

Dark romanticism in Chris Grey's popular songs: from obsession to the new life process

Evi Irawanti Br Saragih¹, Muh. Firsya Wirawan², Mutmainnah³, Ayu
Triria P.D⁴

Author Affiliations

¹Sam Ratulangi University, Indonesia

²Sam Ratulangi University, Indonesia

³Sam Ratulangi University, Indonesia

⁴Sam Ratulangi University, Indonesia

Abstract. Dark Romanticism on literature is a subgenre of the Romantic movement that emerged in the early 19th century. This genre emphasizes the darker dimensions and negative aspects of the human condition. In this day, works within the Dark Romanticism genre are no longer confined to literary forms such as novels, short stories, or poetry, but also extended into the music industry particularly through songs that explore tragic love, toxic relationships, and emotional suffering. The growing interest in songs that embrace the themes of Dark Romanticism in music markets indicates a strong emotional resonance between such works and the internal experiences of their listeners. One artist who consistently engages with Dark Romantic themes in his music is Chris Grey, a Jamaican-descended musician. The lyrics in his songs frequently portray emotional dependency on a love object, despair following rejection, and a life consumed by illusions, often manifesting as obsession. According to Carl Gustav Jung, obsession is a manifestation of the unconscious *shadow*—the part of the self that contains repressed or hidden aspects deemed incompatible with one's ideal self-image. Obsession arises when an individual fails to detach from the object at the centre of their emotional fixation. This study aims to examine the stages of obsession as represented in the lyrics of Chris Grey's songs, and to trace the transition toward a renewed sense of hope following the Dark Romantic (obsessive) phase. It is hoped that this research contributes to interdisciplinary discourse particularly in understanding the emotional dynamics present in popular culture.

Keywords: Dark Romanticism; Songs; Chris Grey; Obsession; Carl Jung.

INTRODUCTION

The development of the music industry, both locally and globally, has shown significant growth in recent years. This is reflected in the increasing number of listeners across various digital music platforms and social media channels that utilize songs as supporting audio for content. According to the 2023 report by the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI), paid music subscription services have experienced a substantial surge over the past decade, contributing the largest share—67 percent—of global recorded music revenue. This growth is partly driven by the emergence of numerous new songs with diverse themes and tones that appeal to a wide range of audiences.

One of the song themes that has seen a rise in popularity is the theme of dark romanticism. This theme encompasses a range of narratives including heartbreak resulting from breakups, deep longing, the complexity of relationships, as well as obsession or excessive admiration and an intense desire to possess someone. This phenomenon cannot be separated from the role of social media, which is widely used by the younger generation, particularly Generation Z. Born between 1997 and 2010, this generation is known for being more adaptive to technological and social media developments, exhibiting a tendency toward freely expressing personal values, while at the same time being vulnerable to stress caused by global uncertainty, social pressures, and high expectation.

For the younger generation, songs with themes of dark romanticism often serve as a medium for catharsis or a means of purging negative emotions. In general, music possesses the capacity to evoke emotional responses through its lyrics and the listener's interpretation of lived experiences. This emotional connectivity reflects the complex interplay between psychological, neurological, and social factors. Moreover, songs can function as a form of expression for

individuals who struggle to articulate their emotions verbally. On the other hand, such songs may also lead listeners to become immersed in a state of emotional darkness.

A study by Amorita Azzahra et al. (2024) entitled "*Analisis Bahasa dan Makna Lagu 'Gala Bunga Matahari': Ekspresi Perasaan Melalui Lirik Lagu*" reveals that song lyrics not only reflect the personal expressions of the songwriter, but also establish an emotional connection with the listener. The phenomenon of using songs on social media demonstrates how music serves as a collective medium for remembering, processing, and coping with feelings of loss. This study further emphasizes the role of music as an effective medium for conveying universal emotional messages and fostering emotional solidarity in the digital age. These findings suggest that music plays a significant role in the psychological lives of its listeners.

As part of psychological studies, songs with the subtheme of obsession have gained increasing popularity among younger generations, as they are perceived to effectively represent various anxieties about the realities of life. In contemporary practice, modern life often compels individuals to conceal their true selves, including aspects of their romantic lives. Individuals experiencing obsessive tendencies may appear emotionally independent, detached, and distant in relationships. However, beneath this surface lies a complex inner world, marked by unconscious fears, unresolved emotional wounds from the past, and unmet emotional needs. Consciously, they may reject intimacy, yet paradoxically, they are drawn to individuals who embody the very qualities they suppress: inner peace, emotional stability, and self-sovereignty.

Fundamentally, obsession is not merely a matter of the object being pursued, but rather concerns the internal experience of the obsessed individual. Obsession arises when one loses control over the desired object, experiences a profound and painful longing, and faces confusion in navigating relational dynamics that do not meet their expectations. When the subject of the relationship responds with calmness and detachment, the obsessed individual often feels destabilized due to the loss of predictable interaction patterns. This becomes a psychologically perplexing experience, which, paradoxically, further intensifies the obsession.

The avoidance exhibited by the relational subject emerges from a growing awareness that the obsession is not rooted in genuine love, but rather reflects a search for identity and a long-abandoned part of the self. Obsession is not merely a matter of personal attraction, but a profound and symbolic psychological fixation. The idealized figure becomes a representation of a disowned fragment of the psyche. In the quiet of their inner world, the obsessed individual longs to become whole once more. However, due to an unresolved relationship with their own vulnerability, they are unable to approach this desire directly. Instead, they retreat into fantasies that are secretly nurtured, and into memories that are repeatedly replayed in the mind, this is what constitutes the obsessive thought: a mental fixation that persists and dominates, even when the individual rationally understands that the feelings are entirely irrational.

One artist who consistently explores the theme of dark romanticism in his work is Chris Grey, a musician of Jamaican descent. Annisa Balqis Lubis (2025), in her undergraduate thesis entitled "*Theme in Chris Grey's Selected Songs*," explains that the central themes in Chris Grey's music include love, loss, personal struggle, and the search for meaning in life. The lyrics in his songs frequently portray emotional dependency on the object of affection, despair caused by rejection, and the experience of living in an illusory shadow commonly referred to as obsession. Furthermore, these themes reflect universal values that resonate with a broad audience of listeners.

This study aims to examine the representation of various stages of obsession and the transitional process toward new life and hope as depicted in Chris Grey's songs, through a lyrical analysis informed by the perspective of Carl Gustav Jung. According to Jung, obsession is a manifestation of the unconscious shadow—an aspect of the self that contains repressed or hidden traits deemed incompatible with one's ideal self-image. Obsession arises when an individual fails to release their attachment to an object that has become the centre of emotional fixation. This study is expected to contribute to interdisciplinary discourse, particularly in enhancing the understanding of emotional dynamics as reflected in popular culture.

Obsession with a romantic partner emerges as a central theme in Chris Grey's body of work, as reflected through repetitive lyrics, musical nuances, and the emotional context of his songs. In an article by Siti Istiana published in *LPM ALAM TARA* (2025), entitled "*Antara Cinta, Obsesi, dan Kehilangan: Kajian Lagu Let the World Burn*," it is explained that the song portrays love that has transformed into obsession, where the boundary between affection and destruction becomes blurred. Lyrics such as "*I'd let the world burn for you*" and "*If I can't have you, then no one can*" reveal extreme possessiveness and a desire for domination. In this context, love is no longer a source of peace, but a destructive force that consumes logic and erodes identity.

The study by Daryll Jim R. Angel and Amrah Phil A. Solano (2025) in *Sinister Love: A Discursive Psychology of the Song "Every Breath You Take"* reveals that the lyrics of the song *Every Breath You Take* represent obsession and longing rather than love. Themes such as obsession, possessiveness, and surveillance reflect the complexities of intimate relationships, gender, and power within a socio-cultural context. From a discursive psychology perspective, the songwriter is portrayed as an observer driven by insecurity, fear of loss, and a desire for domination. The repetition of the lyrics "Every breath you take, every move you make, I'll be watching you" indicates unmet emotional needs and a search for validation from the partner. Both *Let the World Burn* and *Every Breath You Take* articulate a complex form of obsession rooted in emotional insecurity and power dynamics within intimate relationships.

The study by Anastasia Widya Putri Maharani and Sri Oemiati (2025), entitled *Proses Individuasi Diri Tokoh Otosaka Yuu dalam Anime "Charlotte": Psikoanalisis Carl Gustav Jung*, employs a contemporary Jungian psychological framework. This research continues to explore the theme of obsession, revealing that the protagonist attains psychological wholeness through a willingness to sacrifice based on inner conviction rather than external validation. This marks the beginning of hope and a new life, wherein the individuation process is realized as the character gradually relinquishes the persona and lives more authentically. The study provides significant insights into character development and the symbolism of the human psyche in popular media.

Research on obsession in works of art, including song lyrics, is important because it reflects internal conflicts, emotional instability, and power dynamics in interpersonal relationships. Song lyrics enable the interpretation of implicit messages, social impacts, and reflections of identity within the context of popular culture. Jung (1933), in *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*, particularly in the essay *Psychology and Literature*, asserts that authentic art originates from the collective unconscious rather than solely from the individual ego. The artist acts as an intermediary of archetypal ideas and primordial experiences, which serve as the deepest sources of creativity. According to Jung, great art has the capacity to connect the audience with the innermost layers of the psyche and to provoke reflection on existential questions. Analysis of the representation of obsession further enriches interdisciplinary studies among literature, psychology, and culture, while opening new understandings of symbolism and psychological dynamics in works of art.

To maintain the focus of the study within the established context and objectives, it is necessary to formulate several research questions that serve as the foundation for the analysis. These problem statements function as a guide in examining the representation of obsession and the psychological transformation process reflected in musical works. The primary research question of this study is: *How are the stages of obsession and the transformation from obsessive attachment toward self-liberation and a new life represented in the lyrics of Chris Grey's songs?* This research question is intended to help uncover the complex emotional dynamics within the song lyrics, as well as to explore the symbolic meanings that reflect the individual's psychological process in confronting, experiencing, and releasing obsession.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative descriptive method. The qualitative approach is chosen to gain an in-depth understanding of the fundamental principles that shape the meaning of a social and cultural phenomenon within a specific context, as well as to explore relevant categories (Fiantika et al., 2022). Data were collected through observation and literature review. The

research data consist of two types: primary and secondary data. The primary data comprise the lyrics of three of Chris Grey's most listened-to songs, namely: *Let The World Burn*, *Always Been You*, and *Haunted*. Meanwhile, the secondary data include books, journal articles, and other relevant sources related to the research questions and Carl Jung's psychological theory, particularly concerning the concept of obsession and its stages.

In the data collection process, the researcher carefully listened to the three songs, noting the portions of the lyrics deemed significant as initial data, and subsequently categorized them based on thematic focus. After the data were compiled, an analysis was conducted to identify how the stages of obsession are depicted within the song lyrics, culminating in the point of transformation or liberation from obsession. The final stage of this study involved drawing conclusions based on the results of the analysis.

According to Carl Jung, obsession is part of the psychic dynamics that consists of several stages. Each stage can be identified through symbols that emerge in creative expressions such as song lyrics. These stages are as follows: First, *Complex Activation (The Beginning of Obsession)*, where obsession originates from the emergence of a complex - a constellation of feelings, thoughts, and memories that carry a strong emotional charge and operate unconsciously. A complex may become reactivated when an individual encounters a situation that resonates with past traumatic experiences. In such moments, contents from the unconscious infiltrate conscious awareness, causing a person to fixate on certain thoughts involuntarily. As Jung explained, "a complex can be really described only as a feeling-toned idea which is split off from the whole personality and lives a life of its own in the unconscious" (p. 135). When an individual becomes obsessed with another person, it may be due to the projection of a hidden aspect of themselves that they recognize in the other. Once a complex is activated, the individual may display exaggerated emotional responses, as normal consciousness is momentarily overridden. This can lead to distortions in perception and judgment of reality. For instance, someone with a complex rooted in past rejection may exhibit intense fear of being ignored, even when the situation does not objectively warrant such a reaction.

Second, *Projection (Searching for the Object of Obsession)*. At this stage, the individual projects aspects of their unconscious outward, often onto another person. The object of obsession frequently represents an archetypal projection. For example, the lyric "You are like the light in my darkness" depicts the search for an idealized image. Third, *Identification and Conflict*. At this stage, the ego begins to merge with the object of obsession, causing internal conflict between desire and reality. Lyrics such as "Without you, I am nobody." illustrate the ego's dependence on the projected object. Fourth, *Awareness and Reflection (The Beginning of Individuation)*. A realization arises that the obsession reflects a part of the self. This marks the initial step in the process of individuation. For example, the lyric "Perhaps what I have been searching for all along is myself." indicates profound self-reflection. Fifth, *Transformation (Integration)*, where obsession no longer dominates but is integrated as part of the psychological journey toward wholeness (the Self). The song becomes a medium for transformation. For instance, the lyric "Now I know, love is not about possession, but understanding" reflects comprehension and acceptance.

Songs with themes of obsession, when analyzed through the lens of Jungian psychology, can be classified into five stages: Complex Activation, Projection, Identification and Conflict, followed by two subsequent stages that mark the process of becoming a renewed and integrated self—Reflection and Transformation. Jung regarded creative expression, such as music, not merely as a form of art but as a window into the unconscious. When an individual composes a song (or engages in other forms of artistic creation), they often unconsciously express inner conflicts, hidden emotions, archetypes, and psychic dynamics that are not fully recognized by the ego. Obsession, as portrayed in song lyrics, reflects the psychic dynamics involved in the process of healing and the pursuit of psychological wholeness.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Individuation is a central concept in Carl Gustav Jung's psychological theory, referring to the inner journey of an individual toward the discovery of the true self. The Self represents the stage of psychological development in which a person lives in harmony with both the conscious and the

unconscious. It is the integrated totality of all opposing aspects of the personality. Within each person coexist both good and evil, as well as light and darkness. Human beings are born with this inherent duality. However, the true self can only be realized when these opposing sides are fully acknowledged and accepted as they are. In simpler terms, individuation refers to the process of integrating all past experiences—both positive and negative—in order to live a psychologically healthy and stable life. This includes individuals who experience gradual emotional disturbances, such as obsession.

In Jungian analytical psychology, obsession is closely related to various other concepts such as personality, the unconscious, archetypes, and the shadow—elements that can influence an individual's consciousness and shape behaviour unconsciously. Obsession arises when a person fails to integrate the hidden aspects of the self into the totality of the personality, which may subsequently manifest as obsessive impulses or behaviours. It emerges from an inner psychic tension, and should not be viewed merely as a disturbance to be eliminated, but rather as a meaningful sign—an indication that the psyche is in need of integration in order to regain wholeness. This study aims to produce findings in the form of a descriptive analysis of the stages of obsession, as well as the symbolism indicating that the individual has released obsessive feelings and moved toward self-liberation and new hope, as reflected in the lyrics of Chris Grey's songs.

1. The Stage of Obsession and the Journey Toward a New Life

In the Jungian approach (Carl Gustav Jung's analytical psychology), obsession is not explicitly delineated through specific stages as in modern clinical psychology. However, the concept of obsession can be understood through several core ideas: the initial emergence of the obsession, the process of seeking the object of obsession, and the eventual manifestation of internal conflict. Following these three phases, there is a stage in which, if the obsessed individual is able to transcend the experience, they may emerge as a renewed and integrated self.

1.1. The Stage of Obsession in the Song *Let the World Burn*

In a 2020 interview with a media outlet, specifically during the release of a song titled *The Reason*, Chris Grey revealed that he had once been in an unhealthy relationship. He stated, "*I wrote 'Reasons' as I was starting to realize I was in a relationship that wasn't good for me. I couldn't imagine not being with her, but the relationship was making me miserable. This song captured the moment I was halfway leaning into the relationship, and halfway getting out of it.*" Grey explained that the song was a work he composed while still involved with his partner in that relationship. In the following year, particularly through the album *The Castle Never Falls*, Grey released a series of songs exploring themes of dark romanticism, including obsession. These works garnered significant public attention and achieved commercial success in the music market.

Based on statistics from the paid music streaming platform Spotify, *Let the World Burn* ranks as the most listened-to track on the album *The Castle Never Falls*. The song narrates a story of toxic love, depicting an individual willing to sacrifice anything for the person they love, despite the destructive consequences. Overall, the song vividly portrays obsessive love, where the desire to remain close to someone can lead to harmful thoughts and behaviours. The first stage of obsession is the activation of a complex, which involves unresolved past experiences resurfacing and influencing current behaviour and emotions. The manifestation of an active complex can be observed in the following lyrics:

*I shouldn't have fallen in love
Look what it made me become
I let you get too close
Just to wake up alone*

Let the World Burn, 2023

These lyrics illustrate how complex activation functions. When an individual experiences feelings reminiscent of old wounds, their emotions respond automatically. Sudden changes may occur, observable both physically, such as in facial expressions, and non-physically, such as in mood or emotional state. The lyrics depict a person

undergoing a layered emotional reaction—reluctant to fall in love yet allowing someone to enter their emotional space. This response appears excessive but is profoundly real, stemming from the accumulation of unresolved emotional experiences.

The next stage of obsession depicted in the song *Let the World Burn* is projection. Projection is a defence mechanism whereby an individual unconsciously attributes their own emotions, traits, or impulses to others. For example, a person who feels guilt may accuse others of being disloyal or malicious, even though these feelings originate from within themselves.

*I shouldn't have fallen in love
Look what it made me become*

Let the World Burn, 2023

At the projection stage, through the lyrics above, we can observe how the obsessed individual attempts to externalize their guilt onto another person: “Look at what they have done to me,” as if the other person has committed a wrongdoing by causing them to fall in love. In reality, such feelings fall within one’s own domain, and control over the situation does not involve the interference of others. Further evidence of projection can be seen in the following lyrics:

*This is how it always had to end
If I can't have you then no one can*

Let the World Burn, 2023

The lyrics above depict a profound obsession. Such statements typically arise from an individual experiencing heartbreak, jealousy, anger, or fear of loss, yet lacking the ability to manage or accept these emotions in a healthy manner. In this situation, the obsessed individual is aware that they may never be able to be with the object of their obsession; they have developed a fear of abandonment and lost control over the object itself. However, rather than acknowledging or admitting feelings of helplessness or fear, they project this sense of loss as a threat directed toward others. They displace the feeling of incapacity to endure loss into a possessive stance whereby no one else is allowed to have the object of obsession.

The subsequent stage of obsession is identification and conflict. At this stage, the ego begins to merge with the object of obsession, resulting in an internal conflict between desire and reality. In other words, there is a profound dependency on the desired object, where the individual no longer feels whole as a self without the presence of the obsession object, even though reality does not always permit such union. An example of identification and conflict can be observed in the following lyrics:

*And I know you think you can run
You're scared to believe I'm the one
But I just can't let you go*

Let the World Burn, 2023

Through these lyrics, we can observe the presence of conflict between the obsessed individual and the object of obsession. The narrator attempts to convince that he remains the same person as when the relationship first began, whereas the object feels afraid to believe that the obsessed individual is the only one worthy of them. Consequently, this results in avoidance by the object of obsession and pursuit by the obsessed individual. The lyric, “*But I just can't let you go*,” further emphasizes the conflict arising from these opposing desires. Despite knowing that the object of obsession is hesitant and wants to distance themselves, the narrator is unable to release or give up. There is a powerful love and a strong desire to fight for the relationship.

The next stage of obsession is reflection or self-awareness. At this stage, the obsessed individual begins to exhibit conscious change by reflecting on erroneous

feelings and behaviours. The individual starts to realize that a complicated relationship can be destructive to both themselves and the object of obsession. The lyric, “*Now I’m the one to blame*,” illustrates a direct admission of fault, without shifting blame onto others or external circumstances. This lyric demonstrates a high level of awareness that the individual is responsible for the consequences of their own choices.

The final stage of obsession, namely transformation or self-integration, is not found in the lyrics of this song. The obsessed individual only reaches the stage of realizing that obsessive feelings arise from unresolved past relationships; they still believe that half of their identity resides in the object of obsession, and that losing control over it would mean losing their sense of self. This creates prolonged conflict, where the obsessed individual’s desire to possess intensifies while the object of obsession continues to avoid. Love transforms into a destructive terror, and comfort is absent in this relationship. This process reflects a reciprocal emergence of awareness that this situation should not be occurring. Similar to Grey’s personal experience in a toxic relationship, obsession rendered him unable to live without the person he loved, yet it also caused him suffering.

1.2. The Stage of Obsession in the Song *Always Been You*

Among the three Chris Grey songs ranked highest in terms of current listener count, the song titled *Always Been You* also exemplifies the workings of complex activation. This song narrates a profound longing for a person from the past. Its lyrics depict how an obsessed individual is continually haunted by memories whenever placed in situations that trigger recollections of shared experiences. The song conveys an unwavering love and affirms that this person has been the sought-after one all along.

*You crossed my mind
A few miles ago
Turned on your street
Thinkin' I'm headed home*

*And I tried to love again
Now I'm right back at your door
I know in the end
It's always been you*

Always Been You, 2024

The lyrics of this song above explain that there are always situations in which an obsessed individual suddenly recalls someone from their past with whom they once had a relationship that remains unforgettable. Unconsciously, even while driving, the individual may divert their vehicle toward the place where that person is, hoping that a positive connection still exists between them. At this point, the awareness of the obsessed individual is overridden, and their judgment of reality becomes blurred. This misjudgment of reality continues when, despite attempts to move on by forming new relationships, the object of obsession remains the one they ultimately desire. Their memories repeatedly resurface, overshadowing their conscious awareness.

The next stage of obsession is projection, which occurs when a person feels uncomfortable with certain emotions or impulses within themselves and unconsciously displaces these onto others. For example, when someone projects infidelity onto another person, they may become overly vigilant or obsessed with monitoring that individual to prevent what they secretly fear within themselves from occurring. In the song *Always Been You*, the following lyrics illustrate how projection operates.

*I hope you're alone
And nobody else is there
Holding you close*

Always Been You, 2024

Projection, as conveyed through the aforementioned lyrics, can be interpreted as a manifestation of the fear of loss and feelings of loneliness. Although implicit, the obsessed individual projects these emotions onto the object of obsession, hoping that the latter is also alone. This implies that if the individual is suffering, the object of obsession must experience the same suffering. It is evident that the individual still desires companionship and intimacy; however, since possession is no longer possible, no one else can replace the position held by the object of obsession. Perhaps, at a conscious level, the obsessed individual is aware that the desired object is already with someone else, yet they alter reality through an alternative projection.

The subsequent stages of obsession are identification and conflict. Overall, the song encapsulates the internal conflict between the effort to forget and the reality that the feelings of the obsessed individual remain unchanged. This is evidenced by the lyric, “*And I tried to love again... Now I'm right back at your door.*” The tension between new hopes and old realities is clearly articulated. Regardless of any attempts made, including forming new relationships, these efforts prove futile as the individual inevitably returns to the object of desire. Another lyric, “*I find nirvana inside of your love... Baby girl nobody else was enough,*” further emphasizes this conflict, illustrating the obsessed individual’s conviction that the previous relationship provided a happiness that no future relationship can replicate. The emotions remain unresolved and cannot be fulfilled anew. Additionally, the lines “*Oh I got everything to lose*” and “*a part of me was yours*” intensify the gravity of this emotional conflict, revealing that the obsessed individual has surrendered a part of themselves, feels deeply bound, and has entrusted their full confidence to the extent of risking everything they possess.

The stages of obsession involving reflection or self-awareness and transformation or integration toward a new life and becoming whole as oneself appear to be unrealized in this song. Although a momentary awareness seems to emerge within the individual, prompting an attempt to engage in a new relationship, this does not endure due to the persistent recollection of a deeply rooted past relationship. The reflective stage, during which the obsessed individual should evaluate their thoughts, experiences, actions, and responses to reality, evidently fails to capitalize on this opportunity. Consequently, the obsessed individual remains trapped in repetitive patterns of thought and emotion despite considerable effort. The attainment of a stronger, independent new life free from reliance on others ultimately remains unachieved.

1.3. The Stage of Obsession in the Song *Haunted*

The song *Haunted* by Chris Grey is the second most-listened-to track on the Spotify music platform. It remains within the same album as the two preceding songs, *Let the World Burn* and *Always Been You*. This song also embodies a dark atmosphere and explores themes of obsession. It narrates the persistence of feelings that cannot be erased despite separation and continue to haunt the former partner’s life. The activation of complexes, or clusters of past emotions and experiences, suddenly resurfaces in memory, triggering an individual to enter an initial stage of obsession. These memories dominate consciousness and alter the individual's condition, making them more defensive, passive, or even reactive without a clear understanding of the cause. What they recognize is that these past memories provoke a sense of discomfort. In *Haunted*, the lyrics that effectively depict the activation of such complexes are as follows:

*We said our last goodbyes
But you know that's a lie
Oh you might not be mine
But I'll always be Watching
Now you're forever Haunted*

HAUNTED, 2024

The above song lyrics depict past memories during a period when the obsessed individual and the object of obsession were still engaged in a complicated relationship but ultimately chose to go their separate ways, despite both being aware that this decision was merely an illusion. This represents a conscious choice to no longer force the circumstances to maintain the relationship, as doing so would only lead to disappointment. However, unbeknownst to the obsessed individual, the object of obsession is able to move on and start a new life, while the obsessed individual remains trapped within past memories. The individual even asserts that although the object of obsession no longer belongs to them, they will continue to watch over them. The experience of failure in the relationship leads to a more obsessive and possessive personality, as if the object remains under their control.

The subsequent stage of obsession is Projection. In the song *Haunted*, the process of redirecting one's own emotions onto another person, or the object of obsession with whom the individual experiences a conflict of interest, is illustrated in the following lyrics:

*In his voice do I echo?
Send a chill down to your bones
Looking in his eyes seeing my ghost*

*Baby I can be your shadow
You'll never have to be alone*

HAUNTED, 2024

The lyrics in the first stanza illustrate how the obsessed individual experiences despair upon discovering that the object of their desire has begun a new life with someone else. This disbelief gives rise to various internal questions: whether the object of obsession sees the individual reflected in the new partner, and whether the qualities or experiences absent during their own relationship are now present with the new person. This sense of despair compels the individual to impose the idea that the object of obsession will perceive them as a haunting shadow lurking between the eyes of the new partner. The lyrics in the second stanza further emphasize that, regardless of time, the obsessed individual will strive to re-enter the life of the desired object in any form, so as to prevent them from feeling alone or abandoned. The individual feels compelled to maintain a role in the other's life, even though in reality they are no longer wanted.

The subsequent stages of obsession are identification and conflict. In the song *Haunted*, the recurring lyric "*In his voice do I echo?... Looking in his eyes seeing my ghost*" suggests that the obsessed individual attempts to identify or locate themselves within another person in order to maintain a sense of connection. In this context, the individual perceives themselves reflected in the new partner of the object of obsession, fostering the belief that a reunion between them is imminent. This creates a complex conflict between the obsessed individual and the object of obsession. Through the lyric "*Stuck on my love got you in chains... I know you're terrified by the mess you've made,*" the obsessed individual is convinced that the object of obsession is also unable to move on, being trapped in a binding love that results from the mistaken decision to separate—a notion that may not necessarily be true. Referring to the lyric "*Oh I can't move on with life that's without you... I can't die without hearing your 'I do,'*" it becomes evident that the obsessed individual is ensnared within their own thoughts and unable to release the emotions they have previously projected. Even after recognizing that the object of obsession has begun a new life, the obsessed individual continues to pursue and hope for a rekindling of love. Clearly contradicts reality.

The next stage of obsession is reflection. This process, in which the obsessed individual becomes aware of their mistakes and contemplates their actions, is evident in the lyric excerpt: "Under the touch of a mistake... Stuck on my love got you in chains." At this point, the obsessed individual shows a slight recognition that

the love they have given to the object has imprisoned them, and that this is a mistake. They may realize that this is the root cause of the increasing complications and the growing distance between them; however, there is no subsequent action taken to address this awareness. The individual continues to yearn for the object of obsession, while the object avoids them and begins a new life. This dynamic undoubtedly impacts the final stage of obsession, namely transformation or integration. The obsessed individual remains entangled in the past and fails to become a whole person with a renewed identity. The hope to remain with the desired figure remains strong, and the obsession to continuously possess them becomes uncontrollable.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that not all stages of obsession—from complex activation or the emergence of obsession, projection or seeking the object of obsession, conflict identification, to the process toward a new life and liberation from obsessive feelings, namely reflection or self-awareness and transformation or integration—are depicted in the three popular songs by Chris Grey. Through the lyrics of *Let the World Burn*, the obsessed individual reaches only the reflection stage; they become aware that the excessive desire to possess the object of obsession, to the extent of being willing to “burn the world,” causes chaos in both their own life and that of the person they idolize. The lyric “Now I’m the one to blame” reaffirms this awareness, acknowledging personal responsibility in the situation. In *Always Been You*, the individual reaches only the stages of identification and conflict, with no indication of reflection or self-transformation. Although a form of awareness briefly arises, prompting the individual to attempt a new relationship, this does not last long due to persistent memories of the deeply rooted past relationship. The reflection stage, where the obsessed individual should evaluate their thoughts, experiences, actions, and responses, fails to be actualized. Consequently, the individual remains trapped in repetitive thoughts and feelings despite their best efforts. The attainment of a stronger, independent new life without reliance on others is therefore not realized. In *Haunted*, the individual attains only the reflection stage, recognizing their mistake, yet fails to become a whole and authentic self by not progressing through the transformation stage. The obsession remains deeply rooted, as evidenced by the admission that they will continuously watch over and haunt the life of the obsession’s object indefinitely.

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