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June hayward's narcissistic personality disorder in r. F. Kuang's *yellowface*

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Abstract. This research aims to explore June Hayward's Narcissistic Personality Disorder, including the symptoms, the cause, and the effect. This study uses a psychological approach because the study focuses on the main character's psychological problem. The symptoms of Narcissistic Personality Disorder are analyzed using DSM-5-TR diagnostic criteria, while the causes and effects are analyzed using Freud's psychoanalytic theory, supported by psychological journals on NPD. The method used in this study is a qualitative descriptive method to explore the portrayal of Narcissistic Personality Disorder through June Hayward's character. The findings reveal that June Hayward has eight out of nine symptoms of Narcissistic Personality Disorder. June Hayward's Narcissistic Personality Disorder symptoms involve envy, lack of empathy, sense of entitlement, exploitative behavior, arrogance, grandiosity, need for admiration, and fantasies of success. The finding also shows that June's NPD is influenced by June's unresolved childhood problems, parenting style, and repressed emotions, which cause June Hayward to seek external validation to maintain her self-esteem. Furthermore, the finding also shows how Narcissistic Personality Disorder affects June Hayward's emotional regulation, interpersonal relationships, and the way June sees the reality of herself. These findings demonstrate how Narcissistic Personality Disorder shapes June's personality and influences the conflicts that develop throughout the novel.

Keywords: ***cause; effect; narcissistic personality disorder; symptoms; yellowface.***

INTRODUCTION

Human beings live blessed with behavior. The behavior of each individual is highly diverse because each person in the world has their own unique way of thinking, feeling, and behaving. Human beings do not bring these behaviors from the day they were born. These behaviors are shaped by interaction with other people, such as family, friends, society, etc. According to Caponecchia (2012), humans are complex creatures, and the interactions between their physical body, mental state, and social interaction, as well as their environment, both physical and social, influence their behavior and overall health. Some behaviors deviate from what is considered normal, which are known as personality disorders. When a person shows this kind of disorder, their behavior can affect the people around them too, not only themselves. As stated by Vacca et al. (2025), a mental disorder

occurs when an individual's internal mechanisms fail to carry out their natural functions, which negatively impacts their well-being as defined by social values and meanings.

Narcissistic Personality Disorder is one of the personality disorders that often happens to people in real life nowadays. As claimed by Choi-Kain (2020) in her journal, NPD has become an important personality disorder in today's era and is even described as "the new borderline personality disorder" in this period. This shows that NPD is becoming more noticeable and relevant in real-life these days. This disorder is characterized by a pattern of actions marked by extreme self-centeredness, a need for admiration, and a lack of empathy. As Mitra et al. (2024) explained, NPD is a pattern of behavior where a person sees themselves as more important than others, always wants admiration from others, and lacks empathy for others. People who suffer from NPD may seem arrogant, unlikable, and unbearable. This behavior continues over time and in various situations, frequently causing problems in their social and professional life.

The complexity of human behavior can also be explored through literary characters. Afdholy et al. (2024) state that literary works explore human struggles and psychological conditions, while Emir (2016) argues that novels reveal human thoughts and emotions through their characters. Likewise, Meiliana (2020: 9) explains that literary characters reflect real human life, making literature an appropriate medium for psychological analysis.

The issue of Narcissistic Personality Disorder is portrayed in Yellowface by Kuang (2023) through its protagonist, June Hayward. Driven by envy, insecurity, and a desire for recognition, June constantly compares herself to Athena, a successful bestselling author. Her jealousy eventually leads her to justify unethical actions, reflecting narcissistic patterns of self-centeredness, entitlement, and lack of empathy. June's actions demonstrate patterns of thought and behavior that align with narcissistic tendencies.

Previous studies have examined personality disorders in literary works. Arini (2018) examined Narcissistic Personality Disorder in *American Psycho*, while Filbert and Prasaja (2023) investigated Borderline Personality Disorder in *The Silent Patient*. Both studies focused on identifying the symptoms, causes, and effects of personality disorders through a psychological approach. Nevertheless, the findings primarily emphasize parental neglect, social environment, and traumatic childhood experiences as the underlying causes, as well as relationship difficulties, depression, legal issues, and physical health problems as their effects. These findings leave room for further investigation into other psychological factors that may contribute to the development of Narcissistic Personality Disorder and its consequences. Therefore, this study examines the causes, symptoms, and effects of Narcissistic Personality Disorder portrayed by June Hayward in Yellowface, providing a broader perspective on the psychological factors underlying the disorder and its impacts.

The psychological problem that June Hayward has throughout the story interests the writer to explore the symptoms of her narcissism, as well as the triggers and the consequences on her life and her surroundings. Furthermore, the Narcissistic Personality Disorder topic is currently on the rise and becoming more visible in our society due to the massive use of social media to seek validation, which makes this study relevant in today's era. Therefore, the psychological problem of the main character and the relevant topic of NPD become the reason why the writer writes this research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Narcissistic Personality Disorder

Narcissistic personality disorder, as defined by the American Psychiatric Association (2022: 761), is a mental condition marked by a long-term pattern of exaggerated self-importance, a strong need for admiration, and a lack of empathy for others that begins in early adulthood and appears in various contexts. Individuals with Narcissistic Personality Disorder depend heavily on praise and attention to maintain their self-esteem. When they do not receive admiration or when they are criticized, they may react with anger, anxiety, or emotional instability. Additionally, Bach et al. (2025: 54) added that Narcissistic Personality Disorder has personality dysfunction in the area of self-perception, which is an exaggeration of self-image. The exaggerated sense of self makes a person with NPD more likely to be authoritative because they think they are above others.

B. The Symptoms of Narcissistic Personality Disorder

To identify a character with Narcissistic Personality Disorder, the character must show the traits of NPD in their action. According to the American Psychiatric Association (2022), individuals with Narcissistic Personality Disorder exhibit at least five of nine characteristics.

1. Grandiosity

The most fundamental characteristic of NPD is exaggerating one's capabilities. People with grandiosity believe they are better in terms of capability, accomplishment, talent, and other qualities. Furthermore, people with grandiosity underestimate other people because they want to be seen as more outstanding than others. People with grandiosity often expect people to praise them and treat them with extra respect.

2. Fantasies of Success

People with NPD often imagine themself being successful, very powerful, extremely beautiful, or having a perfect romantic life, etc. These fantasies make them feel superior, although it does not happen in their real life.

3. Belief of Being Special

People with this characteristic want to be associated with high-status people because they feel like only high-status people can understand them. Also, they refuse to connect with ordinary people because they see ordinary people as not on their level, which makes them look down on people.

4. Need for Admiration

A person who has NPD usually craves compliments or praise. They need the admiration to feel good about themselves because their self-esteem is easily damaged. Low self-esteem leads a person to doubt themself or criticize themself. Therefore, seeking admiration from external parties is a defense to fill the emptiness inside.

5. Sense of Entitlement

This characteristic makes a person believe that they deserve special favors in society in terms of treatment or social rules. They expect people to give them what they want and get upset when others don't. This happens because one has a sense of superiority that leads to having expectations to be pampered by others.

6. Exploitative Behavior

A person with NPD often does not care for others' feelings. Therefore, this trait leads a person to take advantage of other people by using others to get what they want, without really thinking about how the other person feels. This can happen in small ways, like

asking for too many favors, or in more serious ways, such as manipulating friends or partners to gain money, attention, or social status.

7. Lack of Empathy

A person with NPD does not care for others' feelings. Therefore, it is hard for a person with NPD to have empathy. Because to have empathy, someone has to be able to put themselves in someone else's shoes to understand how others feel, which requires the feeling of care. A person with a lack of empathy may ignore others' feelings, downplay others' feelings, give insensitive comments, change the subject to themselves in conversation, etc.

8. Envy

A person with this characteristic often feels jealous when others succeed or have things they want. At the same time, they may insist that other people are jealous of them. This mix makes them competitive and resentful rather than happy for others. They may try to belittle someone's success to feel better.

9. Arrogant Attitude

It is the nature of a person with NPD to think that they are better than others, which leads them to become arrogant. This nature brings the attitude of arrogance. The arrogant attitude is exhibited through bragging, correcting others in public loudly, mocking people, looking down on others, etc.

C. The Cause of Narcissistic Personality Disorder

The development of Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD) is influenced by various psychological factors, particularly experiences during childhood. First, unresolved childhood experiences play an important role in shaping adult personality. According to Tyson (2023: 10), unresolved emotional conflicts from childhood remain in the unconscious mind and continue to influence behavior through recurring psychological patterns. Likewise, Ross et al. (2024: 2) explain that adverse childhood experiences, such as emotional neglect or abuse, may contribute to the development of NPD by affecting emotional development and self-worth. Moreover, parenting style is another important factor. Kohut (in Lejuez and Gratz, 2020: 55) explains that children develop their sense of self through emotional mirroring from caregivers. When this validation is absent, individuals may develop a fragile self-concept and rely on external validation. Similarly, Huxley and Bizumic (2016: 2) argue that invalidating parenting behaviors contribute to narcissism by creating hidden feelings of inadequacy and encouraging the development of a false self. Furthermore, repressed emotions also contribute to NPD. Tyson (2023: 11) explains that painful feelings and unresolved conflicts are stored in the unconscious and continue to shape behavior without conscious awareness. Tyson (2023: 15) further states that stressful life events can reinforce emotional repression and influence later psychological development.

D. Effect of Narcissistic Personality Disorder

Narcissistic Personality Disorder affects emotional functioning, interpersonal relationships, and the way a person sees the reality of themselves. First, individuals with NPD often experience emotional dysregulation when facing criticism or threats to their self-image. Gao (2025: 28) states that unstable self-esteem makes individuals with NPD vulnerable to emotional problems, while Chen (2024: 2) adds that criticism may trigger anxiety, depression, or even suicidal tendencies. Furthermore, NPD also creates interpersonal problems because individuals tend to prioritize their own needs, feel

entitled, and lack empathy. Deng et al. (2021) explain that these traits make it difficult to maintain healthy relationships. In professional settings, Ngwu et al. (2023: 5) argue that entitlement, defensiveness toward criticism, and attempts to undermine others can damage workplace relationships. Additionally, another effect of NPD is a distorted self-image. According to Tyson (2023), unresolved emotional conflicts and repressed experiences distort how individuals perceive themselves, leading to an unrealistic self-concept, dependence on external validation, and difficulty developing a secure identity.

METHOD

The qualitative descriptive method is employed to analyze this study. According to Creswell (2018), qualitative research is used to explore and understand the meanings of a phenomenon by describing various aspects of it within its context. Furthermore, the source of data for this analysis is from the novel Yellowface by R.F. Kuang. The data that are found in this research are in the form of words, phrases, or sentences that are taken from the novel *Yellowface* by Kuang (2023). This novel has 319 pages and is told in the first person.

The research instrument of this study is the writer as the researcher. As the main instrument, the writer is the one who discovers and interprets the meaning behind the character's actions and personality based on what is found in the literary work, and uncovers the assumptions. To collect the data, the writer goes through several procedures. The first step is to read the book. The second step is to mark the important sentences that are relevant to the topic of discussion. The third step is to take notes of the statements related to Narcissistic Personality Disorder. Furthermore, the last step is to classify the quotations. To analyze the data, the writer goes through some procedures as well. The first step is to match the data with the symptoms of Narcissistic Personality Disorder. The second step is to interpret the data using a psychological approach to find out the causes and effects of the main character's narcissistic personality disorder. The last step is to make a conclusion from the results of the analysis.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION (HASIL DAN PEMBAHASAN)

A. Symptoms of June Hayward's Narcissistic Personality Disorder

1. Envy

June Hayward often compares herself to Athena and feels envious of Athena's success.

> "It's not that Athena isn't talented. She's a fucking good writer-I've read all her work, and I'm not too jealous to acknowledge good writing when I see it. But Athena's star power is so obviously not about the writing. It's about her. Athena Liu is, simply put, so fucking cool. Even her name-Athena Ling En Liu-is cool; well done, Mr. and Mrs. Liu, to choose a perfect combination of the classical and exotic. Born in Hong Kong, raised between Sydney and New York, educated in British boarding schools that gave her a posh, unplaceable foreign accent; tall and razor-thin, graceful in the way all former ballet dancers are, porcelain pale and possessed of these massive, long-lashed brown eyes that make her look like a Chinese Anne Hathaway" (Kuang: 2023:5)

This passage of data 2 shows that June admits Athena is talented, but she does not want to say it. She does not want to acknowledge that Athena's work brings her to success. Instead, she says that her beauty and her style make her famous. June has already read Athena's works and admits that she is a good writer. However, she still manages to belittle

her achievements, saying it is not based on her writing skills. This envious behaviour makes her resentful towards what Athena has achieved.

2. Lack of Empathy

June Hayward has trouble understanding or caring about other people's feelings. After Athena's death, June's attention turns entirely to herself. This attitude shows a lack of empathy from June Hayward.

> "The problem is that my days feel completely normal, except for the singular, bewildering fact that Athena is fucking dead, that she's gone, just like that, and I don't know how I'm even supposed to feel about it, so I start drinking and panic-eating whenever the blues creep up in the evenings, and I get pretty bloated for a few weeks from all the ice cream and lasagna, but that's as bad as things get." (Kuang: 2023:23)

This data 9 quotation shows June's feelings after her friend passed away the night before. Normally, people would feel emotional after the death of a friend whom they have already known for a long time, even though they were not close, and not to mention she also witnessed her death. June does not know what to feel about the death of her friend, which shows that she lacks empathy. June also describes Athena's death as something confusing, instead of painful. Her inability to recognize or respond to Athena's death with care or sadness demonstrates a clear lack of empathy, as her attention remains centered on herself rather than on the loss of her friend

3. Sense of Entitlement

In this story, June Hayward believes she deserves special favors and exceptions to the rules for her serious violation. It is reflected in the way she justifies her decision to take Athena's manuscript and publish it under her own name.

> "Plagiarism is an easy way out, the way you cheat when you can't string words together on your own. But what I did was not easy. I did rewrite most of the book. Athena's early drafts are chaotic, primordial, with half-finished sentences littered all over the place. Sometimes I couldn't even tell where she was going with a paragraph, so 1 excised it completely. It's not like I took a painting and passed it off as my own. I inherited a sketch, with colors added only in uneven patches, and finished it according to the style of the original. Imagine if Michelangelo left huge chunks of the Sistine Chapel unfinished. Imagine if Raphael had to step in and do the rest." (Kuang: 2023:36)

This data 15 quotation shows that she knows her action is a work of plagiarism, but she does not want to admit it. She makes excuses that this is her polished work, by the inspiration of conversation with Athena. In her own judgment, she deserves an exception from the rules just because she changes some details when, in fact, the idea still belongs to Athena. June does not have the right to publish any of Athena's ideas. However, her sense of entitlement allows her to do it just because she did some editing.

4. Exploitative Behavior

June Hayward uses other people to reach her own goals without thinking much about the other person's feelings. In this case, taking Athena's manuscript is considered an exploitation because June took advantage of Athena's manuscript to advance her own career.

> "Athena died before anyone knew the manuscript existed. It would never have been published, or if it had, in its current state, it would always have been known as Athena's half-finished manuscript, as overhyped and disappointing as F. Scott Fitzgerald's The Last Tycoon. I gave it a chance to go out into the world without

> the judgment that multiple authorship always entails. And for all the work I put into it, all those hours of effort why shouldn't it be my name on the title?" (Kuang: 2023:37)

This quotation highlights June Hayward's exploitative behavior. June takes advantage of Athena's work to achieve her goal of gaining recognition as an author. Instead of respecting Athena's work by publishing under her name too, June justifies using the manuscript for her personal benefit. She convinces herself that her actions are reasonable, while ignoring Athena's rights. This shows that June prioritizes her own success over ethical responsibility.

5. Arrogant Attitude

June Hayward's behavior shows that she thinks she is better than others. This behavior leads her to act arrogantly and mock people who are beneath her.

> "Maybe she knew Athena. Maybe she's one of those wannabe writers daylighting as an underpaid, overworked publishing junior staff member with a China-inspired manuscript of her own, and she's jealous I've made it big when she hasn't. I get that-in publishing, that's a universal dynamic. But that's not my problem." (Kuang: 2023:64)

In this quotation from data 23, June Hayward so arrogantly belittles someone who is weaker than her. The person whom she calls a wannabe writer is named Candice Lee. Previously, Candice Lee suggested June to hire a sensitivity reader to assess her novel because her work relates to Chinese culture, while June Hayward is white. Candice Lee intends to prevent June's work from unintentionally offending Chinese people. However, June so arrogantly dismisses her as a "wannabe writer" who has failed to achieve the same level of success that she has and accuses her of being jealous of her work. Furthermore, her statement, "that's not my problem," reflects her dismissive attitude toward others' feelings and perspectives. Instead of taking into consideration those suggestions, she belittles her and gets her fired. This arrogant attitude shows that June believes she is superior to Candice, which makes her look down on others whom they see as less accomplished.

6. Grandiosity

June Hayward assumes that her status as a successful author automatically makes her important and that she deserves special treatment from others. June believes she is more important, talented, or special than others. She expects people to treat them with extra respect.

> "Her lack of formality strikes me as rather unprofessional. I rankle a bit that Susan's acting like she's picking her daughter up from school instead of chauffeuring an acclaimed guest. But no, no, that's my own bias coming through. They're not a glitzy bookstore, I remind myself. They're just some little social club without a big budget, and they're doing me a favor by wanting to be associated with me" (Kuang: 2023:115)

In this quotation from data 33, June Hayward believes that she has to be treated specially. Susan treated her as people in general, but she couldn't accept it, as she thinks that being a famous writer has gained her massive popularity, so she should be treated specially. So, she could not accept Susan's behavior. This is a common symptom of Narcissists that think they have to be treated specially by other people.

7. Need for Admiration

June Hayward constantly wants compliments and attention following the success of her book. It makes her feel good about herself. However, June's thirst for attention and praise does not want this to end because this attention makes her important and validates her sense of self-worth.

> "But, my God, I want to be back in the spotlight. You enjoy this delightful waterfall of attention when your book is the latest breakout success. You dominate the cultural conversation. You possess the literary equivalent of the hot hand. Everyone wants to interview you, Everyone wants you to blurb their book, or host their launch event. Everything you say matters. If you utter a hot take about the writing process, about other books, or even about life itself, people take your word as gospel. If you recommend a book on social media, people actually drive out that day to go buy it." (Kuang: 2023:193)

This data 38 quotation highlights June Hayward's thirst for praise. This constant need for admiration started after she became a massively best-selling author of her plagiarized work, The Last Front. When the hype of the famous book slowly decreases, she feels empty. She wants that attention again and again. So, to get that attention again, she tries to publish a book for a second time. However, she cannot come up with ideas, which leads her to plagiarize Athena's work again.

8. Fantasies of Success

June Hayward is always preoccupied with fantasies of unlimited success, even after getting cancelled on the internet for plagiarism.

> "The draft will be messy, but that's all right this whole affair is messy. It's more important to strike while the iron's hot. Brett and I will clean up the typos as best we can, then put the manuscript on submission. Someone will buy that story. Perhaps it'll be Eden-I'd be willing to work again with Daniella, provided she comes groveling, stacks of cash in hand. But I'm expecting a choice. The offers will be many. We'll go to auction. I would not, in fact, be surprised if this project goes for more money than any of my previous works. A year later, I'll be in bookstores everywhere. The initial press coverage will be skeptical at best, scathing at worst. White lady publishes tell-all! June Hayward writes the memoir none of us wanted, because this psycho just can't stop. Diana Qiu will blow a gasket. Adele Sparks-Sato will lose her fucking mind." (Kuang: 2023: 318)

In this quotation from data 53, June's fame is already dimmed because the public has already known her scandal of plagiarism. However, she still thinks that her action can easily be forgiven by the public. Without struggling to write her own work, she fantasizes that success is still waiting for her. Her confidence in this passage is based on an exaggerated belief that her work will still attract the reader after the plagiarism problem. This preoccupation with future success reflects the fantasies of success.

B. The Cause of June Hayward's Narcissistic Personality Disorder

1. Unresolved Childhood Problems

June Hayward's NPD is caused by June's childhood experiences. This happened because it was only her father who understood her writing hobby. Meanwhile, her mother was not interested in her writing at all, which is such a painful memory for her because her feelings are neglected.

> "Well, you're always welcome here." Mom turns, and I follow her into the house. She doesn't ask how the workshop went. Her blatant disinterest in anything that

> has to do with writing always stung when I was younger, but today, it's a comfort. "Watch your step, though-sorry about the mess."" (Kuang: 2023:253)

This data 48 quotation shows her unresolved childhood problem. She had always liked writing since she was a child. However, her mother never showed any interest in writing, the most important thing in June's life, since she was a child. The statement 'always stung' shows that this was a painful memory for June Hayward. Unresolved emotional wounds are often repressed but continue to affect a person's life into adulthood. This quote suggests that those wounds still linger even as June has grown up.

2. Parenting Style

June Hayward's mother seems to have a controlling and critical parenting style. This type of parenting plays a role in shaping insecurities because the feeling of constantly being judged makes a person feel like she is not doing enough. This may have contributed to her strong desire for recognition and validation from external parties.

> "Mom lives in a suburb outside Philly-near enough to Boston that I can get on the Amtrak and be there by lunchtime the next day. I have to root around my phone for her street address-I haven't been to the Philly house in years, and I never see Mom outside of our yearly Christmas and Thanksgiving gatherings at Rory's. I'm sure this spur-of-the-moment visit is a product of vulnerability, motivated by fear and childlike regression. I'm also sure, past the initial hugs and tenderness, that I'll regret coming at all; that once the "I've missed you" and "You look good!" chatter turns to the same over-controlling, patronizing comments that have spiraled into blowout fights in the past, I'll hop on the train and hurtle back to DC." (Kuang: 2023:252)

This data 47 quotation displays the relationship between June Hayward and her mother, which shows how problematic their relationship is. June admits that she rarely visits her mother and only sees her during family gatherings. Moreover, she expects their interaction to eventually turn into over-controlling and patronizing comments that often lead to serious arguments. This indicates that her mother may have a parenting style characterized by excessive control and criticism. It also indicates that June does not feel accepted by her mother due to the condescending comments.

3. Repressed Emotions

June Hayward's dream to become a writer is often dismissed by her mother. June's mother wants her to become an accountant and always pushes her to be one. It makes June feel unloved, which later gets pushed deep into the unconscious through a process called repression. These repressed emotions may result in June becoming insecure and needing external validation. "Mom has always had the particular ability to reduce all my aspirations to trivial obsessions with a simple disinterested question." (Kuang: 2023:258). This quotation from data 50 shows that June feels ignored by her mother. When her mother shows no interest, June feels hurt and unimportant. After her father died, these feelings became stronger, but June does not express them openly. Instead, she keeps these emotions inside and pretends everything is fine. Her sadness and feeling of being unloved are repressed, meaning they are pushed down and not dealt with. These repressed emotions later manifest as jealousy toward Athena.

C. Effect of June Hayward's Narcissistic Personality Disorder

1. Emotional Dysregulation

The way June struggles to regulate her emotions can be seen in the way she reacts when her self-image is challenged. Because her sense of self-worth is strongly tied to recognition and public approval, any threat to her reputation triggers intense emotional distress.

> "My heart races; my breaths are shallow. My brain buzzes so loudly that I can hardly hear my own thoughts, and I feel a tug at the base of my skull, like I'm withdrawing into and then away from my body. I can feel a panic attack oncoming-no, not oncoming, peaking. I've been low-key suffering an attack for the past hour, and I'm only now in an environment private enough to experience the full range of symptoms. My chest constricts. My vision fades to a pinprick" (Kuang: 2023:84)

This quotation shows June's unstable emotions. June struggles to regulate her emotions when faced with stressful situations that threaten her reputation. Her physical reactions, such as a racing heart, shallow breathing, and fading vision, show that her emotions are very intense. The panic indicates unstable emotions, as she is unable to manage the distress caused by threats to her self-image and professional reputation.

2. Interpersonal Problem

Maintaining healthy and genuine relationships with other people is hard for people with Narcissistic Personality Disorder, which also happens to June Hayward. June has a problem building an authentic relationship in friendship. June does not feel safe being herself around people because she is afraid people would know the real her.

> "I didn't realize it was possible to have so much fun with Athena. I've never been so myself with her. We've known each other for over nine years now, but I've always been so guarded in her presence-in part because I'm nervous she'll realize I'm not half as brilliant or interesting as she thinks, and in part because of what happened freshman year. But tonight, for the first time in a long time, I don't feel like I have to filter every word I say. I'm not struggling to impress Athena Fucking Liu. I'm just hanging with Athena." (Kuang: 2023:16)

In this quotation from data 8, June admits that during the nine years she had been friends with Athena, she had always been guarded and put on a front because she was afraid Athena would realize she wasn't as brilliant or as attractive as she seemed. This shows how June is unable to interact with Athena comfortably. She does not want to be seen as having a flaw because she constantly feels the need to impress Athena to protect her self-image.

3. Distorted Self-image

A distorted self-image happens when a person's perception of oneself differs from reality due to an unrealistic sense of self. In this case, June Hayward truly believes her version of the story, which is different from reality. June interprets the situations in ways that protect her image and maintain a positive view of herself, even when reality says otherwise. As a result, June exaggerates her contributions to the novel. "The whole process takes three editorial rounds over four months. By the end, I've become so familiar with the project that I can't tell where Athena ends and I begin, or which words belong to whom." (Kuang: 2023:45). This quotation from data 19 highlights the blurring of the line between June Hayward and Athena. It shows how June Hayward is confused about her own writing, as she does not even know which writing is Athena's and which is her own. This represents the distorted perception of ownership of the work and her identity as a writer. June no longer sees the manuscript as Athena's work, but as something that was also a part of her. Her perception of her contribution became blurred. She began to believe

that she owns The Last Front because she spends so much time editing and working on it when, in fact, the work is still Athena's.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that June Hayward in Yellowface exhibits eight symptoms of Narcissistic Personality Disorder, including grandiosity, fantasies of unlimited success, a need for admiration, entitlement, exploitative behavior, lack of empathy, envy, and arrogant behavior. These symptoms are primarily shaped by three factors: unresolved childhood experiences, controlling parenting, and repressed emotions, all of which contribute to her need for external validation and fragile self-esteem. Furthermore, June's NPD results in emotional dysregulation, interpersonal problems, and a distorted self-image. These findings demonstrate that June's narcissistic traits are not merely individual characteristics but are closely connected to her past experiences and significantly influence her behavior and relationships throughout the novel.

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