

## Conference Paper

# The Causes and Effects of Anger in Linda Howard's Novel *Death Angel*

Sri Chairani

Islamic University of Kuantan Singingi (UNIKS), Riau, Indonesia

## Abstract

The emotion of anger has a long love-hate relationship with morality. On the one hand, anger often motivates us to sanction wrongdoing and uphold demanding moral standards. On the other hand, it can prompt aggression behaviors that are at odds with morality and even lead to moral disasters, such as revenge and even murder. This research is concerned with Anger found in Linda Howard's novel entitled *Death Angel*. It can be seen in the novel that the causes of the main characters' anger are humiliation, infidelity and burglary (theft). All of these causes of anger shown by each of the main characters have effects. The effects are revenge and murder of the main characters themselves. The method used in this study is qualitative research method, that is, a research which uses procedures that make use of qualitative data. The theory of anger used to analyse the data is that of McAllister (2013). The findings of this research constitute the reality that anger must be concerned with the forms of its causes and its effects which are generally and can be confirmed negative. Moreover, the persons overwhelmed with anger usually cannot control his temper that they tend to endanger themselves as well as others with whom they address their anger.

**Keywords:** anger, humiliation, infidelity, burglary, revenge, murder

Corresponding Author:

Sri Chairani

ranie.nk1@gmail.com

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## 1. Introduction

Anger is the strong emotion that someone feels about an action or situation which he or she considers unacceptable, unfair, cruel, or insulting, and about the person responsible for it (Sinclair, John. Ed, 1987: 48). This study is concerned with anger found in Linda Howard novel's *Death Angel*. The novel written in 2008 is one of her famous novels. Linda Howard as the pseudonym of Linda S. Howington (born August 3, 1950 in Alabama, United States) is an American best-selling romance or suspense author. Before she became a writer, she was an avid reader and fond of *Gone With the Wind* by Mitchell (1936). After 21 years of penning stories for her own enjoyment, she submitted a novel for publication which was very successful.

The novel *Death Angel* describes a story about a girl called Drea who decides to take revenge to a drug smuggler named Rafael Salinas, because she feels that she has been humiliated by him. She feels that she has been regarded as a prostitute by lending her to a hired killer. She steals his money about two million dollars and then escapes from him. This, of course, makes him very angry with her after he knows that his money has been stolen by her. Then, he hires the same hired killer to hunt her. The hunting ends in a tragic accident which kills her. Drea, however, experiences miracle. She is given the second chance of living and sent her to the real world. She changes her way of life and decides to work together with FBI to overthrow Salinas. Unexpectedly, she makes a relationship with the hired killer she ever met.

Through the story of the novel, it can be seen that there are various reasons why someone can get angry with someone else; such as being insulted, cheated or humiliated by other people and his or her belongings being stolen. Consequently, there must be some effects of the anger, and it is very possible that someone who is in his or her anger may possibly kill someone else who has made him or her angry.

## 2. Literature Review

Anger or wrath is an intense emotional response. It is an emotion that involves a strong uncomfortable and emotional response to a perceived provocation, hurt or threat (Videback, 2006: 30). Anger is used as a protective mechanism to cover up fear, hurt or sadness. Anger becomes the predominant feeling behaviorally, cognitively, and physiologically when a person makes the conscious choice to take action to immediately stop the threatening behavior of another outside force (DiGiuseppe & Chip Tafrate, 2006: 133).

According to McAllister (2013: 2), we get angry when our expectations are not met. When something close not go the way it should, we try to take control over the out of control situation with anger. We also get angry when we feel were being threatened. And it may or may not be a real situation. We have all seem a person gets angry about something that is not a real threat at all. Additionally, some angry people carry their angry/resentments and rage around with them at all times, creating an environment that makes other people more aggressive toward them, just enhancing the whole anger cycle. These are the kinds of people who have a very short fuse, and any number of things will set them off. According to him, there are some other reasons why some people get angry. They include: 1) Grief-losing a loved one, 2) rudeness, 3) tiredness, 4) hunger, 5) pain, 6) withdrawal from drugs or some medication, 7) some physical condition, 8) physical illness, 9) mental illness, 10) alcohol, some drugs,

alcohol abuse, drug abuse, 11) injustice, 12) being teased or bullied, 13) humiliation, 14) embarrassment, 15) deadline, 16) traffic jams, 17) disappointment, 18) sloppy service, 19) failure, 20) infidelity, 21) burglary, 22) financial problems, 23) being told you have a serious illness.

There are some effects of anger that may happen, it includes *revenge* and *murder*. Revenge originates from the primal need for self-defense. In today's world, it is often abused as a destructive and futile response to anger or humiliation. Exhaust all alternatives before considering revenge, and use revenge only if it is your only effective self-defense. Most strategies for revenge fail because they attempt to change the past. Unfortunately once the damage is done and the injury, insult, humiliation, or other loss occurs, the clock cannot be turned back and the loss is permanent. In addition, the value of the loss to the offended is seen as much greater than any benefit gained by the offender. As a result the offense represents an unrecoverable loss to society as a whole. Successful strategies for revenge look far into the future and recognize that the cycle of vengeance and retaliation can only spiral toward tragedy and are best stopped before they are started. Revenge is a doomed attempt to eliminate shame and increase stature by asserting dominance. It fails because asserting dominance does not increase stature, instead it usually increases violence. Also, remorse cannot be coerced, it has to be discovered (Beaumont, 2009: 52). Murder is the unlawful killing of another human without justification or valid excuse, especially the unlawful killing of another human being with malice aforethought. This state of mind may, depending upon the jurisdiction, distinguish murder from other forms of unlawful homicide, such as manslaughter. Manslaughter is a killing committed in the absence of *malice*, brought about by reasonable provocation, or diminished capacity. In jurisdictions where capital punishment exists, the death penalty may be imposed for such an act; however, this practice is now less common (Tran, 2011: 2).

### 3. Research Methodology

This research applies a descriptive qualitative research method. K. Yin (2011:9) states that qualitative research strives to collect, integrate, and present data from a variety of sources of evidence as part of any given research. Creswell (2009:4) defines that qualitative research is a means for exploiting and understanding the meaning individuals or groups scribe to a social or human problems; the process of research involves emerging questions and procedures data typically collected in the participant's setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data the final written

report has a flexible structure. The primary or main data of this research which are in the forms of quotations are obtained from Linda Howard's novel *Death Angel* (2008), whereas the supporting data are taken from various sources or references including books and internet handouts.

## 4. Discussion

Anger including its causes and effects in Linda Howard's novel *Death Angel* is analysed. The causes of the anger analyzed are *humiliation, infidelity, and burglary (theft)*, whereas the effects of the anger are *revenge* and *murder*. The analysis also includes the way how the revenge and the murder are carried out.

The humiliation starts when Drea Rousseau, a beautiful young woman, has been staying together with Rafael Salinas, the narcotics smuggler. Though she is not his wife, she feels safe to stay with him. Time changes from day to day. Drea thinks that someday Rafael will get bored with her, and when it happens, later she wants to have had enough savings. She is actually always restless to stay together with Rafael, the narcotics smuggler who has long been wanted by Federal Bureau of investigation (FBI). Moreover, she knows that he has just rented a hired assassin to kill somebody. The killer is successful to do his work. Drea hears that Rafael praises the hired killer who has already done the assassin for him. She sees that the killer does not say anything to answer Rafael's praise. In such a moment, she also hears that Rafael offer bonus for him, but he refuses it. In other words, he tells Rafael that he does not want the bonus. Instead, he tells him seriously that he wants Drea.

The moment when the assassin tells Rafael that he wants her instead of the bonus and the moment when Rafael refuses his demand can be described in the quotation below.

"Ask for something else," Rafael said lazily, looping his arm around her shoulders and snuggling her close to his side. "I couldn't give away my good-luck piece." (Howard, 2008: 4)

The impolite or vulgar words which can be regarded as the form of humiliation from the assassin can be seen below.

"I don't want to keep her," the assassin said dismissively, without looking away from Drea's face. "I just want to fuck her. One time." Reassured by Rafael's immediate rejection of the request, confident once more, Drea laughed.....

At the sound, the assassin’s entire body seemed to tense, his attention so tightly focused on her she could almost feel the touch of it on her skin. (Howard, 2008: 4-5)

It is clearly seen in the above quotation that there is humiliation done by the assassin to Drea. She feels she has been humiliated because she has been regarded as a prostitute by him. Observe what Rafael has said to the assassin in the quotation below.

“One time, you said. I have business across town that will keep me tied up for five hours, which is more than sufficient.” He paused, then added lightly, “Don’t damage her.” Without even glancing at her again, he walked across the living room toward the door. What? Drea bolted upright, unable to think straight. What was he saying? What was he doing? This was a joke, right? Right? (Howard, 2008: 5)

In the above quotation it can be seen that Drea is surprised very much to hear the statements of Rafael to the assassin. She seems to feel that Rafael has underestimated her. She feels to have been humiliated by him; the man whom she hopes will protect her. At this moment, however, she sees that he has the heart to give her to the assassin to be treated as a prostitute. Accordingly, she becomes very angry but she has no bravery to say something to him to show her anger.

In the deepest side of her heart, she decides to take revenge against him. She resolves that he must pay his bad treatment to her though she does not know the way how to do it. She feels that she cannot live quietly if she lets him alive without serious injuries. Her decision to take revenge against him can be described in the quotation below.

She hated him, hated him even more than she hated herself. She’d completely subjugated herself to him, bitten her tongue and smile and gone along with him no matter what he wanted, and what for? For him to treat her as if she were a common whore? She trembled with a primitive need to hurt him, to see his blood, to physically beat him and bite him and tear at him with her nails .....  
 Rafael had to pay. She didn’t know how, but she had to make him pay. She couldn’t live if she let him get away with grinding her into the dirt the way he had. (Howard, 2008: 14)

Drea is very disappointed in what Rafael has done to her, that is, to give her to the hired assassin. She thinks that he has treated her as a prostitute. She thinks she does not need to be faithful to him because she now realizes that he has underestimated

her. Her plan that she will leave him constitutes the form of her infidelity to him. This can be seen in the following quotation.

That was it. She'd buy everything else she needed as she needed it. She was satisfied that no one, looking at this room, would think anything other than that she'd gone shopping and would soon be back. Rafael, knowing how she loved clothes and makeup, would never believe she'd willingly left all this behind, and that would buy her precious time-she hoped. She'd have to make a clean escape. (Howard, 2008: 21)

The unfaithfulness or infidelity of Drea can also be seen when she is brave enough to come into the bank site of Rafael. If there is no permission from Rafael himself, she should not do it because it is forbidden. Her deed for this can be regarded that she is not faithful to him who believes that she will not make something that can make him angry. This form of infidelity can be seen in the below quotation.

She wasn't counting on it, though; she intended to run far and run fast. She'd have to change her name, spend some money to get a new ID that . . . . .  
The e-mail problem taken care, she went back to Rafael's account information and took her first look at the bottom line. A savage glee filled her. Two million, one hundred eighty-eight thousand, four hundred thirty-three dollars and two cents. She'd leave him the two cents. She thought, because she was transferring only round numbers. (Howard, 2008: 22)

Drea really steals Rafael's money in the bank by using his password through a computer. She is successful to transfer nearly all of his money to her account and she also leaves him. Soon after he realizes what has really happened, he gets very angry with her. He does not really like to see her infidelity to him. His anger with her can be described below.

Rafael stood there, rage and humiliation burning through him. He'd let himself care about her, and the slut had played him for a fool . . . . .  
She'd pay for this. No matter what it cost him, she'd pay. "She can't run far enough," he said flatly. He'd like to take her apart with his bare hands, but he'd learned to put some distance between himself and the actual act. (Howard, 2008: 29)

Drea steals Rafael's money in a bank through a computer. She transfers all his money which is there in his bank account to her bank account. This burglary or theft, of course, makes him very angry with her. Her revenge by means of stealing his money through

his bank account as the form of her revenge to him can be described through the quotation below.

She went to the bank's website, then logged on as Rafael, holding her breath until the account information actually flashed onto the screen. First she went into his account preferences and changes the e-mail address so that any notifications would be sent to her e-mail address instead of his. From the research she'd done, she knows that a bank would send an e-mail when any unusually large transfers were made, and she didn't want Rafael getting that e-mail today. (Howard, 2008: 21)

Rafael gets very angry and he does not know where Drea is now. He thinks that she has gone away with his money. He thinks it is not easy for him to find where she hides. He wants to find her as soon as possible and hurts her as the form of his anger. To realize his willingness to catch and kill her, he rents the hired assassin to run after her and finish her off.

Salinas looked around, then took an old-fashioned transistor radio from his pocket and turned it on. The volume was loud, so loud that if Salinas hadn't taken a step closer, the assassin couldn't have heard him. "Drea stole two million bucks from me, four days ago, and took a powder. I want you to find her and take care of the matter. Permanently." (Howard, 2008: 134)

Her deed of stealing his money makes him angry very much. She is then hunted to be murdered by him through a hired assassin. She tries to run as far as possible in order that she can save herself; however, finally she cannot avoid her death after experiencing a fatal accident. The accident that causes her death can be described in the quotation below.

He reached the rear end of the car first. He could see the top of her head, just above the headrest; she was still in the seat. The driver's door was completely gone, and he could see her left arm dangling limply, blood slowly dripping from her fingertips. "Drea," he said, more softly. No response. He shoved through the brush and wreckage until he reached her side, then momentarily froze. (Howard, 2008: 46)

After she had gotten accident, it is a miracle because Drea lives again though she has been diagnosed to have no more hope for life. After some months in the hospital, she lives it because she is healthy now. She looks for an apartment outside and she can find it. She also gets a job in a firm which is not far from his apartment. The place where she lives is finally known by the hired assassin and they become close to each

other. They even finally love each other. After they are very close to each other, the assassin knows that Drea has a plan to take revenge against Rafael who has ever humiliated her. He really understands her purpose to do it. For this purpose, he helps her to do it. He even tells her to be careful to work together with FBI. Finally, Rafael is shot in his neck when he just comes out from a building escorted by his seven men. He is shot by somebody in a bus which is passing near him and his men. He then falls down and dies. The murder of Rafael can be proved through the quotation below.

A bus rumbled by and there was a barely audible pop ever the roar of the diesel engine. Rafael Salinas stumbled, his hand going out as if to catch himself. A second pop, right on the heels of the first, made several people look curiously around, wondering what the noise was. Salinas went down, a red spray arcing from his throat. (Howard, 2008; 93)

## 5. Conclusion

In line with the causes of anger (humiliation, infidelity, and burglary), it is concluded that humiliation can be sought as a means to de-emphasize the ego; humiliation must involve other person(s), though not necessarily directly or willingly. In this research, humiliation happens to Drea. Furthermore, infidelity is breaking a promise to remain faithful to a sexual partner. She steals Rafael's money in a bank through a computer. She transfers all his money in his bank account to hers. This burglary or theft, of course, makes him very angry with her. Related to the effects of anger (revenge and murder), Drea hates Rafael and plans to take revenge, and finally, she murders him.

In this research, we can conclude that obviously, nobody wants to be humiliated because humiliation can make them feel ashamed. They even feel that they have been looked down; consequently, it is very possible that they will react to show their anger to those who have already humiliated them. It is human that everyone wants somebody else who has a close relationship with them to be faithful to them. On the contrary, someone never likes the act of being unfaithful (infidelity) done by somebody else with whom they have a close relationship. It is very possible for them to be angry with their close friends who are not faithful because they think they have been betrayed by them. The act of stealing or burglarizing someone's things or belonging is, of course, morally bad. It is not liked by those whose things or belongings especially the precious one are stolen or burglarized. Therefore, it is very possible for them to be angry with those who have done the theft or burglary.

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