

Chapter Three

ANALYSIS

The analysis of this thesis is focused on the searching for the theme and the messages of Oscar Wilde's *The Happy Prince*. Theme is the idea that puts the basis for the story. It emerges in the characters and whatever they do in action. Based on this fact, the analysis will be emphasized on the characters of the story, especially the major characters, the Happy Prince and his friend, the Swallow, and their conflicts to finally describe the theme and the messages. To support the analysis to find the theme and the messages, the writer will also analyze other intrinsic elements of the story, they are the setting and the plot of the story.

A. The Intrinsic Analysis of Oscar Wilde's *The Happy Prince*

This analysis work is using the objective theory, which disregards any extrinsic elements of the story. To work right along with the theory, the

intrinsic approach is also applied in the analysis due to the fact that the writer is focusing his analysis on the intrinsic elements. The intrinsic elements that will be used to support the analysis are plot, character, conflict, and setting.

Plot, as the arrangement of events to achieve an intended effect, is absolutely needed to describe the theme of a literary work. By knowing the plot, readers will understand more about the movement of the story and finally they can obtain the messages.

The exposition of the story of Oscar Wilde's *The Happy Prince* begins with the introduction to the two major characters of the story, the Happy Prince and the Swallow. The Happy Prince is introduced as the statue of the city that is made of thin leaves of fine gold, two bright sapphires for his eyes, and a large ruby on his sword-hilt. It is set up on a tall column and everybody admired him much. Although it is a statue, the character of the Prince is presented like a human being. He could talk and see, and he had feelings like the living, but he couldn't move because he was set up on a tall column.

The Happy Prince had once been the real prince of the Palace of Sans-Souci. His courtiers had called him the Happy Prince because he had always lived in

happiness inside the Palace, he had never known what had happened outside the Palace, where there were ugliness and misery. All he knew at that time was pleasure of life. After he had died, people set his figure on a statue high above the city.

In the exposition, it is also told that the Little Swallow is a swallow that had been left by his companions flying to Egypt because he had been falling in love with the most beautiful Reed near the river. Finally, the Swallow felt lonely and began to tire of his beloved Reed.

The two major characters of the story, the Happy Prince and the Swallow, are both flat characters, because they have so simple characterizations that they do not change much throughout the story. They both have good hearts and really appreciate kindness to other people; and it goes until the end of the story. They are also unique characters because they are not human beings but they are described by the author like they are ones. The statue of the Prince could talk, see, and feel but he could not move, and the Swallow was a little bird but he could talk to the Prince.

The setting of the exposition is the city where the statue of the Happy Prince was set up on a tall

column. The atmosphere here is calm and serene. It is shown by the description of the statue which was placed high above the city and built of thin leaves of fine gold, two bright sapphires, and a large red ruby. It is also shown by the admiration of many people to the statue of the Happy Prince.

The conflict of the story has actually started to rise in the introductory part when the Swallow felt lonely and he had to leave his most beautiful Reed. He was in love with the Reed, but in the other hand he loved travelling and he wanted to have a lover who also loved travelling. He decided to join his companions to fly to Egypt. This conflict also makes the story grow, because by his decision to leave the Reed and fly to Egypt, he entered the city and met the Happy Prince when he wanted to take a rest on the tall column of the statue.

The conflict continues to rise when the Happy Prince saw some miseries of the citizens and he asked the Swallow to help them because he couldn't do anything but seeing, talking, and feeling. Everytime the Prince asked for help, the Swallow always rejected for the reason that he had to fly to Egypt. Fortunately, the Swallow had a good heart that he was finally willing to help.

The climax of the story started to happen when the Swallow was going to die because of growing colder and colder. The Swallow said that he was going to the House of Death, then he kissed the Prince and fell down dead on his feet. The leaden heart of the Happy Prince snapped right in two because of a dreadfully hard frost.

The resolution of the story happens in the last part when God said to one of His Angels to bring Him the two most precious things in the city; and the Angel chose the leaden heart of the statue of the Happy Prince and the dead Swallow.

The story takes place in the city where the Happy Prince had used to live as the real prince. There is no statement about the name of the city, but it is stated that the palace of the Happy Prince is called the Palace of Sans-Souci. The atmosphere of the setting that is described in the story is saddening and miserable because the Happy Prince only cared about the people who lived in misery.

B. The Significance of the Theme and Message of Oscar Wilde's *The Happy Prince*

This story tells readers about the statue of the Happy Prince and his friend, the Swallow. When he

still used to live as a real prince, the Happy Prince never realized that outside his palace there were lots of ugliness and misery, he always lived in pleasure and happiness so that his courtiers called him the Happy Prince. After the Prince had died, people set his statue up in the city so that the Happy Prince now could see all the ugliness and all the misery.

Oscar Wilde's *The Happy Prince* has a unique characterization since the major characters of the story are a statue, that is the statue of the Happy Prince, and a little swallow, namely the Swallow, the friend of the prince. The Happy Prince was a statue, but in this story, the character is described like the character of a human being. He could talk; he could see, and he could feel, but he couldn't move.

The Happy Prince had once been the prince of the Palace of Sans-Souci. His courtiers had called him the Happy Prince because he had always lived in happiness inside the Palace, he had never known what had happened outside the Palace, where there were ugliness and misery. All he knew at that time was pleasure of life. After he had died, people set up his figure on a statue high above the city so that he could see the ugliness and miseries in the city.

"...So I lived, and so I died. And now that I am dead they have set me up here so high that I can see all the ugliness and all the misery of my city..." (page 139)

The inner conflict that happens to the Happy Prince is that, as a statue, he was now able to see the ugliness and miseries in the city but he could not do anything. On the contrary, when he had been a real prince, he could have done a lot of kindness for the people but he had not done anything because he had not known that there had been the ugliness and miseries.

From this inner conflict of the Happy Prince, we can notice that the Prince actually had a good heart but he had never had a chance to show it when he had been a real prince. It is natural that every people who lives in many pleasures of life not care for the misery of other people.

"I did not know what tears were, for I lived in the Palace of Sans-Souci, where sorrow is not allowed to enter... Round the garden ran a very lofty wall, but I never cared to ask what lay beyond it, everything about me was so beautiful. My courtiers called me the Happy Prince, and happy indeed I was, if pleasure be happiness." (page 139)

The Prince's words quoted above indicate that the Prince did not realize and care for the ugliness and the miseries of his people because he had been loaded on his pleasures. He had thought that the pleasures he had got in the Palace of Sans-Souci meant happiness, but when he had been set up as a statue, he realized that pleasures did not always mean happiness, so he wanted to expiate his sin by doing some good actions for the miserable people of his city.

There are many important words in the Happy Prince's speaking that help readers reveal the theme of the story, and from these words readers can also pull out many good teachings. His first speaking to the Swallow shows that he was sorry for his life of being a prince because it had made him blind to see the ugliness and miseries among the people. His words "My courtiers called me the Happy Prince, and happy indeed I was, if pleasure be happiness" indicate that the Prince had used to think that happiness comes out from his pleasures of life. After he died and became a statue, he could see all the ugliness and miseries that he had never realized before. His words "they have set me up here so high that I can see all the ugliness and misery of my city, and though my heart is made of lead yet I cannot choose but weep" show

his regret; and by these words he realized that pleasures of life doesn't always mean happiness.

This inner conflict of the Prince sets up the basis for the theme of the story, because by this conflict the character of the Happy Prince wanted to do some kindness for his people. Although he could not do it by himself, he then asked his friend, the Swallow, to help him do some good actions to the miserable people that the Prince could see.

The social conflict of the Prince happened between him and his friend, the Swallow. He always wanted the Swallow to stay with him to help him, but the Swallow always said that he would join his companions flying to Egypt.

The Swallow is a little swallow of the city who was left by his friends going away to Egypt. He stayed behind because he was falling in love with the most beautiful Reed near the river. He felt lonely when his friends had left him. He finally decided to leave his beloved Reed and start to fly to Egypt.

The first help that The Happy Prince wanted the Swallow to do is to help a woman and her little boy in a poor house. She was embroidering passion-flowers on a satin gown for the loveliest of the Queen's maids-of-honour. The boy was having a fever and

asking for oranges. The mother didn't have anything to give but river water, so he was crying.

The first conflict between these two major characters happened when the Happy Prince asked the Swallow to bring her the ruby out of his sword-hilt. The Swallow didn't want to help because he thought he had to go to Egypt, but the Prince looked so sad that he was sorry, and finally stayed to be his messenger. The Swallow picked out the great ruby from the Prince's sword, and flew away over the roofs of the town to the poor house. He came to the house and looked in. The boy was tossing feverishly and the mother was sleeping. He laid the ruby on the table. He flew gently round the bed fanning the boy's forehead with his wings.

From the happenings, readers can see that the Happy Prince and the Swallow had good hearts. The Prince was willing to sacrifice the precious thing that he had and to give it to the miserable mother and son. The Swallow was willing to cancel his flying to Egypt and he decided to help the poor mother. They left their need back for the need of other people.

When the Swallow flew back to the Happy Prince he told him what he had done. He said that he felt quite warm although it was cold. The Prince said that

it was because he had done a good action. The Swallow's saying "It is curious but I feel quite warm now, although it is so cold," and the Happy Prince's answer "That is because you have done a good action" become the key words to basis of the theme of the story. When the Swallow said that he felt quite warm it means that he felt satisfied and happy. Happiness comes out from what kindness and concern that we have done for others.

From the happenings we can also feel the atmosphere of a story for children. The atmosphere is full of kindness and tenderness.

Then he flew gently round the bed, fanning the boy's forehead with his wings. "How cool I feel!" said the boy, "I must be getting better," and he sank into a delicious slumber. (page 140)

"but I feel quite warm now, although it is so cold."

"That is because you have done a good action," said the Prince. And the little Swallow began to think, and then he fell asleep. Thinking always made him sleepy. (page 140-141)

The happiness that the Swallow experienced by doing a good action can be seen on the next event. It was in the next morning when he took a bath in the

river. The Sparrows chirruped and said to each other, "What a distinguished stranger !" but the Swallow still enjoyed himself very much because he felt happy.

The second conflict between the Prince and the Swallow happened when the Prince once again wanted the Swallow to be his messenger and help a miserable people. The Prince wanted the Swallow to help a young writer who had no firewood so that he couldn't finish writing a play for the Director of the Theatre. He was too cold and hungry to write any more. Finally, the Swallow was willing to stay.

"Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow," said the Prince, "will you not stay with me one night longer ?"

"I am waited for in Egypt," answered the Swallow. "Tomorrow my friends will fly up to the Second Cataract. The river-horse couches there among the bulrushes, on a great granite throne sits the God Memnon...."

"Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow," said the Prince, "far away across the city I see a young man in a garret..... He is trying to finish a play for the Director of the Theatre, but he is too cold to write anymore. There is no fire in the grate and hunger has made him faint."

"I will wait with you one night longer," said the Swallow, who really had a good heart.

(page 141)

The Prince had no other ruby to pick out, so he asked the Swallow to pluck out one of his eyes that was made of rare sapphire and give it to the man. The young writer was very happy to find the sapphire lying on his withered violets.

From that event, the two characters again showed their kindness. The Prince showed his deep concern for others. He had no other ruby but he sacrificed one of his eyes that were made of precious sapphires, while the Swallow was again willing to cancel his flying to Egypt and help the Prince.

The atmosphere of these events is again full of kindness, tenderness, love and care for other people. The atmosphere here is also coloured with the sacrifice of the Prince.

"Alas ! I have no ruby now," said the Prince "my eyes are all that I have left. They are made of rare sapphires, which were brought out of India a thousand years ago. Pluck out one of them and take it to him. He will sell it to the jeweller, and buy firewood, and finish his play."

"Dear Prince," said the Swallow, "I cannot do that"; and he began to weep.

"Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow," said the Prince, "do as I command you."

(page 141-142)

The next day, the Swallow told the Happy Prince again that he was just leaving for Egypt, but again the Prince wanted the Swallow to stay with him one night longer and be his messenger. The Swallow said to the Prince :

"...Dear Prince, I must leave you, but I will never forget you, and next spring I will bring you back two beautiful jewels in place of those you have given away. The ruby shall be redder than a red rose, and the sapphire shall be as blue as the great sea."

but the Happy Prince did not care about that. He still asked the Swallow to stay with him one night longer.

The Swallow didn't want to stay, but when the Prince told him about the little match-girl who had let her matches fall in the gutter and was afraid that her father would beat her if she didn't bring home some money, he decided to help. The Prince told him to pluck out his eye, but he refused because it would make the Prince blind.

The atmosphere here is, in the beginning, filled with the sadness of the little girl, and then filled with her joy, the joy of a little child, after she had received the jewel from the Swallow.

"In the square below," said the Happy Prince, "there stands a little match-girl. She has let her matches fall in the gutter, and they are all spoiled. Her father will beat her if she does not bring home some money, and she is crying. She has no shoes or stockings, and her little head is bare..." (page 142)

So he plucked out the Prince's other eye, and darted down with it. He swooped past the match-girl, and slipped the jewel into the palm of her hand. "What a lovely bit of glass!" cried the little girl; and she ran home, laughing. (page 143)

From what he did and he spoke through out the story, we know that the Swallow had a kind heart. He was willing to delay his journey to Egypt just to maintain the Happy Prince's commands. Even when the Happy Prince had lost his two eyes and became blind, the Swallow finally decided to live with the Prince.

The most interesting thing from the story is that it gives us many valuable teachings to learn and to teach to our children. From the character of the Happy Prince we can learn that his title 'Prince' doesn't drive him away from doing good to others. He really gave his attention to the ugliness and miseries that happened around him although he could not do anything. He really much cared for others.

We can also see that his limitation doesn't make him stop thinking of and caring for others. It is shown by his words "And now that I am dead they have set me up here so high that I can see all the ugliness and all the misery of my city, and though my heart is made of lead yet I cannot choose but weep."

There are no detailed descriptions about the ugliness and the miseries of the city inside the story, but still they are impressed in some events. In the exposition of the story readers can find a disappointed man who said "I am glad there is some one in the world who is quite happy" when he gazed at the statue of the Happy Prince. The existence of a disappointed man in the city shows that there is sadness among the people. Sadness can be caused by some ugliness or some miseries of life.

Readers can also find the atmosphere of the ugliness and the misery of the city when the Swallow flew to the poor house of a poor mother and her hungry child. He passed by the cathedral tower, where the white marble angles were sculptured. The cathedral tower shows luxury, on the other hand, the poor house of the mother and her child shows misery.

He passed by the palace and heard the sound of dancing, and inside the palace he also heard a woman

who was to be the loveliest of the Queen's maids-of-honour scorn the seamstresses who embroidered passion-flowers on her dress. She said, "I hope my dress will be ready in time for the State-ball... but the seamstresses are so lazy." She did not realize that one of the seamstresses is the poor mother who had a little boy lying ill and she had nothing to give him but river water. The contrast between the life of the woman of the palace and the poor mother and her child indicates that there are ugliness in the city. The people inside the palace, even the maids, do not care for the people of the city.

The character of the Swallow also gives readers many good teachings for living. He postponed all his wants to do the Happy Prince's commands. He had a good heart. He felt happy when he had done some good for others. When the Prince went blind, he decided to live with the Prince and be his messenger forever.

The atmosphere of the last part of the story is filled with sadness, especially when the Prince had been blind and the Swallow was getting weak and dying. We can also feel the atmosphere of love and loyalty when the Swallow decided to stay with the Prince because the Prince had been blind.

Then the Swallow came back to the Prince. "You are blind now," he said, "so I will stay with you always."

"No, little Swallow," said the poor Prince, "you must go away to Egypt."

"I will stay with you always," said the Swallow, and he slept at the Prince's feet.

(page 143)

The poor little Swallow grew colder and colder, but he would not leave the Prince, he loved him too well. He picked up crumbs outside the baker's door when the baker was not looking, and tried to keep himself warm by flapping his wings.

But at last he knew that he was going to die. He had just enough strenght to fly up to the Prince's shoulder once more. "Good-bye, dear Prince!" he murmured, "will you let me kiss your hand?"

"It is not to Egypt that I am going," said the Swallow. "I am going to the House of Death. Death is the brother of Sleep, is he not?"

And he kissed the Happy Prince on the lips, and fell down dead at his feet. (page 144)

All the kindness and good actions of the Happy Prince and the Swallow were not in vain although the statue of the Prince was finally melted and the Swallow died. In the last part of the story, readers can see that God told one of His Angels to bring Him the two most precious things in the city. The Angel

brought Him the leaden heart of the Happy Prince and the dead little Swallow. God let the bird sing for evermore in His Garden of Paradise and let the Happy Prince praise Him in His city of gold. From this we can remark that there is no kindness which is in vain, because God will always give return for it.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION