1861-1865). The third chapter uses psychoanalytic feminism and eco-feminism theories to depict the different modes of coping mechanisms that females adopt in *Dreams of Water* and *The Sweetness of Water*, which are different from other male characters.

1.7 Literature Review

Dreams of Water and *The Sweetness of Water* imitate the life of the authors especially in aspects related to the civil wars. Jarrar (2007) was born in Lebanon to an Australian mother and a Lebanese father. She has lived in different countries, but decided to return to Lebanon, despite the Civil War (1980) that forced her and her family to flee to the mountains for safety. She wrote a similar scene in the novel, when Aneesa asks her mother to go to the safe mountains; she wants to go to mountain to be safe but her mother refused, explaining that “ I'm [she's] not leaving Bassam here in Beirut and you [Aneesa] know there's no way he would come up to mountains” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 34). On the back cover of the novel, it is described, “a slow-burning, powerful story of loss and grief” (good housekeeping website). This depicts the long journey of bereavement after the kidnap of the son and the brother, Bassam, during the civil war. As the scenes were written back

and forth between past and present, Lebanon and London, each part from the six in the novel focuses on showing whether the characters, who encounter loss, succeed or not in passing the bereavement process. On the other hand, Nathan Harris was born in Oregon, *The Sweetness of Water* is considered his first novel. As a typical situation for many Black Americans, his father tried to discover more information about their history, but did not succeed. Thus, Harris creates the missing parts by writing this novel, focusing on the two characters, Prentiss and Landry who were slaves and freed upon the Emancipation Proclamation in the end of the American Civil War (1861-1865).

None of the scholars has examined the theme of bereavement and loss in *Dream of Water*, which, as we shall see, is central to the novel and its structure. Awad (2016), for instance, wrote in his article about “Aneesa, a Lebanese woman who works in London as a translator during Lebanon’s devastating civil war, reflects on how living and working in London have enabled her to look at her identity from a new perspective” (2016, p. 296). Balaa (2013) talked about “Men's Contradictory Experiences of Power in *Dreams of Water*” noting that “ the masculine identity is not permanent and masculinities vary” (2013, p. 205) due to the political circumstances enacted in the novel. Others like Nihad Rahmouni and Yousef Abu Amrieh wrote an article “Arab Literary Representations of London: Cross-Cultural Romances as Social Spaces” to analyze the identity of Arab women in London. Moreover, Lana Zantout wrote a thesis about Aneesa in *Dreams of Water* and Zena in *Beirut, I love you* in who "struggle to define their fluctuating identity in the midst of war and post-war societies" (Zantout, 2016, p. 1)), reflecting the issues related to identity of two women during the Lebanese Civil War.

Likewise, none of the scholars has examined the theme of bereavement and loss in *The Sweetness of Water*. Several reviews about the whole novel and an article titled “Slavery, Resistance, and Queerness in the Reconstruction Era: Masculinities in American South Plantations” written by Harinisri & Radhakrishnan. Harinisri & Radhakishnan discuss “the intersectional matrix underlying the socio-political landscape of the American South plantations” (Harinisri & Radhakrishnan, 2024, p. 1). They also discuss the issue of queer in the White hegemonic community and the issue of societal roles of masculinities.

This thesis examines the discourse of bereavement in *Dreams of Water & The Sweetness of Water* and it would be useful for researchers, teachers and students in the discipline of Literature as it draw a new perspective towards further studies that shed light on civil war experiences. It also affirms the reality that we, all human beings, still encounter wars, facing loss in any minute and grieving after each pain.

Yet, family relationships and hopes for peaceful future assist in coping with loss.

Chapter Two

Loss & Bereavement in *Dreams of Water* & *The Sweetness of Water*

2.1 Unexpected Death in Wartime

War and loss are the hardest two pieces in the chess of life. Judith Butler proposed “to consider a dimension of political life that has to do with our exposure to violence, and our complicity in it, with our vulnerability to loss and the task of mourning that follows” (Butler, 2004, p. 19). The Civil War and its horrors are within this political dimension, which causes such loss.

Everything can be expected during war times, non-soldiers and soldiers sip the taste of conflicts. Freud made a clear division and “separate those who risk their lives in battle from those who remain at home, where they can only expect to lose one of their loved ones through injury, illness, or infection” (Freud, 1918, p. 18), the hard truth about wars. In *Dreams of Water*, unknown men came and took Bassam from his home during the horror of the Lebanese Civil War. Waddad asks to where they take him, one of them says “don't worry *Khalti*, he'll be back later” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 74). However, Aneesa and Waddad keep waiting for him, for the moment he returns through the door once again.

In parallel, George and Isabelle in *The Sweetness of Water* wait for Caleb to return from war, unable to think of that he might not. George “expected his son to return a muddied, threadbare savage; foresaw himself and Isabelle as the dutiful parents who would nurse him back to normalcy” (Harris, 2021, p. 9). Also, Isabelle could not bear listening to the women talking about “who's returned, or rumours of who might return” (p. 15) from the war. Freud confirmed that people in reality “showed an unmistakable tendency to put death on one side, to eliminate it from life” (Freud, 1918, p. 16), to act as if death is too far from them and their beloved ones.

The authors of *Dreams of Water* and *The Sweetness of Water* use archetypal symbols that vary between both literary texts, leading to unexpected references. Number three (3) is repeated directly and indirectly in both novels. Aneesa “sees time close around the three of them in a kind of circle” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 10), when she goes with her mother to the *Sheikh* to talk about her hungry children, which no one sees them except her. Aneesa, Waddad and Bassam are three. Also, Aneesa, Waddad and Ramzi are three in addition to

Aneesa, Salah and Samir who are also three in London. Even the psychic confirms that Bassam died after three days of his abduction. This number refers to the cycle of life that has three components; birth, life and death. Moreover, three may symbolize also the three dimensions of time (past, present, future) and this what the *Sheikh* confirms by saying “the child has spoken of a past life... she may never speak of it again” (Jarrar, 2007, pp. 4-5), yet the narration reveals that number three refers to the future of this child, Aneesa. When she sees time close around them, this can be interpreted as the three stages of grief that will occupy her life in the future, which are numbness, disorganisation and reorganization.

In the *Sweetness of Water*, number three has a similar reference. George goes to the wood, meets the two Black men and “it was as if they'd [stars] been arranged just for the three of them” (Harris, 2021, p. 10) after the aching news about Caleb. Prentiss explains “the dimensions they might accomplish as a unit of three” (p. 65) and later “the three men would take turns with the axes” (p. 66). Thus, three here indicates unity, light during darkness, spiritual awareness towards change and the male principle. Whereas, “they had changed and now all three of them were altered but in the same place they'd occupied for so many years” (p. 75) refers to the rebirth of George, Isabelle and Caleb. No one of them preserve their past attitude after the alleged loss of Caleb.

2.2 Narrating the Loss

Jarrar focuses on the protagonist Aneesa, who talks about all the details since the disappearance of Bassam, then during her grieving in London and finally when she returns to Lebanon. Through Aneesa, readers get to know more how Waddad spends those years as a bereaved mother. Aneesa describes how she imagines remotely her mother, how she sees her face to face and how she interprets her daily behaviours basically through her letters to Salah. Aneesa talks about Waddad more in her letters. She narrates the grief of her mother before and after she comes back home, which might be because it so painful for the mother to express her grief and mourning. It is easier for Aneesa to detect and introduce Waddad's pain of the lost. Whereas, Aneesa's grieving confuses the reader as she could not bear the uncertainty of Bassam's death and flies to London. There, she attempts to start new life but her grief is obvious in the same letters to Salah and in her daily days, she says, “I would say that I once lost a brother” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 163).

Then, she writes him, “what my mother does not know is that I came back not to find Bassam but myself ! ” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 55), which refers to another loss, the loss of the self.

Harris focuses on the narrator to reveal the emotions of George and Isabelle. Before telling her, “it was in the stoop of his shoulders, the hollowness of his cheeks. Only then, in that very second, did she see the pain he carried” (Harris, 2021, p. 20). Yet, “she knew she would not forgive him for whatever he'd kept from her” (p. 21), she feels the pain from distance. Her grief initiates with locking herself up in Caleb's room. Patricia Jalland highlights that “many women had taken to heart the wartime prescriptions about the appropriate way to deal with grief: ‘you must hide your feelings: you do your mourning quietly, alone. The same as you might do praying’” (Jalland, 2013, p. 19). This is exactly what Isabelle does without any communication with her husband, George. Isabelle chooses to stay silently in Caleb's room when George is home and flies in the house when George is not in. George's grief is narrated in his preference to stay away from home. Kathleen Woodward wrote an article explaining that confirming the lost beloved, by saying I have lost someone, is comfortable. Strangely comfortable “because it allows us to foreground our role in the story we are telling, to assert a relation, to refer not so much to the event of the death as to what we have suffered by that death, to speak of our pain, our grief” (Woodward, 1990, p. 93). This acceptance leads to the grieving process.

2.3 Initial Grieving

It is known that humans should not stay in the same place that caused their pain. Aneesa leaves to London unable to stay in Lebanon with the possibility of her brother's death. While her mother's search “took her to distant corners of the city, through streets. She climbed up endless stairways, knocking on doors, sipping cups of coffee” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 31) looking for any hint about the fate of Bassam. However, the tough truth remains to confirm that Bassam will not show up ever again after several years of brutal war. Aneesa tells Bassam's best friend, Khaled, that she “know[s] he[Bassam] is no longer alive” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 198) , yet she wants to know what happened.

Inability to confess the loss pushes the person out of the comfort zone. George leaves to the wood, he cannot believe August's words about Caleb. August claims that his best

friend had died honourably and peacefully during the fight. At this moment the uncertainty prevails before grieving. George knows that August is lying, thus the later thinks that “he [George] deserved to know the truth of what had happened” (Harris, 2021, p. 10) and it turned to be that “his boy abandoning the trenches he'd helped dig” (p. 11) and surrenders to the Union. George encounters the loss, but unable to transfer such news to Isabelle. Freud said that “We are paralyzed by the thought of who is to replace the son to his mother, the husband to his wife, or the father to his children, should an accident occur” (Freud, 1918, p. 17). The numbness after the loss lead to denial.

2.4 Loss & Denial

Aneesa and Waddad in *Dreams of Water* expose grieving and mourning by weakness and deniable. Patricia Garfield in her article mentions that "the first phase of grief, numbness, is characterized by shock or even outright denial of the death" (Garfield, 1997, p. 3). Aneesa says that “her mother's search for Bassam began soon after my [her] departure” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 31) through streets and into buildings seeking “a sign of recognition at her story” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 31). Waddad rejects to believe the death of her son Bassam at first; she keeps searching for him. Moreover, she even joins meetings with the families of missing people, but when her turn to speak “she shook her head and stepped determinedly out of the room muttering under her breath, I am not one of them. This is not my place” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 32). Freud (1917) said that mourning “involves the painful, and thus intermittently denied” (p. 245) and it is confirmed also in *The Sweetness of Water*.

Isabelle in *The Sweetness of Water* as well refuses to sit in meetings, where women are talking about their sons, who might return or not from the war even before knowing that Caleb will not come back. She tells George that women “treat their boys being paroled with self-satisfaction of a victory in hearts” (Harris, 2021, p. 15) and she is not playing with them, afraid from losing this game. However, Waddad, Aneesa, George and Isabelle live the grief and mourn for losing their beloved in political struggles.

2.5 The Journey of Loss

In *Dreams of Water*, Jarrar maps the long journey of loss in the days of Aneesa and Waddad in Beirut, London and between the orphanage borders. The loss of the brother and the son, Bassam, due to his political involvement during the civil war. Waddad "had found them in the back of his cupboard, hundreds of political leaflets and list of names she did not recognize" (Jarrar, 2007, p. 20) after his disappearance. Governmental members come and kidnap him, then he did not return ever after. However, his uncertain death caused a heavy burden on both shoulders, Aneesa and her mother. Aneesa and Waddad live the loss of Bassam from the beginning to the end of the novel. The bereavement period reveals the hardships of their experience. Freud said, "life becomes impoverished and loses its interest when life itself, the highest stake in the game of living, must not be risked" (Freud, 1918, p. 17); many losses occur when humans encounter death and "grief work" takes place as Freud and other psychoanalysis scholars who proceeded him confirmed.

In *The Sweetness of Water*, Harris maps the short journey of loss in the days of the parents, George and Isabelle, in the imaginary town of Old-Ox. The loss of the son, Caleb, due to his participation in the civil war. August, Caleb's friend, claims at first that Caleb died honourably in the fight with the Confederate against the Union. Afterwards, he reveals how Caleb surrenders to the Union, then was killed. The news of his death pushed his father, George, to leave the house towards the woods, having no courage to tell the mother, Isabelle, that her son will not return, "an entire day had passed since George Walker spoken to his wife" (Harris, 2021, p. 3). George's grieving starts before Isabelle with the huge burden as he did not inform her; he thinks "who was the biggest coward, the boy dying without courage, or George for not being able to tell the boy's own mother that she would never see her son again?" (p. 11), unable to utter a word. Freud (1915) showed that people usually "collapse when death has struck down someone whom we[they] love - a parent or a partner in marriage, a brother or sister, a child or a close friend" (p. 290) as George who the death of his son overwhelms him with bereavement.

2.6 Bereaving the Lost

The uncertain death of Bassam in *Dreams of Water* provokes his mother and his sister prolonged bereavement, “Bassam's living and dying, both, were endless” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 25). Aneesa and Waddad reveal some similar responses to the loss. They mourn Bassam who may not be dead. For Jacques Derrida, “mourning is not a process delimited in time, but is rather interminable. It is difficult to resolve because the process of mourning is not inaugurated by the death of a significant other. Instead, it has already begun before the death of the other and it is never to be ended” (Polatinsky, 2011, p. 10). Thus, both mourn him before his certain death, considering the political situation and knowing that just few return after long years of disappearance. Salah “is certain that Bassam will have been murdered by his abductors” as he lives during in Lebanon war and knows much. However, he cannot inform Aneesa about her brother enduring “unspeakable cruelty before dying” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 123). This uncovered truth make bereavement longer, even though Aneesa and her mother know it but decide not to believe.

It can also be argued that the certain death of Caleb in *The Sweetness of Water* pushes his parents to start bereaving directly. At first George does not have courage to tell Isabelle and spends his day out in the woods overwhelmed with the news of his son. The next day, he decides to inform her, “and before he uttered another word, she knew she would never forgive what he'd kept from her” (Harris, 2021, p. 21). She would never see Caleb again. Freud (1915) “death will no longer be denied; we are forced to believe in it” (p. 291), therefore, both parents start the “grief work” similarly in some aspects and no in others.

2.7 Grieving and Mourning

Lives swing between grieving and mourning mainly in all negative life events. Butler (2004) explains how grief and mourning are normal responses to loss due to the precariousness and vulnerability of human beings. Aneesa and her mother suffer and bereave since the moment of Bassam’s disappearance. Aneesa writes in one of her letters to Salah, her Lebanese friend in London that “Bassam’s living and dying, both, were endless, our fears and hopes entangled between them” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 25). Aneesa and Waddad did not know if he still alive or not, therefore, they are suffering and refusing to

believe the ultimate reality of Bassam's death. Masarwi confirms that "grieving has been found to result in disturbed sleep, impaired self-control, increased anxiety and episodes of severe depression or anger" (Masarwi, 2019, p. 3). Aneesa cannot handle life without knowing the fate of Bassam. Everything in her life begins to change due to the bereavement that starts exposing in grief and mourn. Aneesa has "hours of her undoing, long and sleepless, solitary" (Jarrar, 2007, p. 23). She could not work, overwhelmed with anxiety, chaos and memories. Aneesa decides to leave homeland and travels to London in an attempt to forget everything, to begin new life and simply be happy. Loss renders one displaced from the home that cannot house the bereaved, thus Aneesa leaves. There, her elderly friend Salah notices "the sadness that seems always to be hovering around her eyes" (Jarrar, 2007, p. 123) and understands her grieving. Bassam and her father are in her thoughts, whenever she meets new companion in London, she hesitates at first to tell them the story of Bassam but directly opens her heart afterwards. Her days in London are full of "unrelenting sadness" (Jarrar, 2007, p. 21) despite her several attempts to belong to this peaceful place, where excitement and novelty fill the air. Therefore, she could not bear being away, leaving mother alone and not knowing anything about Bassam, she "can't forget everything that has happened. Bassam, my [her] father and what's happened to country" (Jarrar, 2007, p. 45). Aneesa seeks new relationships in London but then determines to reveal the truth in her origin country, Lebanon. Thus, she returns and this shows her relatedness and dependence on the lost brother who affirms that she did not cope after all these years and should go back to find the truth. Salah tells his son, Samir that Aneesa is "only just realized that things like that do not leave you" (Jarrar, 2007, p. 191), indicating that loss. Aneesa also used to talk to herself, her mother tells her "It is a sign of unsettled mind" (Jarrar, 2007, p. 46). Aneesa keeps thinking about her brother and about herself. While Waddad grieves alone in a country where the civil war torn the human and stone.

Waddad shows different grieving aspects, she is solo in front of great loss. Reader may feel that her searching for Bassam is the bereavement; she cannot believe that he is between the missing youths during the war. Waddad feels angry, raises her voice and then bursts into tears. Anger and loud voice are signs of internal deformation and "symptoms of severe clinical depression" (Masarwi, 2019, p. 4). Both of them have argument about Bassam but then calm down. Moreover, tears are feminine expressions of lamentation

and powerlessness in stressing situations. Waddad does not listen to the police and keep searching. Waddad cries when she receives the first letter from Bassam, when she knows about Bassam's political involvements and in other different situations, which leave no choice for the bereaved mother rather than crying. She cries and tells Aneesa about the new law which "gives the relative of the missing the right to have them declared dead" (Jarrar, 2007, p. 62) more than seven years and Bassam has gone since nearly nine years. Thus, the shifted pain is not clear at this moment, whether it is getting deeper in a permanent part of the body of Aneesa or the body Waddad. Aneesa leaves Waddad in the sea of sadness, alone.

The war as well is the reason for the grieving of George and Isabelle. George walks in the woods, reflects on Caleb from time to time and flees away from home the whole day with no intention to go back, due to his misfortune or it could be his good luck, he loses his way home and meets two Black newly freedmen, Prentiss and Landry. George's sorrow becomes obvious when he told one of them, Prentiss who is in the age of his son, that this is "my father's land, now mine, one day it was to be my son's..." (Harris, 2021, p. 7). William Warren discusses Lindemann's descriptions of "(i) somatic distress (tightness of throat, shortness of breath, lack of energy)" (Warren, 1981, p. 80) as symptoms of acute grief. George suffers a lot, "the pain in George's face, so immense it might split him two, was momentary, and he managed to disguise it with a grin" (Harris, 2021, p. 48). His exhaustion is justified by claiming that "it must have been the dehydration. Yes he was disoriented, a bit confused, and the tears were merely a symptom of his predicament" (Harris, 2021, p. 11). He could not walk because of the hip's pain but the greater pain is actually his loss. George's grief intensifies in front of the cabin, he did not tell Isabelle about the bereavement yet. George and Prentiss "walked as one to stop himself from falling over, from giving in to the pain" (Harris, 2021, p. 10). George speaks to his self and all painful expressions mark George's face, "so immense it might split him two, was momentary, and he managed to disguise it with a grin" (Harris, 2021, p. 48). Yearning is obvious "in the nervous chatter of his voice, the eyes that darted like those of an animal hiding from the prey, the young man gained George's sympathy, perhaps the only morsel of it left in an otherwise broken heart" (Harris, 2021, p. 4). George even tells Prentiss, "if you know the hell this day has been you might yell yourself" (Harris, 2021, p. 7) referring to the chaos that overwhelming him after hearing the news. Then, "the black outline of

what could only be Isabelle carved in shadow against the front window” (Harris, 2021, p. 11). The repetition of dark forest, darkness and blacks “like there was nothing there at all” (p. 12), according to Carl Jung black symbolizes the death, the unknown mystery. This archetype shows the emptiness as a sign of grieving. George tells Prentiss “I’m not myself. Excuse me” (p. 11) in addition to physical and mental reactions to grief. George tells his friend Ezra, “my son is dead” (p. 39) and the reader notices his grief between every thought and memory. “The fact was, it would have been fine for George if the journey never ended, as his homecoming would mean a reckoning with Isabelle” (p. 41) and many times he “did not want to be back home and at the same time no errands to do” (p. 44) in the city. However, George finds this “better than making contact to his grief” (p. 50), better to contact his wife's misery and to think about it.

Isabelle locks herself in Caleb’s room with prolonged silence and George “does not know what she needs from him “the necessities of her grief” (Harris, 2021, p. 49). “But it was enough for him to know that she is within” and his friend Ezra tells him, “go see your wife. Even if she refuses you. Even if she spits at your feet” (p. 39) . Thus, he tries to run away from home for longer periods of time, but he must return. Isabelle asks him one day to inform her brother about the loss. Isabelle tells George that she “was hoping you [he] might go to town and send a telegram from me” (p. 58). Therefore, George sends a brief telegram, “Caleb killed in action. Few details. Your sister grieves” (p. 65). George reconsiders and wants to amend it to “we grieve” (p. 65) then changes his mind. This reveals the need of support to endure the mourning that follows.

The loss did not leave Aneesa in London and caused her vulnerability as well. Aleksander Kopka states that vulnerability, “precariousness and grievability in a border framework of mourning” (Kopka, 202, p. 97), change the understanding of the world. Aneesa and Waddad did not see him ever after, yet could not give up thinking about his uncertain death. Aneesa says that “he can't have disappeared so completely, as though he'd never existed” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 198). Aneesa and her mother cannot mourn without knowing the truth about her brother's death and cannot move on without certainty. They cannot implement any ritual as there is no body to bury. Waddad once wears black suit and this indicates that the mourning period did not end, or it just begins once more. She and Aneesa talk about Bassam, recall memories and cry. Aneesa also writes letters in

Bassam's name to assure her mother. However, this action is interpreted in Lana Zantout's, "by changing Bassam's fate, she[Aneesa] is attempting to wipe from her memory any trace of Bassam's potential death" (Zantout, 2016, p. 37), any mourning about the uncertain death.

Homophones in *The Sweetness of Water* indicate the mourning of the characters. Mourning and morning are repeated several times, and whenever the readers see morning, the mourning of the bereaved comes to mind. George had "taken to the woods that very morning" (Harris, 2021, p. 3) and "the image August had left him [George] with that morning" (p. 11), the mourning starts from that moment. George tells Isabelle's friend, Mrs. Foster, "we are in mourning" (p. 51) when she comes to visit his wife. Rothaupt & Becker mention that "Riches and Dawson (1996b) stated that the connection with other parents who had lost a child and support of family and friends provided the foundation of social support" (Rothaupt & Becker, 2007, p. 11), which is needed to pass the mourning phase. "George told her of August's visit, of his wife having gone silent from the moment he told her the news until he'd left the same morning to come to town" (Harris, 2021, p. 39). George shows a need for support, "yet Ezra merely winced, his eye twitching, as if in display of a care more genuine than any words might carry" (p. 39). At the same time Ezra provides such support and says "Isabelle will pull through. Give her time. That is the remedy" p. 39) and "be patient with her she doesn't yet know how much you two will need each other" (Harris, 2021, p. 56). The loss uncover George's lack of confidence, "it occurred to him that Caleb might have inherited some flawed trait from his father" (p. 11), he has no courage to tell Isabelle that she will never see Caleb again. At the same time, he is "not capable for consoling" (Harris, 2021, p. 49) her. Warren shows that "alterations in relations with in-laws, flirtations with self-destruction, lack of confidence" (1981, p. 80) are signs of personal disorganisation following a loss. However, these signs of grief must be expressed in mourning.

The need to participate in the mourning rituals change the bereaved. Isabelle after meeting Mrs. Foster breaks the silent and heads to show her mourning. She asks George to send a telegram to her brother, explaining that she does not "wish to hold a ... hold any ceremony until Silas returns. He'd wish to be here for it" (Harris, 2021, p. 58). However, the mourning starts earlier when she locks herself in Caleb's room after George's

confession. Freud mentioned that “in mourning we found that the inhibition and loss of interest are fully accounted for by the work of mourning in which the ego is absorbed” (Freud, 1917, p. 245). Isabelle spends this period alone; she goes out the room when George is sleeping. She does not want any contact with him or with anybody. George does know and keeps “pondering her actions once again, whether they were due to her suffering or her defiance, the latter at him and the former at what they had lost” (Harris, 2021, p. 56) because he did not inform her directly about Caleb's death. Yet, George thinks that “it seemed only wise to leave Isabelle undisturbed, and with the freedom to roam her portion of the house however she saw fit” (Harris, 2021, p. 62). Sadak & Weiser mention that “in bereavement, women are known to confront their emotions more frequently than men, who use more avoidant strategies” (Sadak & Weiser, 2017, p. 436). Thus, Isabelle is working through grief by cooking, gardening, eating with George and taking care of the house. Yet, she becomes “a cold fixture on the porch ... but without any of the cheer that had once rounded out her demeanor” (Harris, 2021, p. 71) referring to the mourning period, in which “the world has become poor and empty” (Freud, 1917, p. 246) without the loved son.

Loss affects the lives of the bereaved and the family system of the deceased. In *Dreams of Water*, the father has a presence in the initial chapters with a direct focus on his relation with Aneesa and Bassam, Aneesa as the daughter who assists him and Bassam who refuses to assist him. Later on, the reader discovers that the father died and Bassam informs Waddad about the collapse of her husband at work. Waddad says that she “was just pleased at the time that he'd [Bassam] thought to get the groceries” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 62). On one hand, the loss of father influences his family. Aneesa keeps thinking about their father in London and Beirut. Moreover, the chapter focusing on Bassam's abduction, shows that he also thinks about their father. Bassam regrets not being “close to his father, perhaps because they were both too embarrassed to show affection openly” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 76). Brown's article indicates that “any loss will have immediate and long term reverberations for every member and all other connected relationships” (Brown, 2012, p. 2). Therefore, the strength of the relation affects the bereavement process, Aneesa yearns and Bassam regrets. While on the other hand, the loss of Bassam causes a great loss. No masculine here to accompany Aneesa and Waddad. That's why the bereavement process is harder after Bassam's disappearance and almost confirmed death. Schoka asserts that

“the process of grief may be aided or hindered depending on the type of affect, openness of communication and level of cohesion in the relationships between the survivors” (Schoka, 1999, p. 2). The relation between Aneesa and her mother can be described as unsupportive, Aneesa leaves to London and attempts to start a new life away from the grieving, mourning and bereaving mother.

Likewise the relation between George and Isabelle takes unusual direction. During this period of loss, the gap between them widens and they become “helpless without each other” (Harris, 2021, p. 41). In an article, Sidmore explains how some researchers suggested that the parents must grieve in “individual patterns” (Sidmore, 2000, p. 353), however, it “can cause communication difficulties, often resulting in serious marital problems” (2000, p. 354). This is exactly what happened with George and Isabelle, the news of Caleb being killed leads each one of them to grieve differently. George “wished to tend to her, wished she help her face the injustices wreaked upon them both. But what they shared had limits” (Harris, 2021, p. 41). Despite this, he asks the two freed men to “keep your[their] voices down. Isabelle is resting” (p. 59) and he checks whether she is feeling better the next day.

Characters in *Dreams of Water* and *The Sweetness of Water* bereave non-verbally. The characters express many mutters, humming, presses of lips and many shaking heads. In addition to many shudders, shivers, sighs and deep breaths while thinking alone or talk to the others. Aneesa is “humming to herself” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 3) since childhood. All these are anxiety symptoms that caused by the uncertain death of Bassam. In psychology, the “persistent, intense, chronic, or recurring anxiety not justified in response to real-life stresses is usually regarded as a sign of an emotional disorder” (Britannica, 2022). The sudden disappearance of Bassam caused such shock. Aneesa notices in her mother “a certain fire in the eyes that she remembers seeing in Bassam's face sometimes” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 34). This causes a feeling of “a shudder go through her body” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 34) as if Aneesa sees Bassam's eyes. Fragments stories and memories back and forth show the precarious nature of life for those trying to escape emotional distress. Shivering is a way of expressing emotions, “the physical expressions are crying, shivering, and laughter” (Okafor, 2013, p. 37). In the wood and in the presence of the two freedmen, “George was shivering now. Start talking about the animal, how it led him here... and he

found himself reflecting on his son” (Harris, 2021, p. 8). Moreover, “the shiver of water's surface would forever take on the spasm of his brother's backside on impact with the master's whip” (Harris, 2021, p. 34). The latter quotation pictures the shivering water, which recalls to Prentiss's mind the scene of his brother, Landry being hit by their previous master. In addition, Roy mentions that “death tears someone away from us, and the tear, in those first moments, seems to be felt more in the body than in the mind” (Roy, 1988, p. 5). Waddad takes a deep breath, tears fall on her face and she shakes her head as new rule “gives the relatives of the missing the right to have them declared dead” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 62) after seven years of disappearance. Waddad feels pain and wears black before going. Aneesa feels “her own pain shift to another part of the body, to a permanent, deeper place” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 62) announcing the confirmed death and the eternal sorrow. Whereas, George's pain is “so immense it might split him two” (Harris, 2021, p. 48) but he conceals it with a smile in front of Prentiss and Landry.

2.8 Loneliness & Silences in Loss

Death of someone turns the world of their beloved ones to a desert of loneliness and silence due to the tragic separation . Satran sees that “vulnerability to loneliness when separated from those who matter may be seen as a residue of man’s primitive heritage” (Satran, 1978, p. 283) and a part of everyone's life. “Secondary Loneliness” is obvious in *Dreams of Water* and *The Sweetness of Water*. Witzleben defines this as type of loneliness which is “expressed in grief and melancholia due to a loss of an object” (Witzleben, 1598, p. 38). Both Aneesa and her mother suffer from loneliness, Masarwi asserts in her book that “some researchers have found that the loneliness is the hardest part of mourning” (Masarwi, 2019, p. 7), the living soul mates are gone forever. Aneesa in London and her mother in Beirut with few phone calls between both, can be seen in Roy's words;

Every mourner, surely, has personal and private moments of sorrow, and memories, that are unique and cannot be shared. But the reconstructive work of mourning; this eminently human undertaking, cannot be rightly done by an individual in loneliness. People "are meant to do this work of mourning together, all of us who are "re-membered" to each other because we are "membered" still to the one whom we have lost (Roy, 1988, p. 6).

The loneliness of George and Isabelle is obvious despite being in the same house. Fowlkes says that “the subjective experience of anyone in deep mourning is likely to be a sense of the utter solitude and loneliness of grief” (Fowlkes, 1991, p. 533). George escapes to the woods to avoid such confession to his wife and “to be left alone for a time” (Harris, 2021, p. 8). George later asks the two freedmen whether they can help him in cultivating a peanut land. Prentiss's thought is “what was wrong with this man? the only ailment Prentiss could assign to him was a bout of loneliness, the same affliction that had shadowed him the night before” (Harris, 2021, p. 47) when they were in the woods. Also, Isabelle “would rather be left alone” (p. 53) without any outside interruption in her grief. She is lonely in the room, in Caleb's room without any response or yearn to George's knocks.

Mothers never leave and this makes them lonely. Waddad does not take any decision to leave Beirut. Isabelle decides that she would not leave even after the departure of Caleb and the death of George, she says “I won't be leaving Old Ox” (Harris, 2021, p. 318). This can be due to “the loneliness of emotional isolation” which “is based on loss of one key person” (Satran, 1978, p. 282), their only sons.

Loneliness and silence are closely related, usually the mind of the solo talks instead of the tongue. Witzleben explains that:

There are two reasons for silence: First, a person may be silent because he has nothing to say. He has what I call a lack of human substance. Second, a person may be silent because he has too much to say. Such people suffer from their primary loneliness more than others, because in their loneliness they occasionally experience something very powerful, unusual, and frightening (Witzleben, 1998, p. 39).

In *Dreams of Water*, silence is not apparent unless confirmed by the characters' actions. Aneesa writes to Salah in her letter that she “miss[es] him, conversations and comforting silences” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 41) alluding to her life in London. Aneesa “telephones her mother and tries to detect a plea for her to return but there is none” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 93), her mother replies that she can manage everything by herself.

George and Isabelle in *The Sweetness of Water* expose grieving and mourning by silence. Isabelle locks herself in Caleb's room and stays silent after George has the belated courage to inform her then both of them enter the silence grieving zone. Roy explains that “the silence is sacral, a testimony that something of incomparable and unsurpassable importance, that something terribly definitive, has happened to one of our very own, and to us” (Roy, 1988, p. 5). They expect his return with injury not with news about his death, Isabelle “having gone silent from the moment he told her the news” (Harris, 2021, p. 39) and George is silent as well because she is not talking to him. George tries to talk to her “and only when he could no longer withstand the silence did he walk downstairs to eat alone” (Harris, 2021, p. 50). Roy says that after the “moments of grief, after our bodies and minds have skirled their first bars of lament, we begin to hear the silence more acutely, and we seek its meaning, the meaning of the vast human loss it expresses” (Roy, 1988, p. 5), the meaning of the silence equals the meaning of the lost.

Loneliness and silent can lead to feeling guilty and ashamed. Guilt and shame are connected to the bereavement of the lost in both novels. Freud believed that “this separation [of death] required the energetic process of acknowledging and expressing painful emotions such as guilt and anger” (Hall, 2014, p. 8). Masarwi interviewed bereaved women and concluded that “they direct their anger inward, at themselves. They spoke of guilt feelings and perpetual suffering and pain” (Masarwi, 2019, p. 39). Waddad tells Aneesa in a phone call, “all you're feeling is guilt, Aneesa. It's time you grew out of that. You have a right to a life of your own” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 93). Aneesa feels that her mother needs her as a partner in the grief. Aneesa feels also ashamed for not listening to her brother when he called her in their last meeting.

George is feeling guilty for not informing Isabelle directly about Caleb. Isabelle locks the door of her son room and does not talk to George. He wonders whether the delay is the reason or she wants to spend time alone, “but the desire to do something for her that might assuage his guilt was so crushing” (Harris, 2021, p. 50). As for the shame, Isabelle meets one of the Black freedmen, Landry, and “the simplicity of the face fell upon her with a wave of embarrassment” (Harris, 2021, p. 19) because she is alone in front of him. Isabelle returns to the cabin “choking back shame” (Harris, 2021, p. 19) due to her separated family members after Caleb's departure to war, one year ago. Whereas, Caleb

“hadn't found any shame in his desertion” (Harris, 2021, p. 80) upon his return. However, Caleb is ashamed from his relationship with August that causes the death of Landry and the grief of Prentiss, his brother.

2.9 Physical Appearance & Characteristics

Grieving and mourning change physical and facial appearance. *In Dreams of Water*, Waddad's physical appearance changes a lot “her eyebrows are faint lines above watery grey eyes” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 17). Aneesa asks her mother “what made you change your look so drastically?” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 33) because Waddad cuts her hair to not “wasting time over hair-dresser and dressmakers” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 33). Aneesa will get used to it as everything else in their life. Each time, she discovers new thing, her mother has a tired “elfin face” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 34) as shown in the novel. Aneesa once writes to Salah surprisingly, “I am aghast, Salah, at my mother’s easy fall into dreaming. I had thought her stronger than this, but perhaps I did not realize the magnitude of her grief” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 41). Aneesa returns and notices the changes and “hardly believe[s] that this is the middle-aged woman she left behind all those years ago” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 17). Aneesa returns and notice the physical appearance of her mother and “there is a certain fire in the eyes” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 34), like Bassam. “The loss is barely bearable. It is a cold, cold fire” (Sadak & Weiser, 2017, p. 436), even Aneesa “digs her hands into her pockets” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 21) as he does.

In The Sweetness of Water, the next morning after being informed about the loss was different. George's “face was expressionless beauty escaped him” (Harris, 2021, p. 13), at the end he transfers the bad news. “It was the stoop of his shoulders, the hollowness of his cheeks. Only then, in that very second, did she see the pain he carried” (Harris, 2021, p. 20). Isabelle's physical appearance surprises George. Her appearance “seemed to bear no relation to his earlier fears” (Harris, 2021, p. 53). Isabelle's gray ponytail and her face is soft, full with life. Nevertheless, George must not be surprised because she is always a “fierce” woman, “holding up quite well in the face of the shock” (Harris, 2021, p. 55). Caleb returns and notices the physical appearance of his parents. He “had not quite managed to kill his father, but he had certainly aged him” (Harris, 2021, p. 73). George feels pain when he walks and his face like “cracks upon glass” (Harris, 2021, p. 73). Yet, Caleb finds comfort when looking at his mother, Isabelle.

2.10 Responding to Grief & Identity

In *Dreams of Water*, Aneesa did not respond to Waddad's pain ethically. She leaves the vulnerable bereaved mother alone. In London, she "speak[s] more of everyday things, steering a long way from the vagaries of our troubled mind" (Jarrar, 2007, p. 21). Awad's reference of "Aneesa, a Lebanese woman who works in London as a translator during Lebanon's devastating civil war, reflects on how living and working in London have enabled her to look at her identity from a new perspective" (Awad, 2016, p. 296). This also enables the reconciliation with her destructed past. Aneesa seeks new identity of the previously vanished due to the civil war and seeks to regain the suppressed subjectivity after the death of the two males in her family, father and brother. This is exactly what Homi Bhabha said, "We find ourselves in the moment of transit where space and time cross to produce complex figures of difference-and identity, past and present, inside and outside, inclusion, and exclusion" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 1), Aneesa leaves to find her lost identity caused by the loss of father, brother and country. Aneesa travels to London to live in different country and to have new or maybe hybrid identity with novel communications. Nonetheless, she keeps thinking about home, Waddad, Bassam and dreams about them despite some attempts to avoid her inner grief. Aneesa says when she was asked to mention something about herself, she answers "I lost my brother" (Jarrar, 2007, p. 163), this loss identifies her. Yet, she returns to Lebanon particularly to find herself, not Bassam! Zantout mentions that "Aneesa returns home in an attempt to face her haunting past and put together the fragmented pieces of her life" (Zantout, 2016, p. 4), the pieces that scatter due to loss and war.

George chooses to respond to Isabelle's grief instead of his sorrow. George says that he "can't control how she takes such things. Hope she stops short of that" (Harris, 2021, p. 39). From George's words, readers believe that "grief suddenly and permanently becomes a part of one's identity, making them a member of a club nobody ever wants to join" (Barney & Yoshimura, 2020, p. 90), nothing occupies the lives of George and Isabelle except grief. However, George at the same time "wished to tend to her" (Harris, 2021, p. 41) because both of them need the other in these hard times. Baddeley & Singer (2009) connect loss and identity as follows:

Loss is a challenge to the bereaved individual's sense of identity and that healthy recovery from loss requires sharing memories related to the loss as a way to sustain and/or reconfigure one's sense of meaning and purpose in the face of grief a loss in family...unspoken memory[silence] can play in the sense of identity individuals have as members of a family unit (Baddeley & Singer, 2009, p. 198).

Another loss seeks attention in *The Sweetness of Water* is the loss of freedom, which is also grieved. The two African-American brothers, Landry and Prentiss, whom George finds in woods gain their freedom as result of emancipation, the fake victory of the war. Nevertheless, "there is very little space for Mixed race people to have their own identities because they are neither seen as a separate race nor accepted into the races that form their racial identity" (Sanford, 2018, p. 37). Thus, the Old Ox, their community does not recognize them as freedmen, as if they are still slaves. They refuse to work with George at first because they seek independence from masters, "so much of their lives had been pressed upon them by other men, it felt only right that each decision be prized- their own to make" (Harris, 2021, p. 26). Kaufman mentions that "the realization of men's contradictory experiences of power also allows us to better understand the interactions of class, race, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age and other factors in the lives of men" (Kaufman, 1999, p. 60), men have power but also have roots of pain within this power. After few days, they accept to work with George to collect some money and leave to search for their mother, she was sold as a slave. Later, the "marginalized and subaltern slaves on Ted Morton's plantation, witnessed a transformation in their sense of masculinity when they moved to George's plantation, enjoying free will and liberty" (Harinisri & Radhakrishman, 2024, p. 6). Afterwards, the death of Landry was about to be totally ignored by White men in the city. Caleb tells them "A man died... setting aside who did it, or how little I think of that person for the rest of time, does the fact itself means nothing to you? That a life was lost" (Harris, 2021, p. 211), they allege that the White killer, August, is innocent. George since the emancipation "feels no different to me[him] than before the occupation" (Harris, 2021, p. 73). The people still discriminate different races even though the lost returns.

2.11 The Return of the Lost

Dead people do not physically return, however their souls may come back. In *Dreams of Water*, Bassam returns for the first time in Aneesa's dreams while she is in London. "Away from home, Aneesa dreams exhilarating dreams of her brother" (Jarrar, 2007, p. 17), Aneesa is seeing him and they are walking together. Marrone in his article bases his analysis on the thanatologist Robert Wrenn's ways of grief. One of the four is through "thought patterns and dreams involving preoccupation with, or sense of the presence of, the deceased" (Marrone, 1998, p. 324). Therefore, Bassam's coming back is within the grieving process of Aneesa. The second time, Bassam returns to the psychic whom Aneesa meets in London. Aneesa sees a psychic to know the truth after Bassam's disappearance. Thus, the psychic tells her that Bassam is with them at the moment, he is killed three days after being abducted and he does not regret what he did. Through this return, whether it is real or not, Bassam tries to confirm his death. Whereas, Aneesa seems relieved but the opposite releases later, she goes back to Lebanon to know the truth. The third return of Bassam is his return in one chapter in the novel to speak out. Jarrar (2007) gives the readers all the details of Bassam's last minutes at his home, with all of his endless regrets. Freud mentions that "a physician often has occasion to remark that a son's grief at the loss of his father cannot quench his gratification that he has at last obtained his freedom" (Freud, 1990, p. 84). His abduction is caused by his hands, he wants to feel independent.

In *The Sweetness of Water*, the actual physical return of Caleb makes his parents uncertain about what happened with him, asking from time to time for explanations. Caleb "tried to turn, but his mother held him so tightly that his features stay hidden" (Harris, 2021, p. 72), while George freezes as if both of them need to be introduced to the other. This temporal loss changes them as if he did not return. His return uncovers the gap between his parents. Loss changes people, their life transfers from act to act in grieving and mourning even if he did not die. Caleb "had come so far to return to what little he knew, and all at once it appeared that it might no longer exist" (Harris, 2021, p. 75). His Parents want to know what Caleb did and how he returns but he keeps changing the subject. When Isabelle discovers the hidden pistol, "Caleb knew – to return, as thoroughly as possible, to the edition of himself they'd once known" (Harris, 2021, p. 76), the son who don't put

his hand on something tough. His return also holds a grief, August kills Landry as Landry sees both Caleb and August doing sexual affair. Returns from death to cause another one to be a victim. Above all, his return is seen as “reminders. These constant reminders. Of time lost, relations frayed ” (Harris, 2021, p. 96) as past days will not be back.

Bassam and Caleb return with scars. Scars is the narrative of the story, the story of pain with all its now and then effects. Dean defines scars in her essay as “scars—markers of damage, reminders of trauma and its aftermath—” (Dean, 2016, p. 228). Bassam's scar is on his forehead and Caleb's scar is on his cheek. The psychic confirms to Aneesa in London that Bassam has “got a large scar on his forehead” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 19). This scar indicates the torture that Foucault (1995) talked about. Bassam's scar is the punishment for his political involvement with one of the fighting parties. Foucault mentioned that the torment is:

An element in the liturgy of punishment and meets two demands. It must mark the victim: it is intended, either by the scar it leaves on the body, or by the spectacle that accompanies it, to brand the victim with infamy; even if its function is to 'purge' the crime, torture does not reconcile; it traces around or, rather, on the very body of the condemned man signs that must not be effaced; in any case, men will remember public exhibition, the pillory, torture and pain duly observed (Foucault, 1995, p. 34).

The scar on the cheek indicates the shame of Caleb for serving dishonourably in the war. Isabelle asks him “what did they do to your face? How bad was it? You must tell us everything and leave out nothing” (Harris, 2021, p. 75) with no answers. Caleb's “mangled face weakened her [Isabelle] if she looked at him too long. She was sure that his body, too soft and fragile for climate of war” (Harris, 2021, p. 96). Yet, she tells him “when you get back I'd like to hear what really happened to that face of yours” ((Harris, 2021, p. 79), therefore the truth is finally uttered. “They had opened his face with the butt of a rifle. That night he'd cried, not from the pain but from the fear of deformity” (Harris, 2021, pp. 79-80). Caleb does not feel that his desertion was shameful. Especially when his cowardice turns to braveness, Prentiss breaks the prison's chains with the assistance of Caleb and both of them flee for new beginning outside Old Ox, unsure of return.

The lost may return as ghosts in daylights or nights. Serrano mentions that “most of the deceased return as malevolent ghosts that haunt their relatives” (Serrano, 2020, p. 43). Derrida (1994) invented this concept “hauntology” to refer to the past memories and experiences that will not come back. Not only the past but also the future that will not come due to the loss. The father of Aneesa and Bassam comes as ghost in their dreams. Aneesa once tells her mother that she “saw him in a dream” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 20), his spirit waiting for her. Moreover, the father “comes to him [Bassam] in a dream” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 80) which indicates the desire to see him between them in reality or might be the regret being away from each other. After losing Bassam, Aneesa “realizes she is once again in Beirut that the ghosts of daylight return” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 37) referring to Bassam and to her father. Mark Fisher called “hauntology”, the “cancelled futures”. George sees no future without Caleb, nor Isabelle. However, many things after his return take place and change the visage of the future. While Bassam seems to leave the world with assured belief that “the horror will remain with them” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 83), with both Aneesa and his mother.

2.12 Grieving & Coping Strategies

2.12.1 Memories

Any memory about or with the deceased is part of “grief work”. Memories can be considered as the bridges that hold the loss with all its grieving and mourning, “today, Bassam and her father are foremost in Aneesa’s thoughts. They are part of a general unease that will not leave her, though she tries callously to shake them off” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 46). However, these grieving bridges open at the same time the road towards new distances. Becker & Knudson discuss in their article that “the mourner often finds a constructive way of maintaining a meaningful relationship to the deceased through private memories, public memorials, secular and religious rituals, and spiritual beliefs” (Becker & Knudson, 2003, p. 692). These paths maintain the attachments with the deceased ones. Okafor in his article shows that “grief work involves an active process of confronting memories associated with the thoughts of the loss of loved ones” (Okafor, 2013, p. 27). Aneesa recalls several memories with Bassam, her father and Salah. Aneesa “wakes to dreaming, images, faint and gleaming, trailing before her, the colours of her childhood, shades of blues and greens and the warm” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 36). Samir as well

takes his father, Salah, to London after the death of his mother because there are “too many memories there for him” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 51). Buglass explains that “relocation requires that the bereaved person forms an ongoing relationship with his or her memories of the deceased in such a way that he or she is able to continue with his or her life” (Buglass, 2010, p. 46). Thus, the bereaved can maintain the memory of the dead without succumbing to psychic fragmentation and with the ability to move on.

In *The Sweetness of Water*, George retrieves memories about Caleb from the beginning of the novel. Gibson explains that “the bereaved, religious or not, are often deeply attached to the material legacies of the deceased and the memory of the deceased is indelibly tied to places, objects, images and bodies” (Gibson, 2004, p. 293). Thus, George being in the woods reminds him of Caleb and being at home reminds him of Caleb, “when the boy was younger, they had walked these very woods together.. with that memory” (Harris, 2021, p. 8). Reflecting on Caleb in some moments and reflecting on the beast in others, Freud mentioned that “each single one of the memories and situations of expectancy ... is met by verdict of reality that the object no longer exists” (Freud, 1917, p. 255). The reality is that Caleb is gone forever and his father cannot bear it, he is grieving. George “felt trapped in the cabin, not by the quarters themselves but by the memories they exposed, which lay in wait wherever he turned” (Harris, 2021, p. 56) because Caleb's memories around him all the time. Therefore, he “decided to sleep on the armchair ... act on everything that now occupied his thinking” (Harris, 2021, p. 62), trying to run away from the attacks of his memory. Nevertheless, memories act like the swords with two edges; people grieve and mourn in remembrance, yet on the long term the continuous attachment with the deceased is the only salvation. As Prentiss realizes, “there will be always be certain memories that survive the fall and stood amid the rubble. Monuments of Loss” (Harris, 2021, p. 315). Okafor explains how the “positive memories of life stories of the departed loved ones can motivate bereaved individuals and facilitate adjustment to the new reality of their lives without their loved ones” (Okafor, 2013, p. 107). George recalls how Caleb accompanies him in the wood and “the small moments that had bonded the two – putting him to bed; praying” (Harris, 2021, p. 8) and many more before being melted in sorrow. Okafor considers that even the “ability to remember or to illuminate the memory of the original traumatic event is a vital part of catharsis” (Okafor, 2013, p. 37), so recollection has a hand in bereave and a hand in cope. The

memories with Caleb are so painful and Caleb's door triggers these memories, yet George tries to assert his strength in front of the loss. He is doing “grief work” and has to find new relationships to overcome or at least live despite the uncompensated loss.

2.12.2 Imagination

Uncompensated loss leaves space for images and imagination. According to King, the “mourning imaginably requires the work of dialogue and communion with the images that symbolize the dead” (King, 2020, p. 286), these images are the elegy in time of loss. Becker & Knudson (2003) say that this “relationship is defined as a function of memory, emotion, subjective imagination, or “spirit” (p. 692), this simply means that the dead still exist as images. These images obligate the living to remember them. In *Dreams of Water*, Aneesa does not recall the last meeting with Bassam, however, “there is a persistent image in her mind of a day they spent together” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 67) which enhances her grief. In addition, Aneesa “imagines he [Bassam] had been about to say something of such significance that she would forever remember it” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 69) referring to the bargaining stage of the grief in which the griever craves to return back in time and amends what could be adjusted. On the other hand, George in *The Sweetness of Water* keeps reflecting on Caleb. The “thought of the image August left him with that morning of his boy abandoning the trenches” (Harris, 2021, p. 11) recurs to show George's grief. Sadak & Weiser make it clear that “to grieve and mourn is a splitting, paradoxical experience that is partially conscious and partially unconscious of the presence of absence” (Sadak & Weiser, 2017, p. 434). They later state in their article that “the conscious process of grieving involves a journey of intention grounded in the rites and rituals of art, writing, meditative silence, prayer, dream work, and numerous other contemplative practices” (2017, p. 438). Whereas, “the unconscious component of grief lives autonomously within the body as visceral, wordless, archetypal energy capable of constellating intense pain” (2017, p. 436). This energy might be manifested as King explains “through feelings, dreams, reverie, imagination and visions, the numinous force of the unconscious elements emerged and confronted my[his] conscious self” (King, 2020, p. 262). Aneesa drowns in imagination whether at home or in London. While she is in London with her lover, Robert, Aneesa “likes to imagine them together, Robert and Bassam sitting down on the sofa in

her living room” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 97) looking at her. Thus, canny imagination is part of grieving in addition to portion of “uncanny”.

“Uncanny” imagination can lead to strange angels, images and beasts. In both novels “uncanny” imaginations precede or follow the loss. “Literary figures can hallucinate under the influence of psychoactive substances and due to their vivid imagination, they can converse with imaginary objects” (Mrówczyńska, 2021, p. 51). Aneesa sees angles as her children during her childhood, she “at four, hears the angles, a chorus of sweet voices that tell her to dance with them” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 3). However, her parents (especially her father) do not accept talking about them. Jentsch suggests that “people generally have an innate predisposition to perceive objects as living beings” (Mrówczyńska, 2021, p. 52), thus these people become imaginations' victims. The *Sheikh* confirms that she is talking about the past, but the loss of Bassam asserts that she might be talking about the future, what is coming towards her. Her children are calling her just like Bassam's last call, they are weeping just like her life in grieving and their feet are dirty black just like her forever mourning after Bassam. Even the angel's picture in Salah's home returns us to Aneesa's childhood angels. Moreover;

There are times when she imagines she can see her brother in the distance. He is walking down their street, hands in pockets, head bent low. He cannot be more than fifteen years old ... Aneesa sees hints of their childhood. She waves to him but he ignores her. When he finally stops, there are two of him, one standing behind the other, arms wrapped tightly around his twin (Jarrar, 2007, p. 8).

Thus, this imagination is hard to be real and is considered according to Freud as uncanny. In *The Sweetness of Water*, George sees a beast, a nameless creature and keeps looking for it. He resumes searching for this monster after the news about Caleb, as if he is going back to the past, to his childhood away from the current loss. He wants the two freedmen to assist him in catching it. Another mention for the beast comes later on the novel, when Ezra informs George that the beast is just a joke that George's father told him about in his childhood.

“Uncanny” imagination can lead as well to see ghosts, those invisible spirits. Fuchs notes that “grief resembles an otherwise quite different emotional state, namely the feeling of

uncanniness: The anxious person in an uncanny environment experiences a menacing presence of something which yet remains invisible in the background” (Fuchs, 2017, p. 44). Aneesa notices that “ghosts of daylight return” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 37) when she returns to Beirut, the place of loss and war .Whereas, George describes the changes that Isabelle does while he is sleeping “as if he were living with a ghost” (Harris, 2021, p. 51), waking up to see lilies arranged and shelves decorated. Freud confirmed that “many people experience the feeling in the highest degree in relation to death and dead bodies, to the return of the dead, and to spirits and ghosts” (Freud, 1919, p. 241), the feeling of uncanny. Mrówczyńska says that “what is important for the concept of the uncanny is that Derrida (1994) takes into consideration the supernatural elements such as ghosts and spirits. He claims that the apparitions are the signifier of the future, not the past” (Mrówczyńska, 2021, p. 56) and this confirms that Aneesa and George are alluding to the future away from thinking about the existing hard tests of loss through uncanny. Derrida referred to this as “hauntology”, which shows that “the one who has disappeared appears still to be there, and his apparition is not nothing. It does not do nothing” (Derrida, 1994, p. 120). In *Dreams of Water*, for Aneesa, “Bassam and her father are ghosts in her dream and everything around them, the faint light that illuminates their movements and the distant sounds that accompany their voices, appears ethereal, as if they would all disappear with a single flutter of her eyelid” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 100) . While in *The Sweetness of Water*, for Isabelle, George is “everywhere. He's in the fields, in the forest. I [she] can't get rid of him. But much as I[she] begrudge him. I[she] can't wait to see him each day” (Harris, 2021, p. 326) after his death. Such feeling is not only seen as a part of grieving and yearning to the deceased, but also as part of “grief work”.

“Grief work” and the mourning process maintain an attachment with the deceased. King explains how the suffering opens him to “the transpersonal, objective psyche where healing and transformation of my [his] own personality could be augmented” (King, 2020, p. 277). King adds that “the implication here is that if one’s conscious suffering in mourning includes the ego’s encounter with the unconscious” (King, 2020, p. 280), then the bereaved will potentially change in terms of personality and communication. Aneesa flees to London and starts new communications even though images and dreams chase her, “her new friends are from everywhere ... they are ideal companions, asking nothing of her” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 940). Also, George runs towards the wood and starts new

communications with two Black freedmen even though beast and reflections hit and run him in several periods, George tells them that they “could learn the business together” (Harris, 2021, p. 47). The business of cultivating peanut in order to keep his land after the loss of Caleb.

Thus, “grief is seen not as a pathological reaction, but as an inevitable, healthy, growth producing conscious response to loss if the person can allow images to come alive and be recollected and remembered” (Sadak & Weiser, 2017, p. 438). Freud focused at first on the importance of breaking attachments with the deceased to be able to continue living. However, Freud's own experience and different refutations refer to the importance of maintaining connections with the deceased. Aneesa once mentions that she “senses a strong desire to keep her father and brother there, to hold on to their awareness of each other and of herself floating somewhere in the background” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 100) even in her dreams. These images might be seen in reality or in dreams.

2.12.3 Dreams

The dreamer is often trapped in dreams during the early phases of grief. The pictures in the dreams are shaped by the deepest emotions, “dreams are exceptionally vivid, emotionally packed, and may dramatically alter the life and belief system of the dreamer” (Garfield, 1997, p. 2). The deceased usually come back as figures in the dreams of their acquaintances, “an important aspect of the phenomenology of mourning: the mourner’s encounter with the ongoing “presence” of the deceased. As a spontaneous, autonomous “figure” or “image, ” encountered in dreams, waking reveries, or visions” (Becker & Knudson, 2003, p. 692). Freud (1900) quoted Hildebrandt who once said that “whatever the dream may offer us, it derives its material from reality, and from the psychic life centered upon this reality” (p. 6), from daily life experience. The later mean"specific events, related thoughts, memories, and emotional states, do influence dream content” (Germain, et al., 2013, p. 270). In *Dreams of Water*, Bassam and his father appear in Aneesa's dreams as indication of grief “images behind her eyes thick and overwhelming, her pulse quickening and then suddenly stopping in the base of throat” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 23), they are always in her thought and mind. Aneesa also suffers from insomnia and from dreams about her brother, “away from home, Aneesa dreams exhilarating dreams of her brother. They are moving together towards a sense of effortlessness” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 19).

Sometimes Aneesa focuses on her new self in London, but sometimes dreams in addition to memories take her back home. She once writes to Salah surprisingly about her “mother’s easy fall into dreaming. I[*she*] had thought her stronger than this, but perhaps I[*she*] did not realize the magnitude of her grief” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 44.41).

Dreams reveal the sorrow of groaning mind but also has hands in healing grief. Even the painful ones show where the bereaved is standing in order to assist in accepting the loss. Dreams light paths toward new life by integrating them to become whole, the lost is here and nothing is needed. Gradually dreams return to more or less normal after some time, with occasional flashes of inspiring or comforting contact with the deceased person. Cozza & Hefner show in their article that “the dead affect us in many ways – in our grief and despair, by evoking memories from the past or visiting us in our dreams, in the ways we pay tribute and memorialize the deceased, or through the hope and promise of reuniting with our loved ones following our own deaths” (Cozza & Hefner, 2019, p. 179). Thus, visit in dreams indicate the feeling of ongoing communications, “many mothers described a continuation of the bond with the dead child through various mystical experiences, the most common being in dreams” (Masarwi, 2019, p. 37). Even though, Aneesa believes that he might never return but dreams about him support her in moving on in her life. “These dreams are often part of our sorrow and suffering; they also contain our consolation” (Garfield, 2010). Freud (1900) showed in “Interpretations of Dreams” the image of the bereaved brothers and sisters “harbour in their unconscious hostile wishes, survivals from an earlier period, wishes which are able to realize themselves in dreams”. Aneesa “as she dreams, senses a strong desire to keep her father and brother there, to hold on to their awareness of each other and of herself floating somewhere in the background” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 100) to keep connection, they are here. In *The Sweetness of Water*, dreams are not part of grieve or heal.

Dreams are connected to water, bereaved may wake up crying or sweating. Aneesa suffers from “hours of her undoing, long and sleepless, solitary... Her dreams, gathering all her fears together in one great deluge until there seems to be no means of overcoming them, were once again of water” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 23), water as negative or positive connotations?

2.12.4 Water

The titles *Dreams of Water* and *The Sweetness of Water* have a mutual reference. Water is common aspect in both novels and has a connection to loss. Sadak & Weiser explain that “grief is clearly and concretely expressed as salty tears that arrive in painful waves that drag the bereaved under and threaten to drown them” (Sadak & Weiser, 2017, p. 440), those tears are made of water. Those tears are shed whenever news about the lost is heard, as if hear and ear have hand in tear on the face of mourners. In *Dreams of Water*, the dreams of Aneesa are once again of water and Waddad's “eyebrows are faint lines above *watery grey eyes*” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 17), full of tears. On one hand, Zantout analyzes that Aneesa's “reaction and experience with water in the sense that she has unconsciously drawn a parallel between water and Bassam. In the presence of natural water, Aneesa remembers her brother, once again restoring Bassam’s fluid existence” (Zantout, 2016, p. 74). This fluidity between belief and disbelief of him being dead or alive. On the other hand, “as Aneesa moves between pre-war and post-war spaces, between Lebanon and London, natural waters in the form of rain, rivers, and sea become a recording of her fluid self and her inner struggles” (Zantout, 2016, p. 75). She has identity crisis in addition to the ongoing grieving. In *The Sweetness of Water*, water is mentioned when referring to Isabelle's tears when George informs her about the death of her only son, Caleb. George delays in transmitting the horrific news, thus, “by the time he shut his mouth, the plate in her hand dried itself in the morning air – she managed to put it down, as if her tears were better falling to the floor than sully something she'd just made clean” (Harris, 2021, p. 21). This quotation shows the initiated grief that starts with eyes' water. Welman in his thesis showed that Bachelard thinks of death as “the tragic summons of the waters” and “water truly holds death in its substance”. Or again: “ ... water is the universe of death” (1995, p. 209). Thus, water in both novels resemble death, characters loss.

Characters in both novels share stories about the lost souls around the sink, particularly in the kitchen. This shows the reality of drowning in sadness, Mallon in his article explains that “people react differently to loss: some show great resilience and adaptability in the first months, others sink into chronic grief or depression, whilst others show considerable improvement in mood and outlook” (Mallon, 2008, p. 11), sinking into here can be the first consideration. In *Dreams of Water*, Aneesa describes her mother by saying

that “she turned abruptly to the sink and began washing the breakfast dishes” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 25). This turn occurs after a conversation about Bassam whether he is still alive or no. In *The Sweetness of Water*, George “wept standing against the sink, the same place she[Isabelle] had when he'd delivered the news, lengthy moans and embarrassing sobs” (Harris, 2021, p. 58). The sink reminds him of his guilt and his loss.

Without ignorance to the agonizing connection between water and tears, water plays a positive role in life, it washes out the pain of the loss whenever the characters use or see water. “Water can symbolize the dark unknown dimension of life, but conscious association with it can bring about a feeling of renewal” (Sadak & Weiser, 2017, p. 439). Aneesa grieves but at the same time decides to fly to London to start new life. George as well grieves but at the same time decides to start working in his land. Moreover, “water generally cleanses, however, and it inevitably becomes a symbol of characters in stories handling difficult life scenarios. In any case, water is a symbol of power in stories. It has the ability to free characters as well as claim them” (Goudarzi, Eslamian, & Ostad-Ali-Askari, 2020). Landry's haven is the water, away from the miserable life especially for him as a slave. Landry enjoys the sweet water, “there were places and sounds that brought Landry comfort” (Harris, 2021, p. 23), especially fountains and ponds. Not only for Landry, but also for the two mothers, Waddad and Isabelle.

Water inspires the female characters in both novel during their bereavements. Welman confirms the “water as an element of renewal and rebirth is thus also closely associated with the transformative potential of the archetypal Feminine” (1995, p. 211), one of these archetypes is the mother. Waddad “listened to the water from the garden fountain slapping against the marble slabs at its outer edge” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 33), then “her anger abandoned her and she felt so bereft that she realized she had been looking in all the wrong places and suddenly knew exactly what she must do” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 33). In this moment, Waddad transforms her thinking to different direction and starts to go to orphanage to look for Bassam, or his reincarnation. Whereas, Isabelle thinks about asking a freedman to build a fountain to honor Landry, “honor the memory of a man who had deserved his own fountain in time. He would have it at last” (Harris, 2021, p. 357). After knowing about his fascination in fountains and water. These females engage also in writing or receiving letters, these letters affirm a link between loss and rebirth.

2.12.5 Letters

Letters are mentioned in both novels; these letters are from or to the lost. Okafor in his article shows that “documents included communication objects (i.e., photos, pictures, videos, letters, poems, and significant stories), which contained personal reflections, feelings, and memories that provided insights into bereaved individuals’ loss and grief experiences” (Okafor, 2013, p. 53). In *Dreams of Water*, Aneesa deceives her mother and sends several letters, one in her presence in Beirut and the rest through Bassam's friends when she is in London. Aneesa sends letter assuring her mother as if Bassam wrote them, yet Waddad tells her upon her return “no more letters, Aneesa. No more, please” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 18). These letters trigger grieving because they know he might not be alive. Moreover, she writes also a lot about herself, Bassam and her mother in her letters to Salah and each part of the letter is scattered between pages not as one part to refer to her inner feelings, the chaos after the loss. Also, in *The Sweetness of Water*, Caleb sent letters to his mother during war and after their escape as message that triggers anxiety.

Likewise, letters are another way to cope in “grief work”. “Continuing bonds” credited by Klass and other psychology scholars encourages the bereaves to find ways to keep the bands between them and the deceased. In *Dreams of Water*, Aneesa tries to do that and the letters which were supposed to be written by Bassam maintain the connection with him even during his absence. This is also a way of coping, “writing in Bassam’s name, Aneesa is capable of ensuring her brother’s well-being by keeping him alive in her letters, and is also capable of granting herself and her mother hope for Bassam’s safe return” (Zantout, 2016, p. 6). Therefore, Waddad tells her, “Aneesa, it’s time we accepted the fact that your brother is gone. We have to get on with our lives”, “But what about the letters?”, “No more letters, Aneesa. No more. Please” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 18) reveal the first steps towards coping. In *The Sweetness of Water*, Isabelle waits for a letter from Caleb and Prentiss after they left, she describes writing to her as “the greatest gift” (Harris, 2021, p. 336). A soothing letter in her loneliness after losing them all, a strengthening one towards coping.

Chapter Three

Coping Mechanisms & Gender

The bereaved grieves and mourns after the loss for a different duration, yet coping strategies must take place at some point. Psychoanalysis critics, as mentioned before, introduced “grief work” or “mourning process” to transcend the moments of melancholy. The “grief work includes the need to confront the reality that the loved one had died, to go over the memories and possible trauma prior to and immediately after the death, and finally to work toward emotional detachment of the deceased” (Becker & Knudson, 2003, p. 8). However, Worden, as cited by the article of Rothaupt & Becker, refuted the fourth task by “withdrawing emotional energy from the deceased and reinvesting it in another relationship” (Becker & Knudson, 2003, p. 8). Thus, Aneesa and Waddad use the path of “grief work” but without surrendering to the idea that Bassam is indeed dead. Memories control their minds and souls, days and nights. Nevertheless, they work on forming new relationships; Aneesa with Salah, his son and colleagues in London. On the other hand, Waddad with the kid, Ramzi whom she meets in the orphanage while performing voluntary works with children. Whereas the “mourning process” according to Freud “involves the painful, and thus intermittently denied, acceptance of the reality of the loss and then the gradual, difficult detachment of emotional investment from the lost object until finally “the ego becomes free and uninhibited again” (May, 1986, p. 3). Thus, this process apply to Aneesa and Waddad’s situation, but they do not detach themselves from Bassam.

Coping for George and Isabelle takes different strides that affect their entire life. At first, they think Caleb is dead during the war. Therefore, George confronts his feelings then starts thinking of ways to move on, not alone of course. Kathrin Boerner & Jutta Heckhausen discuss in their article how “a dual-track model that includes two modes of coping: Loss-oriented coping involves an effort to confront feelings of grief and loss itself, whereas restoration oriented coping is an attempt to appease pain in some way or distance oneself from one’s grief to focus on the demands of daily life” (Boerner & Heckhausen, 2003, p. 203) and this is what George does.

3.1 Uncanny coping

In the *Dreams of Water* and *The Sweetness of Water* uncanny ways of coping stand out. Sadak & Weiser include in their article that “recent studies emphasize the reality that people do not get over or even “accept” losses. They simply surrender to the reality of loss while creating a life that includes it, and keep moving forward. Time does change everything, but for most people grief is never finished” (Sadak & Weiser, 2017, p. 442), which indicates that grief is like a vicious cycle that keeps moving, an integral part of life. Living in this way act as defense mechanisms against the loss and all its obligations. The different modes of loss and the coping strategies are clear in Jarrar’s & Harris’s novels. The impact of Lebanese Civil War on Aneesa and Waddad, and the impact of American Civil War on Isabelle and George. The characters mourn and grieve through reflecting on life, religion, nation and family relations instead of surrendering to melancholy. Jarrar’s *Dreams of Water* and Harris’s *The Sweetness of Water* are comparable as there are differences and similarities connected to how protagonists in each novel do not surrender to the traumas caused by the Civil Wars and they attempt to cope with their experiences of loss and bereavement.

Aneesa has a friendship with Salah and Waddad accompanies a small kid, Ramzi. In Jarrar’s *Dreams of Water*, Aneesa leaves the country to London; she could not adapt to loss and could not stop herself from thinking about Bassam. Her leaving might be seen as an attempt to cope directly without giving herself a chance to grief and mourn properly. She learns “how to separate herself from people and circumstances that are no longer there” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 93) and has new social network. However, this coping attempts did not last for a long time. Bowlby explains that mourning process is a series of emotional events occur to form another attachment, invest in different person in order to move on. Therefore, the bereaved person can cope with the absent of characters and attract to different interests. This is what Aneesa’s mother, Waddad, does to distract herself from searching for Bassam. She volunteers in an orphanage where she “especially enjoyed the time with the younger ones” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 37) not the elementary school children. Coping with loss was harder for Waddad who the bereavement changes her a lot, “the bereaved faces a constant struggle to return to their customary functioning, to the routines of daily life” (Masarwi, 2019, p. 28), searching becomes her new full-time job.

Waddad begins searching for Bassam after Aneesa left to London. Freud mentioned that mourning “involves grave departures from the normal attitude to life, and look upon any interference with it as useless and harmful” (Freud, 1917, p. 244). Therefore, Waddad stays in Lebanon despite the occurring war and decides to search for him. Waddad does not listen to the police who tells her to “try to forget him” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 32) and cannot cope despite the collective experience in the society, the experience of loss during war. At first, she did not accept that Bassam left with no return. She keeps searching and asking people about him, “it took her to distant corners of the city, through streets. Endless stairways” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 31). She refuses to be part of a larger group of people who face the same suffering after missing their siblings, she says “I am not one of them, it is not my place” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 32). Tirna Chatterjee argues that “mourning means the out-and-out denial of any new object or a complete refusal to take part in any action that is not in regards to the lost object” (Chatterjee, 2021, p. 77). She feels that such organization will not bring back the lost. Suddenly, Waddad knows what to do, she will not accept the reality that Bassam goes and will not return, she wants “to know what happened. Even if he’s never coming back” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 32). Until this moment, a plan to cope flows in her mind like water flows in the fountain next to her. Such things are the “inventions of woman torn by grief” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 38), who does not have any other way to ease the grief of her heart. She goes to the orphanage “certain she would find Bassam at the orphanage in the mountains” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 37). After “rejecting the Freudian perspective on relinquishing the attachment to the deceased as the essential task of mourning, it is important to identify an alternative framework that is capable of accommodating continuing bonds” (Field, 2006, p. 710). Waddad goes there to do some voluntary work with children and while doing so, she keeps looking for the boy she wants to find “always feeling that he was there ready to be discovered” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 37). She enjoys her time there, until she finds Ramzi, 8 years old child whom his mother left him in the orphanage after the father abandoned them, unable to take responsibility of many children. She keeps visiting the orphanage on regular basis and brings presents to Ramzi who reminds her of Bassam.

Upon Aneesa’s return from London unable to cope from far away, her mother informs her that she finally found Bassam. Waddad says “I think I’ve found your brother ... he is in the orphanage” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 17) and Aneesa becomes surprised eager to know

more. She tells Aneesa, “He [Ramzi] was born only a few days after your brother disappeared, it all fits in” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 18). The coping process takes here a unique way. Waddad believes that Bassam is now reincarnating in Ramzi’s body. Reincarnation literally means, “to take on the flesh again” (Nagaraj, Nanjgowda, & Purushothama, 2013) and it is a belief in Druze religion. “The Druze rejection of the permanency of their deceased’s departure does not necessarily mean that psychologically “unhealthy” grieving mechanisms of denial or dissociation are employed” (Somer, Sela, & Or-Chen, 2011, p. 470). Hence, Waddad finally sleeps with happiness, Bassam is here again. Waddad has a sense of recognition when looking at Ramzi. His eyes, hair and shape are the same characteristics of Bassam. Bassam is alive again with different name, Waddad tells Ramzi about Bassam and he asks her not to cry while talking about Bassam. Ramzi reassures her that Bassam cares about her safety that is why he did run away when men came to take him. It turned to be true when Bassam confirms in initials chapters, “that if he delays in coming out the men might hurt his mother” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 74). Ramzi later tells Aneesa to “just tell her [Waddad] that I [he] will come and live with her. There’s no need to wait any longer. I will come and be her son” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 59). The reincarnation process is completed and Ramzi, in a sense, takes the place Bassam. There is not detachment from Bassam and both follow “continuing bonds” in adapting to bereavement.

Aneesa writes to Salah about Bassam's reconnection, reincarnation. She describes “how to see , in the birth of an eight -year-old boy, the soul of a man killed at the very moment, moving from one body to another, skin to new skin” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 38). At the beginning, Aneesa does not consider reincarnation logical. Afterwards, she asks Waddad to take her to see Ramzi, trying to see the truth as Waddad. Then, she gets accustomed to him and to his name, Ramzi “reminds her so much of Bassam as a boy that Aneesa is taken aback” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 34), his colouring, hairline, small frame and energy. Thus, reincarnation “could be regarded as acceptance-based coping mechanisms that would be predicted to be advantageous psychological assets” (Somer, Sela, & Or-Chen, 2011, p. 463), Aneesa wishes to hold him, “to gather him together, the pieces that have been missing for so long” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 43) because she misses Bassam a lot.

George seeks relationship with newly freed slaves and Isabelle accompanies herself before reshaping her whole life. In Harris's *The Sweetness of Water*, George sees that working in the land is a good thing that he can do after asking the assistance of the two freedmen, one of them reminds him of Caleb, his son. George, tries to keep himself busy with different things as going through the woods or talking to the two brothers. However, “he [George] found himself, as he had been the case since the preceding day, reflecting on his son” (Harris, 2021, p. 8), on his grief. Boerner & Heckhausen (2003) argue in their article that “coping with loss involves active efforts to structure memories and thoughts as well as to regain mastery over one’s life” (p. 203). Therefore, George creates unexpected friendship with the two men, and all of them “walked as one through the trees” (Harris, 2021, p. 10). “Grief work” must take a place and new relationship presents in life after any loss .George decides to change his routine and plants the land. George says “men change” (Harris, 2021, p. 39) and says “I want to have something. I’ve been made to feel so helpless, at such loss” (Harris, 2021, p. 64), therefore he keeps his land. He thinks that “if he was to keep his land, and to put in any crop at all, he would need help. Keep his holdings. Sell nothing” (p. 38). George says “I don't want to lose this land, too. What we've been through has changed me. Not all of me, but a part” (p. 64) and he wants to keep his land as a legacy. He also needs to get used to work in his land, so “when they left, he would know how to continue on his own” (p. 66), which means that George can maintain his peanuts land when the freedmen leave to the North. Even after the unexpected return of Caleb, working in the peanut land is the way of coping with change for George, and for Isabelle as well.

Isabelle remains the same, before Caleb's return and after Caleb's return. George tells his friend about her and says, “I can’t control how she takes such things. But I can control what's mine. The land ... I suppose I wish to hold on to what I have left. Do something with it. Something worthwhile” (Harris, 2021, p. 39), and gets busy with this land. Whereas, Isabelle “was on her own. That was what is was. The conclusion came slowly to Isabelle, cropped up as a fear, the trailing vapors of an idea that lingered after Caleb's death” (p. 93) to point out her grief work. Bowlby, as mentioned in the article of Wortman & Boerner, referred to four stages of grieving, the last phase is “reorganization or recovery as the loss is accepted, and there is a gradual return to former interests” (Wortman & Boerner, 2007, p. 287). However, Isabelle does not change after her son

returns, she lives “an existence of uncompromised freedom” (Harris, 2021, p. 93) without any interest in her early life, before the death and the return of Caleb. “She had George to thank. He'd venture off first, altering the order of their home, and shored up his grief in the two boys who lived now in their barn, the land they worked together” p. 94), therefore, in such circumstances she faces life alone and continues without specific destination.

In *Dreams of Water*, the uncertainty or precisely denial does not allow Aneesa and Waddad to cope properly, they continue to grieve and to mourn. Field explained more that “continuing bonds expressions that are indicative of unresolved loss imply disbelief that the other is dead” (Field, 2006, p. 711). Despite the passing years, around nine, Aneesa and her mother cannot consider Bassam’s ultimate death. Quotations as “Bassam is alive”, shows that he is not dead, however, “he may have been alive when he wrote this but how do we know what’s happened to him since?” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 25) defeats the first belief. Waddad says “the only way we’ll know that he’s still alive is if we see him again” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 25). Even though years passed, Waddad still cannot believe that he will not return one day. Aneesa wants to stand on concrete ground and knows what happened exactly to Bassam. All of them seem to deny, stuck in the first phase unable to continue towards complete relief. The peak reached when Ramzi’s mother comes and takes him home. It is obvious that Waddad is moving back to grief but simply claims that she is tired and need to sleep. Whereas, Aneesa insists that they will not pay money to Ramzi’s family to keep him.

In *The Sweetness of Water*, George and Isabelle try to cope with changes after Caleb's return. At the end of the novel, Isabelle is the only character to cope, all of them are gone with or without return. George is dead, Landry as well and Caleb with Prentiss head to the North in search of the mother of Prentiss and Landry. Isabelle keeps seeing George even if he is dead, “George in here. He's everywhere. He's in the fields, in the forests” (Harris, 2021, p. 326). Boerner & Heckhausen confirms (2003) “the tie to the deceased should not serve as a substitute for relationships with other living persons. The perception of the deceased should be as open to change, and as flexible as the perception of somebody who is alive” (p. 206). Therefore, Isabelle appoints freedmen with their families to work in George's land, the same approach and deal. To restore the land as it

was and to build a fountain near Prentiss's grave. These errands assist her in coping in addition to infrequent letters from Caleb assuring her that both of them are good and working. Highlighting different gender coping with loss and change.

3.2 Coping between Genders

All citizens are affected by wars worldwide, but unfortunately, the severe consequences are those that affect women. Archer (2017) argues that “the consequences of defeat are calamitous for surviving civilian population, particularly women and children” (2017, p. 2). Women really suffer when they lose sons, brothers, husbands and fathers. To cope with their bereavement, they adopt different modes of defence mechanisms. Highlighting how those families adopt different strategies to cope with their loss and how they continue living despite the painful experiences reveal that females bereave in wartime after losing her relatives in various uncommon ways unlike males.

Male figures are hard in accepting and coping, but they try to have new relationships to make the painful heart gap unseen. Gilbert (1996) explains that;

Gender acts as a discriminating factor. Men tend to grieve differently from the traditional expectation of expressive social grief. This traditional image of “healthy grief” was based on what might be referred to as “women’s grief” (Cook, 1988). Men are more likely to avoid expressing emotions related to a loss (Frantz, 1984), to be less willing to talk about the loss (DeFrain, 1991) and to experience less intense grief that is resolved more quickly (Haig, 1990) (Gilbert, 1996, pp. 276-277).

In Dreams of Water, Bassam reflects the above description in reporting his relation to his mother after the death of his father. In the prison, he says that “his role being only a protector rather than friend” (Harris, 2021, p. 76). However, being in this role is the cause of his regret later. The man is supposed to be active and to subdue his pain or set on the side in order to continue functioning in daily level. Male figures have no strength to cope and usually run away from the land of memories, like Salah who left Lebanon after the death of his wife. In *The Sweetness of Water*, George as well leaves to the woods after hearing the news about Caleb's death because he has no courage to inform Isabelle. After telling her, he does not prefer to return home because she locks her up in Caleb's room,

yet, he decides to live her grief instead of his. While female figures resist in the same place and live in their grief, awaiting reincarnation or return one day.

Females are usually stronger and continue life with grief and hope. They have no restrictions to express their sorrow. Rothaupt & Becker quoted different scholars whom researches “addressed gender differences concluded that mothers are more vulnerable to feelings of intense despair and longer lasting grief than fathers and that they express feelings of grief more than men, although men clearly grieve” (Rothaupt & Becker, 2007, p. 10). The coping modes for Aneesa are not the same as Waddad. The loss affects her differently; she seems to cope easily after “she saw a psychic after she left home, in the hope that he would tell her something about the truth behind her brother’s disappearance (Jarrar, 2007, p. 19). The psychic tells her “he [Bassam] wants you to stop worrying about him. Tell your mother too”, she “strangely comforted” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 20). In addition, confirming that one loses somebody or something is “paradoxically comforting because it allows us ... to speak our pain, our grief” (Woodward, 1990, p. 93) and this is what Aneesa asserts. Aneesa tells the psychic, “my brother, in the civil war in Lebanon. He was kidnapped and we [Aneesa and Waddad] never saw him again” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 19), and this comforted her temporary as read in the novel. In London, Salah cares about her and they spend great time together without thinking of any sorrow, just be happy. Yet, Aneesa says that she “can’t forget everything that’s happened. Bassam, my[her] father and what’s happened to our [their] country” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 45). She is the one who leaves but also the one who bereaves later for not having any clue about Bassam. She could not bear thinking about the loss of Bassam with all memories chasing her from Lebanon. Aneesa “feels a sudden longing for permanence and certainty” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 23). Waddad tells Aneesa upon her return that “things changed so much for me after you left ... I had to manage the search on my own. It took a long time, but it’s finally happened” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 17). Waddad wants Aneesa to cope with loss after returning from London and to see the truth as she does. Waddad tells her “Aneesa, it’s time we accepted the fact that your brother is gone. We have to get on with our lives” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 18). Therefore, Aneesa begins to visit Ramzi and all his features make her able to start coping, as they are living with Bassam again. Aneesa buys him chocolate and sweets, then they go the mountain house where she wants to show him the room of Bassam. However, Waddad refuses, as she is afraid that he will remember nothing.

“Derrida eschews the process of mourning where the self “gets over” the loss of a significant other and returns to a normal state of functioning as enjoyed prior to a bereavement” (Polatinsky, 2011), the loss of Bassam comes suddenly without prior alarm. In addition, “women cope better and have fewer health consequences because they confront and express their grief more than men” (Stroebe, Schut, & Boerner, 2017, p. 62). Scenes are obvious in *Dreams of Water*, Aneesa and her mother show how they mourn, through tears, anger, anxiety, and then find another attachment while keeping ties with Bassam. “The ways in which Arab women cope depend on how acutely conscious they are of the reality surrounding them and the restrictions placed on them by that reality” (Masarwi, 2019, p. 74), but Waddad refuses to be in the organization of many families awaiting the missing relatives to return alive or dead.

Waddad chooses to reincarnate Bassam in a small boy called Ramzi, whereas Isabelle chooses to remain silent. Isabelle does not talk to George and locks herself in Caleb's room, until her dear friend “Mildered Foster” came to see her. “Foster was closer to Isabelle than George” (Harris, 2021, p. 53) and this is not pleasant to George. “She's strong woman. Helpful in times like these women help women” (p. 69) as she stands next to her friend in hard times. “Psychological experiments find that people perceive women to be better suited to lead in times of crisis” (Bakken & Buhaug, 2021, p. 986). Both characters, Waddad and Isabelle start their grieving from their sons' rooms, both of them lead their houses after the death of the husbands and the departure of the sons. Waddad volunteers in the orphanage and Isabelle employs new freedmen in George's land.

Nowadays, changes occur in looking at gender bereavement. Jalland mentions that “the gender gap was reduced as women internalised their sorrow, and moved closer to a traditionally male pattern of grieving” (Jalland, 2013, p. 19) after being able to confront and express. This leads to think about eco-feminism, it can be also applied to men in grief. As showed in the article of Sadak & Weiser;

Nature has the capacity to hold all of our grief and sorrow. Being in nature reminds us that cycles of renewal are part of our reality"., grief is an archetypal phenomenon that can lead to an awareness of what truly has value and what truly matters in the land of the living. Grief can be the means to more fully integrate our relationship with the natural world (Sadak & Weiser, 2017, p. 442).

Aneesa engages with nature in Lebanon and in London. She is yearning “for the hardiness she has seen in large oak trees in the West, unwavering and placid too” (Jarrar, 2007, p. 23). Also, George goes to the wood and its darkness running away from the death news. George “peered back at the forest, silent and void of life in the darkness. Like there was nothing there at all” (Harris, 2021, p. 12), not either loss.

Loss will remain in spirit before actual death. People stick to the hope for better days to come, to the faith in prayers and shrines, and to new people filling the physical gaps with remaining ties to the lost.

Chapter Four

Conclusion

The whole thesis can be summarized in those words of Sigmund Freud, who said, “We find a place for what we lose. Although we know that after such a loss the acute stage of mourning will subside, we also know that we shall remain inconsolable and will never find a substitute. No matter what may fill the gap, even if it be filled completely, it nevertheless remains something else. And, actually this is how it should be, it is the only way of perpetuating that love which we do not want to relinquish’ (Freud, 1990, p. 368)” (Mallon, 2008, p. 6). Readers detect this when Aneesa and Waddad acknowledge the loss after denial. They live the grief and mourning with success and failure from time to time. When the kid, Ramzi returns to his family, life continues but not as before. In addition, George and Isabelle live the same suffering after the claimed death of Caleb; they grieve the deceased before his sudden return. Aneesa and Waddad could cope and stay in the same place that witnessed the abduction of her brother, Bassam. George and Isabelle as well.

War still ongoing not rest no breath of quietness, loss takes part from our souls days after days without stopping, we are losing tissues and cells every once and while. Loss changes a person from the inside out. Loss may mean gain sooner or later, lose something and gain another. No words can describe the pain of loss, yet we as human beings encounter it every day and feel that death is nearer during wartimes. Wars do not differentiate between youths and olds, wars take all in seconds without any alert or any afterwards mercy. Burn the humans alive whether by weapons or by standing face to face with loss. Nothing in hand, no assistance in such circumstances or escape. Hoping a wake up after a long nightmare, but no! As Freud repeated “grief work” must take place. This cycle should continue moving and humans must go with it. This period can start with denial but day after the other acceptance will take place, then life will function again without detaching from the lost, person or thing. This what exactly happened with the protagonists, Aneesa & Waddad and George & Isabelle. All of them grieve and mourn, but at the end stick to hope that one day someone will come and fill the empty spaces, while maintaining the memories of the lost in heart and soul forever. Bassam will keep

smiling, Aneesa will be the faithful girl to her mother, Caleb will stay the brave one, fathers scarify and mother wait.

Thus, this whole thesis opens new way of thinking about grieving, mourning and coping despite the fact that all of us as humans encounter loss and survive millions of times. I may find it hard to cope as the characters but life will continue and this is our mission with coping and walking till the last breath.

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قدمت هذه الرسالة استكمالاً لمتطلبات الحصول على درجة الماجستير في برنامج الأدب المقارن بكلية الدراسات العليا في جامعة النجاح الوطنية في نابلس، فلسطين.

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الملخص

استنادًا إلى النظريات التحليل النفسي للفقد والحزن واستراتيجيات المواجهة التي حددها فرويد وبتلر، تصور هذه الأطروحة صور الحزن والحداد والصدمة في رواية ندى جرار "أحلام الماء" (2007) وفي رواية نانان هاريس "حلاوة الماء" (2021). علاوة على ذلك، ستستخدم الأطروحة نظرية ما بعد الاستعمار التي حددها هومي ك. بابا وإدوارد سعيد لإظهار أن للاستعمار يد في التسبب في الحزن وفي تغيير الشعب المُستعمر، وخاصة في القضايا المتعلقة بالهوية والحرية. علاوة على ذلك، استخدم كتابات فوكو عن الندوب لإظهار أن الحروب تترك جروحًا لن تلتئم بمرور الوقت. وكما استخدم أيضًا النسوية والنسوية البيئية للقول بأن الحروب الأهلية تصيب الناس عامة بالصدمة، وخاصة النساء. ومع ذلك، يُقال هنا أن النساء يستخدمن آليات التأقلم لدفع ألم الخسارة بشكل أفضل من الرجال. ومع ذلك، لا يزال المفجعون بالفقد، وكذلك الشخصيات في كلتا الروايتين، يعيشون في فراغ وعلاقات حب وآمال مستقبلية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الفاجعة، الفقد، الحزن، الحداد، الصدمة، التأقلم، جرار، هاريس