

## MEMORY IN THE LIGHTHOUSE BY ALISON MOORE

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### Abstract

*The Lighthouse* by Alison Moore remains to be a narration where the sense of memory has become influential. Almost all memories with mother are joyful and they are what connect Futh, the hero of the novel, to life. Especially the lighthouse, which can be regarded as a concretized form of beautiful memories with the mother, functions as a source and energy of life for him. Still, it is the unbearable memories, the memories of loss and abandonment, the memories of betrayal that gradually lead him to death and dominate his life. It might be argued that Futh was already dead and buried in memories as his absence is not noticed by others. He is abandoned and betrayed by a mother and a wife, who, in Futh's eyes, would hopefully replace the absent mother. In short, Futh's life as narrated in the novel is nothing but an account of memories, mostly tragic, which dominate his life and prevent Futh from living in a sense.

**Keywords:** Alison Moore, The Lighthouse, memory, object relations theory, psychoanalytic theory

## ALISON MOORE'UN THE LIGHTHOUSE ADLI ROMANINDA ANI

### Öz

Alison Moore'un *The Lighthouse* romanı anının etkinliğini gösterdiği bir anlatıdır. Romanın kahramanı Futh'un annesiyle olan anıları zevk vericidir ve Futh'u yaşama bağlayan onlardır. Özellikle anneye yaşanan güzel anların somutlaşmış biçimi olarak görülebilecek deniz feneri objesi Futh için bir yaşam kaynağı ve enerjisi olarak işlev görür. Ancak Futh'u yavaş yavaş ölüme iten ve yaşamına egemen olan anılar kaybetme, terk edilme ve ihanete uğramayla ilgili olan katlanılmaz anılardır. Futh'un yokluğunun fark edilmemesi nedeniyle onun zaten ölüp anılara gömülmüş olduğu iddia edilebilir. Futh annesi ve kayıp annesinin yerine geçebileceğini düşündüğü eşi tarafından terk edilir ve ihanete uğrar. Romanda anlatılan Futh'un yaşamı ona egemen olan ve bir bakıma Futh'un yaşamasına engel olan, sıklıkla trajik anıların anlatısından başka bir şey değildir.

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### Introduction

As a term memory refers to human's faculty of remembering and being aware of although it is a quality possessed by any organism. That is, it is not only peculiar to human beings and depicts the related capacity of anybody or substance. Moreover, even machines today have memories and it might be argued that today's memory is primarily virtual. Memory has recently led to the emergence of a field of study called "memory studies" and it seems there is an increasing interest in and even fascination with memory as a source of curiosity, which is in contrast to "the notion that what most characterizes the times in which we live is a social amnesia, in which we, as modern subjects, are cut off from the pasts that have created us" (Radstone & Schwarz, 2010, p. 1). That is, it might be paradoxically claimed that it is the absence of memory that has led to the recent interest in memory. In fact, it is wrong to assume that human being has learnt to completely disregard the history that has made him with the advancements in technology; on the contrary, human beings have had a new interest in history as suggested by the rise of new historicist approaches and studies as well as the increase in the number of fiction, both print and visual, that focuses on past periods. In short, human beings try to learn more about history while they are at the same time called to distance themselves from history. A similar argument might be true for memory: human beings often are strangely attracted by memory although it is the presence in which they live and it is the future in which they lay hope. It is also obvious that although memory is something to escape for some people, it is an energy and source of living for others.

Childhood memories play a very significant role in the lives of people. Asking "What if understanding who you are, revealed through those [childhood] memories, has everything to do with how you live in the present and how successfully you are able to take control of your future" (Leman, 2008, p. x), Dr. Kevin Leman emphasizes that role in fact. Futh's childhood memories indicates his lack of a strong attachment to his parents; in fact, he is deprived of it. That is the main reason behind his inability to build long-lasting relationships because "atypical behaviors of motherless children were more than just strong support for the notion that early experience played a critical role in later social behaviors" (Carter et al., 2005, p. 3). John Bowlby, another psychoanalyst writing on effects of childhood bonds with mother, also suggests that child's social and psychological capacities are not to be understood when examined without taking into consideration the relation between mother and child.

Founder of attachment theory, Bowlby argues that traces of attachment to mother could be observed in behaviours of not only children but also adolescents and adults (Bowlby, 1998, p. 3).

### Memory in *The Lighthouse*

The memories of Futh, the pseudo-protagonist of the novel *The Lighthouse* who resembles an anti-hero more, are also like non-verbal confessions, confessions attempting to reveal to the reader how tragic it has been to live without a good family, without parents, and finally without a considerate wife. Futh is a middle-aged man who has recently divorced his wife and he is planning to have restorative holiday along the Rhine. Although this seems to be a travel inside Germany, it is in fact a travel inside his own past and memories, started with the intention of finding himself though resulting in loss of oneself. This travel reminds him of the memories of earlier trips with his parents and his wife and gives the reader clues about his paranoiac situation. This paranoia is not without reasons because people in Futh's life have left unanswered traces and questions behind. That is why, memories haunt Futh's life. His travels into the past prove to be a sinister process in which Futh will think about not only the things he has done till then but also about the things he has not done which thus turn out to threaten his present. The holiday Futh plans to have is a walking holiday and he walks to his tragic end although he cannot foresee that. As a maker and seller of artificial smells, Futh has newer injuries and is hurt while trying to heal his wounds caused by his separation from his mother and his wife Angela. He is an escapist trying to leave behind the unhappiness that has dominated his life for years.

Object relations theory, which “put[s] the individual's need to relate to others at the center of human development” (Scharff, 1995, p. 3), naturally emerged from psychoanalytic theory because “the daily work of the psychoanalyst is intimately bound up with his patients' relations with other people” (Greenberg & Mitchell, 1983, p. 9). Although psychoanalysis is primarily based on Freud's ideas and observations, object relations theory points to a shift in it: “In contrast to Freud's emphasis on biological instincts as the driving force behind personality development, all object relations formulations are relational” (Goldstein, 2001, p. 7). This theory claims that human beings are motivated by the need for contact with other people; “objects” in this sense refer to other significant people around a person. Object relations theory has been noted for its emphasis on the relationship between mother and child. Accordingly, it observes the processes through which a child considers his/her own self as dependent on and/or separate from the mother. It studies “the infant's move from symbiosis

with the mother to awareness of separateness from the mother and formation of a relationship with her as a differentiated other” (Pine, 2000, p. vii). It suggests that a person’s attitudes and/or reactions to other people and the situations they face are affected by what s/he experienced during infancy and childhood. That person will in a sense tend to generalize what s/he feels during childhood and define people and comment upon events taking his/her experiences as an infant into account. Futh’s tragic situation could be described in the light of his tragic childhood experiences, especially in the light of his lack of mother. The repeated uses of flashbacks serve to reveal Futh’s tragic past, which includes his mother’s abandonment of him, his bitter realization that the friends he thought he had were not friends, the not-so-promising job he has in making artificial scents as well as his futile attempts to produce his mother’s scent, his wife’s miscarriages and his divorce. The novel’s melancholy is nothing but apparent, reminiscent of the Virginia Woolf novel it seems to refer to with its similar title. Futh is a character who has made faults and who feels the enormous but at the same time terrible burden of his memories.

From the beginning the holiday Futh takes has a sinister mood. It is very cold although it is summertime. And with the very first page, Futh’s lack of his mother is mentioned. It is made clear that at the age of eleven, his mother left him and the next year he went on a holiday with his father without his mother. He does not remember what he saw in this holiday simply because of the fact that he is without his mother. And it is also made clear that his father cannot compensate for the lack of his mother. One of the earliest images related to Futh’s father depicts him as a drunk man, “smelling of lager” (Moore, 2012, p. 1). Futh’s mother is not mentioned mostly although Futh wants to hear someone talking about her: “ ‘Your mother...’ so that his heart would lift. But then, when she was spoken about, she would invariably be spoiled in some way and he would wish that nothing had been said after all” (Moore, p. 2). It is felt to the reader that Futh’s mother is not remembered in favourable terms by those around, which still does not prevent Futh himself from remembering her like an angel that once lived in his life. It is apparent that he does not want to share her with anyone else, especially with his father because when his father talks about how he managed to persuade Futh’s mother to date with him, he simply does not want to hear about the story. One of the memories of his mother is that of a cinema-going where his father for the first time saw Futh’s mother, then selling popcorn, and took her on a hill with a beautiful scenery where they two had some intimate moments. The idea of intimacy between them seems disgusting to Futh, who himself had another memory of cinema with his father, a memory filled with hints of homosexuality in that Futh “felt the warm pressure of his father’s thigh against his own,

felt the tickle of his father's arm hairs on his own bare forearm, the heat of his father's beery breath in his ear hole, his father's hand reaching into his lap" (Moore, p. 2). Seymour Keitlen argues that before puberty, love for the mother "plays a large role in the genesis of homosexuality. After puberty and adolescence, this fixation [upon the mother] is abandoned in favor of identification with the mother" (Keitlen, 2003, p. 38). The novel does not provide clear evidence regarding Futh's homosexuality; however, it is apparent that Futh cannot maintain a healthy relation with women in general, which might also be the reason why he divorces from Angela. It might of course be claimed that Futh cannot stand imagining his mother having intimate moments with his father, which might be interpreted on the basis of famous Oedipus complex. In fact, throughout the novel the reader feels Futh's hidden accusations against his father in the failed marriage; for Futh it is his father that is to blame for the sudden disappearance of his mother. The father maintains his image as a threatening one in the novel. And the reader finds the traces of father complex in the narration. For Futh, his father is the one who has stolen women from his life; it is not only the mother stolen by the father; Gloria is also firstly loved and possessed by his father. In addition, Futh's father has sex with different other women. Futh's sexual failures stand in stark contrast to his father's skills in persuading women to have sex. Therefore, it might be claimed that Futh's father stands as a threatening sexual rival against his son. Psychologically, Futh's fear of castration is above all related to his impotence in his rivalry against a father who is potent and manlier than himself.

Futh meets a man on the ferry deck who is going to Utrecht for attending a conference. Conferences are what Futh finds useless because he does not need advice or knowledge and information has not proved to be a guide for him till then in his life. In other words, life and realities of living are beyond the explanations of science for him. Science offers no remedy to the harsh experiences Futh has had, which includes two abandonments by his mother and his wife, the reasons for which Futh cannot understand. The feeling of insecurity caused by not only the lack of his mother but the divorce from his wife is revealed in his unduly cautious manners. That he wants to stay outside and does not want to stay indoors despite the cold weather is a sign of his depression. He continually remembers people and/or events from his past, which might be termed as stream of past life if not stream of consciousness. Futh often associates something from his present life with an object, event or person from his past life. For example, his sore feet remind him of a girl with an expertise of reflexology who used to know how to massage different parts of his body.

Freud in his *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* expresses his observations about his nephew, who, like Futh himself, feels the absence of a mother. This child

“had a reel with a piece of string tied round it. It never occurred to him to pull it along the floor behind him, for instance, and play at its being a carriage. What he did was to hold the reel by the string and very skilfully throw it over the edge of his curtained cot, so that it disappeared into it, at the same time uttering his expressive ‘o-o-o-o’. He then pulled the reel out of the cot again by the string and hailed its reappearance with a joyful ‘da’ [‘there’]. This, then, was the complete game –disappearance and return...The interpretation of the game then became obvious. It was related to the child’s great cultural achievement- the instinctual renunciation (that is, the renunciation of instinctual satisfaction) which he had made in allowing his mother to go away without protesting. He compensated himself for this, as it were, by himself staging the disappearance and return of the objects within his reach” (Freud, 1990, p. 9).

It is inferred from Freud’s observation that the child compensates for the lack of his mother with an object, which is also the case with Futh. The watch Futh sees on the arm of the man he sees on the deck, named Carl, seems astonishing to him. The man says it is a gift from his mother, which explains the reason for Futh’s admiration. Futh seems to be fascinated by everything that comes from a mother, any mother. It is apparent that the lighthouse Futh has functions as an object of compensation; Futh, like the child in Freud’s account, wants to feel the presence of his absent mother with the lighthouse he keeps. Freud also stresses that the child, who at first remains to be passive, gets more active in time: “At the outset, he was in a passive situation- he was overpowered by the experience; but, by repeating it, unpleasurable though it was, as a game, he took on an active part” (Freud, p. 10). Lacan, while interpreting Freud’s observation in Seminar XI, refuses the idea that the absent mother is reduced to a ball:

“This reel is not the mother reduced to a little ball by some magical game worthy of the Jivaros- it is a small part of the subject that detaches itself from him while still remaining his, still retained. This is the place to say, in imitation of Aristotle, that man thinks with his object. It is with his object that the child leaps the frontiers of his domain” (Lacan, 1998, p. 62).

Psychoanalytic theory offers differing names for the object that is used to compensate for the absence of mother. Lacan offers “*petit a*” (=object a) (Lacan, p. 62) while Winnicott prefers to use the term “transitional object” (Winnicott, 2005, p. 5). That transitional object, whatever it is, “yields freedom and joy to babies and all who were once babies” (Rodman, 2005, pp. xi-xii). A transitional object, in Winnicotian sense, will help the baby, and, in a broader sense, the adult child, to get rid of the anxiety caused by the loss/lack of mother.

Zizek, from a different perspective, uses the term “biceptor” (Zizek, 2003, p. 59). For Zizek, a biceptor “properly belongs neither to the child nor to his mother; it is in-between the two, the excluded intersection of the two sets” (Zizek, p. 59).

The lighthouse Futh always carries on himself is also a reminder of his mother and the loss of it will bring his end. Futh behaves very carefully in order not to lose or forget it somewhere. His present appearance is far from being good; he seems tired, has a pale face, cannot sleep properly. He does not eat enough and drinks alcohol a lot. He thinks this holiday will revitalise him although the reader feels the same as the man who Futh met on the deck of the ferry, named Carl, who will suddenly ask: “Do you ever get a bad feeling about something?” (Moore, p. 25). From the beginning, there is something that disturbs not only Futh but the reader; it is felt that something ominous will happen to Futh. Even his name suggests false truths in his life and it seems Futh has suffered a lot from the hypocrisy and artificiality he has witnessed so far in his life.

Futh’s memories will continue to haunt him. Futh will not be able to stop thinking about Angela, who must be busy putting Futh’s belongings into boxes. As his home gets further and further away, his memories get closer and closer paradoxically. His heart “feels like something peeled and bleeding. It feels the way it felt when his mother left” (Moore, p. 7). For Futh, home is where his mother went years ago because his mother went to New York saying “I am going home” (Moore, p. 8). All kinds of sudden departures seem odd to Futh simply because his mother did the same. Futh feels he saw his mother when he suddenly wakes up in the middle of the night, smells her violet-smelling scent. His childhood memories following the departure of his mother are bitter and include the images of a drunken father and beatings without any reason. That is why Futh prefers to stay out after his mother left. He unavoidably compares his own isolated and asocial image to the popular image of Kenny, the son of a nearby neighbour named Gloria. Kenny’s good relationship with his father is contrasted to the relation Futh has with his father in another memory in which Futh cannot get his father’s help when he takes apart his bike but cannot put the pieces back together. Like the lighthouse, the pieces of this bike are kept in a box by Futh in the hope that one day it will be possible for him to bring them together. In other words, bitter memories are sometimes concretized by Futh in the hope of a better future although he will not be able to have such a bright future. Futh’s bitter memories from his childhood also include reading the books that belong to his mother. Although his father forbids him from reading these books, he keeps reading them secretly, which is a clear indication of the fact that Futh tries hard to find ways

to get in touch with his lost mother. Despite his father's attempts to villainize his mother, most of Futh's memories related to his mother are happy and joyful ones in which there is a woman figure who has good friends to organize parties and who dances in such occasions. Lack of Angela has been a second shock and strike for Futh as Angela could have proven to be a good guide for him who will prevent him getting lost if she had not abandoned him like his mother. It seems Futh regards Angela as a mother figure who will compensate for the lack of his own mother. He can't help confessing that "Angela has always done the long-distance driving and is also the better navigator" (Moore, p. 17).

While Futh's father is an abandoned husband, Kenny's mother Gloria is an abandoned wife and like the child Futh himself, she is without friends. Having a short holiday to forget abandonment by a beloved one is what Futh has learnt from Gloria as a kind of therapy. That is why, he tries to console himself by forcing his own self to believe that he is going to solve all his problems since he has started a holiday. Memories return as nightmares and Futh finds holiday as an artificial solution to get rid of them. His is a kind of escape from realities; everything related to the life he has left behind is bitter simply because they are real. Futh hates his memories with his father because they include betrayals to his mother; during the holiday he takes with his father after her mother left them, his father has sex with different women in the hotel room and Futh sees them from their reflections on the mirror of the bathroom, which causes him to feel disgusted by the mirror and wet the bed. When he takes shower, he can't help remembering those reflections of the women with whom his father has sex during their holiday.

The man whom Futh gives a lift with his own car, called Carl, leads Futh to realize that his own hands are devoid of life, bloodless and cold unlike Carl's hands. In fact, Futh almost always compares his own capabilities, or rather, clumsiness with the things done, made and achieved by others. The probable reason lies in his memories with his aunt Frieda, who used to warn him against everything he tried to do from climbing to swimming. Frieda has had a great role in the emergence and development of Futh's overcautiousness. The fact that he has not proved to be a very successful person almost in any sense has led him to talk about the only thing he feels he is doing well in an exaggerated manner, that is, his production of scents. The lack of his mother and deprivation of love have both created in Futh a strange urge to make himself be loved by everyone; he cannot realize this very urge is the main reason that draws people away from him. That is why he is disliked and in a sense sent away by Carl's mother. The angry talk between Carl and her mother in the kitchen reminds him of



the similar talks he witnessed while he was a child between his father and mother, the talks “he tried not to hear” (Moore, p. 32). The picnic-like break and the meat pie he has on the way to Hellhaus, where he is going to stay for the night, reminds him of one of the picnics he had before his mother left. This is going to be a recurring scene in the rest of the novel because it contains not only a few beautiful moments and objects belonging to his childhood but the ciphers of his parents’ broken relationship, a relationship which was doomed to break perhaps from the beginning. The lighthouse by the sea is an element of this memory; there are two lighthouses in Futh’s memory: one of them is the beloved one he always keeps with himself and the other one is the lighthouse by the sea about which his father talks a lot irritating Futh’s mother and which is not remembered as a favourable object by Futh simply because it irritates his mother. The lighthouse given by mother and kept by Futh is a kind of guide for Futh while the other lighthouse is the one that has caused the marriage ship to stray. Lighthouses as symbols of strength might also refer to isolatedness and fear and for Futh the lighthouse by the sea remains a symbol of his isolation. The image of the lighthouse is reflected upon the name of the hotel where he is going to stay; the name Hellhaus means “lighthouse” but it also suggests a hell-like and ominous place.

That sense of straying or going in the wrong direction makes itself felt also in the relationship between Futh and his wife Angela. It is clear that Futh has mostly avoided driving and left this task to Angela. In one of his memories Angela and Futh take the wrong way on the motorway because of Futh and Futh does not want to confess that he has made a mistake and led the car in the wrong way as he was raised as an abandoned boy who feared making mistakes a lot in a house under the problematic life conditions and relations with an angry father. Futh’s silence, it seems, is what has brought about the failure and end of his marriage. As a man who has avoided driving until his mid-forties and who is now driving to his holiday hotel, he cannot understand that he is again taking the wrong way. Futh does not know how to drive, which is visible in his failed marriage as well. In other words, he has taken the wrong way in his marriage as well.

The Lighthouse offers a second main character for whom memories mean a lot. It is a woman named Ester, who works at a hotel run by her indifferent husband and cleans the rooms. Ester also has a strange habit of having sex with male hotel customers. She is aware of the fact that she is losing her beauty and sexual attraction, made visible by the spoiling rose tattoo above her left breast, a tattoo that might also be seen as a wish to feel free under restricted conditions of life. She uses unnecessarily heavy make-up to hide this fact. The

reason why she tries to hunt men in the hotel and seduces these men instead of protecting herself against their evil eyes intentionally is also related to this aim of making herself believe that she still has enough sexual attraction to show. Her strong interest in maintaining a sexy body has to do with her memories as a young girl when she used to have very small breasts and she envied all those large-breasted women. She also gets a strange pleasure from looking into the suitcases of customers, using their scents and lipsticks, and even stealing some sundry items belonging to them. In one of such attempts while Futh is having a bath and Ester is checking his pockets, she touches the lighthouse carefully kept by Futh as if she is touching his sexual organ; in other words, the lighthouse is associated with the penis in the description of this scene. That lighthouse will strangely attract Ester and she will try to get it at the expense of cutting Futh's life energy.

Futh will be a man to hunt for Ester; she will prove to be a trap into which Futh will fall down without noticing. The venus's flytraps in which she has a great interest represent Ester's personality while Futh is a fly to be trapped by this flytrap. The destinies of Ester and Futh strangely coincide with respect to their memories of scents and perfumes. Futh is what Ester has always wanted to be: a scent producer. However, there is sharp difference. While Futh desires to obtain his mother's scent Ester is trying to find her own perfume in order to make men fall in love with her with the first smell. Her memory related to perfume production is a bitter one; she once makes a perfume of her own and offers it to her mother after emptying out her mother's perfume bottle. When her mother uses it, she stops giving surplus perfume bottles to Ester to punish her.

Ester keeps forgetting lights on and doors open; her life under the pressure of her husband Bernard leads her to find ways out of this imprisonment. Like Futh, she seeks her own right way and feels the lack of the love of mother as her mother used to leave her with the au pair Lotto. Her marriage with Bernard has a disturbing story behind in which Ester betrays Bernard's brother Conrad, whom she was engaged with when she met Bernard. As the years pass, Bernard manages to remain a man with a good appearance while Ester loses her beauty day by day under her husband's suspicions of possible betrayals. For Bernard, Ester can easily be involved in another act of betrayal as she did while engaged with his brother Conrad. Perfume bottles and lighthouses are important items for Ester as well. She has a wooden lighthouse given by Bernard as a gift but this gift is a great disappointment for her as Bernard has preferred to give her the cheaper wooden version instead of the silver one as a gift. Violet scent is her favourite as it is Futh's. Like Futh, Ester has not had a happy

marriage; her husband Bernard is like a jailor who wants to keep Ester under his control all the time and regards Ester as a machine to issue a command on. Bernard pretends not to see, hear and listen to Ester while she likes watching him as if she will be able to find a means to contact him through her eyes, a contact which she cannot find using speech. Another thing that occupies Ester's mind is that Bernard, who is known to be always jealous of his girlfriends, is never jealous of Ester. For Ester, memory means remembering flirt times with Bernard. Her efforts to go back to the passionate memories of flirting times are in vain for Bernard feels almost nothing towards Ester and there is no possibility for an intimacy:

“Bernard, naked now, takes off his watch, stopping to wind it before putting it down on the bedside table. He gets into the bed and turns towards Ester. He looks at her as if she reminds him of someone, as if he is trying to remember who. It's me, she wants to say to him, I remind you of me” (Moore, p. 115).

The memories of the first visit to the house of Ida, Bernard's mother, remain beautiful moments in life although these moments are never repeated during the marriage and Bernard begins to visit his mother alone, leaving Ester at the hotel. The presence and absence of Conrad is the main problem of the rise of tension between Bernard and Ester. It seems that the marriage between Bernard and Ester is the result of a competition and revenge as Conrad has married the girl with whom Bernard falls in love and Bernard marries Ester simply because he wants to take revenge upon Conrad. Like Futh, Ester will suffer lack of children, which will cause troubles between herself and Bernard. And like Angela, she also feels irritated by the fact that Bernard seeks the image of his mother in her.

Bernard never wants to understand what Ester likes doing. He cannot give a meaning to her collection of moths. He wants to learn why a woman keeps so many romances. He wonders why she stores so many old lipsticks and perfume bottles. He always has a sense of being betrayed; that is why he continually tries to find something Ester hides. It is clear that the marriage between Ester and Bernard has destroyed Ester's life instead of putting it into an order as “Ester does not remember when she started drinking in the morning or sleeping in the middle of the day. She remembers her first infidelity, but she does not remember them all” (Moore, p. 168).

Too cautious of being harmed by anyone or anything, Futh first tries to find emergency exits of the room in which he stays. This action also has to do with his memories and his relation with his aunt Frieda. This sense of being attacked is a foreshadowing for his end; that is why perhaps he desperately looks for places on which he could fall after jumping

out of the room windows while he is attacked. Futh is like the moth that enters his room; like that moth Futh will also push himself into danger. He cannot help thinking about what he did wrong during his marriage with Angela, which will be a revelation of details from that unhappy affair and turn into a confession:

“He was a bad listener, apparently, bewilderingly incapable sometimes of following simple instructions. He was always late leaving the house, late arriving anywhere, even when he had to meet Angela. And he never apologised, even when he was clearly in the wrong. These were small things but he supposed they built up, amounted to something” (Moore, p. 42).

Futh seems to imitate his mother who did not apologise while leaving. And in his imagination and dreams, there is always a wish to return to past only to change its course and direction. That is, Futh wishes his memories of his past had taken a different path: “He imagined things being different. He had a reverie in which he said and did the right thing and Angela did not leave him” (Moore, p. 42). He keeps blaming himself for making mistakes, mistakes which might not be his fault at all. He cannot make his own self convinced about the fact that he might not have made some mistake. In other words, the feeling of being guilty has turned into a stain that cannot be cleaned from Futh’s personality. Apart from the lighthouse, Futh likes carrying compass and both of these items are associated with his figure as a man trying to find his way. He keeps envying people having a proper family and a regular family life and inevitably contrasts his own isolated situation to their happiness. His continual hunger is in fact a hunger for orderly life.

The start of Futh’s interest in Angela goes back to the years when he was abandoned by his mother and carries the traces of a timid and shy male personality as well as the competition with Kenny, who was always a more popular boy compared to him. The novel implies that the relationship between Futh and Angela was born out of Futh’s attempt to replace his mother with her:

“He planted violets in the garden when he and Angela first moved into their house. There was a huge bed of them and yet there was no scent at all. ‘That’s violets for you’ said Angela. ‘You can’t smell them’. And so, to show her their scent, to demonstrate that you could smell them, he bought her a set of violet toiletries -bath oil, shampoo, soap, body lotion, eau de toilette. Angela looked at the gifts and said ‘I’m not your mother’” (Moore, p. 71).

Angela will utter the same sentences when she and Futh meet again after their first meeting: “After that first time at her mother’s house, she came round to his place and when she arrived he took her coat and offered her a cup of tea and a scone and she rolled her eyes and said ‘I’m not your mother’” (Moore, p. 72). It is clear that Angela can never forget the

married man with whom she had a relation before she married Futh because she uses present tense while talking about him; she continually contrasts Futh to this previous boyfriend. This boyfriend is a man who is good at things to be made with hands while Futh is a man of brain and thoughts. In other words, the previous boyfriend is more physical, more concrete while Futh represents abstractness. It is also suggestive that she talks about this man while in bed. While Ester betrays physically, Angela betrays mentally. For Futh, both the abandonment by his mother and divorce from his wife are kinds of betrayals from women; that is why he takes shelter in museums, cafes and parks which he has never visited with Angela just as he used to take shelter in a cave on a tree after his mother left home.

In the mind of Futh, the memories of his father are moments of sarcasm and mocking targeting himself. His father is the man who has always mocked Futh's inabilities in any sense, especially his inabilities in driving. He has always made fun of Futh's attempts to obtain the scent of apple, which has a significant place in Futh's memory and it is associated with sunshine, music and beauty. When Angela begins to make an apple crumble after Futh wants her to do, Futh suddenly remembers that beautiful memory with his mother, which only causes Angela to get angry and decide not to make apple crumble again. Even the women in their thirties whom Futh looks at while drinking his beer during his breaks in his walk are reminders of his own mother, who left home when she was in her mid-thirties. Futh also keeps mistaking different women for his missing mother. He tries to sing the songs which his mother used to sing. The wedding day on which he married Angela itself includes implications of an already broken relationship and it carries the traces of a possible intimacy between Kenny and Angela while it is Futh and Angela who are supposed to have such intimate moments. The honeymoon is full of annoying events and arguments. In short, Futh's life, which is dominated by the feeling of being betrayed, is a search for a lost one, one who is dear and who is recalled with beautiful memories. Memories following the desertion of mother are filled with bitterness, vagueness and disappointment. Futh has already lost his sunshine since his mother left. The harmony and music in his life have disappeared and Angela has rejected replacing Futh's lost mother. Futh is an easy meat for anyone who would like to hunt him. He is flying around the venus's flytrap and will soon be captured by it. Sleep is a way to fall into dreams and remember memories; nevertheless, Futh wakes up from his sleep mostly in pain, which shows that his memories give him pain instead of pleasure. While the memories belonging to and recalling the period of life before the abandonment of his mother can be considered as a source and energy of life, those belonging to the period after the abandonment are painful and nightmarish.

Early separation between mother and child “has been explicitly linked to insecure/disorganized attachment and subsequent mental health problems” (Howard et al., 2013, p. 6). Futh’s life is a summary of pains and these mental and/or psychological pains have already turned into physical ones; that is why, Futh continually suffers from head ache and his feet are almost always in pain, forcing Futh to carry plasters. He is exposed to fly bites. His hunger always pursues him. His throbbing feet are an indication of his long life-journey which is full of pains and struggles. He cannot even take off his boots despite the unbearable pain in his feet because his fate makes him get closer to his final destiny without allowing him to take a different road. He feels as if he is going to be besieged by the trees in the forest. It seems as if all the world is inviting Futh to his final destination. Ester also suffers from throbbing feet, which can be taken as a sign of the tiredness stemming from a worn life. She, like Futh, is a woman who cannot give a meaning to the life she has lived so far. While the turning point in Futh’s life is the abandonment by the mother, marriage to Bernard is the start of suffering for Ester.

Walks together with his mother in his childhood emerge as another lovely memory for Futh because he does not fear being lost while walking over the hills with his mother. As for his present walks, they include threats of getting lost. His childhood is filled with sombre memories in which a child bears witness to the slow ending of a marriage about which he can do nothing. As a child, he knows

“that his mother was leaving them. He knew that when the train reached their station, the holiday would be over and then she would go. He wanted the train to slow down; he wanted it never to stop. He wanted his mother to keep on sleeping, his father to stay in the bar. But the train sped on and the daylight went and through the windows, in the dark, Futh glimpsed the names of the stations they were hurrying through and he knew that they were almost home. His father returned from the bar, and the noise he made coming into the carriage looking for his seat woke Futh’s mother, and the train slowed, and trundled to a stop” (Moore, p. 109).

As can be seen, holidays are not Futh’s favourite times as his mother left him after a holiday. And the holidays he went on following the abandonment by his mother are disturbing and have a stressful atmosphere. Futh’s holidays seems to have ended after his mother left him. Futh could go on an endless holiday with his mother because he lost the sense of time and place while he was together with her. The holidays he has after she left him turn into painful moments in which he always feels the pressure of an evil mood.

Futh cannot forget Angela although his marriage with her is a failed one; a woman he encounters at the breakfast salon of the hotel he stays in, the book she reads, and the scent she

has reminds him of his wife. Moore turns the lighthouse Futh keeps in his pocket into an image of phallus that gives Futh the strength, manliness and virility in this scene. Trying to find his missing angel in the woman's personality, Futh desperately seeks the lighthouse in the pocket of his trousers, which leads the woman to catch a glimpse of "the hand which is deep inside his pocket, gripping the silver lighthouse, his thumb anxiously circling its smooth, warm dome" (Moore, p. 117). Futh is depicted as a beggar in the scene and his act of gripping the lighthouse is described like a masturbation. The condom he carries will be of no use to him because he does not seem to attract any woman he meets sexually. It will be a better choice for him if he leaves everything behind, that is, if he escapes. He wants to get rid of everything that causes him trouble; he decides that he could do with less of anything, that he could go on his holiday without many of the things he has brought. He thinks he could go on living eating little although he has always been in hunger and wanted to eat a lot, especially at the feast tables in Gloria's house. In fact, Futh wants to get rid of the burden of memory, all the lived experiences with all those people with whom he has had to share his life for some durations in his life. His pain is not released; on the contrary, it gets worse. He even tries to put the lighthouse he keeps carrying in his pocket to his suitcase, which is an indication of the fact that he even wants to get rid of the memory of his mother, the most beloved woman in the world. He thinks he will feel lighter after placing the lighthouse into the suitcase. However, he will be distanced from life as he tries to get himself distanced from the lighthouse because the lighthouse is the only thing left from Futh's mother together with the books she used to read before leaving as Futh's father burns out everything belonging to his wife after she left simply to erase any kind of trace from her. Even the packages in which Angela puts Futh's belongings are useless for him; he does not want to go back to reality since the real is bitter. He feels "he would have preferred not to be going back at all" (Moore, p. 119). The novel offers another foreshadowing here as Futh will really not be able to go back to his past life. Cutting the connection with memory instead of living in the tragic whirlpool of it seems to be the best solution for Futh. What makes him think like that is that most probably no one will ever notice his disappearance. In fact, before marrying Angela, Futh has an interest in camping, which shows his intention of going away and remaining alone.

It is not only lack of mother but also lack of children that cause Futh to feel deficient. Unlike Kenny, who has managed to have children after marrying, Futh has not been able to father a child. He has not been able to prove a good husband, either. Kenny has always stood for the ideal husband in Angela's mind. That is why she cheats on Futh with Kenny while Futh cannot take the liberty to divorce Angela, probably because he wants to go on replacing

the lack of his mother with Angela. He well knows that Angela cheats on him; however, he does not want to be the one who ends the marriage. What is more, he feels surprised when he learns that Angela wants to end the marriage because he simply believes that Angela intends to keep the marriage bond. He does not want to be abandoned for the second time by his mother. Unfortunately, he will share the destiny of his father, who also has a failed marriage and is finally abandoned by the wife. The cigarette image is important in both abandonments; Futh's father does not want his wife to smoke and similarly Futh does not want Angela to smoke. Both Futh's mother and Angela smoke when they have completed something they want or achieved something. Futh's mother smokes when she finally decides to leave the house and there is the smoke of Kenny's cigarette in the bedroom of Futh and Angela's house after Angela has sex with Kenny. It might be claimed that Futh takes the job of producing scents to suppress the smell of the cigarette his mother smoked before she left the house.

On the day he plans to leave, the coffee he drinks reminds him of the coffee prepared by his mother again. His mother used to have very nice coffee cups but the way she drank coffee is described as another indication of her wish to leave. The day when she left the house, there is the smell of coffee again in the house. "Abandonment is something that generally happens without warning and over which the child probably has no control" (Taylor & Veale, 1996, p. 92) and Futh's mother leaves the house very quickly: "And then everything happened in a rush- her kissing him and taking her suitcase and leaving. It happened so quickly that when he picked up her coffee cup in the suddenly empty kitchen, he found that it was still warm" (Moore, p. 161). Futh remembers the fact that his mother used to remain absentmindedly until the coffee went cold whenever she drank coffee. Drinking coffee is turned into an image of leaving, getting lost in one's dreams for Futh's mother. Futh's wife Angela hates the smell of coffee when she gets pregnant, which causes Futh to lose another connection with his mother. Still, he forces himself to learn how to remember the scents of people and/or things he lacks; that is why he feels he can get the smell of the coffee his mother used to make in his happy days and he does so when he catches cold. That is, for Futh, coffee is associated with treatment and care by the mother.

Futh can find no one to help him; whenever he needs to get some information, for example, when he needs to learn how he could go to a place, he cannot find anyone to help him. He has to find his own direction. When he wants to feed the ducks in the river, they don't notice the pieces of the bread he throws, that is, they do not notice him. He takes the wrong bus to Hellhaus and while he is on the bus, he watches the setting of the sun, which is



the setting of the sun of his life. Futh's loss of the silver lighthouse will bring him his end. He puts it into his suitcase and his suitcase is sent to Hellhaus as his final destination is Hellhaus itself. He plans to go to Utrecht and see Carl again; he even plans to have a meal there but almost nothing he plans runs its course. He arrives at Hellhaus late and notices the flat tyres of his car. That is why, he has to spend the night at the hotel. The things he misses are once again reminiscent of the good old days with his mother:

“He walks on towards the hotel to spend the night as per his itinerary, eager anyway for a quiet bar with padded seats and chilled drinks; a bedroom door and a key, a soft carpet and a clean bed and pillows and blankets; a deep bath and a little kettle, a plate of cold sausages and a packet of complimentary biscuits; his suitcase, his silver lighthouse, his pyjamas and rest” (Moore, p. 165).

Ester, meanwhile, steals the silver lighthouse that belongs to Futh, thinking that he would not notice it.

Even the existence of Ester is a great problem for Futh. He is disturbed by her presence and she is like the death angel for him. Paradoxically though, it seems as if he has a wish to be killed by her. He is ready to die as he has never compensated for the lack of his mother. He regards his own self valueless: “He does not want any to be wasted on his account” (Moore, p. 172). The only thing that will reunite himself with his mother, who he thinks dies and goes on living only in memories, is death itself. He wants to be prepared to death by Ester, in fact. He wants to be treated like a son of Ester for the last time. The roles are changed at the end of the novel. It is now Futh who intrudes into the room of Ester although it is Ester herself who has a habit of going into the room and privacy of those staying at the hotel. While trying to search for his silver lighthouse and beautiful but lost memories, Futh enters the privacy of Ester, who also tries to go back to the good old days when she believed to be really loved by Bernard. Futh is caught unprepared when he hears that someone is trying to enter the room. As a man who has always avoided actions for which he cannot provide a reason, Futh desperately understands he will certainly be misunderstood by the person entering the room. This is the death bell for Futh. Hiding in the bathroom reminds him of another memory with Gloria in which Gloria wants him to scrub her back and which makes Futh feel not only embarrassed but also guilty. The perfume bottles Futh finds in Ester's bathroom remind him of “the dark interior of his mother's wardrobe. It is like being wrenched soul first through time” (Moore, p. 178).

The narration does not tell clearly how Futh has been killed by Ester; it is also probable that he had a heart attack in the bathroom as Ester entered it. If he is killed by Ester, this might be a typical case of misandry because “some women try to justify misandry as a legitimate ‘choice’ for women, a ‘voice’ for those who have been silenced. Expressing anger is useful, they believe, as one feature of collective therapy for women” (Nathason & Young, 2001, p. 245). In the case of Ester, Futh could stand for Bernard, on whom she wants to take the revenge of not only herself but all suppressed women. She is like “female sex predators” who “are the hateful and spiteful advocates of misandry” (Davis, 2015, p. 112). And like all femme fatals, she “harbors a threat which is not entirely legible, predictable, or manageable” (Doane, 1991, p. 1). Ester kills Futh like a venus’s flytrap because Futh would put himself in danger in some way or another. In addition, Futh’s death coincides with the smell of camphor, the scent he dislikes, and scent is what Futh tries to produce as a profession. That is, Futh’s death would naturally happen during his search for the lost mother; the story of his tragedy is the story of a continual quest. What is important here is that Futh remains to be a man of no significance for almost everyone. A person disregarded even by mother will perhaps be disregarded by the rest naturally. That is why, Carl can never remember Futh’s name although he tries hard. In his memory, Futh is doomed to remain as a thin man “with thinning hair. He was pale, but perhaps that was just seasickness. He cannot even remember the man’s name. It was a name which makes him think of froth, and the powdery wings of a moth. It was a name which seemed to vanish even as he heard it” (Moore, p. 182).

### Conclusion

In conclusion, *The Lighthouse* by Alison Moore remains to be a narration where the sense of memory has become influential. Almost all memories with mother are joyful and they are what connect Futh to life. Especially the lighthouse, which can be regarded as a concretized form of beautiful memories with the mother, functions as a source and energy of life for him. It is the unbearable memories, the memories of loss and abandonment, the memories of betrayal that gradually lead him to death and dominate his life. It might be argued that Futh was already dead and buried in memories as his absence is not noticed by others. He is abandoned and betrayed by a mother and a wife, who, in Futh’s eyes, would hopefully replace the absent mother. In short, Futh’s life is nothing but an account of memories, mostly tragic, which dominate his life and prevent Futh from living in a sense.

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