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Sinners for Love:
A Screenplay Exploring the Destructive Nature of Obsessive Love

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ABSTRACT
This thesis is created with the purpose to explore the destructive nature of obsessive love from its reasonings, symptoms, and how it affects people around the perpetrator. While love is a widely-known emotion that has been a norm for everyone, many still do not know the dark side of too much love, which can be the result of mental illnesses such as obsessive love disorder and many more. Obsessive love disorder itself is a mental disorder where someone has an overwhelming obsessive desire to possess and protect another person. Using screenplay as the form and drama-thriller as its genre, I will show the development and symptoms of obsessive love disorder through Sinclair as the main character. She will also show how she manipulates people around her to fulfill her love obsession. In the screenplay, Sinclair will manipulate Charlot's love for her by using him to get the man she obsessively loves.

Keywords: Obsessive Love Disorder; obsession; screenplay; drama-thriller

INTRODUCTION
Love is a universal emotion that has become the basis of marriage and family for many societies, which many people continue to explore. Television shows, movies, songs, literature, and even the media seem to promote a romanticized view of what love should be. Often, love is portrayed as an all-consuming emotion, and the person in love is characterized as doing anything within their power to secure the kind of love they want or think they deserve. In an excessive amount, this can lead to acts of encouragement for people to crave love and justify any means to achieve it. This action can also be triggered by mental illness and may stem from the social learning processes and cultural effects. Developmental experiences such as the formation of social attachments in childhood can also produce obsessive love (Ahmadi et al., 2013).

As a relatively rare illness, Obsessive Love Disorder (OLD) is uncommon for people to know since less than 0.1 percent of people have the disorder (Cherney, 2018). Obsessive love disorder is a psychological illness categorized as a type of obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and is usually a sign of another mental health condition such as attachment disorder and delusional disorder (Reynaud et al., 2010). Although it is relatively rare and not contained in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th Edition (DSM-5) as a specific mental disorder, obsessive love disorder is popularized by the book *Obsessive Love: When It Hurts Too Much to Let Go* (Forward and Buck, 2002). Susan Forward Ph.D. is one of the leading therapists who specialize in relationship and family issues, as well as the best-selling author, instructor, and consultant for many Southern California psychiatric and medical facilities. The second author, Craig Faustus Buck, is a journalist, nonfiction book author, writer-producer for network television, novelist, and screenwriter. Their book stated that obsessive lovers neglect everything that was previously important to them to focus all of their attention on their lovers. They are so caught up in the maelstrom of their passions that they simply refuse to accept when a relationship is over, which can be unbearable for themselves and the people around them, especially the lover (Forward & Buck, 2002).

Like other mental illnesses, people diagnosed with obsessive love disorder have different intensity and urge to fulfill. So, the existence of this illness is not limited to apparent sickly persons since many symptoms of mental illnesses are undetected by the cursory mind. Some people may be full-front with their symptoms, and others may be more subtle about it. Those main symptoms usually include an overwhelming attraction to one person, obsessive thoughts about the person, feeling the need to 'protect' the person they are in love with, possessive thoughts and actions, and extreme jealousy over other interpersonal interactions (Cherney, 2018). However, the most heartbreaking thing for an obsessor is actually rejection. "When confronted with the loss or growing disinterest of a lover, obsessors do not let go" (Forward & Buck, 2002). Rejection triggers them to keep their delusion alive. Thus, they will show the symptoms mentioned above to protect their relationship from disappearing.

In reality, obsessive love has nothing to do with love at all as it is more about the urge to own or possess something they longed for. So, when rejection makes obsessors feel that their lives are spinning out of control, they usually see only one course of action: to prevent their relationship from ending or, if it has ended, to revive it (Forward & Buck, 2002). Because of that, they will attempt any means to pursue their delusion with tactics that may seem relatively benign but used to assert power where they feel most powerless. Forward and Buck's book said that for these obsessors, vengeful assault is an attempt to regain control by exercising their anger. But this sort of transfer inevitably fails because the rejection that created the pain in the first place is not eliminated; it is exacerbated. Even though they may only do it once out of momentary spite, it only takes one uncontrollable outburst to end a victim's life (Forward & Buck, 2002). Thus, love obsession can bring harm or even death to the people involved if its symptoms are neglected and not immediately treated by a combination of medication and psychotherapy.

In this thesis, I will focus on a couple of main reasons that trigger the development of obsessive love disorder. The development of obsessive love disorder may have resulted from other mental health conditions that are obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and attachment disorder (Cherney, 2018). OCD itself is a mental and behavioral disorder in which a person has certain thoughts repeatedly, which is called obsession, and feels the need to perform certain routines repeatedly, which is called compulsions, to the extent that generates distress or impairs general functioning (Fields, 2020). My creative work will not explicitly display extreme symptoms of obsessive love at first which will show how subtle it can be. Accompanied by Sinclair's intelligence and charm, it will be hard to detect any abnormalities due to the rarity and subtlety of the symptoms that Sinclair cleverly hides. Most of the time, people may not realize that they have supported this behavior in real life. Thus, by reading this screenplay, people can be more critical of people's behavior and point out the subtle symptoms of obsessive love before it is too late.

I apply this issue to my character, Sinclair Calliope, the main character, to emphasize what causes her to obsessively love her boyfriend and the actions she will take to pursue her obsession. As the male figures in her life left and her mother abused her, these negative experiences result in her developing an overwhelming obsession with the people she is in love with within the fear of losing them forever, just like her father and older brother. This obsessive love results in many negative impacts that affect herself, her target, and the people around her. Like many people with similar illnesses, she knows that what she does is beyond normality. However, she always rationalizes it with relevant reasons society casts as romantic gestures, such as sacrificing something in the name of love. The story will be told from Charlot's perspective to further emphasize how 'normal' Sinclair's behavior can be seen from an unsuspected person's point of view.

In capturing the urgency of this topic, I choose film as my form as the multisensory beauty of films will complement the chosen storyline and genres the best. "Being the master of the

characters' movement, actions, expression, and dialogues allows me to explore and conceal my main character through the narrator's standpoint and from the dialogue, imagery, and sound that follows the character" (Verdi, 2019). With genre thriller in mind, this form also helps me create visual suspense and surprise that other forms may not fully portray. Having people unfold the truth before one's eyes will be more thrilling than reading it as a narrative description. As there are many emotionally induced scenes in my story, it will get better advantages if it is written in screenplay form.

Inspired by many exquisite films depicting the danger of untreated mental illnesses, such as David Fincher's *Gone Girl* and Martin Scorsese's *Taxi Driver*, I will use drama thrillers as my choice of genre. The drama genre portrays realistic characters in conflict with either themselves, others, or forces of nature (Hellerman, 2019). Drama is regularly mashed up with other genres, which in this context is the thriller genre. "Thriller is a genre that is characterized and defined by the moods they elicit, giving viewers heightened feelings of suspense, excitement, surprise, anticipation, and anxiety" (Hellerman, 2020). Collaborate with drama, these genres will focus on one central mystery that constantly pressures the hero to choose between two extremes which will convey the darkness of the story even more (Hellerman, 2020).

Not only that, the beautifully sewn humans' relationships, accompanied by their unique psychological issues, which are influenced by their various social, economic, and physical environments, are an excellent exploration ground for the subject of a screenplay (Allen et al., 2014). With adversity that questions their morals pressuring them, what they will do to solve it will excite its audience. Highlighting the tragedy of life that both caused and affected peoples' minds and actions will expose the ugly side of love and how someone can develop the disorder. The use of the thriller genre will create suspense that plays with the audience's emotion on how to perceive the characters or situations. It gives more brio and peculiar sensation to the story that will linger in the audience's mind and force them to think about this story, even after it ends.

CONCEPT OF THE CREATIVE WORK

As already mentioned earlier, this creative work will combine drama and thriller genres. This genre will help me create the dark and mysterious setting and necessary suspense to hook the audience's attention throughout the story. It will also give a touch of tragedy to influence the audiences' emotions. Thus, they will care about what happened in the story more. While this can be achieved by creating audio and visual darkness, the story and dialogue should also support the sense of edge and intrigue as the story unfolds. With that in mind, this creative work will use the genre's characteristics and a couple of literary tools to enhance the story's complexity and intensity.

This creative work will not have stereotypical protagonist in this film since everyone has their own peculiarities that enhance the thrill of the film. As Sinclair's toxic obsessive behavior will not be revealed until the later on of the film, it will create a justification for both her surroundings and the audience to see her as the victim of her horrible past. Not only can it be seen from Sinclair's character, but we can also see many facades created by other characters to portray the normality expected by society. From Charlot trying to hide his stalking tendencies to the imagery of a perfect couple created by Jeff and Kezia, the darkness and suspense are created by the unraveling of their disguise as the story goes on. It will also rely on suspense and mystery thrillers with a big twist that upends the plot. It will shatter society's idea of love and romance and the myth of perfection. Society's idea of love will be challenged in this film as the society may justify Sinclair's behavior as romantic love. However, as the story progresses, it will be revealed that it is not love but an obsessive disorder that caused a disturbance and even death to her surroundings. The complex issues created by the drama and the suspense created by the thriller of the characters will be a fascinating combination.

Not only with its genre characteristics, but this creative work will also use dialogue between the characters. The dialogue is responsible for developing characters, establishing the setting, and pushing the plot forward. Quentin Tarantino is one of the scriptwriters known for the unique way he writes dialogue. He usually introduces the personality and characteristics through the dialogue between each other that may not directly stated who they are, but indirectly give an insight for the audience of what kind of person his characters are. There are aspects to Tarantino's writing that manage to keep his scenes engaging that I will be using in my creative work, which are high stakes and structure (Bedard, 2021). With clear stakes, the audience is more likely to be invested in the tension. A three-act structure with a beginning, middle, and end will also help create different purposes for each act and drive the scene to an exciting climax (Bedard, 2021).

In this creative work, I will be using extended dialogue not only for characters and plot exploration but also for suspense and to keep the audience engaged. We will learn how much Charlot adores Sinclair to the point where it comes to doing the right thing or defending Sinclair, he chooses to help to cover the murder Sinclair has done. While doing that, both Charlot and the audience know what is at stake and the result of his choice beforehand. Thus, it will be an exciting tension for the audience to follow. This creative work also has a clear three-act structure where first the audience can see how the relationship grows between Charlot and Sinclair through their conversation. After that, it dives to the mysteries between Sinclair, Kezia, and Jeff that puzzle Charlot and drive him to seek the truth. In the final act, even after the conflicts with Sinclair, Charlot still helps and defends her which shows his blindness towards Sinclair's obsessive love. This structure drives the plot and hooks the audience to the story as it reveals the climax of the scene.

The story itself will be written in a first-person peripheral. In the first-person peripheral, the narrator witnesses the story, but she or he is not the main character (Stanzel & Goedsche, 1984). One of the famous works of this technique is *The Great Gatsby*, a romantic drama film directed by Baz Luhrmann, which was adapted from the novel of the same name by American writer F. Scott Fitzgerald. Although the main character is Jay Gatsby, *The Great Gatsby* is narrated in a first-person perspective from Nick Carraway's point of view. The film has a distance between the actual events that are happening and the audience to create uncertainty in the reliability of the events portrayed through Nick, thus characterizing Jay Gatsby with a heightened sense of mysticism. Although Nick is an accurate observer of the events around him most of the time, his emotions and unconscious perception of the characters influence how he sees and portrays them.

This creative work will be told from Charlot's point of view, even though the main character is Sinclair. It allows the audience to see the narrator's mind's eye view of the fictional universe. However, it is limited to the narrator's experiences and awareness of the actual state of affairs. Charlot himself is both a friend and an admirer of Sinclair, the main character, so his view is bound on how he experienced the events that occurred. He will give the audience a false sense of truth as they follow the story through his lens, where he will surprise the audience as the story reveals its truth near the end.

This story will also use prolepsis, also known as flash-forward, as its opening scene. It is a scene that temporarily takes the narrative forward in time from the current point of the story in literature, film, television, and other media (Literary Terms, 2019). They may also reveal significant parts of the story that have not yet occurred but soon will in greater detail. One of the examples of films using this technique is *Lolita*, a film directed by Stanley Kubrick based on Vladimir Nabokov's novel of the same title. Kubrick changed the order in which events unfolded by moving what was the novel's ending to the start of the film. At the beginning of the film, we see Humbert Humbert shoot the drunk Clare Quilty to death. Kubrick determined that

while this sacrificed a great ending, Thus, making the supposed ending to its beginning creates a captivating hook and intrigues for the audience to follow the story.

This tool is used to hook the audience from the start as it shows the older Charlot being captured by the police for the crime he committed for Sinclair. It immediately plunges the story into a crucial situation that is part of a related chain of events. The story opens with a scene that temporarily takes the narrative forward in time from the current point of the story. Since the audience does not know why Charlot is captured and what he does to be caught, these questions will intrigue their senses and motivate them to watch the film to the end. However, my creative work will still have its ending where Charlot realizes that Sinclair has manipulated him when he is imprisoned and questioned by the detectives. Unlike Lolita, I would not have to sacrifice my ending, but I will still have an exciting hook as an opening.

Synopsis
Captivated by her beauty and charm, Charlot has been secretly making Sinclair his muse and finally asking her out. From then, Charlot gets to know Sinclair and notices a tint of peculiarity from the perfect Sinclair. He starts to dig deeper into Sinclair's life, which Sinclair found out not long after. She is not angry, but she cannot return Charlot's love because she loves someone else, Jeff. Later, Charlot realizes that Sinclair has been poisoning Jeff's girlfriend. They fight about it, which makes Charlot realize that Sinclair just wants to be loved. Charlot decides to keep silent about the matter, leave the city and move to Surabaya. Eight years later, Charlot meets pregnant Sinclair in a supermarket. Apparently, Sinclair married Jeff and had a son and one on the way. They catch up, and Charlot realizes the bruises on her body. He grows concerned about Sinclair. One day, Sinclair calls Charlot telling him that she has to kill her husband to defend herself. Charlot helps dispose of the bodies and helps Sinclair move abroad. After she moves, Charlot never hears about her again. Three years later, the police catch Charlot as the associate killer of Jeff and his children. He is imprisoned, and when interviewed by the detectives, he learns that Sinclair has manipulated him all this time to achieve her love obsession.

Characters
1. Sinclair Calliope, 20 years old, 28 years old
Sinclair is mostly seen as a perfect woman by her surroundings as she is beautiful, bright, and charming. However, there is a peculiarity about her that most people do not notice. It is resulted from her childhood trauma where she is taught to love someone unconditionally, even though she does not receive any love growing up. That combination makes her believe that love should be obsessive to avoid abandonment, which haunts her. However, since she is self-aware and able to put on a facade, most people do not know this side of her. Since she is smart and can read people's behavior, she can manipulate people to fulfill her love obsession.

2. Charlot de la Croix-Aikawa, 20 years old, 28 years old, 31 years old
Since the death of his mother, Charlot becomes an eccentric guy who does not care about fitting in and saving face as much as normal people do which makes him alone most of the time. After his father's death, her mother and Charlot tried to return to France. However, they. She was exiled from the family because she married a Japanese guy who denounced her Catholicism. So, his mother and Charlot went to Indonesia where he grew hatred for everyone besides his mother. Because of that, after his mother's death, Charlot feels like nobody understands him as the world around him keeps ongoing. When he first sees Sinclair, she reminds him of her mother, both physically and emotionally. Because of that, Charlot is attracted to Sinclair and wants to understand her more.

3. Jeffrey Setiawan, 22 years old

Jeff is a stereotypical cool guy that does not talk much. When first introduced, he is in a relationship with Kezia Marietta, his high school sweetheart. However, Jeffrey is bored with Kezia as he already knows the real her but is scared that his image would be ruined if he is the one who breaks up with her.

4. Kezia Marietta, 20 years old
Kezia has been in a relationship with Jeffrey since the first grade of high school. However, she crazily works hard for every 'perfection' she has behind her cute looks. Because of that, she feels like Jeff is the only one who accepts her. So, even though Jeff mistreated her, she still maintains their relationship.

5. Princess Nethania, 19 years old
Princess is an acquaintance of Charlot who studies in the same film, cinematics, and photography major. Even though Charlot does not see her as a friend, Princess sees him as a friend who needs help with social conventions.

Conflict
This creative work will have two types of conflict which are man vs. man, where Sinclair wants Charlot to help out with her love obsession, and Charlot knows that he should not help her. Thus, it creates conflict between them, and man vs. self, where Sinclair is struggling with her obsessive love disorder created by her past trauma since Charlot pities Sinclair, he constantly makes excuses for Sinclair's behavior and justifies it because of her dark past. Thus, it will cloud Charlot's judgment between believing the reality or Sinclair's lies. For this story, I will focus more on the man vs. self. I choose to highlight this conflict more because both Sinclair and Charlot are questioning their inner self as their pasts and surroundings influence it, resulting in them choosing the wrong choices as time goes by.

CONCLUSION
In its making, this creative work is meant to explore the destructive nature of obsessive love that shows the reason of why someone can develop a love obsession, the symptoms of love obsession disorder, and how someone can manipulate people around them to fulfill their love obsession. In the screenplay, we learned that Sinclair develops a love obsession because of her traumatic past. The departure of her brother and father from her life at an early age created daunting memories which are exacerbated by her abusive mother who indoctrinated her that love should be obtained by any means.

Through the progression of the story, Sinclair's obsessive love started to grow and showed several symptoms, such as obsessive thoughts about the person, the inability to be apart from the person she loves, and extreme jealousy which harms others by setting them apart from the guy she loves. This symptom leads Sinclair to start manipulating people around her to fulfill her love obsession. She uses Charlot's love for her benefit by manipulating him to help with her obsession, which leads Charlot to cover Sinclair's attempt to murder Kezia Marietta and later kill Jeffrey and Mikhael Setiawan because she could not handle the possibility of them leaving her. She also shows more subtle symptoms throughout the story, such as wishing for her brother's death to Charlot because she couldn't handle the rejection and being overwhelmingly protective about the men she loves.

This creative work also shows that if not noticed immediately, obsessive love can be dangerous not only to the doer but also to people around them. Sinclair manipulates Charlot with her beauty and charm into believing that she is the victim and that what she does is justifiable. There are many times throughout the screenplay where Sinclair pressures Charlot into thinking that he should be helping her and justifying her psychotic behavior as an act of 'love' and that

love is the utmost priorit y. Charlot completely fall for Sinclair's manipulation and only learn the truth later after all is said and done. If Charlot had detected Sinclair's symptoms before fall for her manipulation, he would have been able to avoid being manipulated by Sinclair to commit harmful acts, while also helping Sinclair understand her own obsessive tendencies instead of encouraging them. With that in mind, this creative work hopes that the reader can learn from Charlot's mistake and understand obsessive love disorder better.

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