

## CHAPTER III

### ANALYSIS

#### 3.1 Liz's Perspective of Happiness

Happiness is not always to be big. Happiness exists in small things as well. Liz's happiness comes from learning Italian. There is this time when she reads Italian dictionary while taking a bath, read every word out loud to no one but herself. She loves Italian words and the sound of it. Learning Italian is one of her happy moments and it distracts her mind from her problems as can be seen on text below. Her friends question her why she wants to learn a language that is only spoken by one country which means does not have any benefits for her. But she just loves it and there is no logical explanation why. However, there is always no logical explanation when we love someone or something. Although there is no logical explanation, Aristotle describes this activity as the nature of happiness because it is produced by intellectual activity.

But I loved it. Every word was a singing sparrow, a magic trick, a truffle for me. I would slosh home through the rain after class, draw a hot bath, and lie there in the bubbles reading the Italian dictionary aloud to myself, taking my mind off my divorce pressures and my heartache. The words made me laugh in delight (Gilbert, 2006: 25).

This new activity makes her decides Italian is to be her first destination to travel. She wants to learn this beautiful language from its origin country directly. She wants to taste the pleasure of living in this country. Every city in Italy has its own antiquities and according to Goethe, you have to come to Sicily in order to understand Italy and this is what Liz does by coming to Italy that she needed to

understand herself. She applies Goethe's perspective into her life. Italian language leads her to begin her journey of happiness and she is happy to find a little piece of happiness from Italian. As we can see from the text below, to her, doing things that make her happy is an act of obligation and no one can judge her for being selfish for doing it. She has any rights to pursue and grab her happiness especially after the hardest part of her life she just underwent. It tells us to grab any good opportunity that comes our way as opportunity seldom comes twice. Liz see a glimpse of light at the end of the tunnel by studying Italian which will bring her to contentment.

But I felt a glimmer of happiness when I started studying Italian, and when you sense a faint potentiality for happiness after such dark time you must grab onto the ankles of that happiness and not let go until it drags you face – first out of the dirt – this is not selfishness, but obligation (Gilbert, 2006: 121).

Liz experiences her little serenity and happiness on her first day in Rome when she is having her first authentic Italian food. It is only some homemade pasta but this simple dish is able to diminish her unhappiness, that when she is home according to excerpt below, she expects all of her negative thoughts will flood her but it does not happen. She feels a glimpse of happiness instead. Happiness is when she enjoys her meals and then be able to sleep peacefully. This is exactly how Davis describes in one of his types of happiness which is pleasant life. Liz has and can enjoy the basic necessities yet, crucial things of human being to live which are food and sleep.

I waited to start crying or worrying, since that's what usually happened to me with the lights off, but I actually felt OK. I felt fine, I felt the early symptoms of contentment. My weary body asked my weary mind: "Was this all you needed, then?"

There was no response. I was already fast asleep (Gilbert, 2006: 37).

The way Liz defines happiness is simple yet heart warming. Nowadays, people measure their happiness based on what they have and do not have. It is rarely happen people defines happiness as when they do a cooking from the scratch, starts from do the shopping until the meal is ready to serve as explained in this text. The successful process of bargaining with the seller in Italian language improves her self confidence and creates self-satisfaction for achieving something new that bring contentment.

I passed a few hours once in the middle of October that might look like nothing much to the outside observer, but which I will always count amongst the happiest of my life. I found a market near my apartment...There I approached a tiny vegetable stall with one Italian woman and her son...I selected a bunch of thin, bright asparagus. I was able to ask the woman, in comfortable Italian, if I could possibly just take half this asparagus home? (Gilbert, 2006: 66).

The process of buying vegetables and bargaining in Italian – a language she could not speak a word of only a few months earlier – is another example of how happiness is for Liz. As we can read in this text that another simple thing which increases her level of happiness are when she cooks and arranges the food on her plate and then eat it without utensils in her room, sitting on the floor and reading local newspaper. In this very moment Liz enjoys her own solitude where she is in direct contact with herself and creating something for the sake of herself. It is an engaged life type of happiness that she experiences.

For the longest time I couldn't even touch this food because it was such a masterpiece of lunch, a true expression of the art making something out of nothing. Finally, when I had fully absorbed the prettiness of my meal, I went and sat in a patch of sunbeam on my clean wooden floor and ate every bite of it, with my fingers, while reading my daily newspaper article in Italian. Happiness inhabited my every molecule (Gilbert, 2006: 67).

Italian is Liz's new love. She truly enjoys the moment when she hears everything a guy says in a football stadium during the match even though a big part of it is rude words. She loves Italian very much that she wants to put her head on his lap so that she can hear every word that comes out from this old man's mouth. It is one of Liz's happy moments. Just like what Dalai Lama describes about happiness of having wealth, Italian language is Liz's most precious wealth at the moment as it brings a large amount of happiness that she cannot buy anywhere.

Oh, it was such an exquisite and lucky moment in my life to be sitting right in front of this man. I loved every word out of his mouth. I wanted to lean my head back into his old lap and let him pour his eloquent curses into my ears forever (Gilbert, 2006: 73).

During her stay in Italy, she let go of her old habit in New York. She eats and drinks everything that Italy has to offer. She does not care if she becomes fat because she is happy that she can enjoy her meals compared to her dark days in New York. Not only she gains more weight but also she gains more happiness. Happiness is when she can have a delicious meal without worrying of becoming fat. This is an example how a pleasant life type of happiness is supposed to be where there is nothing to worry about the temporary effect it may cause as we can see in this text. Yes she becomes fat but it triggers her inner beauty to show; she has the brightest aura all around her compared to girls out there who are on a tight diet in order to be skinny.

My body is turning a blind eye to my misdoings and my overindulgences, as if to say, "OK, kid, live it up, I recognize that this is just temporary. Let me know when your little experiment with pure pleasure is over, and I'll see what I can do about damage control. Still, when I look at myself in the mirror of the

best pizzeria in Naples, I see a bright-eyed, clear-skinned, happy and healthy face. I haven't seen face like that on me for a long time (Gilbert, 2006: 85).

Happiness is when Liz spends some time with her friends in Italy, celebrates Thanksgiving. She is overcome with gratefulness and joy that she cries when it is her turn to speak to convey her gratitude. In this text she explains that she remembers very clearly how depressed and unhappy she was before came to Italy that she could not enjoy anything that she does. Italy and her new friends are the best medicine for her because they are the instruments she needed to achieve an engaged life that makes her life complete in some way.

Namely, that I am so grateful to be free tonight from the depression that had chewed, had been gnawing at me like a rat over the years, a depression that had chewed such perforations in my soul that I would not, at one time, have been able to enjoy even such a lovely night as this (Gilbert, 2006: 115).

Exploring cities in Italy brings precious experience to Liz. She gets to ask people around for a direction and tastes food from one restaurant to another restaurant. It is written here that she feels free and has no burden. A realisation hits her during this trip; that she can go whenever she wants. Happiness is when she gets in tune with her life and maximizing her freedom. In this moment Liz acquires two types of happiness simultaneously, which are pleasant life and engaged life.

These weeks of spontaneous travel are such a glorious twirl of time, some of the loosest days of my life, running to the train station and buying tickets left and right, finally beginning to flex my freedom for real (Gilbert, 2006: 101-102).

Happiness is also when Liz is full of love feelings. It happens when she is in India. She feels terribly happy as the effect of meditation, yoga, and vegetarian food she has during her stay in Ashram. Buddhism believes happiness can be

achieved by focus on spiritual development thus, ignoring world pleasures. She knows that this feeling she has is because she is connected to God in some way. Her belief in God changes the way her look to this world, that she has a purpose in this earth, that she deserves to be happy. Aristotle and Socrates also clearly explain that virtuous activity like what Liz does; get in touch with her spiritual side, is the gate of true happiness of meaningful life and this is what Liz yearns for as we can see on her statement:

But it was pure, this love that I was feeling. It was godly I looked around the darkened valley and I could see nothing that was not God. I felt so deeply, terribly happy. I thought to myself, “Whatever this feeling is – this is what I have been praying for. And this is also what I have been praying to (Gilbert, 2006: 213)

Liz loves being surrounded by friends especially a new friend she has in Bali, Ketut Liyer, a medicine man who once predicted her fate. He predicts that Liz will return to Bali and live there for a few months and it does happen. Liz likes spending some of her time with Ketut Liyer as he is the person who helps her figure out how to have a happy meaningful and engaged life by painting her a picture and tells her what she needs to do to achieve it. Liz is simply happy to be his company for a few hours, most likely as a symbol of her gratitude for his help.

I don't know what Ketut has in mind of me, but I'm just happy to be invited into his life (Gilbert, 2006: 240).

Friendship brings happiness to Liz. It fills her with love because she can connect on emotional level with her friends. Liz writes that she also can feel her friend's love towards her only by her friend's slight touch to her. The combination of pleasant and engaged life equals to meaningful life. She found a friend who acts like a sister in foreign country Indonesia. Their closeness is established when

Liz had an accident and Ketut Liyer suggests her to meet a medicine woman named Wayan to heal her wounds she gets from the accident. She finds out that Wayan is a good woman and her treatment does help Liz to a faster recovery. From that point, she started to visit her often for any reasons. She enjoys spending time and having conversations with her. It is indeed a very precious and rare chance to have a friend who loves her and treats her like a family member. This feeling of being loved is a true happiness.

I could feel her love pulsing through her power grip, right up into my arm and all the way down into my guts. Then she dropped my hand and limped away arthritically, saying not a single word. While I stood there quietly drowning in two rivers of happiness at the same time (Gilbert, 2006: 258).

Besides being surrounded by friends, happiness can also come from an uncommon thing like when her Balinese friends, Wayan, throw a birthday party for her in Balinese tradition. Although she feels the differences with the party in New York, she treasures this moment. She gets to wear tight Balinese clothing, there is no modern pop music that makes her feel strange, but the best part is her friends gather and entertain her with beautiful traditional dance and shower her with sincere wishes and modest birthday gifts. The first thing of something can turn out to be the moment of happiness.

My Balinese clothing was squeezing me like an ardent hug, and I was feeling like this was definitely the strangest – but maybe the happiest – birthday party I'd ever experienced in my whole life (Gilbert, 2006: 320).

Happiness for Liz is something we have to acquire. It does not appear by itself as explained in text below. We have to work and strive for it because in the end we are responsible for our own happiness. Nobody can ruin our happiness because it lives deep inside us, needs to be awakened. We can choose to be happy or

not. This is exactly how Benjamin Disraeli defines happiness as something that needs an action to acquire.

Happiness is the consequence of personal effort. You fight for it, strive for it, insist upon it, and sometimes even travel around the world looking for it (Gilbert, 2006: 272).

Another thing Liz describes as happiness is her temporary beautiful, eco friendly home in Ubud. She even describes this house is her private Eden where she can mingle with the nature. Liz almost never feels unhappy after her intensive spiritual journey in India, and Bali brings more peace that improves her level of happiness. This house is a wealth she possesses in Bali even only for temporary. Happiness of having wealth is described by Dalai Lama as a type of happiness.

When the sun comes out the place quiets down and the butterflies get to work. The whole house is covered with vines; I feel like any day it will disappear into foliage completely and I will disappear with it and become a jungle flower myself (Gilbert, 2006: 246).

Happiness can come in various ways. One of it is come from extending her hand to help a friend in need. It is happiness of sharing one's wealth according to Buddhism as explained in chapter two on the types of happiness. Liz sends an email to all of her friends around the world which says that nothing can make her happier than money donation in any amount to help Wayan, her medicine friend who helps her in many ways too, to buy a house so that she and her daughter and her foster daughters can live in peace without worrying where they should sleep when the lease of the house's over.

I told them that there was nothing in this world that I needed or wanted, and that I had never been happier in my life. Therefore, I explained, a cheaper and more lovely way to help celebrate this birthday would be if my friends and my family would care to make a donation to help a woman named Wayan



Nuriyah buy a house in Indonesia for herself and her children (Gilbert, 2006: 286)

### **3.2 The Cause of Liz's Pursuit of Happiness**

The everlasting belief that the ultimate goal in woman's life is marriage has been exist since hundreds of year ago. It also defines how happy a woman is. However, this belief does not seem to apply to Liz completely. It is true that Liz is very happy to jump into marriage life at the beginning. As year goes by, she realises she does not want to be a wife anymore. She does not even want to be pregnant and to be a mother, whereas it is woman's nature and fate. It is ironic how Liz denies it and never talks about it with her husband whereas communication is very important in a relationship.

I don't want to be married anymore. I don't want to live in this big house. I don't want to have a baby (Gilbert, 2006: 10)

In fact, we'd been trying to get pregnant for a few months already. But nothing had happened. And every month when I got my period I would find myself whispering furtively in the bathroom: Thank you, thank you, thank you for giving me one more month to live (Gilbert, 2006: 11).

She is married but desperately unhappy for actually no single reason that she cannot or will not divulge. However, one thing is very clear that she does not want to be pregnant. In this text, she admits that she also takes part of why she does not want to stay in her marriage. There are always be one or more problems in marriage life as two different persons live together but actually that is the purpose of it, to accept each other's flaws and to learn to solve any problem that occurs together. This is what is missing in Liz's marriage. There is no healthy communication between them. They could not complete and support each other.

Maybe there is but it is also possible that the communication is not balance and one person is not satisfied and feel incomplete.

The many reasons I didn't want to be this man's wife anymore are too personal and too sad to share here. Much of it had to do with my problems, but a good portion of our troubles were related to his issues, as well. But I don't think it's appropriate for me to discuss his issues in my book (Gilbert, 2006: 12).

Here the writer draws a conclusion of the cause of her unhappiness is her unsuccessful marriage or it is actually her sole purpose to make the readers or audience think that way. However, there is more than enough explanation from her side, as she does not want to expose the failure of her husband in their marriage, that it is really the best way to end the marriage before both of them suffer more.

Marriage, as we know can be classified as the final destination of human beings. It is a crucial thing, a hope of every parent in this world, a dream of every woman since childhood that even children story books and fairytale have happy marriage at the end of the story. After all, marriage is not a benchmark of happiness as seen in this novel. It is explained in this text that the love they once have for each other has died because of too much fighting as the effect of unhealthy communication. It is crystal clear that their marriage is over when one side could not stand the other.

I equal parts loved him and could not stand him. We'd been fighting and crying, and we were weary in that way that only a couple whose marriage is collapsing can be weary (Gilbert, 2006: 12).

Liz is married for years with the man she loves or she thinks she loves but still she is unhappy. She does not engage with her life thus she does not find

happiness. She always put a happy face at daytime, hoping the unhappiness feeling will subside and eventually disappear but in the end she has to face the brutal truth all alone when unhappiness consumes her in the night as quoted:

It was a cold November, around three o'clock in the morning. My husband was sleeping in our bed. I was hiding in the bathroom for something like the forty-seventh consecutive night, and just – as during all those nights before – I was sobbing. Sobbing so hard, in fact, that a great lake of tears and snot was spreading before me on the bathroom tiles, a veritable Lake Inferior (if you will) of all my shame and fear and confusion and grief (Gilbert, 2006: 10)

Marriage does not make her happy. Those ecstatic and bubble feelings have long gone leaving her alone with a big question to herself whether she made the right decision to accept the marriage proposal or is it just herself, is there something really wrong about her that she does not want to be somebody's wife. No matter how many times she review, reassess, and analyse every possibility, she always ends up with an answer that she does not want to be married again and she does not want to have children from her marriage as we can see from her statement:

I also will not discuss here all the reasons why I did still want to be his wife, or all his wonderfulness, or why I loved him and why I was unable to imagine life without him. The only thing more unthinkable than leaving was staying; the only thing more impossible than staying was leaving (Gilbert, 2006: 12-13).

When she realizes that she is not happy with her marriage and how she does very hard to be pregnant but deep inside her heart she does not want a child, she thoughts that her marriage comes to an end and has to be ended as soon as possible.

But seven very difficult months later, I did leave my husband. When I finally made that decision, I thought the worst of it was over. This only shows how little I knew about divorce (Gilbert, 2006: 17).

It clearly states that her unhappiness is caused by her marriage. She thinks she has found her perfect mate but as time goes by, she suffers on her own choice.

At the bottom of the abysmal fact that we were both doing something the other person would never have conceived is possible; he never dreamed I would actually leave him, and I never in my wildest imagination thought he would make it so difficult for me to go (Gilbert, 2006: 18).

Her choice to divorce his husband is like a double – edged sword. She does not expect that he makes the divorce process very hard for her. He blames Liz for being unfair about their relationship. He does not want to accept any divorce compensation that she offers although she suggests him to take all the assets and she takes all the blame. Still, he does not accept and hangs Liz in uncertainty. There is no doubt his husband is hurt with Liz's decision after all years they have been through together. It is like Liz betrays him and he acts and treats her the way only a broken heart man would do, hurts her back by complicate the divorce process, that pulls her deeper into unhappiness. It even causes a big problem into her another aspect of life. Her house turns into a big mess because no one takes care of it, nobody pays the bills, and her career is stuck. It is indeed cannot be described as a pleasant life.

Months passed. My life hung in limbo as I waited to be released, waited to see what the terms would be. We were living separately, but nothing was resolved. Bills piled up, careers stalled, the house fell into ruin and my husband's silences were broken only by his occasional communications reminding me what a criminal jerk I was (Gilbert, 2006: 18).

Even after her former husband released her from their marriage, she is still haunted by guilty feelings toward her husband that prevents her from being happy which triggers her action to travel to Italy, to find happiness while experience

pleasures. Happiness is obtainable and teachable through human effort like what Socrates and Plato state and this is what Liz does. She lets go of things she thinks are not good for her and prevents her from being happy and pursue happiness because at one point she has to do something to achieve it. We can refer back to what Socrates and Plato say about happiness is obtainable and teachable through human effort. Although there are times when she feels really bad for what she has done to her ex-husband, but she keeps going.

Until – as often happened during those first months of travel, whenever I would feel such happiness – my guilt alarm went off. I heard my ex-husband's voice speaking disdainfully in my ear: so this is what you gave up everything for? This is why you gutted our entire life together? For a few stalks of asparagus and Italian newspaper? (Gilbert, 2006: 67).

She is unhappy with her marriage that she decides to leave his husband. She thinks it is the only way out of unhappiness but she was wrong because this is just the beginning. One problem leads to another when she meets David, an actor who performs in a play based on short stories she wrote. She falls in love with him which is not the perfect timing after her ugly divorce.

All the complications and traumas of those ugly divorce years were multiplied by the drama of David – the guy I fell in love with as I was taking leave on marriage (Gilbert, 2006: 18).

She falls in love desperately with this man that she wants his total devotion. She becomes needy and clingy towards him. She does what seems to be the best thing to do when experiencing failed relationship; jump right into another relationship. She thinks it will cure her broken self and bring happiness but she is wrong. Happiness is directive rather than additive, it depends not on external goods, but how we use these external goods whether wisely or unwisely (Plato;

300 BCE). Liz acts very impulsive as this choice she made is not proper after what she has been through with her last committed relationship.

I clung to David for escape from marriage as if he were the last helicopter out of Saigon. I inflicted upon him my every hope for my salvation and happiness (Gilbert, 2006: 19).

She is happier indeed with her new life with him. But at some point she realizes this relationship is suffering. She realizes that there is something wrong within her that she could not comprehend. She describes in text below that she is very needy and clingy. She needs a big amount of attention from the object of her love. This thing finally leads to David's withdrawal that makes her more insecure and possessive.

I was despondent and dependent, needing more care than an armful of premature infant triplets. His withdrawal only made me more needy, and my neediness only advanced his withdrawals, until soon he was retreating under fire of my weeping pleas of, "Where are you going? What happened to us?" (Gilbert, 2006: 21).

There are only two types of person in this world; the all – in type and the half – in type and Liz is the first type. She will give everything she has for the sake of her loved ones especially in relationship. It is indeed a noble behaviour but it becomes a problem when she could not hold her ground and this is what happened in her relationship with man. She gives and gives without receiving until she is emotionally exhausted of giving too much of herself. She thinks by giving she will receive but it is not always end up that way. She has to balance her virtue and pleasure in order to find happiness that she looks for.

But I disappear into the person I love. I am the permeable membrane. If I love you, you can have everything. You can have my time, my devotion, my ass, my money, my family, my dog's time – everything (Gilbert, 2006: 68).

Her unresolved divorce is clearly her main cause of unhappiness, followed with her unhealthy relationship with David but it does not stop there, her unhappiness is growing even more when finally she loses David. In this state she really loses herself that it almost impossible to pull her out from the hole that trapped her inside.

To be losing David right after the failure of my marriage, and right after the terrorizing of my city, and right during the worst ugliness of divorce (a life experience my friend Brian has compared to “having a really bad accident every single day for about two years”)...well, this was simply too much (Gilbert, 2006: 22).

Another cause of Liz unhappiness is her own self. She underestimates herself and always feels insecure. She needs constant assurance of love and attention from the object of her adoration otherwise she will be anxious and needy which is actually only pushes the person away from her. She realises this thing about her and she admits that she is nothing like her mother who is very independent and able to be detached from the person she loves. She judges herself as not as strong like her mother.

The problem is, I said, I’m not like my mother. I’m not as tough as you, Mom. There’s a constant level of closeness that I really need from the person I love. I wish I could be more like you, then I could have this love story with David. But it just destroys me to not be able to count on that affection when I need it (Gilbert, 2006: 87).

Thinking too much is never good and this is one of Liz’s problems. She thinks too much and wishes too much which only makes her more unhappy but, she does not realize it until one day during her meditation lessons in India, a close friend of him at the Ashram, who she calls Richard from Texas, points it out to her when she tells him that she still loves David and could not move on.

But I wish me and David could –

He cuts me off. See, now that's your problem. You're wishin' too much baby. You gotta stop wearing your wishbone where your backbone oughtta be (Gilbert, 2006: 158).

You are, after all, what you think. Your emotions are the slaves to your thoughts, and you are the slave to your emotions (Gilbert, 2006: 139).

She does not mind when Richard tells him this problem about her but when he tells her that he is certain that she can move on from him and just to give it time, she then demands an exact date when it will finally happens that he points out one more problem that prevents her from being happy, she is too controlling.

You want an exact date?

Yes

Somethin' you can circle on your calendar?

Yes

Lemme tell you something, Groceries – you got some serious control issues (Gilbert, 2006: 158).

However, she does not like to be called control freak although she realizes deep down from her heart that he was right. She thought nobody can see her control issues because it is not obvious on the surface. Again, she wishes too much. She really has to learn to let go because keep holding onto something can cause a great distress and this leads her to unhappiness and Richard from Texas points it out perfectly.

You gotta learn how to let go, Groceries; Otherwise you're gonna make yourself sick. Never gonna have a good night's sleep again. You'll just toss and turn forever, beatin' on yourself for being such a fiasco in life; What's wrong with me? How come I screw up all my relationships? Why am I such a failure? Lemme guess – that's probably what you were up to at all hours doin' to yourself again last night (Gilbert, 2006: 159).

Her control issues has been with her since she was ten years old that it grows up within her. When she was a child, she once thought that time passes her by so fast and she feels helpless, wanted to call a time out but she has no control



over it. It becomes a habit to take control of everything that is possible to be controlled because it makes her very sad to not be able to control time.

I suppose this urge to force the entire universe to stop in its tracks until I could get a grip on myself might have been the beginning of what my dear friend Richard from Texas calls my “control issues”. Of course, my efforts and worry were futile. The closer I watched time, the faster it spun, and that summer went by so quickly that it made my heart hurt, and at the end of every day I remember thinking, “Another one gone,” and bursting into tears (Gilbert, 2006: 161).

Liz is being so hard towards herself. It is like she is fighting against herself everyday but sadly she does not realize it. It is indeed very difficult for her to be happy that she does not even know much about herself and her character. This lack of self awareness is another road of her unhappiness.

He says he’s never watched anybody fight so hard against herself (Gilbert, 2006: 167).

Liz’s ego to be always in control also becomes a problem when she does meditation. Her purpose to learn meditation is to find happiness by make a peace with herself but it seems very difficult to be done. Her feeling of incompleteness is also takes part of how she could not focus on meditation as mentioned in this text.

All I seem to do is argue with myself when I try to meditate. That’s just your ego, trying to make sure it stays in charge. This is what your ego does. It keeps you feeling separate, keeps you with a sense of duality, tries to convince you that you’re flawed and broken and alone instead of whole (Gilbert, 2006: 148).

### **3.3 The Effect of Liz’s Unhappiness**

Liz’s unhappiness affects her very much in every way. She has almost everything a woman can have; a marriage with the man she loves, a house they

bought together and spending some free time with his husband and friends. It is indeed a pleasant life. She could not ask for more, could she? Her unhappiness does make her feel ungrateful about everything she has now. It makes her inquire and analyse everything what goes wrong in her life.

How could I be such a criminal jerk as to proceed this deep into a marriage, only to leave it? We'd only just bought this house a year ago. Hadn't I wanted this nice house? Hadn't I loved it? So why was I haunting its halls every night now, howling like Medea? Wasn't I proud of all we'd accumulated? (Gilbert, 2006: 12).

Her acute unhappiness makes her even question the last few years of her life after marriage. She is very busy in her new role as a wife that it feels like she missed some precious moments of what life offers. It seems like she is not being herself at that time as we can see on text below.

I had actively participated in every moment of the creation of this life – so why did I feel like none of it resembled me? Why did I feel so overwhelmed with duty, tired o being the primary breadwinner and the housekeeper and the social coordinator and the dog-walker and the wife and the soon-to-be mother, and somewhere in my stolen moments – a writer . . .? (Gilbert, 2006: 12).

However, no matter how bad things are, there is always a good side of it that leads a person to be a better person. In her most desperate moment, it never occurs to her that she will pray to God. This is the very moment that marks the transformation of her life.

And so the prayer narrowed itself down to the simple entreaty – Please tell me what to do – repeated again and again. Quite abruptly, I found that I was not crying anymore. My misery had been completely vacuumed out of me (Gilbert, 2006: 16).

Liz finds a moment of tranquillity during her prayer. All of her misery disappears completely, replaced by a peaceful silence. Right there she experiences a heaven intervention she does not want to let go of it that she does not dare to

move an inch, afraid if it disappeared. She then realises that she needs to be working on her virtue and cultivate it.

I was just alone. But not really alone, either. I was surrounded by something I can only describe as a little pocket of silence – a silence so rare that I didn't want to exhale, for fear of scaring it off. I was completely still. I don't know when I'd ever felt such stillness (Gilbert, 2006: 16).

Eventhough there are actually very limited effects of her unhappiness that affects her relationship with the people in her life, there are indeed this two persons she hurts. The first person who is affected is her husband. Her husband does not understand what went wrong. He thought that their marriage is rock solid. When Liz divorces him, he is also suffering from his total love and devotion to Liz and their marriage, that he becomes angry to her. She ruins his life unintentionally. Liz indeed does not divulge further about his husband's feelings but she explains very clearly his reaction towards her. He hangs Liz in uncertainty by prolong the process of the divorce. It takes about a year and a half for him to sign the divorce letter and still he asks many things as the compensation. It looks like an exploitation from her side.

The spring of 2003 brought things to a boiling point. A year and a half after I'd left, my husband was finally ready to discuss terms of a settlement. Yes, he wanted cash and the house and the lease on the Manhattan apartment – everything I'd been offering the whole while. But he was also asking for things I'd never even considered; a stake in the royalties of books I'd written during the marriage, a cut of possible future movie rights to my work, a share of my retirement accounts, etc (Gilbert, 2006: 31).

It is never occurred in her wildest dream that his husband would ever do that considering the fact that they once loved each other and spend a quiet amount of years living and sharing life together. Her unhappiness brings her to the point of no return that pushes herself to her own limit where she has to sacrifice

everything. The second and last person who she hurts accidentally is David, her so-called soul mate. David feels confused and upset with Liz's behaviour towards her relationship. She becomes the woman he does not recognize as she is acting insecure, needy and clingy.

I wince now to think of what I imposed on David during those months we lived together, right after 9/11 and my separation from my husband. Imagine his surprise to discover that the happiness, most confident woman he'd ever met was actually – when you got her alone – a mucky hole of bottomless grief (Gilbert, 2006: 20).

It is already clear that Liz is unhappy and her unhappiness affects people in her life without much of her realization at first. All she knows is she suffers even more when David becomes aloof towards her and put much of distance between them. She knows this act would still affect her even when she is not in the moment of post divorce since she is aware that she is a very affectionate person that a slight sign of rejection will be able to destroy her.

David's sudden emotional back – stepping probably would've been a catastrophe for me even under the best of circumstances, given that I am the planet's most affectionate life – form, but this was my worst of circumstances (Gilbert, 2006: 21).

After all of the nasty divorce and on and off relationship with David, she made the second biggest decision in her life; leave her old life behind in New York and begins her one year travel to Italy, India, and the last one is Indonesia. Her unhappiness is already too much that she needs a much better activity to distract her mind and to not dwell into her unhappiness.

A few weeks later, I am living in Italy. I have quit my job, paid off my divorce settlement and legal bills, given up my house, given up my apartment, put what belongings I had left into storage in my sister's place and packed up two suitcases (Gilbert, 2006: 36).

Liz loses everything because of her unhappiness. She has even given up her job. She would not be able to start her trip if her publisher did not purchase the book she shall write about her travels. Although she now lives in a city of her favourite country, Rome in Italy, the effect of her unhappiness is still looming and stalks her everywhere, makes her helpless because she always failed to shoo them away as explained below:

Depression and Loneliness track me down after about ten days in Italy. I stop to lean against a balustrade, and watch the sunset, and I get to thinking a little too much, and then my thinking turns to brooding, and that's when they catch up with me (Gilbert, 2006: 48-49).

Her unhappiness causes her to think too much and analyse everything. She knows depression and loneliness very well that she can even describe their presence as practically, they have been invaded her soul for the last few years. She even describes depression and loneliness as her close friends because she knows the effect they bring very well.

They come upon me all silent and menacing like Pinkerton Detectives, and they flank me – Depression on my left, Loneliness on my right. They don't need to show me their badges. I know these guys very well (Gilbert, 2006: 49).

She becomes to look too deeply into herself, see each flaw and every crack of her life. It shakes her belief if she deserves to be in a beautiful city in Italy after all she has done back in New York, destroying the people she loved. She questions herself if it is only her excuse that all the things she has done is because of her unhappiness. She begins to reanalyse if she actually runs away from her problem by travelling.

Then they frisk me. They empty my pockets of any joy I had been carrying here. Depression even confiscates my identity; but he always does that. Then

Loneliness starts interrogating me, which I dread because it always goes on for hours. He is polite but relentless, and he always trips me up eventually. He asks if I have any reason to be happy that I know of (Gilbert, 2006: 49).

Liz values her job as a writer so much that she does not want to take any medication as it will only kill her brain cell. Medication is the last choice she takes. She is forced to take medication when her unhappiness consumes her and push her to the edge where she attempts to suicide to end her sorrow.

The last thing I tried after about two years of fighting this sorrow was medication. The decision to go the route of “Vitamin P” happened after a night when I’d sat on the floor of my bedroom for many hours, trying very hard to talk myself out of cutting into my arm with a kitchen knife (Gilbert, 2006: 52-53).

Although the divorce is already settled, Liz is still unable to get rid of her unhappiness. The decision to end her marriage also has some emotional effects on her that cause another misery in her life because it means she would not have this security blanket to lean on. Her new title is divorcee and it always has a negative vibe in society. She is fully aware that the wound will leave mark on her forever.

Getting out of marriage is rough, though, and not just for the legal/financial complications or the massive lifestyle upheaval. It’s the emotional recoil that kills you, the shock of stepping off the track of conventional lifestyle and losing all the embracing comforts that keep so many people on that track forever (Gilbert, 2006: 99).

Her unhappiness leads her to her next destination, India, where she learns meditation. It is somewhat a good effect. She jumps on her first spiritual path, seeking happiness from the divinity. It is a tough journey for her to learn meditation where she has to give world pleasures that she had back in Italy. Emotionally, she has to learn to let go of her ego and trying not to control

everything. She faces her own self in meditation, all of her fears, depression and unhappiness all alone.

Happy thoughts make me happy, but – whoop! – how quickly I swing again into obsessive worry, blowing the mood; and then it's the remembrance of an angry moment and I start to get hot and pissed off all over again; and then my mind decides it might be a good time to start feeling sorry for itself, and loneliness follows promptly (Gilbert, 2006: 139).

According to excerpt below, Liz is aware that her unhappiness causes much distress to her and to the people around her. Unhappiness is venomous and it is contagious. Unhappiness makes everything in her life becomes negative.

Even in my own life, I can see exactly where my episodes of unhappiness have brought suffering or distress or (at the very last) inconvenience to those around me (Gilbert, 2006: 273).

Although unhappiness exactly brings many of negative effects, it also brings a few good effects which are become big thing. Besides leading her to a spiritual journey of seeking god, Liz also learns to make peace with herself that she does not need a new man to make her happy.

Well, I'm not praying for a new man, Wayan. The only thing I'm praying for these days is to have peace with myself (Gilbert, 2006: 276).

Have been drowning in unhappiness for a long time makes her realizes her worth. She tries to find a feeling of completeness within her without other people's validation. It means she does not need to have a mate in her life to be happy. She learns from the hard way if she wants to invite good things in life she has to be full and happy. She has to listen to her intuition and starts to love herself first. That is why refuses politely to have a relationship with a Brazilian man who lives in Bali when she was there. This is like what Socrates and Plato say about happiness depends on the "education of desire" whereby the soul learns how to

harmonize its desires, redirecting its gaze away from physical pleasures to the love of knowledge and virtue.

That as much as I might enjoy to have my body and heart folded and unfolded for a while in the expert hands of an expat lover, something else inside me put in a serious request that I donate the entirety of this year of travelling all to myself (Gilbert, 2006: 297).