

**WHITE SAVIORISM IN EMIRA'S LIFE IN KILEY REID'S  
*SUCH A FUN AGE***

**THESIS**



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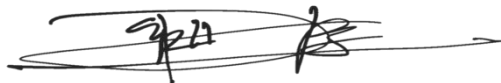
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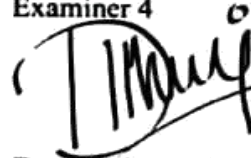
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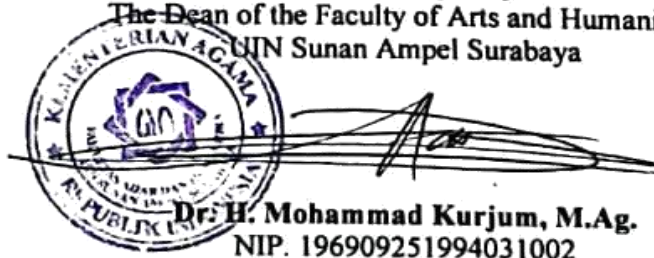
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## ABSTRACT

Rania, S. N. (2022). *White Saviorism in Emira's Life in Kiley Reid's Such A Fun Age*. English Department, UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya. Advisor: Sufi Ikrima Sa'adah, M.Hum.

Keywords: white saviorism, superiority, racism

This study aims to explain the white saviorism Emira, the black character in the story, experiences in Kiley Reid's *Such A Fun Age*. This study focuses on two research questions there are 1) How does the white saviorism happen in Emira's life in *Such A Fun Age*? and 2) How does the white saviorism affect Emira's life in *Such A Fun Age*?

This study used Delgado & Stefancic's critical race theory, focusing on the concept that racism is ordinary, not aberrational and white power's important purposes. Furthermore, this study used Freire's concept of white saviorism, consisting of fear of freedom and decision-making confusion. The qualitative methods were used in this study to collect and analyze the data to answer the research questions.

The researcher discovered that the white saviorism in Emira's life is represented by Alix's behaviors. Alix's orders to Emira without any concern for Emira's personal life reflect Delgado & Stenfancic's concept that racism is ordinary, not aberrational. Furthermore, Alix's certainty towards Emira to keep having a job as her babysitter reflects Delgado & Stenfancic's concept of white power's important purposes. This concept is also reflected in Alix's insistence on Emira to realize that Emira's boyfriend is not a good person, while actually, Alix seems to have a lingering feeling for him, who is also Alix's past boyfriend. Furthermore, this study discovered two significant impacts of white saviorism in Emira's life. Emira thinks that it will be difficult for her to get a job other than being a babysitter. Emira's fear of being free from Alix's family reflects Freire's concept of fear of freedom. Meanwhile, Emira's confusion in making decisions because Alix always makes ones for her reflects Freire's concept of decision-making confusion. The findings in this study indicate that white savior behaviors bring more harm than benefit because the behaviors seem to help black people but are actually discriminating.

## ABSTRAK

Rania, S. N. (2022). *Penyelamat Kulit Putih dalam Kehidupan Emira di Such A Fun Age oleh Kiley Reid*. Sastra Inggris, UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya. Dosen Pembimbing: Sufi Ikrima Sa'adah, M.Hum.

Kata Kunci: penyelamat kulit putih, superioritas, rasisme

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan perilaku penyelamat kulit putih yang dialami oleh Emira, karakter berkulit hitam dalam cerita tersebut, dalam novel *Such A Fun Age* oleh Kiley Reid. Penelitian ini berfokus pada dua pertanyaan-pertanyaan penelitian, yaitu 1) Bagaimana penyelamat kulit putih terjadi dalam kehidupan Emira di *Such A Fun Age*? dan 2) Bagaimana penyelamat kulit putih mempengaruhi kehidupan Emira di *Such A Fun Age*?

Penelitian ini menggunakan teori ras kritis Delgado & Stefancic, berfokus pada konsep bahwa rasisme adalah biasa, tidak menyimpang dan tujuan penting kekuasaan orang kulit putih. Selanjutnya, penelitian ini menggunakan konsep Freire terkait penyelamat kulit putih, yang terdiri dari ketakutan akan kebebasan dan kebingungan dalam pengambilan keputusan. Metode kualitatif digunakan dalam penelitian ini untuk mengumpulkan dan menganalisis data untuk menjawab pertanyaan-pertanyaan penelitian.

Peneliti menemukan bahwa penyelamat kulit putih dalam kehidupan Emira diwakili oleh perilaku Alix. Perintah Alix kepada Emira tanpa memedulikan kehidupan pribadi Emira mencerminkan konsep Delgado & Stenfancic bahwa rasisme itu biasa, bukan penyimpangan. Selanjutnya, kepastian Alix terhadap Emira untuk tetap memiliki pekerjaan sebagai babysitternya, yang mencerminkan konsep Delgado & Stenfancic tentang tujuan penting kekuatan orang kulit putih. Konsep ini juga tercermin dari desakan Alix pada Emira untuk menyadari bahwa pacar Emira bukanlah orang yang baik, padahal sebenarnya Alix sepertinya masih menyimpan perasaan padanya, yang juga mantan pacar Alix. Lebih lanjut, penelitian ini menemukan dua dampak signifikan dari penyelamat kulit putih dalam kehidupan Emira. Emira berpikir akan sulit baginya untuk mendapatkan pekerjaan selain menjadi babysitter. Ketakutan Emira untuk bebas dari keluarga Alix mencerminkan konsep Freire tentang ketakutan akan kebebasan. Sementara itu, kebingungan Emira dalam mengambil keputusan karena Alix selalu membuat keputusan untuknya, yang mencerminkan konsep Freire tentang kebingungan pengambilan keputusan. Hasil dalam penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa perilaku penyelamat kulit putih membawa lebih banyak kerugian daripada keuntungan karena perilaku-perilaku tersebut tampaknya membantu orang berkulit hitam tetapi sebenarnya itu adalah tindakan yang diskriminatif.

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study, the research problem, the significance of the study, the scope and limitations, and the research methods.

### 1.1 Background of the Study

White saviorism is a broad term that refers to the ideology of white people who believe they help Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), but for the wrong reason. White saviors frequently assume that they are aware of the needs of BIPOC (Raypole, 2021). They feel that protecting and promoting BIPOC's rights is their job due to the lack of resources, will, and intelligence to do so by BIPOC itself. White saviors consider themselves superior, whether they understand it or not. They migrate to make a difference, yet they may not know that their "different" may negatively influence BIPOC.

One of white saviorism is in white educators. Miller & Harris (2018) present that white supremacist attitudes and ideas are prevalent among white educators, and while some may assume they are the exception, they are not. Many white educators assert that they treat all kids equally. Many BIPOC students who white educators teach believe that there is an unspoken system of laws governing how white educators teach and interact with students of color, empowering the instructor while marginalizing the students of color.

The white savior's presence has a huge impact on BIPOC's life. White saviorism, based on Murphy's (2021), has a negative impact on the health and

the well-being of BIPOC people. Furthermore, white saviorism, according to Kuja (2019), has the effect of eliminating economically disadvantaged BIPOC agencies while also contributing to a shame-based identity and a sense of powerlessness. Furthermore, white saviorism promotes poverty pornography, which is common in many fundraising campaigns that objectify people to elicit emotional responses and, as a result, donations. It depicts them as helpless victims incapable of assisting themselves, incapable objects who passively await rescue. BIPOC finally questions and interrupts the concept that white people are valued more equally or more highly than BIPOC based on their experience and knowledge. There is no denying a disparity between white people and BIPOC in other circumstances. BIPOC are frequently subjected to “special” treatment, which white people often administer with ulterior purposes.

Several literary works carry the concept of racism in which white saviorism exists. One of the novels exploring racism and white saviorism is Kiley Reid’s *Such A Fun Age*, a debut book published in 2019. The book won the Goodreads Choice Awards for Best Debut Novel in 2020 and the Audie Award for Fiction in 2021. *Such A Fun Age* tells about Emira, a young black woman in her mid-twenties and part-time babysitter. Emira works for a white woman, Alix, an influencer in her mid-thirties and a mother to baby Catherine and two-year-old Briar. Throughout the story, Alix conducts many behaviors that seem to help Emira. Yet, those attitudes are actually discriminative acts. Those are the white saviorism that the researcher intends to discuss in this study.

The plot revolves around the night Emira is apprehended with Briar at a grocery store, where she is suspected of kidnapping the child. Then, the two women's relationship twists and turns as many uncomfortable truths are revealed.

The researcher is interested in researching how white people act as white saviors, even though they are not. In this case, the researcher took the initiative by investigating how the white saviorism happens in Emira's life in *Such A Fun Age* and the impacts on Emira's life. It is evident in Emira's character's portrayal of a BIPOC who suffers as long as she obtains various forms of assistance from white people. The researcher believes that white saviorism is necessary to discuss to help BIPOC be aware that not every help they receive from white people is intentionally good. As a result, the researcher chose Kiley Reid's novel *Such A Fun Age* to investigate the white saviorism in Emira's life.

Furthermore, to increase the quality of this thesis, the researcher looked for various research that is related. Several discussions have discussed *Such A Fun Age*, addressing the issue of social identity (Zakrisson, 2020), health and life skills (Johannessen, 2021), and white fragility (Dücker, 2022). Although several studies have discussed *Such A Fun Age*, none addresses how the white saviorism happens in Emira's life and the impacts of the white saviorism in Emira's life. Thus, the researcher took this initiative by examining the forms and effects of the white saviorism on Emira's life in *Such A Fun Age*.

## **1.2 Problem of the Study**

1. How does the white saviorism happen in Emira's life in *Such A Fun Age*?
2. How does the white saviorism affect Emira's life in *Such A Fun Age*?

### **1.3 Significance of the Study**

This study aims to expand readers' perspectives on white saviorism issues. By reading this study, the readers are expected to be able to add research studies related to white saviorism as a reference for the academic community. Moreover, the readers are also expected to make people aware that not every help BIPOC receives from white people is internationally good. This study also aims to contribute to the literature, specifically for the English Department of UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya's students. It may be the sources of other researchers who are working on a project similar to theirs.

### **1.4 Scope and Limitation of the Study**

To find the answers to the problems of the study, the scope of the study is the form of white saviorism exhibited by the white character and the effects of white saviorism on the black character. The limit of the study is the researcher focuses on the white character named Alix, who performs white saviorism towards Emira, a black woman, in *Such A Fun Age*.

### **1.5 Research Methods**

This sub-section presents an important procedure for conducting this research. It consists of research design, data source, data collection, and data analysis.

#### **1.5.1 Research Design**

In this study, the researcher used a qualitative method to help get in-depth data and a broad understanding of this research's data. Qualitative methods seek an in-depth understanding of social phenomena in their natural setting (University

of Texas Arlington, 2022). Based on Bhandari (2020), the qualitative methods entail gathering and evaluating non-numerical data (e.g., text, video, or audio) to comprehend thoughts, opinions, or experiences. It can be utilized to gain in-depth insights into a topic or to generate fresh research ideas.

### **1.5.2 Data Source**

This study's data sources are divided into primary and secondary data. The researcher used the novel *Such A Fun Age* by Kiley Reid as the primary data source. The researcher used books, articles, and some previous research related to this research topic for the secondary data about everything related to the novel, including the theory.

### **1.5.3 Data Collection**

The researcher took the following steps to collect the data:

1. The researcher read the novel at least twice to gain understanding and decide the issue to discuss.
2. The researcher created a data table for each quotation to make it easier to interpret.
3. The researcher collected data in quotations related to white saviorism.
4. The researcher classified data that has been previously collected based on how the white saviorism happens in Emira's life and the effects of the white saviorism on Emira's life.
5. The researcher also collected data from books, articles, and some previous research related to this research topic.

#### **1.5.4 Data Analysis**

The researcher took the following steps to analyze the data:

1. The researcher divided the discussion into two: the forms of the white saviorism that happens in Emira's life and the effects of the white saviorism on Emira's life.
2. The researcher explained how white saviorism happens in Emira's life based on the critical race theory by Delgado and Stefancic (2017).
3. The researcher described the effects of white saviorism on Emira's life based on the impact of white saviorism by Freire (2014).
4. The researcher drew the conclusion.



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## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

This chapter presents several theories that serve as the basis of this research and support the background of this research related to white saviorism.

#### **2.1 Theoretical Framework**

Specifically, this sub-chapter aims to convey and highlight the theories used in the analysis of this research. The theoretical framework will help understand the theories, including the fundamental concepts and their work in literary analysis.

This thesis uses U.S. multiculturalism as a general concept or discourse that underpins all of the thesis's discussions. The researcher believes that U.S. multiculturalism and African American literary criticism are appropriate for this research because this research deals with white saviorism in the modern era. This thesis uses the concept of white saviorism by Cole (2012), Reed (2018) & Freire (2014) to analyze the effects of white saviorism. Meanwhile, Delgado & Stefancic's (2017) critical race theory helps to explore forms of white saviorism in Emira's life in the novel.

##### **2.1.1 U.S. Multiculturalism**

U.S. multiculturalism is a theory that society should embrace diversity, distinction, and cultural pluralism in a national sense, including race, tribes, ethnicity, faith, and other factors. In the context of the United States, it addresses



socioeconomic class, gender, sex, race, religion, and disabled people (Owen, 2005). As a result, U.S. multiculturalism is a perspective on the diversity of life in the United States. U.S. multiculturalism emphasizes the acceptance of diversity and plurality as the primary reality in people's lives in terms of values, socio-cultural systems, and so on.

Since the 1960s, when the United States began to embrace multiculturalism, how people conceive of social systems has shifted tremendously. Desegregation of schools, the passage of new anti-discrimination legislation, and the repeal of old anti-discrimination regulations have opened doors for previously shut-out persons (Dobie, 2011). The growth of valued traditions that differ from the dominant group has improved self-esteem and confirmed distinct identities in such disenfranchised communities. As a result, cultural wealth that has been overlooked or scorned has become a source of concern for those who own it and the general public.

The arts, crafts, rituals, and religions of American Indians, Hispanics, African Americans, and other historically marginalized groups rekindle interest in the many threads that make up American civilization (Dobie, 2011). It allows people to conduct their lives without being bound by a particular point of view.

African-American cultures, which have faced problems since they arrived in the New World, may have received more attention than others. Because of the freedom gained after civilization in the United States, African American culture has a lot of potentials to expand.

In this study, the researcher used U.S. multiculturalism as a general theory because it covers the discussion of African-American literature. Therefore, the researcher argues that it is helpful to investigate Emira's experiences of white saviorism in the novel *Such A Fun Age* by Kiley Reid.

### **2.1.1.1 African American Literature**

There have been ups and downs in the development of African American literature. According to history, although African American literature dates from their first settlement in North America, those writers who investigated their traditions and genres took a long time to get recognition from the mainstream (Dobie, 2011). However, during the slave period and the period dedicated to readjustment and improvement, the theme of freedom was prevalent in the work of other African Americans. It would take decades for black writers to reclaim their place in mainstream American culture.

In the 1960s, black writers wrote more explicitly about their experiences as African Americans. Based on Dobie (2011), black writers stopped seeking white approval for their work and wrote specifically for black audiences. Over the last several decades, black writers have achieved incredible success, with far too many prize-winning poets, essayists, playwrights, and fiction writers. In another sense, some of the success black writers have had in writing about their lives as African Americans have helped them gain recognition for their work.

Analytical methods considered black artists' goals and the forms and styles in which they worked (Dobie, 2011). In their writings, black writers aim to emphasize where they have a characteristic. Readers who could comprehend the

forms and techniques of black artists and evaluate their works properly, recognizing their distinctiveness while also recognizing similarities and differences with literature from other cultures, where required. The black aesthetic, it might be argued, is concerned with the materials used by its artists, the goal of their work, and how they execute it.

The material for black artists is black history, unlike any other group in the United States. As a result, a dual identity emerges, one that both belongs to and does not belong to America, one that shares the American experience but is denied it (Dobie, 2011). The sensation of belonging and separation produces material that no other American group can match. It necessitates that African American literature is recognized as such rather than as a replica of other works.

In this study, the researcher also used African American literature as an umbrella theory to investigate Emira's experiences of white saviorism in the novel *Such A Fun Age* by Kiley Reid.

### **2.1.2 White Saviorism**

White saviorism, also known as the white savior complex, is a broad term that refers to white people's belief that they are assisting Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) because BIPOC cannot save themselves (Cole, 2012). Yet, in this study, the BIPOC is represented by a black female character in Kiley Reid's *Such A Fun Age*. White saviorism, according to Reed (2018), is defined as white people who profit from white privilege seeking to aid those in underprivileged communities for their personal advantage rather than for the benefit of the communities. It is a common misconception that those who profit

from white privilege want to aid others, but they have a different motive for their personal benefit rather than BIPOC.

In some ways, white saviorism has had a negative impact rather than a positive impact. Freire (2014) claims that the unfortunate and underdeveloped population is denied the chance to save themselves. Any attempt to weaken the oppressors' power almost always manifests as false kindness and deference to the oppressed's vulnerability. To make themselves feel better, white people somehow wanted to save the unfortunate BIPOC.

#### **2.1.2.1 Fear of Freedom**

Many of the oppressed, including BIPOC, according to Freire (2014), have a "fear of freedom." He claims, however, that this fear is a fear of the risks that come with freedom rather than freedom itself. The problem of how we define our identity as human beings are identified by Freire (2014) as "humankind's central problem." Despite the fact that everyone strives for this affirmation, it is constantly hampered by a system that exploits the oppressed and perpetrates violence against them.

Furthermore, Freire (2014) claims that oppressed people can reclaim their humanity through struggle. Freire (2014) also mentions how the oppressor's and oppressed's consciousnesses are affected. The oppressor views freedom as a threat and treats people as possessions; oppressed people become estranged from one another and begin to see their oppressors as good. There are two stages to getting started: reflecting on attitudes and then taking action to change them.

### 2.1.2.2 Decision-Making Confusion

A “humankind’s central problem” approach to how we view ourselves as human beings is described by Freire (2014). Liberation is directly linked to human identity, while oppression is connected to a shattered sense of self. There is a perpetual battle between individuals trying to be themselves and those who deliberately oppose them. The oppressor prevents man from achieving his inherent desires in life.

Only outside the repressive system that keeps them in power can an oppressor assert their humanity. In this perspective, Freire (2014) claims that control is a form of violence that paralyzes human life. Because the oppressor dominates the oppressed’s life, they cannot do what they desire. As a result, oppressed individuals frequently struggle to make decisions in their daily lives.

The negative impacts of white saviorism are used as a theoretical foundation in analyzing the impact of white saviorism on Emira’s life in the novel *Such A Fun Age* by Kiley Reid to meet the needs of this study.

### 2.1.3 Critical Race Theory

Critical race theory (CRT) is an academic movement in the United States of scholars and civil rights activists. They seek to respond to the idea that the United States has become a colorblind society where racial inequality and discrimination no longer exist (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). CRT investigates racial and racism-related social, cultural, and legal issues. CRT has inspired various other sub-fields, one of which is the study of critical whiteness.

CRT began as a legal movement but has quickly expanded beyond that discipline. As Delgado and Stefancic (2017) mention, many educators today identify themselves as critical race theorists, applying CRT concepts to disciplinary issues and school hierarchies, tracking, curriculum and history debates, and I.Q. and achievement tests. Critical race theorists devised voting strategies, which political scientists consider. CRT is frequently taught in ethnic studies courses, and the American studies department teaches critical white studies material developed by CRT authors. CRT, unlike some academic disciplines, has an activist component.

People usually form different groups based on their financial or economic status, gender, ethnicity, and social status (Delgado and Stefancic, 2017). White people are regarded as positive and innocent by most of the population. People of color, on the other hand, are stereotyped as arrogant and vicious. Minority groups frequently face discrimination due to their skin color and have become a common enemy for white people. As people are born into backward groups, they are fought and humiliated. Critical race theory creates a societal framework that focuses on racial issues and how racial action is deeply embedded in America (Parker and Lynn, 2002).

According to Delgado and Stefancic (2017), the societal framework that critical race theory creates includes the following basic tenets:

### **2.1.3.1 Racism is Ordinary, Not Aberrational**

The first basic tenet of the societal framework on racial issues is racism is ordinary, not aberrational. Based on Delgado & Stefancic (2017), “Everyday

racism is a common, ordinary experience for the colored in this country.

Ordinariness itself means that racism is difficult to cure or address.” The racism that happens to people of color can occur in any way, verbally and non-verbally, anytime and anywhere. Even racism can happen in everyday life because it is considered a common thing for white people.

### **2.1.3.2 White Power’s Important Purposes**

The second basic tenet in critical race theory is the important purposes of white power. According to Delgado & Stefancic (2017), white people’s power system is based on their important psychological and material goals for their interests as the dominant group. This second basic tenet has two characteristics. The first characteristic concerns the reasonableness of racism, as racism is not considered to be recognized. White people believe equality is achieved by emphasizing equal treatment of people of color in all fields. As a result, this equity can only address the most egregious forms of discrimination and racism.

The second characteristic is material determinism. Material determinism exists because racism advances the interests of the white elite (materially) and white working-class (psychically). Most societies have little incentive to eradicate it. Many white people hire people of color to serve their interests and desires rather than assist people of color.

## **2.2 Review of Previous Studies**

An undergraduate thesis by Zakrisson (2020) investigated the social identities of the main characters in *Such A Fun Age*, Emira and Alix. The findings of the



study are that Emira is the most disadvantaged as a black working-class woman, but she has the strongest connection to herself and her social identity. Meanwhile, Alix's efforts to erase her origins by separating herself from individuals like her eventually leave her alone in terms of socially connected and validated identities. Then, just as Emira cannot be aware of her blackness and its drawbacks in a society that prizes whiteness, Alix must be aware of her whiteness and its advantages.

A master thesis by Johannessen (2021) discussed the health and life skills in *Such A Fun Age*. The results of the study indicated that Emira's experiences with career indecision and difficulty deciding what she wants to do with her life. In addition, Alix's attitude toward systemic racism and Kelley's attitude toward using racial slurs indicate correlations with cultures that clash and has ambiguous characters that might be difficult to empathize with firsthand.

A journal article by Dücker (2022) examined white fragility in *Such A Fun Age*. According to the research, Emira's story is influenced and facilitated by the narratives of Alix Chamberlain and Kelley Copeland. Their stories are connected and reflect both characters' incapacity to see past their white innocence, missing to take responsibility on several occasions. Furthermore, the colorblind mindset is maintained because neither Alix nor Kelley chooses to acknowledge and overcome their white fragility. Emira is unable to break free from the ideological cage imposed on her by her mammified occupation as a Black female worker for a white household.



The researcher discovered similarities and differences between this research and the previous studies mentioned above. The researchers found that the data came from the same novel, Kiley Reid's *Such a Fun Age*, which discussed the issue of social identity, health and life skills, and white fragility. For the difference, no one has investigated the forms and effects of white saviorism by Alix to Emira as the key characters in *Such A Fun Age* in the previous studies. As a result, this research examines how white saviorism occurs in Emira's life and how white saviorism affects Emira's life in *Such A Fun Age*.



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S U R A B A Y A

## CHAPTER III

### ANALYSIS

In this chapter, the researcher answers the problems previously stated in chapter one. The first part portrays the white saviorism that happens in Emira's life. Meanwhile, the second part examines the effects of white saviorism on Emira's life.

#### **3.1 The White Saviorism Happens in Emira's Life**

The white saviorism in Emira's life is present in Emira's relationship with Alix. Alix is Emira's white employer. During Emira's work as the babysitter for Alix's daughter, Alix shows many behaviors that express her white saviorism. The analysis of Alix's white saviorism is conducted using Delgado & Stefancic's (2017) concept, including the White's view that racism is ordinary, not aberrational, and White power's important purposes.

##### **3.1.1 Alix's Orders to Emira without Any Concern for Emira's Personal Life**

Emira is a college-graduated black woman who is reliable because she understands sign language and is able to type 125 words per minute. She is the first person in her family to graduate from college. After graduating from college, Emira could not find a job until Alix offered her to be the babysitter for Alix's child, Briar. Emira's meeting with Alix began when Alix was looking for a babysitter for her daughter, Briar. They met at Alix's house, and at that time, Briar spoke to Emira. Alix offered Emira a babysitting job, although she knew that Emira was a graduate and a pro. Alix's attitude toward offering Emira a job

sounded good, but when Alix gave her a job as a babysitter, it aroused suspicion. Given that Alix is in the process of writing a book, Alix could have offered Emira to be her secretary, a position that closely fits Emira's background education. Instead, Alix offered Emira to be her child's babysitter. Knowing Emira is a black woman, Alix's attitude in offering Emira this job can be said to be racial discrimination. Yet, Alix thought it was common to offer a black person a babysitting job. Thus, Alix's attitude reflects Delgado & Stefancic's (2017) concept that racism is ordinary, not aberrational.

Alix's other behaviors representing the view that racism is ordinary, not aberrational, are evident when Alix can easily call Emira late at night just to babysit her child. Alix does not seem to care that Emira also has her life outside the babysitting world.

“Is there any way you can take Briar to the grocery store for a bit?” Mrs. Chamberlain said. “I’m so sorry to call. I know it’s late.”

It was almost astonishing that Emira's daily babysitting job (a place of pricey onesies, colorful stacking toys, baby wipes, and sectioned dinner plates) could interrupt her current nighttime state (loud music, bodycon dresses, lip liner, and red Solo cups). But here was Mrs. Chamberlain, at 10:51 p.m., waiting for Emira to say yes. (Reid, 2019, p. 1)

The quote above shows how easily Alix, or Mrs. Chamberlain, called Emira at almost midnight time to come and take her child to the grocery store. Alix did not seem to care that Emira was having fun at her friend's birthday party. She expected Emira to say yes no matter what Emira was doing at that time.

Alix's request might sound ordinary since Emira indeed works for her. However, asking someone to work outside the working hours is considered abusive. Alix knew that Emira needed the cash, so she might always be willing to

come anytime Alix needed her to babysit the child. Thus, Alix made use of Emira's situation and offered her the payment that Emira could not say no to.

On the surface, Alix might seem to help Emira solve Emira's financial needs by paying even for the cabs. However, her intention might sound questionable. Supposed that Emira was a white woman, would Alix still call late at night just to make Emira go to the grocery store with the baby? Alix could ask Emira to work even late at night might be because Emira was black. Thus, Alix could easily order around as much as she likes.

Not only that, Alix took Emira's condition lightly. Alix easily messed up Emira's personal schedule and did not care about Emira's condition, who was wearing a party outfit for Briar's babysitting at that time. "Mrs. Chamberlain said, ... and then up close, "Emira, I don't care what you look like. I'll pay for your cab here and your cab home." (Reid, 2019, p. 2). The quote shows that Mrs. Chamberlain or Alix purposely asked Emira to come to work to babysit Briar, not caring about the clothes Emira was wearing at that time. Alix did not care about Emira's condition. Alix wanted her request to be granted right then and there.

Alix's request to her employee, as an employer, appears to be common. However, disregarding the employee's condition and being forced to work at that time is also considered disrespectful. Alix knows Emira wants extra money for her work, so Alix tells Emira to work with her even though it is not what she promised before. Alix took advantage of Emira's situation by offering to pay the cab fare for Emira so that Emira could not immediately refuse Alix's request.

Alix may appear to assist Emira in providing a solution to Emira's problem, knowing that Emira will consider her request. It, however, appears suspicious. If Emira were a white woman, would Alix still tell her to work hours other than the work agreement under any circumstances? Would Alix treat Emira the same way if she were a white woman, regardless of her circumstances or life? Since Emira is black, Alix could ask her to work in whatever condition Emira was in at the time. Alix is unconcerned about Emira's personal life or schedule; she still sends Emira to work even though Emira is attending a personal schedule. As a result, Alix could easily order as much as she wanted, regardless of Emira's current condition.

Furthermore, Alix often felt disgusted shortly after doing her fake good deed. It is evidenced when Alix offers Emira a hug. Alix felt a little disgusted as she hugged Emira when she offered Emira's attention in the form of a hug earlier.

“This promptly felt like an ignorant response. Alix didn't want this to be their first hug, but she had offered and she had to commit. In her arms, Emira smelled like body butters, burnt hair, nail polish, and cheap perfume.” (Reid, 2019, p. 38).

The quote shows that Alix was reluctant to hug Emira because of Emira's smell which Alix did not think smelled refreshing. Alix persisted in hugging Emira, although she was secretly disgusted even though she was the one who initially offered the hug to Emira. Alix did not really like Emira, her daughter's babysitter.

Alix's actions when she offered and hugged Emira as a form of concern for Emira looked like the employer and employee were getting along in general. However, thinking that the employee smells like that rather than expressing it politely sounds unethical. Alix knew that Emira needed attention to what had

happened to her before so that she might always be willing to need positive encouragement from her employer. Thus, Alix made use of Emira's situation and offered her the attention that Emira felt that Emira had strong support from her employer.

On the surface, Alix appears to be assisting Emira in resolving her mental suffering. Her intentions, however, may appear dubious. If Emira were a white babysitter, would Alix think the same way even when they hugged and were happy? What made Alix think what she'd done to Emira was stupid? Is it because Emira is a woman of color that Alix believes Emira stinks because Emira is not a white woman? Alix thought Emira smelled bad because she was not like other white women. As a result, Alix is free to believe whatever she wants, including that only white people smell good.

Alix's attitude toward Emira, her black employee, assumes that she can hire Emira whenever she wants. It is backed up by Kelley's remarks about Alix's actions against black people who had contact with her. Alix feels that it is normal for her to hire black people only as maids, or else she reports black people to the police on a preposterous charge since she thinks white people have a higher position than black people.

"You're not the first black woman Alex has been hired to work for her family, and you probably won't be the last. ... It was obvious what would happen, but she tried to make it seem like she was protecting the black housekeeper her family employed. But looking back, it was super creepy. Alex hung all over this woman and acted like they were best friends. This woman even did her hair before school. Alex completely gets off on either having black people work for her or calling the cops on them. I can't . . . Emira, you can't be one of her people." (Reid, 2019, p. 142).

The quote above shows that Alix often looks down on black people. She thought that black people should work with her, or she would call the cops on charges of perfunctory.

Hiring black maids appeared to be a non-issue. However, this is questionable when Alix's views on black people are limited to their whereabouts and whether or not they are only worthy of being treated as employees, or whether or not she will report black people to the police for careless accusations. Alix hires black people, including Emira, and reporting black people to the police is ordinary behavior for Alix. That way, Alix feels that white people have a higher position than black people.

The way Alix ordered Emira around without any concern for Emira's personal life might indicate that as a white woman, Alix still feels superior to Emira. This act is considered racism, but Alix sees it as something ordinary. Thus, Alix's behavior reflects what Delgado & Stefancic argue: white people see racism as ordinary, not aberrational.

### **3.1.2 Alix's Certainty towards Emira to Keeps Having a Job as Her Babysitter**

The analysis of this part is based on Delgado & Stefancic's (2017) concept of white power's important purposes. It is a societal framework that indicates that white people's needs should be prioritized over those of Black people. Alix's behaviors represent White power's important purpose is obvious when Alix's family made a mistake by being racist toward Black people, which led to several



people coming to her house and throwing eggs at her windows. Knowing this, Alix tries to portray her family in a positive light to Black people.

"And when Emira arrived fifteen minutes later ..., Alix handed Briar's little wrist toward her thinking, *Wait a second, who is this person? Oh God . . . does she know what Peter said?* All at once, it was somehow much worse to think of Emira knowing what Peter had said, rather than the hopeful first female president of the United States. Alix scooped up the glass with a hand towel in the glaring light from the chandelier. In between long, sad strokes, she told herself to wake the fuck up. ...To get to know Emira Tucker." (Reid, 2019, p. 26).

The quote above shows that after what happened to Alix due to her family's racism, she resolves to befriend her black babysitter. Alix is initially reluctant to be close to Emira because she is a black woman and her employee and only treats her arbitrarily. She then tries to approach her so that she can repair her damaged image related to the racism faced by her family. She persuades herself to be close to Emira so that she and her family can develop a positive image in the eyes of others by learning more and doing good for Emira as a black woman who works for her.

Alix's wish to be near Emira sounded appealing. However, this is not without suspicion. Knowing that her family had just offended others by being racist in front of many people, Alix and her family just kept silent. Knowing that Alix needed a good image in the eyes of many people because she wanted to maintain her image as a virtuous influencer, and she was about to publish her book. Alix, who initially treats Emira lightly because of Emira's job as her babysitter, becomes flustered and tries to use Emira to improve her good image with black



people. That way, Alix can create a good image in public that she is not racist, even towards Emira, her black employee.

Alix tries to keep Emira working for her as she pleases. Alix wants Emira to keep babysitting Briar, Alix's daughter. Alix's intention is proven when Alix talks with her friends about the incident that Emira experienced.

“... Briar adores her and I feel like I'm gonna lose her because of some stupid fucking grocery store cop. ... But the thought of losing her forever is making me physically ill. I'll never be able to finish this book without her.” (Reid, 2019, p. 33).

The quote shows how Alix does not want to lose her babysitter because her daughter loves Emira, and she would never finish her book without Emira. On the surface, Alix may appear to be very attached to Emira. Alix's intentions, however, may appear dubious. Is Alix afraid of losing Emira due to her affectionate feeling, or is she afraid she cannot finish her book since she has to take care of her kid without a babysitter? The quote above might cause such a question since Alix does not seem to worry about Emira's condition after the incident. She just stated her fear of not having Emira as the babysitter.

Alix's attention might sound like an employer's concern for their employees. However, holding people to work with her indefinitely is not a commendable act. After what happened to Emira, instead of thinking about Emira's condition, Alix was worried about the book she had not finished, especially if Emira quit her job. Thus, Alix used Emira's situation and tried various efforts to keep Emira working with her.

Alix tries to keep Emira working for her by giving Emira fake attention. Alix is only following the words of her friends. “This time she answered, and Alix

delivered all the things her friends had suggested, mentally checking off each point.” (Reid, 2019, p. 35). The quote shows that Alix checked Emira’s condition because of suggestions from her friends. Alix did not really pay attention to Emira based on the humanity that was in her.

Besides that, Alix wants to show Emira that she really looks like an employer who cares about her employee. Alix suddenly checked up on Emira, which she had never done before.

“No, you’re not late!” Alix assured her. “The party’s still at noon, or eleven forty-five, if you can come early . . . but you don’t have to, but I’d love for you to come. We’d love for you to come. But it’s up to you.”

“No, I’ll be there,” Emira said. “I’m coming, don’t worry.”

“No, Emira, I wasn’t checking up on you. I mean ... I’m checking on you,” Alix struggled. “But just to see how you are. But okay. I’ll see you at noon? Or eleven forty-five?” (Reid, 2019, p. 36).

The sentence above depicts Alix attempting to appear concerned about Emira. Alix wants Emira to believe that she cares about her, that she is checking on Emira’s health after Emira got into difficulties at the grocery store with Briar earlier, till she contacts Emira.

Alix’s calling Emira the day after the incident at the grocery store sounded heartwarming. It, however, presents suspicion. Alix either wanted to know Emira’s condition, or she just wanted to ensure that Emira would not come late to help prepare Briar’s birthday party. In the quote above, Alix said it was up to Emira whether she wanted to go or when. However, Alix kept repeating the time ‘eleven forty-five’ and emphasizing that she would love Emira to come. This situation implies that Alix does not exactly want to know Emira’s well-being. It is

just that Alix intends to ensure that Emira will always be ready to attend to Alix's needs, whatever situation Emira is in.

The fake attention that Alix showed to Emira was also seen when Alix tried to show her hidden sympathy and other forms of support for Emira. Alix is trying hard to appear to be fighting for Emira's rights, with the intention that Emira remains comfortable with her so that Emira does not leave her job as Briar's babysitter.

“Alix crossed her ankles and arms as she stood. “I'm not going to even pretend to know what you're feeling right now or how you felt last night because I never truly will, but I just want to extend my support in whatever way you need it. If that's a lawyer or ... a civil action suit ... or ...” (Reid, 2019, p. 38).

The quote shows that Alix is trying to show her concern for Emira. She also showed concern so that Emira felt Alix was a good employer. Alix tried to look good in front of Emira.

Alix caring might seem like a good employer who gives all the support she offers to her employees. However, this creates suspicion. Alix knew that Emira wanted help, so Emira was touched and felt that Alix was the ideal employer for her, so she didn't have to leave her job as Briar's babysitter. Thus, Alix made use of Emira's situation and offered her some support and assistance that she could do as an employer and a White woman.

Alix's behavior of showing fake sympathy was shown to Emira when she made small talk about making an effort to look good in Emira's eyes. Alix tries to appear as a good employer to Emira. “Alix nodded. “And I completely respect that. We just want you to know how sorry we are and --” (Reid, 2019, p. 38).

Based on the quote, it can be seen that Alix is trying hard to appear to be fighting for Emira's rights, with the intention that Emira remains comfortable with her so that Emira does not leave her job as Briar's babysitter.

Alix may appear to be a very caring person, especially in light of Emira's problems. When Emira's problems arise, Alix gives her the attention she believes she requires. However, Alix's action seems suspicious. Alix was aware that Emira needed attention to the problems she was experiencing, and knowing this made Emira feel that Alix cared more about her as Alix's employee, and Emira felt at ease with Alix. Alix took advantage of Emira's situation and approached her as an employer.

Alix appears to be assisting Emira in solving her problem. Her motives, on the other hand, may appear dubious. Does Alix help Emira because of her good conscience of equality or because she sees Emira as a woman of color who needs help from white superiority? Alix appears to consider herself superior because she is a white woman and the employer of Emira, a black woman. She believed she could treat Emira, a black woman who became her employee, fairly.

Alix's attention to keeping Emira as her babysitter can also be seen when she tries to ask questions, wanting to know Emira's personal information. Alix wants to find a loophole in Emira's life.

“Since that night, Mrs. Chamberlain started returning home at six forty-five, sitting down across from Emira, and referencing conversations that they'd never had. “Emira, remind me what you majored in?” “Tell me where you live again?” “Did you say that you had any allergies?” The timing couldn't have been worse. These were the questions you asked at the beginning, and not at what Emira was trying to make the end.” (Reid, 2019, p. 44).

From the quote, Alix tries to get to know Emira, like people in general, not as a babysitter. Alix tries to delve into Emira's personal life so that Alix knows the weak side or what problems Emira is facing.

Alix may appear to be an employer who wishes to blend in with her employee. She asked questions she should have asked when Emira had just started babysitting Briar. This situation, however, presents concerns. Alix is aware that Emira is very private about her personal life, and she is also aware that Emira has troubles. Alix forced her to open up to her as if she had made Emira her friend. Knowing this helped Emira feel at ease, and she opened up about her personal life to Alix. Alix learned things about Emira's life in this manner, seeking alarming gaps or troubles in Emira.

Alix appears to want to make Emira her friend and her employee. Her motivations, on the other hand, may appear questionable. Why did Alix ask Emira such basic questions, which should have been asked when Emira had only recently been Briar's babysitter? Alix, did she genuinely want to be close because she was fascinated with Emira's life or troubles all this time? Alix appears to be a white woman who wishes to be close to and prosperous with Emira. She imagined she could give Emira the attention she had never received as a black woman.

Alix's sense of superiority shown to Emira is also seen when trying to give Emira more rights to her work. Alix seemed to show her power as an employer to Emira.

“But for a part-time gig, the money was decent, making it difficult to get excited about potential jobs that were offered less money and zero Briar. Every other Friday, Alix handed Emira an envelope with six hundred seventy-two dollars inside.” (Reid, 2019, p. 44).

The quote above shows that Alix gave Emira some money. Alix put the money in the envelope to provide an additional two weeks' salary as a bonus for some difficult times at the store.

Alix's help with giving Emira some extra money might raise suspicions. Alix knew that Emira wanted a lot of money from her job, so Emira felt it would be enough if she worked for Alix in the future. Thus, Alix made use of Emira's situation and gave her some extra money to keep Emira so that Emira would not quit her job.

Outwardly, Alix might seem to help Emira solve Emira's financial situation. Her motives, on the other hand, may appear dubious. Was the reason really because of Emira's financial need or because Alix wanted Emira to think highly of her employer for giving her the extra money? Alix is seen giving her extra cash so she can continue to be Briar's babysitter. That way, Emira can continue to babysit Briar.

Alix's fake kindness is seen when Alix compliments Emira. Alix wants to be seen as an employer who appreciates Emira's hard work. "This is for the past two weeks, Briar's birthday, and the awful night when you completely saved us. Thank you for everything. We love having you and we're here for you." (Reid, 2019, p.44). The quote shows that Alix wants Emira to know that Alix is grateful to Emira for showing her employer's care for her babysitter. Alix wants Emira to feel the care she gives to Emira as a way to keep Emira by her side as the babysitter of Briar, her child.

Alix's efforts in praising Emira make her look like an excellent employer. Alix did something similar earlier, which raises suspicions. Alix was well aware that Emira required emotional support for her profession. Alix compliments Emira, making her feel appreciated for being Briar's babysitter. As a result, Alix made Emira believe that Alix is an excellent employer who cherishes her employee.

Alix may appear to appreciate Emira's efforts on the surface. Emira had been working with Alix for a while, yet, it was just then that Alix complimented her and expressed gratitude for her efforts. Alix's attitude, thus, raises a question. Is Alix praising Emira because Alix wants to be known as a white boss who values colored employees? Alix is shown providing credit to Emira so that Emira can continue to stay with Alix because she believes Alix will appreciate her efforts as Briar's babysitter.

Given Alix's goal of wanting to keep Emira as her child's babysitter, Alix tries to become closer to Emira. Alix tried to reveal personal things about Emira.

"In the past few weeks, Alix had developed what she knew was an awful and invasive habit of returning home, closing the door quietly behind her, bending at the hip, and looking at Emira's phone. The small entryway was protected by another door that entered into the main foyer, which made Alix feel as though she wasn't quite at home, and that she wasn't exactly looking through the phone." (Reid, 2019, p. 57).

From the quote above, it can be seen that Alix had secretly checked on Emira's handphone to find out what her babysitter was doing or was interested in. Alix violated Emira's privacy. She thought she would get to know Emira better by snooping on her handphone. Alix's actions are not correct. After all, Alix was just an employer. She is not allowed to open her employee's handphone, the contents



of which are private. Alix knew that Emira rarely showed her personal life, so Alix felt that it would be okay if she opened Emira's handphone. Thus, Alix used this situation to further explore Emira's personal life so she could be closer to Emira.

Alix might want to be close to Emira, so she knows more about her child's babysitter. However, her intention sounds questionable. Alix secretly checked on Emira's cellphone might be because she felt suspicious of Emira or that she felt superior, so she had the right to violate Emira's privacy. If Alix wanted to know Emira more, she might easily have a relaxed conversation with her employee. Alix's snooping on Emira's cellphone indicated her suspicion rather than her want to be closer to Emira.

Alix's efforts can be seen in how she intends to make Emira talk about her personal life. Alix wants Emira to trust her as her employer so that she can get closer to Emira and know the bad loopholes or problems Emira is facing. "She wanted to cross a threshold where Emira would offer up information on her own, and more importantly, trust Alix to keep it." (Reid, 2019, p. 58). The quote shows Alix wants to know more about Emira. Alix wanted Emira to believe her. Alix intends to make Emira tell her about Emira's personal life, so Emira trusts Alix by accident.

Alix may want to be close to Emira. Therefore she is interested in learning more about her babysitter's life, including her love life. Alix's desire for her and Emira to be closer appears optimistic because an employer wants to be closer to her employee regardless of job or racial differences. On the other hand, Alix's



behavior creates suspicion because Alix may desire to be close to Emira. After all, she wants Emira to trust her by telling Emira's personal life. Alix can then use Emira's stories to try to discover loopholes to appear to at least assist Emira in her troubles.

Alix's efforts in achieving her goals are also proven when Alix invites Emira to drink wine together. Alix is seen trying to delve into Emira's personal life through this conversation while drinking wine together.

“When Alix felt that she could no longer drink the wine, she offered the rest of the wine to Emira.

“I can't have more than a glass since I'm still pumping.”

When Emira said, “Really?” ...

Emira placed a finger in front of her mouth, and Briar turned the page.

Emira mouthed, Thank you, and Alix said, “Of course.”

*This is good, Alix thought. We aren't there yet but we're getting there.*” (Reid, 2019, p. 61).

Based on the quote above, the fake kind of treatment that Alix has shown Emira has seen a slight increase. Alix felt that she had succeeded in getting Emira to drink the wine when she was with him. Alix thought she could break the distance between them so that Alix could ask some questions about her personal life.

Alix's invitation seemed normal because she invited Emira to drink wine with her as someone she might consider close as Briar's babysitter. However, Alix's invitation to Emira to drink this wine is suspicious. Alix knew it was rare for Emira to drink wine, so she thought Emira would accept her invitation. That way, Alix took advantage of this moment to expedite her efforts to get to know Emira's personal life.

Ostensible, Alix might try to please Emira by asking her to drink wine with her. However, her invitation might sound questionable. It is because Alix really wanted to invite Emira, or it is just for some hidden agendas, considering Emira is a colored woman and Alix is not used to drinking wine together with other than her friends or husband. Alix can invite Emira because she thinks that Emira will be happy to accept her. Thus, Alix can quickly delve into Emira's private life.

Alix's previously ignorant and unconcerned behavior with Emira suddenly wanted to know anything related to Emira. Alix was trying to lick something from Emira.

“Alix didn't know what Emira liked, or what she didn't like, or how she stayed so skinny, or if she believed in God. It wouldn't happen all at once, but she had to keep trying, even if it meant being the first to speak at every silence, and with Emira, there were many. “Are you going there with girlfriends?” Emira smiled and shook her head no. Alix let a cartoonish, gossipy expression go into her eyes. She said, “Ooohh,” and Emira laughed. Her lips came together in a flirtatious secrecy. “Well, come on. Is he cute?” (Reid, 2019, p. 62).

The quote above proves that Alix started her conversation with Emira by discussing Emira's love life. Alix wants to know something and tries to delve deeper into Emira's love life.

If they were actually close, Alix's attitude toward Emira looked normal. However, Alix is not particularly close to Emira; in fact, Alix knows nothing about Emira's life while Emira works with her. Alix's demeanor was suspicious. Alix recognizes that Emira does not have enough friends with whom she can discuss her personal life. Therefore she pushes Emira to tell her about her personal

life, particularly her love life. In this approach, Alix pushes Emira to open up to her about her personal life for her to identify a lack in Emira's life.

Alix may get Emira to tell her about her love life on the surface. However, this begs the question. Alix clearly does not know anything about Emira. If Alix had never been interested in Emira before, why would she be interested in Emira's life now? As an employer and a white woman, Alix strives to solve the problems that arise in Emira's life so that Emira can continue to work for her. Alix forced herself to be close to Emira to enquire about her personal life, which she had never done before.

Alix's other act is by offering fun things which Emira and Briar can do together. Alix points out that she is giving Emira some time and money for Emira to have fun while taking care of Briar, which she doesn't normally do.

“Alix reached up to her head and adjusted her blond bun. “Just to be clear... I want you and Briar to do fun things together. And I definitely know how tedious children's things can be, so if you ever want to mix things up, just let me know. If there's a movie or a carnival or whatever it is ... say the word and I'll leave money for you guys to change it up.” (Reid, 2019, p. 92).

The quote proves that Alix offered Emira to do something more fun, which Emira and her daughter could do together. Alix advised Emira to use the money to do the fun things she wanted while babysitting Briar. Alix wants to show her power as an employer and white woman.

Alix's offer appears to be an employer providing an opportunity for Emira to have fun while doing her job. However, Alix's promise to entertain Emira creates a question. Alix understood it was unusual for Emira to have fun while caring for Briar, so she assumed Emira would be pleased with the offer. Alix exploited it this

way to make Emira delighted with her offer and consider staying with Alix, knowing Alix looked so wonderful to her.

Alix may strive to impress Emira by providing her money and time to have fun while working. Alix has never done anything like this; thus, this may appear problematic. Is Alix genuinely interested in pleasing Emira, or does she want to demonstrate her dominance as Emira's employer and as a white woman to Emira? While caring for Briar, Alix offers Emira money and time to have fun at work. As a result, Alix believed she could maintain Emira as her employee.

Alix's act of pretending to look good to Emira is seen when Alix pretends to eat leftovers. Alix wants to look humble to skyrocket in front of her employee.

“Sometimes, Alix found herself pretending—in front of Emira—that she was about to eat leftovers for dinner. In reality, she'd be thinking to herself, Just order the sushi. Just text Peter and ask him what he wants. What point are you trying to prove by eating leftovers? But still, she'd wait till Emira closed the door behind her to go to her computer, ask Peter if he wanted the usual, and place her order via Seamless.” (Reid, 2019, p. 106).

The quote above shows Alix deliberately trying to look good in front of Emira by pretending to eat leftovers. Alix wanted Emira to draw her attention to Alix. Alix wants Emira to tag her, so she looks like a white populist employer.

Alix's attitude of wanting Emira to see it to make Alix appear populist and modest to skyrocket by pretending to eat this leftover food seems dubious. Alix knows that she and Emira have a distance similar to that of an ordinary employer and employee; they are not close to being considered friends or family, so Alix wishes to be perceived as modest by Emira to receive appreciation from her. Why did Alix pretend in front of Emira if she genuinely wanted to be close to her and

consider her friends and family? Emira will regard Alix as an employer and a respectable white woman because of her behavior. So, she purposefully demonstrated her humility in front of Emira by eating the leftovers.

Alix's pretense to be kind to Emira is also seen when Alix takes the opportunity to steal the opportunity so she can chat with Emira. She looks sick of realizing her attitude, stealing the opportunity to be close to Emira.

“Thank God for the weather, Alix thought. Most of her conversations with Emira in the last few days were fueled by weather management—if Briar should wear gloves, if an art class was snowed out, or if Emira needed to borrow an umbrella for her travels home. Alix rolled her eyes at her own actions. “It was insane, and kind of apocalyptic. I shouldn't have made you come out today.” (Reid, 2019, p. 108).

The quote above shows Alix taking advantage of the moment to talk to Emira. She wants to be close to Emira so that Emira can remind her that Alix is a white employer who pays attention to everything, both Briar and Emira.

Alix's concern for Briar and Emira's well-being may appear sympathetic and empathetic. However, Alix's disgust with her behavior prompted concerns. It raises doubts even with her disgusted attitude. Would Alix get weary of Emira if she was a white babysitter? Alix did not have to pretend to be interested in everything about Emira if she wanted to be close to her. Alix used this as a chance to announce her desire to pretend to be kind to Emira.

Alix's fake kindness is seen when she gives food to Emira. Alix wants to show Emira her superior attitude as a white employer.

“This is yours.” Alix pushed it into her arms. “I’m sure you have food at home, but this is better than anything you will find at a grocery store right now.”

“Whoa. . .” Emira adjusted the bag in her arms. “This is really, really nice.”

“Just do me a favor”—Alix beamed—“and come very hungry on Thursday. ...” (Reid, 2019, p. 111).

The quote above shows Alix giving food to Emira. Alix wanted to show her superiority as a white woman and employer by giving her food to Emira.

Alix’s compassion for Emira seems like that of a kind boss who provides a nutritious meal for her employee. However, Alix was observed comparing the meal she gave Emira to the food in the grocery store, which raised suspicions. Alix giving Emira food appears to imply that Alix regards Emira as a person in need, despite Emira being a woman of color and her boss. Alix seemed to regard Emira as someone who was having a difficult time. By doing so, Alix takes advantage of Emira’s status as a woman of color and Alix’s employer by implicitly demonstrating her dominance over Emira.

Alix shows her superiority as a white woman and Emira’s employer by telling Emira that she is a part of her family. Alix wants Emira to feel comfortable so that she can keep Emira working for her. Alix also wants to show her existence as a white employer. She can regard her employee who becomes a BIPOC as part of the white family.

“... And Emira, I mean it. You’re not coming to babysit. You’ll be here as family. Okay?”

Emira pouted a little in a way that made her look quite young. She pulled up the back of her leggings and said, “Okay.” (Reid, 2019, p. 112).



The quote above shows Alix trying to ensure Emira as family. Alix wishes Emira to recognize Alix's benevolence by saying so. Alix's behavior toward Emira is similar to developing a family, which sounds great. However, witnessing Alix's demeanor and hearing her say this to Emira aroused suspicions. Given Alix's existence as a White woman and Emira's employer, would Alix have acted the same way if Emira was White? Alix appears to be subtly displaying her superiority as a white employer, where she believes Emira to be alone. Alix takes advantage of this by treating Emira as her family, so Emira feels accepted as BIPOC amid the white family. Alix used Emira's status as a BIPOC to demonstrate her supremacy as a White.

Alix shows Emira that she is an excellent white employer and appreciates the hard work of her colored employees by praising Emira's hard work. Alix wants Emira to remind her that Alix is a kind boss. She wants Emira to feel touched and comfortable working with her.

"... Well, first of all . . . I know we've had our moments, you and I. But Emira, I feel very strongly that I know where your heart is. Peter and I are so grateful that you care about our children and that you're there to protect them when we can't. And I appreciate your protectiveness over the girls as much as I appreciate your privacy as a person, so I can't imagine what you're going through right now." (Reid, 2019, p. 196).

The quote above shows Alix complimenting Emira for her hard work, which was a thumbs up in the Briar babysit. Alix wanted Emira to know and was touched by Alix's words that her employer saw her hard work while Emira was Briar's babysitter.

Alix's words to Emira sound touching, knowing that Emira's boss is praising what her employee has done thus far. However, Alix's remarks prompted a



thought. Would Alix treat Emira, the colored employee who went into trouble, the same way if she had not had a problem at the grocery store before? Knowing that Emira must have been affected by the trouble that had happened to her, Alix reminded and manipulated Emira's circumstances by offering her the accolades Emira felt she needed for her hard work.

Alix wanted Emira to see her as a loving boss who gave her employee praise and gifts. Alix gives Emira a gift as a tangible form so that Alix can keep Emira as Briar's babysitter.

“Briar looked up and pushed her helmet back onto her skull. Alix held Catherine with one hand and dug into her purse with the other. She pulled out a small, wrapped square gift with red and white twine tied on top. “That’s for Emira, remember? Go ahead and give it to her.” (Reid, 2019, p. 196).

The quote shows Alix giving a gift to Emira. She wanted Emira to know that she also shared another form of praise by giving Emira a gift as a form of hard work while being Briar's babysitter. Alix wanted to ensure that she could keep Emira working for her with her actions.

Alix, Emira's boss, rewarded her for her efforts as Briar's babysitter. Knowing how much Emira's boss loves her presence as an important person in her family, she presents her with a gift. It, however, unavoidably leads to suspicion. Alix knows and believes that Emira will be hurt, and she intends to quit her position as a babysitter due to what occurred to Emira at the grocery store. Alix afterward grew nice to Emira, even giving her a gift. The gift could have been a bribe from Alix to Emira for Emira to accept the situation and continue working with her for as long as Alix desired.

Alix's fake kindness is also shown when she gives Emira's position to work full time for Alix and alimony. Alix provides an allowance for Emira's work as a form of bribery to keep Emira working with her after learning that Alix feels Emira will quit her job as a babysitter.

"... But yes, we'd obviously make this a full-time job since you'd be giving your other position up. This would put you at thirty-eight hours a week, but we'd bump you up to forty just in case a train is running late one day or what have you. And that way we'd be able to include health insurance and vacation days and all of that good stuff . . . And I didn't mark up summer only because I know you'll probably go home at some point, and we can work around all that . . ." Alix sighed and smiled; her shoulders went down about two inches." (Reid, 2019, p. 197).

The quote above shows giving all the perks that Emira feels she needs. Alix lures Emira by giving Emira a lucrative allowance. Alix wanted to ensure that Emira accepted and did not think about quitting her job as Briar's babysitter until she gave Emira all the benefits.

Alix's conduct of paying Emira for her job as Briar's babysitter seems normal, given that Emira worked hard while caring for Briar. However, it does not become ordinary and becomes a question. Is it true that Alix granted Emira a promotion and benefits because she thought Emira deserved them or did she do it for Emira to continue working for her? In that manner, Alix has complete power over Emira as long as she works beside her and Emira works full-time for her. Alix recognizes and believes that Emira's employment is not as promising as being Briar's babysitter. Alix thinks Emira needs a promising job that can sustain her life. Thus, Alix takes advantage of Emira's situation by making Emira a nanny for Briar so that Emira can continue to work for her.

Alix, who spread Emira's video when she got into trouble at the grocery store, pretended to look like an employer trying to solve Emira's problems. She wants Emira to know that she cares and is aware of the problems that occurred to Emira. "I thought it might all be perfect timing but maybe we should deal with this video first and then we can start to think about next . . ." (Reid, 2019, p. 198). The quote shows that Alix seems to want to solve Emira's problems related to videos circulating on social media. Alix proudly demonstrates her power by pretending to solve Emira's video problem, which Alix caused herself.

Alix's attitude to solving and assisting Emira's concerns relating to the spreading video was viewed as a praiseworthy act. However, Alix's approach to helping Emira to resolve her difficulties quickly after the video she distributed caused concerns. Suppose Alix spreads Emira's video in the grocery store until it goes popular on social media. In that case, Alix may want to bring Emira down while also making Emira feel constricted, so Emira believes she cannot go anywhere. In this way, Alix conveys to Emira that, like it or not, Emira must continue to work for Alix.

Alix's fake kindness radiates when Emira is about to leave the Chamberlains' house. Alix tries to restrain Emira from working for her by discussing the kindnesses that Alix has given to Emira throughout the time.

"All of this was for you!" Mrs. Chamberlain cried. "We wanted to help you clear your name and you turn around and do this? Whatever Kelley said, I . . . Emira. Everything we've done was for you. Everything," she said. Her focused stare seemed to say, *I know you know what I did, and I also don't care*. "You might be too young to understand this right now, but we have always had your best interests at heart. Emira, we, we love you." Mrs. Chamberlain threw her hands up in surrender as she said this, as if loving Emira

was despite her family's other best interests. "I don't. . ." She shook her head. "I don't know what to say." (Reid, 2019, p. 223).

The quote above shows Alix trying to hold Emira, who is about to leave Alix's house and the job. Alix expresses her fake affection for Emira so that at least Emira can stay working with her. Alix looks like she is about to restrain Emira with the snare of her words, discussing her kindness to Emira.

Alix's behavior and word to Emira sounded good and noble. However, Alix's attitude creates concerns. Why did Alix not let Emira leave her house and quit her work as a babysitter if all she did was for Emira's good? Why should Alix remind Emira of all the good deeds she had done for Emira all along? Alix realized she could not be near Briar and would struggle to find a babysitter like Emira, who would listen to her every wish. As a result, Alix investigates her feigned compassion for Emira, and Emira withdraws her decision to quit her position as Briar's babysitter.

Alix tried to pay attention to Emira by focusing on any struggles that Emira faced as a woman of color working as a babysitter, indicating that Alix has a role in Emira's life. She wants Emira to be her daughter's babysitter indefinitely. It is considered an important purpose of white power because Alix does not care about Emira's actual condition after experiencing an incident at the grocery store and only tries to defend Emira for personal reasons. As a result, Alix's behavior reflects Delgado & Stefansic's argument that white people have important goals for their own interests as people with power over BIPOC.

### 3.1.3 Alix's Insistence on Emira to Realize that Emira's Boyfriend is Not a Good Person

The analysis of this part is based on Delgado & Stefancic's (2017) concept of white power's important purposes. It is a societal framework that indicates the White people are superior to their behaviors shown to Black people, so like it or not, Black people follow and believe in everything White does to them.

One of Alix's behaviors represents the view of White power's important purposes is Alix wants to separate Emira from Kelley, Emira's boyfriend, and Alix's former lover. Alix's behavior is proven when she acts as if she wants to separate the intimate interaction between Emira and Kelley. Alix seems to want to separate any interaction between them, especially their intimate interaction.

“And now his hands were wrapped around Emira in Alix's house on Thanksgiving Day. Alix had the sudden urge to remove Kelley's hands from Emira's hips, and not just because of the sexual familiarity that they displayed. ... Alix found herself ready to slap Kelley's wrists away from her sitter.” (Reid, 2019, p. 137).

The quote above shows that Alix wants to diminish the affectionate interaction between Emira and Kelley. Alix wanted to separate the lovebirds knowing Kelley had his arms wrapped around Emira's hips. Alix looks a little angry, knowing Kelley's attitude towards Emira.

Alix may appear concerned about the situation in which Briar is present at the time of the incident, but at the same time, she wants Briar to see Emira, her babysitter, as a kind and wise person. It appeared normal because Alix seemed concerned that her child would notice the affectionate conduct of the people around her. It does, however, pose certain concerns. Why should Alix look furious

at Kelley and Emira's loving attitude if Alix did not want her daughter to see it? Why does Alix appear possessive when she sees them, knowing that Kelley is her ex-boyfriend? Is it because Emira is an employee and a woman of color that she cannot date Kelley, a white man and Alix's ex-boyfriend? Alix is aware that Emira is dating Kelley and they like one another, but Alix's feelings slightly fail to move on from Kelley. Thus, Alix attempts to separate the interactions between them in various ways.

Alix's behavior is also evident when Alix tries to instigate Emira to break up with Kelley. Alix does not want Emira and Kelley to be in a relationship. "I wouldn't feel right not letting you know about my experience with Kelley, especially when I think the same issues may come up in yours." (Reid, 2019, p. 164). The quote shows that Alix is trying to tell Emira about her love life with Kelley in the past. Alix frightens Emira by telling her about her awful love experience with Kelley.

Alix's caring might seem like worrying Emira if her relationship will end as it used to. On the other hand, giving Emira input without an apparent reason is not justified. Alix felt that she knew that Emira was confused because Kelley had been in contact with Alix, so Alix gave Emira advice about her past experiences. That way, Emira will feel that Alix's words are trustworthy, and Emira will cut ties with Kelley.

Alix appeared to be assisting Emira in resolving problems in her love relationship. Her intentions, on the other hand, may appear dubious. Would Alix still help Emira by advising her on her past love problems if Emira was not dating



Kelley? Alix seemed to regard herself as someone who understands everything better because she has been in a relationship with Kelley. She believed she could control and be trusted by Emira to break up with Kelley, even though Alix knew that Emira and Kelley loved each other.

Alix tried to create a rift between Emira and Kelley. Alix wants Emira to blame Kelley for the spread of the video she recorded at the grocery store that night. Alix tries to pit Emira and Kelley against each other due to the spread of videos of Emira's problems on social media.

“On her third rotation, sheira at her computer screen and caught sight of the word Inbox on a tab she hadn't opened. It was followed by EmCTucker@ before it was cut off. ...

It was just so easy to type his name. After Kell it came right up. It was even easier to find the attachment dated September 2015; it was the first and only email they'd ever exchanged. And once it was downloaded, Alix dragged it into a folder marked Spring Blog Posts that she hadn't used since last spring. Without watching the video, Alix quickly emailed it to herself as well—now she had it twice—and then she erased the email in the Sent folder and logged out of Emira's email. Alix cleared her browser's history and put in two new searches before she left the computer—winter toddler crafts and organic teething bars—and then she reached for her phone.” (Reid, 2019, p. 176).

The quote above shows Alix's attempt to break into Emira's email and spread a video of Emira's problems at the grocery store that Kelley had previously sent to Emira. The video was immediately deleted on his phone. Alix seemed intent on causing a misunderstanding between Emira and Kelley. She wanted Emira to blame Kelley for what happened because the video that was circulating was a video sent by Kelley. So, Alix wanted to make a fuss about their relationship and decided to spread Emira's private video until she came to be the person Emira trusted and the arbiter who helped solve Emira's problem.



Alix was undoubtedly concerned that Emira and Kelley's relationship had progressed too far and that they would face the same problems she had with Kelley in the past. Alix's act of gaining Emira's trust may appear commonplace. However, Alix's motive and tactic created suspicion. Alix is aware that she has not yet acquired Emira's complete trust, and Emira appears upset over what happened to her at the grocery store. Alix took the opportunity to break into Emira's email, grab the video Kelley sent that night, and distribute it on social media with the assistance of a friend. Alix takes advantage of Emira's position to gain her trust while severing her friendship with Kelley.

Alix's incitement of Emira for no apparent reason may indicate that, as a white woman, Alix still believes she can control and be trusted by Emira as an employer and a white woman. This act is regarded as an important manifestation of White power because Alix is more concerned with Emira breaking up with Kelley because she failed to move on to Kelley, rather than Alix being concerned with Emira's feelings for Kelley as well as Kelley's feelings for Emira. As a result, Alix's behavior reflects Delgado and Stefansic's argument that white people, as people with power over BIPOC, have important goals for their interests.

### **3.2 The Effects of The White Saviorism on Emira's Life**

Alix's behaviors representing the white saviorism that Emira experienced in her life had several impacts. The impacts are fear of freedom and decision-making confusion.

### 3.2.1 Emira's Fear of Being Free from Alix's Family

The analysis of this part is based on Freire's (2013) concept of fear of freedom. It is a societal framework that indicates that Black people are experiencing the impact of the White people's actions on white saviorism. Black people feel that they have lost their identity and control over their own lives, so they find it difficult to make decisions due to white saviorism carried out by White people.

The impact caused by Alix's actions on Emira is fear of freedom. This impact is seen when Zara, Emira's friend, suggests that Emira is looking for another job. Emira is afraid to leave her comfort zone working as a babysitter. "Emira took a deep breath. "Okay, umm . . . this family called and said they'd take me as a nanny." (Reid, 2019, p. 206). The quote proves that Emira is reluctant to start something new. Even after she searched for various types of work that might suit her, Emira remained focused on working as a babysitter. She is afraid of starting new things.

Emira's behavior shows that the impact of Alix's white saviorism keeps Emira from growing. Emira looks afraid to start new things, including things related to work. Alix promised Emira so many offers beforehand that Emira did not want to give up her job. As if looking for a new type of job, Emira feels stuck to just being a nanny instead of having to do other kinds of work.

Emira's fear is also evident when she is confronted while looking for her new job. Considering the salary offered when she was looking for her new job, it was a little or did not meet Emira's expectations. "She would have stayed with Briar for

as long as the Chamberlains would have her.” (Reid, 2019, p. 207). The quote shows that Emira is afraid that she does not want to leave her comfort zone. Even though she knew Alix had taken advantage of her, she still thought she would stay as Briar’s babysitter. Emira was afraid to quit her job.

Emira’s behavior shows that the impact of white saviorism by Alix makes Emira feel that she has no choice but to become Briar’s babysitter. Alix scares Emira into refusing to get a tempting offer that Alix had previously offered her if she worked elsewhere. Even though Emira knows that Alix is using her, Emira feels that she is afraid that she will quit her job as Briar’s babysitter. Thus, Emira was afraid that her freedom would not bring her more benefits after she quit her job.

Alix’s actions to keep Emira as Briar’s babysitter had gone exactly as she had planned. It is evident in the effect it has on Emira’s life, where she is shown to be afraid of her freedom. It is considered the impact of Alix’s white saviorism behavior toward Emira. Emira is worried that if she quits her job as Briar’s babysitter, she will face even worse consequences than she did as Briar’s babysitter. As a result, Alix’s influence on Emira in terms of white saviorism reflects Freire’s argument that fear of freedom is a fear of the risks associated with freedom rather than freedom itself.

### **3.2.2 Emira’s Confusion in Making Decisions**

The analysis of this part is based on Freire’s (2013) concept of decision-making confusion. It is a societal framework that indicates that Black people are experiencing the impact of the White people’s actions on white

saviorism. Black people feel that they have lost their identity and control over their own lives, so they find it difficult to make decisions due to white saviorism carried out by White people.

The impact of Alix's white saviorism on Emira's life occurred when Alix made Emira unable to refuse every invitation she received from Alix, even though Emira often seemed to want to. Alix insisted that Emira always take her orders without giving her other choices.

"Emira." While she rocked her second daughter in front of her stomach. Alix walked over to her sitter at the windowsill. "I know it's not your first choice," she said, "but we would absolutely love if you spent Thanksgiving with us."

"Ohhh, wow, no, no." Emira shook her head.

"Okay, 'cause Mira?" Briar interrupted. "I... I'm your first choice."

Alix thought, *Yes, Bri, good girl.*

Emira laughed. "Well, I can't argue with that," she said. She reached forward to pick up Briar from underneath her armpits and turned her around to sit her on her thighs. "That's extremely nice, but I'll be okay." (Reid, 2019, p. 109).

The quote shows that Emira could not do anything but accept Alix's invitation. Emira's attitude showed that she was put in a corner. Emira was reluctant to accept the invitation. Instead, she did it because Alix invited her. Emira was afraid that her refusal would hurt her employer. Thus, she could not really make her own choices.

Alix's invitation impacts Emira becoming a person who cannot make her own choices. It is a crucial impact on Emira. Emira is not free when faced with choices. She believed that whatever Alix decided would also be good for her, even if it was not what she desired. Thus, Alix caused the effect of her actions on Emira being unable to make her own choices when Emira was with Alix.

Emira does not know what to do and what to do in her future. Emira did not have to do anything concerning herself, what to do, or where to go. “Emira bent down to her backpack and retrieved her phone. At this point, it was a relief to have someone telling her what to do.” (Reid, 2019, p. 206). The quote shows that Emira seemed at ease that someone had told her what she should do. Indirectly, Emira proved that she did not know what to do when facing some situations.

Alix’s actions toward Emira have affected Emira’s reluctance toward the rights she should have, which is making a decision. Emira was so used to the decisions Alix made for her that Emira became confused when a decision hit her. That way, Alix causes Emira to not develop, especially in making decisions about her life.

Alix’s white saviorism that made Emira confused about what to choose was also seen when Emira was asked something about her life. Tamra, Alix’s friend, asks about Emira’s future goals. “Um...” Emira readjusted in her seat. She took the clasp of her necklace from the space above her sternum and returned it to its place behind her neck. “I’m not really sure.” (Reid, 2019, p. 135). The quote shows that Emira looked confused when answering Tamra’s questions. Emira was not too sure about her goals in her life. She seemed indecisive about her plans for her life.

Tamra felt Emira’s confusion about her life choices shortly after talking to Emira. Emira did not know what she wanted or how to get what she wanted.

“But,” Tamra said slowly, “that girl is very lost. She’s twenty-five years old and she has no idea what she wants or how to get it. She doesn’t have the motivation to maintain a real career the way our

girls will have, which is probably not her fault but it doesn't make it less true." (Reid, 2019, p. 154).

The quote shows Tamra saying that Emira did not have the motivation to support her future career. At her age, Emira was confused about what she wanted and what she should pursue. Emira seemed to have lost her way of making her life choices.

What Tamra felt about Emira represented the impact Alix's white saviorism had on Emira. People around Emira saw Emira as confused about what she wanted in her own life. Emira became a passive figure who did not grow and had no vision.

Emira's next confusion was when Emira faced the fact that Alix had been using her all this time. Zara, Emira's friend, advised Emira to quit her job as a babysitter and find a new job. Emira was not too sure when she answered her friend's question. She was not sure if she would work as a receptionist or not.

"Emira seems hesitant to answer Zara's question when Zara asks her if she can work as a receptionist or not. Emira said, "Yes... ?" It would be boring but she could do it. ... "I mean, yeah, they're chill over there." (Reid, 2019, p. 206).

The quote shows that Emira was not sure if she would really look for a new job. She was not sure what she was going to do. After leaving her position as a babysitter for Briar, Alix's daughter, she was unsure about getting a job.

Alix's white saviorism influenced Emira to become a person who is unable to make her own decisions. Emira lacked the motivation to support her future career. When asked about her plans, Emira was perplexed. It is Alix's impact because Alix has had complete control over Emira's decisions all along. Alix encouraged

Emira to have a pessimistic personality. As a result of Alix preventing Emira from making her own decisions, Emira was perplexed whenever she was asked about her own life choices.

Emira's confusion continued when she talked to Zara about the job she was applying for. Emira felt she did not know what to do, knowing that the salary offered by the job she was applying for did not match Emira's expectations. "Emira wanted to ask her friend, *Am I? Am I willing to go down in rate?* She currently made sixteen dollars an hour." (Reid, 2019, p. 207). The quote shows that Emira was upset when she wanted to talk about the income offered from the job she was applying for. Emira felt she should talk about the salary offered to her friend, but Emira did not know how to talk about it. Emira was confused about determining what she would do by knowing the salary offered.

Alix's white saviorism influenced Emira to become someone unable to express herself. Emira was perplexed by the idea of discussing something personal with others. She did not know what would happen if she talked about herself.

Alix's actions in retaining Emira as Briar's babysitter had gone just as intended. It is evident by the impact it has on Emira's life, as she was shown to be indecisive. It is the result of Alix's white saviorism toward Emira. Emira had no idea what she wanted to accomplish now or in the future. When faced with a crucial situation in her life, Emira was unsure what she should do. Emira recognized her perplexity when a friend assisted her in seeking new employment.



As a result, the impact of Alix's white saviorism on Emira illustrates Freire's claim that decision-making confusion exists.



## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION

*Such A Fun Age* tells about Emira, a young black woman in her mid-twenties and part-time babysitter. Emira works for a white woman named Alix, a mid-thirties influencer and mother to two-year-old Briar and infant Catherine. During her work, Emira was exposed to the white saviorism that Alix exhibited.

This research found two types of white saviorism based on Delgado & Stefancic's arguments. First, Alix's white saviorism embodies the concept racism is ordinary, not aberrational. It is reflected in Alix's orders to Emira without concern for her personal life. Alix thinks she has helped Emira's financial problem by hiring her as Briar's babysitter. Yet, Alix often shows her superior attitude toward Emira by ordering Emira around without concern for Emira's life. Alix's attitudes include Alix telling Emira to work other than working hours as she pleases. Alix can also ask Emira to do what she asks, regardless of Emira's condition. Alix considers her attitude very common since she is Emira's employer. Yet, as a white person who hired a black sitter, Alix's act represents Delgado & Stefancic's concept of racism is ordinary, not aberrational since Alix never pays attention to what she does to Emira is racist.

Second, Alix's white saviorism toward Emira represents the concept of white power's important purposes. This attitude is reflected in Alix's certainty that Emira keeps having a job as her babysitter. The attitude is also reflected in Alix's insistence on Emira to realize that Emira's boyfriend is not a good person. Every

good thing Alix offers or gives is not necessarily for Emira's sake. By being kind to Emira, Alix has two primary purposes in mind. First and foremost, Alix can make Emira keep working for Alix as the family's help and babysitter. The second purpose of Alix being friendly and kind to Emira is to separate Emira from her boyfriend. Emira's boyfriend, Kelley, was Alix's ex-boyfriend in high school time. Alix tries to separate Emira and her boyfriend, Kelley, by creating misunderstandings between them under the guise of wanting the best for Emira's life.

In addition, this research also found two significant impacts of white saviorism in Emira's life. The first is Emira's fear of being free from Alix's family, which represents Freire's fear of freedom. Emira is terrified of stepping outside of her comfort zone. She thinks acting in ways that go against her desires is okay. She also believed that if she continued to babysit Briar, Alix's daughter, she would be fine. Emira is afraid that if she quits working for Alix's family, she will have a more miserable life because she is a colored woman and an employee.

The second is Emira's confusion in making decisions, representing Freire's decision-making confusion. Since she sued to have Alix decides many things for her, Emira has no idea what she wants to do today or in the future. Emira is confused about what she should do when faced with a critical decision in her life. When a friend helped Emira find a new job, Emira realized her confusion. Emira was dissatisfied with the direction of her life. She frequently surrenders, opting to go with the flow of her life because she is so perplexed by the options available to her.

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