

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

“He heard a voice, and it seemed so familiar to him that he went towards it, and when he approached, Rapunzel knew him and fell on his neck and wept. Two of her tears wetted his eyes and they grew clear again, and he could see with them as before. He led her to his kingdom where he was joyfully received, and they lived for a long time afterwards, happy and contented.” (the story of Rapunzel by Brothers and Grimm).

“Happy and contented” or “Happily ever after” are the common words which emerge at the end of fairy tale story. Verhaert (2008) describes the fairy tale, as a fictional tale which happens somewhere far far away and has some fairy tale figures in it, like a princess or giants but also millers or talking animals. (Verhaert 2008, p. 6). Moseley (n.d.) states in her article entitled ‘The Importance of Fairy tales’,

By reading a story which included beautiful princess, noble princes and kind fairy godmothers, dragons, ogres, witches, evil spells, wicked stepmothers, and also magic, she feels that knowing it as a fantasy story, it makes her feel so safe when she wants to go to bed and never have a nightmare (Moseley n.d., p. 1).

Drawing on Moseley’s statement, the writer assumes that by using the theme of empire, a love story between the prince and the princess, magic, witch, and adventure, fairy tales are categorized as the interesting story for children who have a wide imagination to explore their fantasies. When the bed time has come, most of the children already in their beds to read fairy tales with their parents. These stories are very close to the world of children and often associated with ‘Bedtime story’.

When the fairy tales are read and loved by them, based on the brain development of children, these memories will always be taken until they are adults. In

the stage of learning, children will learn and memorize through what they like and see at that time. The tales that they heard or watched in the stage of learning, will always be in their mind and it is not just the stories, but all the characters inside it.

However, there are other effects for the children which caused by the concept of fairy tales. For example, in the concept of good and bad thing and the princess concept that describes the characteristics of women which are nurturing, bland, helpful, and submissive. Most of them will always assume that men are described as the strong character and has a duty to protect women, then on the other side, women are described as the princess who is submissive, gentle and beautiful. These concepts give some effects for the children who are still learning about 'life' and deconstruct their mind that all portrayal in the fairy tales are the law of nature.

In general, there are many opinions about the positive and negative thing in fairy tale stories. On the positive effects for children, some people will always think that it can make the children learn about the good and bad things about life and also believes in hope. Moseley (n.d.) states in her article 'The Importance of Fairy Tales', While fairy tales entertain us, they also teach us about love, honor, sacrifice, hope, courage, hard work, justice. Sometimes, being detached from our everyday world, they free our minds to see intangibles with special clarity." (Moseley n.d., p. 2). According to Moseley's statement, the writer assumes that by looking at how the characters believe in their hope to find their true love and happily ever after as their ending, it can help the children to think that 'nothing is impossible' if we have our hope and work hard to get that. In addition, fairy tale stories also help the parents to show their children about what is good to do and the opposite side for them.

However, if there are positive things, it must be always the negative effects which emerge in fairy tale stories.

According to M.M. Kaye's quotes in Jackson's journal, 'The underlying messages of Disney Princess Fairytales and Their Influence on Girls' Relationships':

the most obvious theme of princess fairytales with a negative effect on girls is the image of the stereotypical princess. Disney princesses are, by definition, flawless. M.M. Kaye's satirical fairy tale, "The Ordinary Princess" sums up the main points of a princess in seven points: Firstly – very beautiful; Secondly – long golden hair; Thirdly – blue eyes; Fourthly – lovely complexions; Fifthly – graceful; Sixthly – accomplished; Seventhly – names like Persephone, Sapphire, and Roxanne (83)." (Jackson n.d., p. 2).

Hoffman (2004) states, television, movies, billboards, music, and magazines are only a few of the mediums through which the media convey messages to children. A child between the ages of 3 and 12 spends an average of 21 hours per week watching television. In a presentation at the University of Maine called *The American Beauty Myth*, former actress and model Camille Cooper revealed how the media employs image retouching, lighting techniques, and camera filters to distort the images that we see (Hoffman 2004, p. 5). Drawings on the Kaye and Hoffman's statement about 'the ideal beauty' of woman in the media, the writer assumes that the princess concept can be categorized as the negative effects for the children because it can make them to think that those concepts are the natural law for a woman.

For example, in Cinderella and Snow White story, both of the main female characters (Cinderella and Snow White) are described as the princess who is beautiful, innocence, 'caring' that they can look from the story when they have to do the household matters such as sweep the floor and clean their house, 'nurturing' that most of them can look it from how their interaction between them and the animals by caring it, and also wait for the true love comes for her, save their bad life and has a happily ever after ending. On the other side, the

witch who is represented as a woman who is not bland as the princess, brave enough to do something, and aggressive, she will be identified as the evil in the story. These kind of concepts can be categorized as the negative effects for the children, especially girls because it can influence their minds that all of the concepts are true and will be brought by them until they grown up. Most of them will always assume that a good woman has to do the same thing as the princess and if they do not want to be called as an 'evil', they have to be a good woman which reflected in the fairy tale stories.

The Disney Corporation as the largest media conglomerate in the world discharges the newest way to enjoy the fairy tale stories in 1937. For the first time, one of the fairy tale stories, Snow White re-told through the colorful cartoon which played in cinema and got the box office. Afterwards, not long after it made into a film, there are the other fairy tale stories such as Cinderella, Alladin, Beauty and the Beast, and Sleeping Beauty that made in the colorful cartoon. After a while, those fairy tale stories are not just shared from mouth to mouth but they start to make it into a film and take more attention to the story line.

There are a lot of fairy tale stories which made into a film such as Alice in the Wonderland, Mirror Mirror, *Snow White and the Huntsman* and also the newest film that adapted from the fairy tale story, Hansel and Gretel which released in 2013. Nowadays, when the film industry is growing, there are several variations on the story and the characters of those films. In this study, the writer chooses one of those films, *Snow White and the Huntsman* because it is categorized as the newest film adaptation of the fairy tale and the warrior princess concept inside it.

The uniqueness of *Snow White and the Huntsman* film that is seen by the writer is because the interest from the film itself and the stars that take attention of

many people to watch it. According to Gille (2012), the Hollywood Reporter states that *Snow White and the Huntsman* was the top movie in France, Japan, Australia and New Zealand, raking in \$22.6 million at 6,780 locations in 60 markets. *Snow White and the Huntsman* is an undeniable box-office success (Gille 2012, p. 1 of 1). Snow White is a classic fairy tale story that everyone must already know about it. There are many films that have been retelling the story of Snow White, includes *Snow White and the Huntsman*. However, the first reason that makes this film is very unique because the presence of a 'warrior princess' character in Snow White. As everybody know, Snow White is the female lead character or 'the central person' in the story of Snow White. Automatically, when the character of Snow White is changed to be the warrior princess and she is not just described as the princess. This character leads the film to get a lot of attention from the public, because it is new for them and the adaptation film of fairy tales.

Besides that, In the 21st century as the era of Third Wave Feminism, all women believe that it is the era when women and girls are doing fine. There are some movements such as Girl Power who strengthens the women's power without leave their identity as a woman. The description of the 'warrior princess' in here attracts the attention of public because she is not only described as the ordinary princess but also the princess who is brave to go to the war and shows her strength as a woman. The warrior princess or 'a strong woman' concept in *Snow White and the Huntsman* film is appropriate to the spirit of Third Wave Feminism era. By looking at the actress who plays Snow White in *Snow White and the Huntsman* film, the targets of this film is not the children but for the teenage girls even all women. Besides that, the presence

of Kristen Stewart as Snow White also take a lot of attention from the public. As everybody know about her previous film, the Twilight series which also get a lot of attention in the film industry. Many people will wait her next film even want to see her acting skill as the warrior princess in Snow White and the Huntsman film.

Snow White and the Huntsman is a fantasy film which adapted from Brother and Grimm's fairy tale story and released in May 2012 after the other version of the Snow White story, Mirror Mirror released one month before it. *Snow White and the Huntsman* film is directed by Rupert Sanders who classified as the professional to direct some advertisements and make his debut to direct a film, *Snow White and the Huntsman*. From his experience, even though it is the first film for him, he has succeeded in bringing it to be a box office. Furthermore, this film also brings their main actor and actresses get or nominated in some awards event such as Choice Movie Hissy Fit won by Charlize Theron as Ravenna, Choice Summer Movie for the female won by Kristen Stewart as Snow White, and two nominations in Choice Summer Movie Star for the male and GQ Men of The Year award for International Breakthrough in GQ Award event won by Chris Hemsworth (Wiki 2013, p. 1).

Snow White and the Huntsman film begins with a story of a girl named Snow White who must look with her own eyes that her father died at the hand of her stepmother. Moreover, her misery does not stop from there; she should be locked in the North tower until she grows up and her kingdom blackened by her stepmother, Ravenna. A few years later after the massacre of her father's kingdom, she can successfully escape from the Queen by injuring Ravenna's brother with a nail. Afterwards, this story continues with the instruction of the Queen to find Snow White

in the Dark Forest. She sends the Huntsman who is described as the drunkard man and disappointed with himself because of the death of his wife, to hunt Snow White. In the Dark Forest, the Huntsman successfully finds Snow White, but rather than bring her to the Queen, the Huntsman rejects her will and accompanies Snow White to the Duke Hammonds which there is an army with the name of Snow White's father. Finally, this film ends with the victory of Snow White and she is enthroned as the Queen of the kingdom.

From several versions of Snow White film, *Snow White and the Huntsman* is the first film which uses the dark concept (Cornet 2012, p. 1 of 1). According to Rupert Sanders as the director, he tries to bring a kind of dark or sad 'background' for all the characters. For example, Snow White who must look her father died and the kingdom falls in the hand of Ravenna, her stepmother, The Huntsman who cannot leave his sad memory about her wife, and also Ravenna who has a painful experience about her mother (Cornet 2012, p.1 of 1). This study will focus in the female lead character, Ravenna and Snow White to find the representation of them in this adaptation film of the fairy tale, *Snow White and the Huntsman*. For the writer, this film is different from the original one because the princess, Snow White does not just wait for the prince to come after her and make her life happily ever after, but she has to do something to realize it, take an action. Furthermore, Ravenna, Snow White's stepmother who is identical with 'the evil', she is not jealous in order to look beautiful in physical thing, but her beauty connects with her power.

Snow White and the Huntsman film is quite interesting to discuss because it shows the different concept of the female lead character, Snow White who described

as bland, nurturing, caring, and also wait for her lovers in the original story. Maggiore states (2003), however, this imparting of societal rules through fairy tales can be used to manipulate and brainwash children into continuing the dominance of a group. One such group that is afflicted with the lessons of fairy tales is women.” (Maggiore 2003, p. 2). Most of the well-known fairy tale stories are the princess story such as Snow White, Cinderella, and Sleeping Beauty. It is because the main character of these stories is a woman, so most of the children think that women should be like those princesses. To analyze this research, the writer uses feminism as the theoretical framework. The theory will help the writer to look at the representation of the female lead character (Ravenna and Snow White) in order to dig the real message of this film. Furthermore, as the method of this study, the writer uses qualitative method which looks at the narrative and non-narrative aspect of the film.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

After seeing and determining the topic as it has already been explained by, there is a question that could be raised. The question is:

1. How is the female lead characters, Ravenna and Snow White portrayed in *Snow White and the Huntsman* film?

1.3. Objective of the Study

As it has been mentioned in the statement of the problem, the goals of the study are:

1. To investigate and analyze the portrayal of the female lead characters, Ravenna and Snow White.

1.4. Significance of the Study

Since the Grimms recount some of the fairy tales from Europe such as Snow White, Cinderella, and Rapunzel, they can be said to be successful in the dissemination of those fairy tale stories. Besides that, the tales which made in the animated film by Disney corporation, it makes these tales are more well-known in the child's world. As everybody knows, the child's world is very close to the cartoon or animated movie. They are very fond of cartoon or animated movie. According to Megamundo (2010), in his article with a title "Research: Why Kids like Cartoons", there are three main points of his finding,

The first is because the cartoon is fun, the second is children can learn from these cartoons because they are not dull, and the important finding is because they are fantastical. Kids want to see something unrealistic because they want to escape from the real world. It is a desire for kids to forget about boring things like homework and find something fun to do. They want to watch something that continues as normal because it represents nothing out of the ordinary. The cartoons let the kids believe that their dreams can come true." (Megamundo 2010, p. 1 of 1).

Children who fall in love with cartoons will bring their memories of them until they are adults. On the top of that, it is not just about the story itself, but also the whole characters especially the 'angelic' and the 'evil'.

Besides from the animated movies, some of the industrial film that was originally made into a cartoon version of the fairy tale, now they re-make it in a film. There are a lot of films such as Hansel and Gretel, *Snow White and the Huntsman*, and Mirror Mirror which is so well-known for the public. Since the industrial film developed rapidly, there is a kind of modification for the story and the characters in a film which adapted from the tales. *Snow White and the Huntsman* film is one of those films that have those modifications. Based on the objective of the study, there are two significance of the study. The first is the writer hopes that this study provides a perspective on how we should be sensitive to the messages in a film, especially for the tales which made into a film. The second is this study would be the tool to help others who wants to analyze fairy tale story which made into a film, especially for the female character who is depicted as the strong woman. This study focused on the female lead characters of *Snow White and the Huntsman* film, Ravenna and Snow White. These characters are the main character who brings the plot of the story in the beginning until end of the film. Besides from the film itself, the writer just focused on the third wave feminism in the term of girl power and it will be supported from the narrative and non-narrative aspect.

1.5. Organization of the Thesis

1.1 Chapter 1 – Introduction

This chapter will present about the background of the study, a statement of the problem, purpose of the study, the significance of the study, theoretical Framework,

the method of the study, scope and limitation, organization of the thesis, and also the definition of key terms.

1.2. Chapter II – Literature Review

To keep both research's validity and reliability, the researcher provides knowledge related to the topic. The writer will use the literature review from the journals which has a topic about fairy tale such as Snow White story and related studies which use deconstruction theory as the theoretical framework.

1.3. Chapter III – Research Methodology

In the research methodology, there would be research design, data collection, data and data analysis. Many data that needed by the researcher are collected and analyzed in this part. The contribution of the samples gives a lot of objective views in gaining the data required.

1.4. Chapter IV – Findings and Discussions

In this chapter, the finding and discussions from all results of data analysis will occurs in it. The questions that come in the statement of the problem, will find the answer to make it clearer for the readers and the researcher conveys the discussions of the findings.

1.5. Chapter V – Conclusion and Recommendation

This is the end of the chapter; it will be focused on the conclusion of this research. It will bring the whole analysis becomes the short explanation which makes the reader understand about the topic, analysis, and the findings.

1.6. Definition of Key Terms

Fairy tale : A fictional tale which happens somewhere far far away and has some fairy tale figures in it, like a princess or giants but also millers or talking animals. The story has a happy ending which tells about the success of the hero and teaches something about human mental processes or eternal wisdom (Verhaert 2008, p. 6). Most of the fairy tale stories belong to the Brother and Grimm in Germany. Brother and Grimm are two brothers who compiled some fairy tales into one book and retell those stories to the public.

Representation : Something that represents another thing, either as the physical object that is usually smaller than the real object, or as a simple description that can be used in calculations (Cambridge dictionary, p. 1 of 1).

Third wave feminism : Third wave of feminism does not seem to be fighting men but rather fighting injustices. These issues include racism, child abuse, rape, domestic violence, homophobia, heterosexism, environmental degradation, classism, healthcare, and reproductive rights.” (Charisse 2003)

Girl Power : Girl power is a term from the third wave of feminism which occurs in the early 1990s.