

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the author will explain the background of the research which is the background for the author to raise the problems that occur in the research object, besides that the chapter also contains the formulation of research problems, research objectives, and research benefits study.

A. Background of Study

Literature is a work of art. Therefore, it has the same properties as other works of art. The purpose of literature itself is to help humans uncover the secrets that are in them, and give meaning to their existence, and open the way to the truth. What distinguishes literature from other arts is that literature is conveyed through language. In literature, in the first stage, of course, someone confronts literary works by analyzing every element and aspect contained therein. According to Mario Klarer (2004), the word "aesthetic" or "artistic" is used to publish literary works from commonly used texts, such as telephone books, newspapers, legal documents, and scientific literature. (Klarer 2020)

Matthew Arnold (1822-1888) as quoted from Hans Bertens (2001) views literature, aside from its aesthetic and attractive aspects, it also has lessons for us to learn which were known in ancient times and have been repeated many times throughout history.(Anon 1999) David Carter (2006) states that literature includes all genres such as history and philosophy. In textual studies, Mario Klarer unifies literature into four main genres: fiction, poetry, theater and film. Novel is one type of work of fiction. A novel Literature such as poetry, drama and prose can provide new knowledge and experiences about life. Sometimes, they are written to describe the author's experience or environment, making people relate to the stories told in literature. Novel is an expanded work of fiction written in process and is a term applied to different types of writing that share the same attributes (Abrams & Harpham, 2015, p.252) (Abrams and Harpham 2013).

Literary genres can Interpreted as the characteristics of types or types

of literature that have various general characteristics or can be grouped based on style, content, and form. Intrinsic elements are elements that build a story in a novel. The intrinsic element is the element that builds the literary work itself. There are several intrinsic elements in fiction, namely theme, character, characterization, setting, plot, point of view, and message. While extrinsic elements are external elements that complement a novel. Extrinsic elements are things that are outside the structure of literary works, but are very influential in literary works. According to Abrams (1981), the genre of this novel is combined into four major genres, namely comedy, romance, tragedy, and satire. Literature is a work that discusses life's problems so that literary works can provide information about life's problems. Literature goes through a phase of development that can give birth to various genres. Written literature is one of the genres that Wellek and Warren were able to define—and oral literature by Finnegan (Lintasmedia et al. 2019).

There are several literary genres, one of which is children's literature. In children's literature, stories about life, be it hardships, happiness, and even death are described clearly and easily understood by children. In this case, the literary genre is one of the sources that can be a place for children to understand life. The form of reflection on people's lives can be in the form of literary works, although the presentation cannot be far from imaginative elements. In addition to educating people's lives, through literature a person will acquire moral values that can be used as guidelines and experiences. In line with Bronowski's opinion (in Emzir, 2015: 9) which states that literature is used as a medium to open people's insights and knowledge and make people aware that so far they still feel they are in actual reality when in fact only in entities similar to reality.

The novel *All the Bright Places* is the work of Jennifer Niven, the first woman writer to be named one of the best-selling authors on an international scale according to *The New York Times*. The *All the Bright Places* novel was first published on January 6, 2015 by Knopf Publishing Group. Jennifer Niven grew up in Indiana. Apart from being a writer, Jennifer Niven has also worked

as a screenwriter, associate producer at ABC Television, and a journalist. The novel *All the Bright Places* achieved success as a best-selling novel. This novel also won the Good Reads Choice Award for Best Young Adult Fiction 2015. *All the Bright Places* tells the story of two best friends trying to overcome each other's trauma.

Violet Markey (Elle Fanning) is still haunted by guilt after the tragic death of her sister, Eleanor. Nine months ago, the car that Eleanor and Violet were driving was traveling at high speed and crashed into the side of a bridge. From then on, Violet no longer dared to drive a car. Her guilt grew even more because at the time of the incident, it was Violet who had asked Eleanor to go there. Similar to Violet, Theodore Finch (Justice Smith) also lives in the shadow of his trauma. He struggled with depression and frequently considered suicide. Because no one in his family is aware of his illness, Finch feels more and more alone. When they are partnered together for a school assignment, Violet and Finch get to know one another. Students were required to submit essays at the time about the most amazing locations in Bartlett, Indiana. Finch also takes Violet to a number of locations that appear odd and unremarkable but yet conceal a lot of beauty. Since then, Violet has wanted to socialize with her friends and carry on with her daily activities without taking responsibility for her sister's passing. Finch left Violet after discovering the purpose of his life, but he still committed suicide.

The work mentioned above portrays the phenomena of life as it exists in the present day. It also describes Violet, the main character, as she searches for the meaning of life, specifically the purpose of her own existence. The writer is intrigued in this, thus the writer wishes to conduct research on the significance of violet life, which the writer connects to Jean Paul Sartre's existentialist. Based on these considerations, the researcher intends to investigate the existentialist novel *All the Bright Places* by Jennifer Niven's search for life's meaning. The study's title is **“VIOLET’S SEARCH FOR MEANING OF LIFE IN NOVEL ALL THE BRIGHT PLACES (2015): AN EXISTENTIALIST CRITICISM”**.

B. Problem Statements

1. How Violet Markey, the main character of the novel *All the Bright Places* by Jennifer Niven, searches for the meaning of life?
2. How is the meaning of life in Jennifer Niven novel *All the Bright Places* based on Existentialist Criticism?

C. Objectives of the Study

1. To analyze the main character, Violet Markey, in searching for the meaning of her life in novel *All the Bright Places*.
2. Describe the meaning of life in Jennifer Niven novel *All the Bright Places* based on Existentialist Criticism.

D. Benefits of the Study

By analyzing *All the Bright Places* novel, the author hopes that later this study gives benefits to the readers both theoretical and practical.

1. Theoretical benefits

This study is expected to provide new contributions and information for broader knowledge, especially literary studies on the novel *All the Bright Places*.

2. Practical benefits

This study is expected to enrich the knowledge and experience of other researchers and students of Muhammadiyah Surakarta University or other universities who have an interest in literary studies on existentialist novels.

E. Limitations of the Study

The researcher focuses on the analysis of Violet Markey's search for the meaning of life in the novel *All the Bright Places* from Existentialist Criticism.