

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A. Background Of The Study

An Ideal Husband written in 1895 is one of Oscar Wilde's plays. It consists of four acts and 93 pages. The play has great settings, act I, the octagon room in Sir Robert Chiltern's house in Grosvenor Square, act II, morning-room in Sir Robert Chiltern's house, act III, in the library of Lord Goring's house in Curzon Street, and act IV same as act II (morning-room in Sir Robert Chiltern's House). *An Ideal Husband* is a comedic stage play which revolves around blackmail and political corruption, and touches on the themes of public and private honour.

Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills Wilde was born on 16 October 1854, in Dublin, Ireland. Oscar Wilde was a 19th century Irish writer whose works include the play *The Importance of Being Earnest* and the novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. He is also one of the Victorian era's most famous dandies, a wit whose good-humored disdain for convention became less favored after he is jailed for homosexuality. Wilde grows up in a prosperous family and distinguished himself at Dublin's Trinity College and London's Oxford. He publishes his first volume of poems in 1881 and found work in England as a critic and lecturer, but it is his socializing (and self-promotion) that made him famous, even before the 1890 publication of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. In

1895, at the height of his popularity, his relationship with the young poet Lord Alfred Douglas was declared inappropriately intimate by Douglas's father, the Marquess of Queensberry. Wilde sued for libel, but the tables were turned when it became clear there was enough evidence to charge Wilde with "gross indecency" for his homosexual relationships. He was convicted and spent two years in jail, after which he went into self-imposed exile in France, bankrupt and in ill health. His other works include the comedies *Lady Windermere's Fan* (1892), *A Woman of No Importance* (1893) and *An Ideal Husband* (1895), several collections of children's stories and the French drama *Salomé* (1896).

An Ideal Husband tells a story about a comedic stage play which revolves around blackmail and political corruption, and touches on the themes of public and private honour. This drama starts at a big, high culture party. Act 1 takes place at Sir Robert Chiltern's house, which is located in the fashionable part of London. The Chilterns are hosting a reception. The first two speakers of the play, two minor characters, Lady Basildon and Mrs. Marchmont, set a witty tone. They are pretty, young married women, and they speak to each other languidly and cleverly. Attention then moves to various new arrivals at the reception, such as Lord Caversham, who inquires after his son Lord Goring, and Mabel Chiltern, Sir Robert Chiltern's sister, who chats with Lord Caversham. The most important arrivals, however, are Lady Markby and Mrs. Cheveley, because the latter is the play's villain. That something serious will be occurring in this otherwise comic

play becomes clear when Lady Markby introduces Mrs. Cheveley to Lady Chiltern. Lady Chiltern realizes that she knows Mrs. Cheveley, but under a different name, the name of her first husband. Mrs. Cheveley clearly disturbs Lady Chiltern, and Lady Chiltern appears to dislike the other woman intensely.

Mrs. Cheveley has come to the party to speak to Sir Robert specifically, and, soon enough, the two find themselves alone. What Mrs. Cheveley wishes to talk about is blackmail, if Sir Robert does not support what is in fact a doomed South American canal scheme in a speech to the parliament the next day, Mrs. Cheveley will reveal the terrible secret of his youth, which will destroy his life and career. Shaken to his core, Sir Robert Chiltern agrees to do her bidding. At the end of act 1, Lady Chiltern succeeds in getting her husband to admit that Mrs. Cheveley has persuaded him to change his mind about the canal project. Lady Chiltern is outraged and convinces her husband to write to Mrs. Cheveley immediately, telling her that he will not support the project in his parliamentary speech. Wondering what kind of power Mrs. Cheveley has over her husband, Lady Chiltern declares that it had better not be blackmail that he better not be one of those men who pretend to be pillars of the community but who in fact have shameful secrets.

Act 2 opens the next morning, once again at the Chiltern residence. Lord Goring and Robert Chiltern are speaking. Robert Chiltern is telling his good friend Goring everything. At one point, Sir Robert Chiltern bitterly wonders why

a youthful folly has the power to ruin a man's career, even when that man has spent so many years doing good works. To this Lord Goring replies that what Robert Chiltern did was not folly but fairly ugly and very grave: he sold a state secret for money. Robert Chiltern tries to explain, saying that when he was young he was poor, so that it did not matter that he came from a good family because his prospects were limited by a lack of funds. Sir Robert Chiltern tells how he was seduced by the teachings of Baron Arnheim, who turned his head with "the most terrible of all philosophies, the philosophy of power and the most marvelous of all gospel, the gospel of gold," Baron says. Sir Robert Chiltern says he was ferociously ambitious, and that when the chance came to make his fortune, it did not matter that it depended on a crime, he took it.

Lady Chiltern comes home while the men are conversing. She has been at a "Woman's Liberal Association" meeting, where, as she says, they discuss things such as "Factory Acts, Female Inspectors, the Eight Hours Bill, the Parliamentary Franchise," and so on. Soon, Sir Robert Chiltern leaves and Mabel Chiltern takes his place, asking Lord Goring if he will meet her the next morning. Lord Goring agrees and then leaves. Next, Lady Markby and Mrs. Cheveley are announced. Mrs. Cheveley is inquiring about a diamond brooch she lost the day before, asking whether it was found by anyone at the reception. (Lord Goring found the brooch and still has it.) When Lady Markby leaves, Lady Chiltern and Mrs. Cheveley are able to speak to each other frankly. Lady Chiltern makes it clear

that Mrs. Cheveley is not welcome in her house. This spurs Mrs. Cheveley to tell Lady Chiltern the truth about her husband, and she warns Lady Chiltern that she will carry out her threat. Lady Chiltern is devastated to find out that her husband is like so many other men, men who have shameful secrets. She confronts her husband and tells him that her love for him is dead.

Act 3 takes place in Lord Goring's house, in the library, which is connected to a number of other rooms. Lord Goring is preparing to go out for the evening when he receives a letter from Lady Chiltern. It reads, "I want you. I trust you. I am coming to you." Lord Goring rightly deduces that Lady Chiltern now knows the truth about her husband and that Lady Chiltern needs to talk to someone. Lord Goring cancels his plans to go out and realizes that he must tell his servants that he is not in for anyone except Lady Chiltern, it would be disastrous for her reputation if she were found in his home without a chaperon. However, before Lord Goring can do this, his father is announced. Unfortunately for Goring, his father is in the mood to lecture him. Lord Goring tries unsuccessfully to get rid of his father and must listen to him go on about Goring's need to marry and settle down. In the meantime, Mrs. Cheveley has arrived, and a servant thinking Mrs. Cheveley is Lady Chiltern, escorts her into Goring's drawing room.

Finally able to show his father the door, Lord Goring is put out to find Sir Robert Chiltern on his doorstep. Lord Goring tries to get rid of Chiltern, believing all the while that Lady Chiltern is in the next room. Lord Goring is

concerned that Sir Robert Chiltern will discover his wife and misconstrue her presence in his home. Sir Robert Chiltern lingers and eventually overhears a sound coming from the room in which Mrs. Cheveley is waiting. Sir Robert Chiltern goes in, sees the woman, and returns to Lord Goring disgusted. Sir Robert Chiltern believes that Mrs. Cheveley and Lord Goring are having an affair. Lord Goring, for his part, believes that Sir Robert Chiltern has just seen his own wife. Sir Robert Chiltern leaves and Lord Goring sees that it is Mrs. Cheveley who is in the room. Lord Goring has Mrs. Cheveley's diamond brooch and tells her that the brooch is a gift he give to his niece, so that the only way Mrs. Cheveley can have come by it is to have stolen it, which she do. Lord Goring threatens to call the police and have her prosecuted for theft unless Mrs. Cheveley drops her blackmail plans. Mrs. Cheveley has no choice but to concede, and Goring makes her hand over the letter Sir Robert Chiltern wrote all those years ago. Goring burns the letter.

Act 4 takes place in the morning room of the Chiltern residence, the same setting as act 2. Lord Goring finally realizes that Mabel Chiltern is the woman for him and proposes. Mabel is very happy, as is the visiting Earl of Caversham. Lady Chiltern has forgiven her husband but still believes Sir Robert Chiltern must give up public life. Lady Chiltern thinks they should retire to the country. Lord Goring convinces her otherwise. Lord Goring makes her see that her husband thrives on politics, and if Lady Chiltern were to take that away from

him, Sir Robert Chiltern would become bitter and disillusioned and their marriage would suffer. Lady Chiltern realizes that Goring is right and relents. Sir Robert is ecstatic.

An Ideal Husband has an award of the theater. The Wellesley Summer Theatre was nominated for five IRNE awards for 2006 season. The first was Best Drama or Comedy (*An Ideal Husband*), second was Best Director (Andrea Kennedy, *An Ideal Husband*), third was Best Supporting Actor (Derek Stone Nelson, *An Ideal Husband*), fourth was Best Ensemble (*An Ideal Husband*), the last was Best Costume Design (Nancy Stevenson, *An Ideal Husband*).

There are many responses to *An Ideal Husband* drama. For example response from Shenly. She says that “No man is rich enough to buy back his own past and I always pass on good advice. It is the only thing to do with it. It is never of any use to oneself”. There is also a dislike response from Anita Rossell. She says that “Actually this is on the verge of descend because it is more like comedies which was common in the Restoration Period”. So, researcher considered that *An Ideal Husband* is very interesting to analyze.

There are six reasons that make the drama be interesting, important, and challenging to analyze. The first reason is why the researcher chooses to analyze this drama is because this drama has great setting, act I, The Octagon Room in Sir Robert Chiltern's House in Grosvenor Square, act II, morning-room in Sir

Robert Chiltern's House, act III, in the Library of Lord Goring's House in Curzon Street, last, act IV same as act II. It is London around 1890s. Oscar Wilde set this play in his own time. His many references to particular political situations (the Suez Canal, Women's Liberal Association) made the play up to the-minute for his readers.

The second reason is the characterization of the characters. The readers can see one of the characteristic of Sir Robert Chiltern. As a politician, Sir Robert seems like a moral contortionist. He sees a situation, figures out the best possible outcome, and bends himself to make it happen. This moral flexibility comes as a surprise to his wife, who had previously put him on a pedestal and considered him to be absolutely perfect in every way. After seeing that drama, everyone can feel how to make a good way in their life and don't be using hardness to solving problem. That is imagination from the reader after seeing this drama.

The third reason is the plot. Reasercher thinks that the plot in this drama has interesting conflict. The conflict is a complication that moves to climax. In this play, however, Lord Goring and Mrs. Cheveley are the most active characters, so it makes sense that the climax takes place between them.

The fourth reason is the themes. The theme is very complicated, such as, marriage, womanliness and the feminine, aestheticism and the art of living. As the title might suggest, *An Ideal Husband* primary theme is marriage, a common

premise for the potboiler melodramas of Wilde's day. The Victorian popular theater provided stock storylines of domestic life that, after various crises, would culminate in the reaffirmation of familiar themes: loyalty, sacrifice, undying love, forgiveness, devotion, and onward. More often than not, this reaffirmation also involved the re-establishment of the conjugal household.

The fifth reason on the genre. The genre in this drama is comedy, romance, satire, and parody. Wilde comes out with the melodramatic language to crack open a few heavy ideas about the value of empathy and forgiveness, but it is a comedy. And it is a comedy that makes fun of people's faults and bad habits which makes it a satire. It is filled with fun and zany characters and ends in marriage.

The last reason is researcher wants to analyze this drama because this drama has relationship with the life society and the social problem with all the aspect. Many aspects of this drama like: a struggle of life, economic, social, law, and the other.

In this drama there is an anxiety reflected by major character named Sir Robert Chiltern. Anxiety is the feeling that appears inside of the personality when the feeling of being afraid is bigger than their brave. It is also possible that anxiety occurs because the problem is too hard to solve. It happens because they

feel that something will threaten them. This act can change person's personality. They will look rather different than usual.

Having the feeling of anxiety motivates person to do something to free the external danger, to inhibit the instinctual impulse, or to obey the voice of conscience (Hall and Lindzey, 1985: 42). It has purpose that they can feel safely or more calmly in facing the realities that make them feel anxious. The circumstances of life inevitably place the personality under strain, even though they have many resources for coping with their problem. Their motives are not easily satisfied because they must think again what way they have to choose to solve their problem. Furthermore, the way that they use to reduce their anxiety is only for a while. So, later they have to face their own problem. The way that helps people to reduce the tension is called defense mechanism.

According to Freud, *defense mechanism* is "mental process that has goal to reduce the anxiety and that shares two particular characteristics: they operate unconsciously and distort reality" (Hall and Lindzey, 1985:45). In other word, the use of ego defense mechanism can give the feeling of safety from being anxious. Freud (in Hjelle and Ziegler, 1976: 38) said that *defense mechanism* is "a strategy used by the individual to defend against open expression of id impulses and posing super ego pressure". Here, the researcher wants to explore the anxiety and the ego defense mechanism on the major character's personality that shows in *An Ideal Husband*, a play, written by Oscar Wilde.

Based on the background, the researcher wants to show that as a good character or as a major character, Sir Robert Chiltern has a good character, he is handsome and intelligent, he is an accomplished government official, considered by all as an ideal husband and model politician. As described in the stage notes, Sir Robert has effected a violent separation of thought and emotion in his personality, moreover, he suffers from divided loyalties. Therefore, the researcher gives a title: **ANXIETY IN OSCAR WILDE'S *AN IDEAL HUSBAND* DRAMA (1895): A PSYCHOANALYTIC APPROACH.**

B. Literature Review

As long as the researcher knows, there has been another researcher who did a research about the play, namely Martha Kurniawati (Universitas Kristen Petra: 2009). The title to the her research is a mistake in the past and its consequences as seen in Oscar Wilde's *An Ideal Husband*. In her research, she focused on the main character's mistake in the past and its consequences. She wants to analyze the reasons of Sir Robert Chiltren commit the mistake, discuss the consequences and his efforts to pay for his mistake. In this occasion, the researcher tries to conduct the research paper on the anxiety that appears in major characters personality and the ego defense mechanism, which appears by using psychoanalytic perspective.

C. Problem Statement

The major problem of the study is how anxiety is reflected in Sir Robert Chiltern's personality.

D. Limitation of the Study

This study is limited to the anxiety that appears in Sir Robert Chiltern's personality because the problem arises and ego defense mechanism that he uses on facing the reality about the act that he did in the past and the influences that appears in his personality. This study uses A Psychoanalytic Approach.

E. Objectives of the Study

Dealing with the statement above, the objectives of the studies are:

1. To analyze the play based on its structural elements.
2. To analyze the play based on the psychoanalytic approach.

F. The Benefits of the Study

The benefits of the studies are:

1. Theoretical Benefit
 - a. This research will become a reference to study literature, especially drama analysis using psychoanalytic approach.
 - b. This research can give a contribution to English learning.

2. Practical Benefit

This research gives a deep understanding for the writer himself about the play based on psychoanalytic approach.

G. Research Method

1. Type of the Research

The researcher uses descriptive qualitative method. Here the researcher tries to relate the discussion of analysis based on the underlying theory.

2. Objects of the Research

The researcher takes Oscar Wilde's *An Ideal Husband*, which contains the series of drama description. Here, the researcher tries to analyze the anxieties and the ego defense mechanisms that appear in the major character's personality.

3. Data Source

There are two types of data sources, namely:

a. Primary Data Source

The primary data source is the scripts play itself, *An Ideal Husband* by Oscar Wilde.

b. Secondary Data Source

The secondary data are taken from other sources related to primary data such as the author biography, some books of psychoanalysis criticism, references from internet related to *An Ideal Husband* Drama.

4. Technique of the Data Collection

The methods of collecting data in this research are as follows:

- a. Reading the drama script repeatedly
- b. Taking note of the important part in both primary and secondary data
- c. Identifying the topic of the play
- d. Analyzing the data of the research based on Sigmund Freud's theory

5. Technique of the Data Analysis

The technique of Data Analysis in this study is descriptive and hermeneutic. Description means that the researcher interprets the text and content relating to the psychological condition of the major character, while hermeneutic interprets the script to find out the intension of the playwright.

H. Paper Organization

The research paper will be divided into five chapters. Chapter I is Introduction, covering background of the study, literature review, problem

statement, limitation of the study, objectives of the study, benefit of the study, research method and paper organization. Chapter II will be underlying theory, covering notion of Psychoanalysis theory, system of personality, anxiety, and defense mechanism. Chapter III will be structural analysis, which includes the character and characterization, plot, setting, style and theme. Chapter IV will be Psychoanalysis analysis of the characters chosen by the writer in *An Ideal Husband* drama, it presents the application of underlying theory in analyzing the problem consists of structure of personality, anxiety, and defense mechanism. Chapter V will present conclusion and suggestion for this research paper also the synopsis of the story.