

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN COLLEEN HOOVER'S *IT ENDS WITH US*

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Abstract

This research examines the portrayal of domestic violence in Colleen Hoover's novel *It Ends with Us*, focusing on the experiences of the protagonist, Lily Bloom, who endures various forms of abuse both in her childhood and adulthood. The study identifies four major categories of domestic violence depicted in the narrative—physical, emotional, verbal, and sexual—by employing Tulangow's theoretical framework on domestic violence. Conducted through a qualitative descriptive method as outlined by Creswell (2012), this study analyzes textual evidence drawn from the novel to understand the psychological, emotional, and social consequences of abuse on the main character. The findings reveal that domestic violence in the novel not only results in physical injuries but also generates long-lasting psychological trauma, fear, anxiety, and diminished self-worth. Furthermore, the narrative exposes the cyclical nature of abuse and its intergenerational impact, especially through Lily's reflections on her childhood and her concerns about her unborn child. This study demonstrates how literary fiction can serve as a powerful vehicle for raising public awareness of gender-based violence, offering insight into the lived realities of survivors, and prompting critical reflection on emotional resilience, agency, and social intervention.

Keywords: *domestic violence; literary representation; psychological abuse; gender studies; It Ends with Us; trauma narrative*

1. Introduction

Marriage is ideally perceived as a union grounded in mutual respect, emotional support, and shared responsibilities. The dream of a harmonious family and growing old together remains a fundamental aspiration for many couples. However, this ideal is often disrupted when one or both partners fail to uphold the essential rights and obligations of marital life. According to *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (2023), marriage is defined as “a legal bond between two people by establishing their rights and obligations between them, their families and society in a legal and social union” (para. 1). When these rights and responsibilities are disregarded, it can lead to relational dysfunction, conflict, and in many cases, domestic violence.

Domestic violence (DV) is a serious form of abuse that occurs within the home, often characterized by coercion, manipulation, and control. Tulangow et al. (2022) assert that among the most significant causes of divorce is domestic violence—

encompassing both physical and psychological harm. The *Office on Violence Against Women* (2023) defines domestic violence as a “pattern of abusive behavior which can be in the form of physical, sexual, emotional, economic, psychological, or technological actions or threats of action or other coercive behavior patterns that affect other people in a couple relationship” (para. 1). Notably, domestic violence disproportionately affects women; Komnas Perempuan (2020) reports that 90.4% of domestic violence victims in Indonesia are women.

The causes of domestic violence are multifaceted, including personality and psychological disorders, economic stress, generational trauma, cultural norms, and entrenched gender inequality (Kemthong, 2021). The impacts of such violence are equally complex, resulting in physical injuries, mental health deterioration, loss of self-worth, trauma, and fear. Furthermore, domestic violence has lasting effects not only on the immediate victim but also on children and other family members, contributing to a cycle of violence that may extend across generations (Obaegu, 2019; Idris et al., 2018). Against this backdrop, literature becomes a significant tool for portraying and critiquing societal issues, including domestic violence. Colleen Hoover's *It Ends with Us* (2016) presents a poignant narrative that reflects the lived reality of many women. The protagonist, Lily Bloom, is a young woman who has endured violence from her father during her childhood and later from her husband, Ryle, as an adult. Despite her initial hope for a different future, Lily becomes trapped in a cycle of abuse, mirroring the experiences of her mother. Her journey of resilience and difficult decision-making provides a compelling lens through which to examine the manifestations and impacts of domestic violence.

This study analyzes *It Ends with Us* as a literary representation of domestic violence, aiming to understand how the novel articulates the psychological, emotional, and physical consequences of abuse. By employing Tulangow's typology of violence (2022) and utilizing Creswell's (2012) qualitative descriptive method, this research seeks to contribute to the broader discourse on gender-based violence and demonstrate how literary fiction can illuminate hidden societal traumas and provoke critical awareness.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Violence

The World Health Organization (WHO) provides the definition of violence as “intentionally manifested action, coercion, empowerment against oneself and others to cause injury, death, and shock or being abandoned” (World Health Organization, 2021).

2.2 Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is a type of abusive relationship. Abusive relationships do not involve trust, respect and consideration for the other person. The relationship is characterized by disrespect, mistreatment, or physical violence. Tulangow, D. S. et al. (2022: 2) explains that “Domestic violence, which is also known as domestic abuse, battering, or family violence, is defined as physically injurious assault by highlighting the interrelated range of abusive, coercive, controlling behaviours, causing psychological, sexual or physical harms, which often accompany or precede the use or threat of physical force”.

Pingley in Kemthong (2021: 1) mainly explains “that domestic violence is a problem where someone in a family harms or neglects another person. This can happen

between spouses, children, relatives, or any other people who live in the same household. "Domestic violence can have a big impact on the happiness of everyone in the family, especially children".

According to Kemthong (2021: 2), "domestic violence is usually caused by disagreements between a husband and wife. They may not realize that their actions are causing problems for other people in the family, especially their children. "It's true that domestic violence does happen because it affects everyone in the family". English et al. & Kertesz et al. in Kemthong (2021: 3) indicate that "violence in a family is often caused by several factors, including the offender's history of violence in their own childhood. This makes them likely to behave in a violent way in the present. In other words, domestic violence is any behavior, the purpose of which is to gain power and control over a spouse, partner, or intimate family member. Domestic violence in marriage is conducted by the husband to his wife".

2.3 Types of Domestic Violence

The criteria for inclusion in the study required that participants in this study had to be in a physically abusive relationship or had to have been in such a relationship during the six months prior to the study, as mentioned earlier. "The range of abuses that women may suffer is wide and can include physical, sexual, psychological and economic violence, as well as stalking, forced isolation in the home and other controlling behaviors" (Tulangow et al., 2022: 2). Domestic violence generally occurs in the form of the following types of abuse: physical, emotional, verbal, and sexual. These four types of domestic violence experienced by women are discussed in the following sections:

2.3.1 Physical Violence

Physical violence can be controlled or impulsive and consists of physical attacks. These assaults result in injuries ranging from "bruising, blistering, burning and puncturing" to deep cuts, cracked ribs or broken bones. Constant blows to the head can lead to serious head injuries that often go undetected and untreated. "Some perpetrators will ensure that they injure parts of the body that are not normally visible, such as the torso, rather than risk leaving marks on the face or limbs" (Tulangow, D. S et al., 2022: 2). Not only does physical abuse cause physical harm, but it can also lead to mental health difficulties, including an increased risk of suicide attempts as well as a greater risk of psychiatric disorders as post-traumatic stress and anxiety disorders, substance abuse disorders, dissociative disorders, mood disorders, and depression. Such mental health issues can also lead to antisocial behavior, specifically aggressive antisocial behavior for those who are physically abused versus more general antisocial behavior for those who experience neglect (Braga et al. in Rodriguez, 2020: 4).

2.3.2 Emotional Violence

According to Capezza et al. in Sriavastav (2021: 10), "Emotional violence is a technique used to exert power over another person by criticizing, humiliating, blaming, or otherwise manipulating them with their emotions. In general, a relationship is considered emotionally abusive when a pattern of abusive language and bullying actions wears down a person's self-esteem and jeopardizes their mental health. Additionally, while mental or emotional violence is most prevalent in dating and married relationships, it can occur in any relationship, including those between friends, relatives,

and coworkers. One of the most difficult types of violence to identify is emotional abuse. It may be covert and deceptive or overt and manipulative. Nevertheless, victims experience a reduction in their self-confidence as a result, which makes them question their own beliefs and reality. Emotional abuse is usually used to exert authority over the victim by discrediting her, isolating her, and silencing her. Survivors end up feeling bound. Often, they are too hurt to stay in the relationship, but also often too afraid to leave. Therefore, the circle never stops until something is over.

Emotional violence can also occur when the abuser puts his partner in a position where she has to earn his favor through her submissive behavior, like a misbehaving child. "Intentional exclusion from family, friends, and neighbors is another type of emotional abuse" (Tulangow, 2022: 2).

2.3.3 Verbal Violence

Verbal Violence is a form of emotional abuse where a person uses words to instill fear in others and gain control over them. According to Karakurt G and Silver KE (2013:804), "Verbal violence happens when someone uses their words to attack, dominate, ridicule, manipulate, and/or demean another person, which negatively affects that person's mental health. To control and dominate others, a person uses verbal abuse. Calling names, criticizing, highlighting, and threatening are all examples of verbal abuse".

2.3.4 Sexual Violence

Sexual violence does not only occur in intimate relationships, but also in the family, between colleagues and friends or may be committed by strangers. Most sexual harassment is perpetrated by people the victim knows or trusts. "Several studies have indicated women's discomfort regarding certain sexual acts expected by their partners, while continuing to comply with these behaviors, because they see it as an obligation towards their partners" (Tulangow et al., 2022: 2). According to Ocviyanti et al. (2019: 90), "Victims of sexual harassment experience unwanted sexual behavior that disturbs them. Behaviors that are categorized as types of sexual harassment include coercion of sexual acts, demeaning attitudes towards the perpetrator's sexual orientation, requests for sexual acts that the perpetrator prefers, and sexual speech or behavior. These acts may occur directly or indirectly".

2.4 Domestic Violence Effect

These range from physical health impacts to psychological and emotional problems. Idris et al. (2018: 87) states that "battered women are not the only people who suffer the damage inflicted by domestic violence. Children are commonly found in cases of violence and are particularly vulnerable to the long-term effects of family violence, just like the mothers themselves". According to Obaegu (2019: 3), the impact of domestic violence can be devastating to individuals, families, and society as a whole. Some of the effects include:

2.4.1 Physical health consequences

Domestic violence can cause a range of physical health problems, such as chronic pelvic pain, vaginal infections, menstrual pain, sexual dysfunction, urinary tract infections, and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS.

2.4.2 Sexual and reproductive health problems

Women who experience intimate partner abuse are more likely to have gynecological problems and may face difficulties with their reproductive and sexual health. These can include unwanted pregnancy, induced abortion, miscarriage, stillbirth, premature labor, low birth weight, and neonatal death.

2.4.3 Psychological and emotional impact

Domestic violence can have severe psychological and emotional consequences. Victims may develop mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and low self-esteem. They may also experience sleep difficulties, eating disorders, emotional distress, and changes in behaviour and cognition. Because emotionally exploited people often worry about how others see them and whether they really like them, emotional abuse can also affect friendships.

Victims eventually stop making friends and feel that no one cares about them. In addition, emotional abuse can cause many health problems, including depression and anxiety, stomach ulcers, heart palpitations, eating disorders, and insomnia. When emotional abuse is prolonged and intense, a person can lose all sense of self, often without leaving marks or scars. Moreover, the wounds are hidden behind doubt, helplessness, and self-hatred, making them invisible to others.

In fact, there is evidence that psychological abuse has similar consequences to physical abuse. Victims gradually lose confidence in themselves as a result of accusations, physical intimidation, name-calling, criticism, and gaslighting. At some point, victims may not be able to see themselves objectively. The victim may end up developing internal criticism and begin to agree with the perpetrator. Once this happens, most victims become trapped in abusive relationships, believing that they will never be good enough for anyone else.

2.4.4 Impact on children

Children raised in families where domestic violence is present are at risk of developing a range of behavioral and emotional disorders. They may develop aggressiveness, anxiety, and increased difficulty in socializing with others. Exposure to domestic violence may also increase their risk of becoming perpetrators or victims of violence in the future.

2.4.5 Social and societal impacts

Domestic violence has a ripple effect throughout society. It places an undue burden on women's mental and psychological health, leading to high levels of stress, fear, and anxiety. It also contributes to the continuity of violence from one generation to the next. In addition, domestic violence can strain social relationships, disrupt family dynamics, and negatively impact the well-being of society. Overall, domestic violence has far-reaching implications for individuals, families and communities, affecting physical health, mental well-being, reproductive and sexual health, and economic stability. It is critical to address and prevent domestic violence through education, counseling and support services.

3. Research Method

This study employs a qualitative descriptive research method as outlined by Creswell (2012), which aims to provide a detailed, systematic description of phenomena

based on textual data. Qualitative descriptive research is particularly appropriate for analyzing literary texts, as it facilitates a nuanced interpretation of characters, themes, and narrative structures within their social and psychological contexts. In this case, the method is used to explore the various forms of domestic violence depicted in Colleen Hoover's *It Ends with Us* and to examine their impact on the protagonist, Lily Bloom.

The primary data source for this study is the novel *It Ends with Us* (Hoover, 2016), from which selected excerpts, dialogues, and narrative passages are analyzed. These excerpts are chosen based on their relevance to the four types of domestic violence identified in Tulangow's framework (2022): physical, emotional, verbal, and sexual violence. The secondary data comprises scholarly articles, books, official reports, and online sources that provide theoretical, psychological, and sociocultural perspectives on domestic violence, including works by Idris et al. (2018), Kemthong (2021), and the Office on Violence against Women (2023).

The research process follows several stages. First, relevant quotations from the novel were identified and categorized according to the specific type of violence portrayed. Second, these textual data were interpreted using content analysis to explore the psychological, emotional, and narrative significance of each violent episode. Third, the findings were contextualized through comparison with existing literature and theoretical insights on domestic abuse. The analysis also considers the protagonist's personal development, her responses to violence, and the broader implications of her experiences for understanding gendered trauma and resilience.

This methodology allows for a comprehensive interpretation of the literary text not merely as a fictional narrative but as a reflection of real social issues. It also provides space to explore the ways in which literary fiction contributes to public awareness and understanding of the complexities of domestic violence. By integrating literary analysis with social research, the study underscores the value of interdisciplinary approaches in exploring human experiences conveyed through literature.

4. Discussion

This section presents the analytical findings of the study by examining various forms of domestic violence as experienced by the protagonist in *It Ends with Us* by Colleen Hoover. The analysis centers on specific issues within the scope of the study, namely physical violence, emotional violence, verbal violence, and sexual violence. These categories form the core analytical framework through which the narrative is explored. Each form of violence is identified through close textual analysis, drawing on relevant excerpts that illustrate how abuse is manifested in the protagonist's relationship with her husband. The analysis not only highlights the overt expressions of violence but also considers their psychological and emotional consequences for the victim. By situating these textual findings within Tulangow's (2022) theoretical typology and supported by relevant literature on domestic abuse, this section seeks to demonstrate how the novel reflects the complexities of abusive relationships and offers a poignant commentary on gendered trauma, resilience, and the cycle of violence.

4.1.1 Physical Violence

Physical violence is usually defined as a physical attack that results in injury by leaving scars on the body and occurs in person or can be seen and felt. In this case, his partner used physical violence against Lily Bloom.

I close my eyes again and try to remember why he's angry. Why he's hurt. My phone. Atla's number. The stairwell. I grabbed his shirt. He pushed me away. (Hoover, 2016: 174-175)

Based on the quotation above, when Lily tries to get Ryle to talk to her nicely by grabbing her husband's shirt, she receives physical violence. Ryle pushed Lily down the stairs and refused to listen to her. Lily does not remember what happened next. Lily does not remember what happened to her some time earlier, which left her injured and unconscious when she regained consciousness. When she tried to remember what happened, she realized that it was Ryle who left her injured and unconscious. She received the effects of Ryle's violence after she realized what he had done.

I can feel my whole body start to shake with the sobs. I have no idea how bad I'm hurt, but I don't even care. No physical pain could even compare to what my heart is feeling in this moment.“You might have a concussion,” he says, matter-of-fact. “You have a small cut on your lip. I just bandaged up the cut on your eye. You don't need stitches.” (Hoover, 2016: 175)

From the above quotation, we can see that Ryle's violence does not only involve physical injury, but also the hurt and disappointment of the person who did such a bad thing to her. Ryle's physical violence does not stop there.

He slowly runs his finger over the heart and a shudder runs over my whole body. His lips meet my skin, right over the tattoo, and then he sinks his teeth into me so hard, I scream. I try to pull away from him, but he has such a tight grip on me he doesn't even budge. (Hoover, 2016: 200)

The above quotation shows that Lily's bite was another instance of physical violence against her. The incident occurred when Lily thought that Ryle was just trying to tease her by kissing her shoulder. Without knowing his real purpose, Ryle suddenly bit Lily's body right on the part of Lily's body that had a tattoo. Not only that, Ryle also grabbed Lily's body when she tried to move away after Ryle bit her. From this incident, there was an effect that Lily received.

The pain from his teeth piercing my collarbone rips through my shoulder and down my arm. I immediately start crying. Sobbing. (Hoover, 2016: 200)

Ryle's bite left Lily with physical injuries, namely tears in her shoulder and arm. The pain was too much for Lily to bear and caused her to cry. Physical violence continued to occur to Lily, namely the impact of Ryle's head on Lily.

Ryle tries to muffle my screams with his mouth. I bite down on his tongue. His forehead comes crashing down against me. In an instant, all the pain fades as a blanket of darkness rolls over my eyes and consumes me. (Hoover, 2016: 201)

This was the last physical violence that Ryle used on Lily. This happened when Lily screamed because she remembered her childhood where her father was violent

towards her mother, and it happened to her. Lily's screams were silenced by Ryle's mouth. But her hatred and anger, which could no longer be expressed, caused her to resist Ryle's treatment by biting her lower tongue. Lily's resistance was met with physical violence in the form of a blow from Ryle. The blow temporarily knocked Lily unconscious and injured her head.

My heart is racing, my whole body is still shaking, my tears are still somehow falling and I'm gasping for air. His words are crashing against my ear, but the pain is throbbing in my head too hard for me to decipher his words. I try to open my eyes, but it stings. I can feel something trickling into my right eye and I instantly know it's blood. My blood. (Hoover, 2016: 201)

The quotation above can be described that Lily felt shocked by her trembling body, which indirectly showed her fear of Ryle and the physical injury she got to her head was the effect of physical violence.

From the above description, it can be concluded that Lily was not just physically abused by her husband once or twice. Lily did not expect her home life to be so horrible for her. The physical violence she experienced resulted in physical injuries to her, deep disappointment in Ryle, emotional uncontrollability, and fear of Ryle.

4.1.2 Emotional Violence

Emotional violence is violence that is done verbally by instilling fear in someone through harsh words, blaming, denial, demeaning, and manipulating the truth. Emotional violence can be found in the violence Lily Bloom received.

He crumbles the number in his fist. "I thought. 'Huh. That's weird. Lily doesn't hide things from me.'" He stands up and picks up my phone. "So I called it." He tightens his fist around the phone. "He's lucky I got his fucking voice mail." He chunks my phone clear across the room and it crashes against the wall, shattering to the floor. (Hoover, 2016: 173-174)

Emotional violence occurs when Ryle finds someone's cell phone number in Lily's cell phone case when he accidentally drops Lily's cell phone, causing the cell phone case to come loose. Ryle, being curious, then tries to call the number, which turns out to be Atlas' number. Feeling disappointed and angry with Lily because he thought Lily was still in a relationship with Atlas, his first love, he slammed Lily's cell phone on the floor to show that he did not like what he knew. The above emotional violence has an effect on Lily. "There's a three-second pause where I think this could go one of two ways. He's going to leave me. Or he's going to hurt me" (Hoover, 2016: 174). The quotation shows the effects of emotional violence, namely the fear that came when Ryle slammed his cell phone and felt intimidated by Ryle's treatment, making her think if Ryle was going to leave her or hurt her. The emotional violence occurred again when they debated whether or not to stay in Boston.

He was offered a job in Minnesota at the Mayo Clinic and he wants us to move there. He said Mass General is rated the second best neurological hospital in the world. Mayo Clinic is number one. He said he never intended to stay in Boston forever. ... I can't leave Boston. The fight

continued to escalate and both of us were getting angrier by the second. At one point, he knocked a vase full of flowers off the table and onto the floor. (Hoover, 2016: 186)

The above quotation can be described as Ryle finally realizing his career dream by getting an offer to work at the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota, opening their debate by inviting Lily to move to Minnesota. Lily, who disagrees with Ryle, has a reason why she can't move from Boston, especially since she can't leave her mother and her flower shop. Ryle, not happy with Lily's opinion, gets angry and knocks over a vase of flowers. The incident made Lily feel the effects. "I was scared, wondering if I had made the right decision to stay" (Hoover, 2016: 186). The effect Lily received was her fear, which made her recall the previous violent incident and feel intimidated by thinking about whether her choice was the right one.

From the above explanation, it can be concluded that the emotional violence that happened to Lily began as a minor argument that was exaggerated into emotional violence. However, it had a major impact on Lily with her fear, trauma, and intimidation.

4.1.3 Verbal Violence

Verbal violence is violence that targets a person's feelings by saying harsh words, yelling at them, or demeaning them without doing anything physical. It can happen to anyone, even in a household. Verbal violence is found in Lily Bloom where her husband swears at her.

"You fell," he says calmly. "About five minutes ago. Right after I found out what a fucking liar I married." He places something on my pillow next to me. "If you need anything, I'm sure you can call this number." I look at the crumpled up piece of paper by my head that holds Atlas's phone number. "Ryle," I sob. What is happening? I hear the front door slam. (Hoover, 2016: 175)

The above quotation shows that Ryle gave Lily an expletive, clearly insulting Lily by saying that she was a lying asshole. The words were said by Ryle because of his jealousy of Atlas, even though Lily never lied or cheated on him. Lily, who tried to explain to Ryle, was unable to do so because Ryle left her by slamming the door. The incident had an effect on Lily.

My whole world comes crashing down around me. "Ryle," I whisper to no one. I cover my face with my hands and I cry harder than I've ever cried. I am destroyed. Five minutes. That's all it takes to completely destroy a person. A few minutes pass. Ten, maybe? I can't stop crying. I still haven't moved from the bed. I'm scared to look in the mirror. I'm just...scared. (Hoover, 2016: 176)

It is clear from the quotation above that the effect of emotional violence on Lily is to destroy her feelings, make her depressed and hurt by what Ryle has done, and make her fear Ryle. The crying that Lily could not stop showed how devastated she was. The inability to see herself in the mirror was an effect that affected her self-confidence and caused her to hate herself. This was the second time Lily had experienced this incident.

“Why is he still here, Lily?” His voice isn't as composed as it was in the kitchen. He's really angry now. “He's in everything. The magnet on the fridge. The journal in the box I found in our closet. The fucking tattoo on your body that used to be my favorite goddamn part of you!” (Hoover, 2016: 200)

Ryle's yelling is a form of verbal violence. His excessive jealousy that does not go away makes him yell at Lily when he reads Lily's old diary and learns that Atlas is a significant person for Lily, making him jealous and angry. His yelling showed his emotions and cornered Lily. So Lily felt afraid and unable to explain to Ryle. The effect of verbal abuse was also felt by Lily. “Ryle.” I beg. “I can explain.” Tears streak down my temples and into my hair. “You're angry. Please don't hurt me. Walk away, and when you come back, I'll explain.” Ryle's screaming is verbal violence that has an effect on Lily, namely her fear, with her screams begging him not to hurt her, making her feel intimidated and frustrated.

From the above explanation, it can be concluded that the verbal violence experienced by Lily occurred because of Ryle's jealousy and uncontrolled emotions, while it could have an effect on Lily, namely her fear of Ryle, intimidation that made her beg Ryle, and could also affect her mentally.

4.1.4 Sexual Violence

Sexual violence is a situation in which a person is forced to engage in sexual activity to satisfy his or her desires. This violent behavior can cause physical injury to the partner's sensitive body parts. In this novel, we find sexual violence against Lily.

His hand grips my ankle and he yanks me until I'm beneath him. “I'm not angry, Lily,” he says, his voice disturbingly calm now. “I just think I haven't proved to you how much I love you. “His body comes down against mine and he takes my wrists with one hand above my head, pressing them against the mattress. “Ryle, please.” I'm sobbing, trying to push him off of me with any part of my body. “Get off me. Please.” No, no, no, no. “I love you, Lily,” he says, his words crashing against my cheek. “More than he ever did. Why can't you see that?” (Hoover, 2016: 201)

Based on the above quotation, Ryle pulled Lily and forced her to have sex on the grounds that he wanted to show how much he loved Lily. The treatment was done by Ryle, again due to his jealousy, which made him angry, so he vented everything by forcibly having sexual intercourse with Lily. It can be seen that Lily refuses to have intercourse with Ryle, while a good sexual relationship should be with both partners who are both willing. It can be concluded that the above quote is sexual violence. Sexual violence has several effects on Lily.

I release a quick breath, and then drag in more air. I start shaking my head. and when his arms come down around me. I cry harder than I knew my body was even capable of. He holds me the entire time I cry. He holds me through my hatred. I did this to myself. I allowed this' to happen to me. (Hoover, 2016: 206)

The above quotation is one of the effects of the sexual violence experienced by Lily, knowing that she was declared pregnant after the sexual violence made her shocked and hate herself for doing it. Her shock when she found out about the declaration made her think for a moment that she did not want her child and had a fear that her child would have the same character as her husband. Not only that, but Lily was still feeling the effects when she was in the bathroom.

I remain in the bathroom for thirty minutes. Some of those minutes are spent staring at my reflection in the mirror. Some of those minutes are spent in the shower. The rest are spent over the toilet as I make myself sick with thoughts of the last several hours. I cry so hard, I don't even make a noise. I immediately want to cry again, so I force myself off the bed. I focus on the hollowness in my stomach as I use the bathroom, and tell myself I can cry after I eat something. I need to eat before I make myself sick again. (Hoover, 2016: 208-209)

The quotation above is a statement from Lily, who is lamenting herself in front of the mirror, thinking that her life is so sad now, thinking of some bad memories that are affecting her health and emotionally with her sadness that she cannot control. When she writes a letter to Ellen, or arguably writes her diary, there are words where she feels she has lost confidence in how people will react to her current situation.

The things I've thought about women like me are now what others would think of me if they knew my current situation. "How could she love him after what he did to her? How could she contemplate taking him back?" It's sad that those are the first thoughts that run through our minds when someone is abused. (Hoover, 2016: 214)

Lily's thoughts about herself and how people responded to her, because after what her husband did to her, she felt depressed and unsure of herself, so she lost confidence in herself. The effect of Lily's emotional instability.

I'm lying on Atlas's guest bed, staring up at the ceiling. It's a normal bed. Really comfortable, actually. But it feels like I'm on a water bed. Or maybe a raft, adrift at sea. And I scale over these huge waves, each of them carrying something 24 different. Some are waves of sadness. Some are waves of anger. Some are waves of tears. Some are waves of sleep. (Hoover, 2016: 215)

The emotional waves that Lily experienced made her uncontrollable, she suddenly felt sad for herself, some time she felt angry at herself, which suddenly shed tears by accident, and after that she felt sleepy. This is the effect of violence on a person's emotional state.

Aside from the sexual assault and its aftermath, knowing that Lily was now pregnant with Ryle's child made her think many times about making the right decision for her and her future child with Ryle.

"I would never keep you from your child, Ryle. I'm happy you want to be involved. But..." He leans forward and buries his face in his hands with that last word. "What kind of mother would I be if a small

part of me doesn't have concern in regard to your temper? The way you lose control? How do I know something won't set you off while you're alone with this baby?" So much agony floods his eyes. I think they might burst like dams. He begins to shake his head adamantly. "Lily, I would never..." "I know. Ryle. You would never intentionally hurt your own child. I don't even believe it was intentional when you hurt me, but you did. (Hoover, 2016: 260)

The quotation above explains how violence can affect children. Lily's fear that if she continued her relationship with Ryle, and if Ryle continued to be violent toward her, it would affect her child, made Lily think twice about making a decision. From that decision, for the sake of her child's bright future, Lily decided to separate from Ryle without limiting Ryle's love for her child later.

5. Conclusion

This study has explored the representation of domestic violence in Colleen Hoover's *It Ends with Us*, focusing on the experiences of the protagonist, Lily Bloom, who becomes entangled in a cycle of abuse that parallels her childhood trauma. Using Tulangow's typology of domestic violence, the research identified and analyzed four primary forms of abuse portrayed in the narrative: physical, emotional, verbal, and sexual violence. Each form is illustrated through specific incidents that not only contribute to the narrative tension but also offer a realistic portrayal of the complex and often concealed nature of domestic abuse. The findings reveal that domestic violence is not limited to physical harm but also encompasses deeply rooted psychological and emotional consequences, including fear, trauma, low self-esteem, and emotional instability. The narrative further illustrates how victims internalize blame, struggle with societal judgment, and face moral dilemmas when deciding whether to remain in or leave an abusive relationship. Lily's eventual decision to end the cycle of violence—motivated by a desire to protect her child from similar trauma—represents a significant act of agency and resilience. By presenting these themes within a popular romance novel, Hoover contributes to the broader social discourse on domestic violence, using fiction as a powerful medium to foster empathy, raise awareness, and challenge harmful norms surrounding intimate partner abuse. This study underscores the value of literary texts as both cultural artifacts and educational tools in understanding the nuanced realities of domestic violence. Future research may consider comparative analyses of similar themes across multiple literary works or explore how genre conventions influence the portrayal of abuse and recovery.

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