

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

There is no doubt that family is important and has significant roles in human life. Family is the first medium where an individual is able to receive and give love, affection and protection. The love, affection, and protection they get from the family will enable them to feel sympathy, empathy and understanding towards other people. Those emotional skills are useful for them in interacting and socializing with other people in the society (Grayson 1). It is a common knowledge that an individual who lacks affection and attention during their childhood time would often result in having lacks or difficulties in their adolescent time (Carlie 1).

When speaking of the ideal concept of family in America, the adult male is responsible to provide the economic basic of family-household, so it means he must earn an income. The adult female may also earn an income, but her primary responsibility is to take care of the husband, the children and the household (Smith 65). This is actually the reason why children tend to be more emotionally dependent on their mother rather than on their father.

... . The fact that single-parent is many in America, especially single-parent mother makes the role of mother in America is really important in family, makes the children cannot be separated by their mother until they reach the adult age. Mother guide their children to act and nurturing their children. As a result, mother brings the unity of the family itself (Boehlke Julie).

As the main supporter in family member, the existence of mother has a significance role. Mother is an important figure to nurture their children, not only to make their children become a good person, but also to help them develop their unique talent for the future. These roles are expected to be taken care by the mother because no other person can specifically understand the sense of mutual understanding of the children better than a mother (www.lds.org).

Children cannot be separated from their mother. If their mother abandones her children physically or mentally, it would totally affect the children. They will have low self esteem in their daily life. Moreover, children who have been abandoned by mother will think that their mother does not love them anymore and they will think that they have made a big mistake which cause their mother leaves them. More importantly, the children will be in doubt to develop some kinds of bond with another person. It is because the children will think that the person will leave him or her when he or she starts to like the person (Van Wyden 3).

There have been a lot of works that portray that phenomenon, such as movies and novels. One of the novels that bring out such issue in its story is a novel entitled *Walk Two Moons* which is written by Sharon Creech. This novel tells about Salamanca (Sal) Tree Heddle, a thirteen-year-old who is having a journey from Ohio to Idaho with her eccentric grandparents to visit her mother. As the story goes, the readers are given the fact that Sal's mother has already passed away. At first it seems that Sal is in denial, like she does not believe that her mother has passed away until she decides to take the trip. During the trip, a lot

of things happen and those help Sal accept the fact about her mother and find a way to fix her relationship *with* her father and also make peace with her.

There are a lot of authors that bring out such issue in their novels, one of them is Sharon Creech. Sharon Creech is an author of many renowned novels Newbery Medal who has become famous for her literary works. Her novel that brings out the issues mentioned previously is entitled *Walk Two Moons*. That novel won the best Newbery Medal in 1995. Sharon Creech *Walk Two Moons* also received the United Kingdom Reading Association Award, and the United Kingdom's Children's Book Award. In 1997, it also won the Literaturhaus Award, Austria, and the Young Adult Sequoyah Award, Oklahoma, USA. She is the Newbery Honour winner author of *The Wanderer*. Her other works include *Bloomability*, *Absolutely Normal Chaos*, *Chasing Redbird*, *Pleasing the Ghost*, *Love That Dog*, and *Ruby Holler* (summary.blog.com).

There are many reasons why the writer uses this *Walk Two Moons* novel in her thesis. First, it won the Newberry Medal and the United Kingdom Reading Association Award winner in children literature category. Second, the story of Salamanca in *Walk Two Moons* gives an illustration about human's problems in life, and like any other literary works, it has a moral message in it, especially considering that *Walk Two Moons* is a Children Literature. A moral message is necessary in a children literature, so that children can read a literary text which is not only easy to understand and entertaining, but also can teach them about good deeds and behavior. According to Wan Syakira Meor Hissan, quoting Peter Hunt a children literature is a piece of writing which is suitable for children. By reading

it, children can relate the experience which the main character gets with their experience and take the moral value from it (Hissan 83-84). As a children literature, *Walk Two Moons* encourages children as the readers in understanding that family bound is important for children to face their future and solve their problem in daily activity. It also shows about the impact of having a broken family that can be bad for children's mental behavior. Thus, children can learn a lot by reading this novel.

The writer is interested in analyzing the main character's characterization. The writer would like to understand how the primary conflict in the story affects Salamanca's attitude and behavior. In conducting the analysis, the writer apply New Criticism since it deals with formal element of a story, and see how those elements combined together in the wholeness of the story. The Formal Elements that will be analyzed are characterization, plot and setting.

1.2. Statement of the Problems

Based on the background of the study above, the writer comes up with three research questions, they are:

1. How are Salamanca's attitude and behavior portrayed in this novel?
2. How does the absence of Salamanca's mother give the impacts to her attitude and behavior?

1.3. Objective of the Study

The study aims at reaching several objectives that are expected. The following objectives are answered according to the questions proposed in the statement of the problems. The objectives are as the following:

1. To discover how Salamanca's attitude and behavior are portrayed in the text.
2. To understand the way the conflicts in the text develop Salamanca's attitude and behavior influence affect those conflicts.

1.4. Significance of the Study

The importance of this study is to show the readers the impact of missing a mother's figure in a child's life and how it can affect the child's attitude and behavior. Being abandoned by their mother, children can suffer from a trauma, whether it is a light or a heavy one. It is also from this thesis that the readers are expected to gain some knowledge about how to deal with such traumatic event or help children who are experiencing the same thing. In doing so, this thesis is hoped to contribute towards the advancement of life in human society.

Besides that, the study is expected to contribute to the academic community of Universitas Airlangga by providing insights to *Walk Two Moons*. The writer also hopes that by reading this thesis, the readers would be able to gain some understanding about the formal elements that form a text as an organic unity. Finally, this thesis is expected to be a reference or an example on how to analyze a literary work by applying the theory of New Criticism.

1.5. Scope and Limitation

The subject of this study focuses on Salamanca characterization, plot and setting of the novel. The characterization of Salamanca is the most distinctive among the characters in the play. Other characters such as Phoebe, Ben, Father, Grandpa, Grandma and Margaret are only mentioned for their interaction with Salamanca in order to support the analysis. Furthermore, the writer would like to see how characterization, plot and setting work together as formal elements that form a text. In analyzing those formal elements, the writer applies New Criticism as the main theoretical framework since it emphasizes its focus on the importance of a text as an organic unity. There are many elements of fiction can be analyzed in New Criticism theory, however this study limits on character, plot and setting since those three elements form the main topic to discuss in a text. The writer argues that by explaining the connection between characterization, plot and setting, the writer will get a deeper and a more comprehensive analysis.

1.6. Theoretical Background

The Novel *Walk Two Moons* is analyzed by using the theory of New Criticism as it is assumed to be the suitable one to analyze the text. The analysis uses method that only uses the text to understand and finds the meaning of the text itself. This theory is supported by Richard Gill's concept of character, plot, setting to support the discussed in this thesis. The characterization is explained in order to analyze Salamanca character as the main character in the novel *Walk Two Moons*;

the plot is described to analyze the conflict of the story and its relation with the theme of losing mother.

1.7 Method of the Study

Since this study is a qualitative research, qualitative method thus becomes the most suitable methodology to be used in this text. Qualitative research enables us not only to describe and explain the social world, but also to describe and to develop the explanatory models and theory. Thus, the contribution of qualitative research is both vital and unique to the goals of research in general (Berg 2). The first step in doing a qualitative research is collecting the data. The technique of data collection which is applied in this study is conducted by doing close reading which means reading the primary source, which is the novel itself. The writer also explores for more details from secondary sources such as online sources, printed books and some articles to support the analysis. Here, the writer gets the main and additional theories and knowledge which support her thoughts.

After that, the writer proceeds to the technique of data analysis. Here, the writer takes the main data from the novel by doing several times of close reading, so that the writer will be able to find the parts of the text to discuss. Then the writer will distinguish the useful data from the unuseful one and then analyze the useful data using the theory mentioned. For example, the writer would analyze Salamanca's characterization by explaining the portrayal of her in facing her teenage life in the story in order to understand whether there are impacts of her mother's absence towards her attitude and behavior. Second, the writer will

observe the plot, and the third one is setting to support the object analysis to find out the events, both internal and external ones that happen to Salamanca.

The writer use interpretation analysis that relates to the theory of the analysis. Interpretive is commonly used in paper research of literary. To interpret something is to put it in words that the reader can better understand. To analyze is to examine the part of a work with the goal of determining the nature of the whole. Interpretive analysis can help discover deeper meaning within a literary work. So, the writer also applies this method to analyze the formal elements and explanation through dialogues, events, and actions in the novel the impact of a mother's absence to the main character's attitude and behavior in Sharon Creech *Walk Two Moons*.

1.8. Definition of Key Terms

Attitude : the way of thinking.

Behavior : the way of behaving.

Characterization : the way that author describes the characters' behaviors and habits.

Character : person or actor in the story.

Organic unity : interdependent part of literary texts that unify and formed A theme.

Plot : A series of event contains conflict.

Setting : the point of place, time, or condition at which the events of the plot occur.