chapter one

INTRODUCTION

I.1. Background of the Study

Literature is a form of art which is born in and with language, and is also a social institution which uses language as its medium. Others say that literature is everything which is written, or the using of language in written form. This may be true since the word 'literature' itself has its origin in Italian word 'litteratura' which is the translation of a Greek word 'grammatica'. Both 'litteratura' and 'grammatica' mean *letter*.

A literary work is a record of human life which reflects and portrays some aspects of activities and experiences that human beings deal with. According to M.H. Abrams in his *The Mirror and the Lamp*, literature can be defined as the form of expression, a process whereby strong and irrepressible feelings are forced out. The author expresses his idea into his work, and this idea will then put the basis for the literary work.

However, Alfred Edward Housman said :

"Good literature continually read for pleasing must, let us hope, do some good to the readers; must quicken his perception though dull, and sharpen his discrimination though blunt, and

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mellow the rawness of his personal opinions" (in Bartlett, 1980 : 692).

This indicates that by reading a literary work continually, a reader is supposed to be able to have an enjoyable experience while learning something valuable from the work he is reading.

Reading a literary work, we can learn a lot about life and human beings. Since a literary work is a portrayal of human life, we can learn many aspects of life through it. Although we take up a literary work only by sitting in a single chair, we will have experienced many things when we get up from our seat. By doing so, we are having a reading-experience. Due to what people say that experience is the best teacher, the literary work has taught us many aspects of life that we can apply in our real, daily life.

When we notice the characters in a literary work, we learn a lot about the phenomena of human characteristics. We will see that people act, speak, and think in many different ways. If we look back to our real, daily life, we will find the same "characters" with those we've found in literary works.

Short-story is one form of literary work which becomes the favorite of most readers especially of modern era. This is reasonable, since most people in modern era have less time for something that, in their opinion, doesn't 'feed' them. They only have short time to relax; and in

their relaxation, if they want to read a literary work, they would rather choose a short-story than any other since it is short enough to be read at one sitting.

The main characteristic of short-story is that it is a single line of action that develops a single idea or theme. Every single story presents its own problem. Edgar Allan Poe, the father of short-story, has indicated, since it is short enough to be read at one sitting, it is capable of a unity of effect that a novel is unable to achieve.

D.H. Lawrence is one of the most famous English writers. He used experimental techniques and unconventional themes that made him one of the most controversial authors of his time. D.H. Lawrence had written many short-stories during his career. Many of his works criticizes social attitudes that he believed were filled with hypocrisy and self-deception. He showed deep concern for the relationships between men and women and the complications of these relationships in his fictions.

His *The Rocking-Horse Winner* is an example of his deep concern for people torn by the need for money. Reading this story, a reader will come to recognise a sense of greed. The story presents a little boy named Paul and his mother, Hester. This mother was so anxious for having much more money to satisfy her expensive tastes that she didn't care too much for her children. Paul, her son who loved her very much, was obsessed by his mother's serious need

for money. Then he took his own mysterious way to have more money for his mother.

In this thesis, the writer wants to focus his attention on describing the theme of this short story, *The Rocking-Horse Winner*. By knowing the theme, we will understand further the general idea or insight that the entire story reveals, so as to make us clearer in getting the message or the ideal that could be learnt. Besides, we will understand more easily what actually this short-story is talking about. Therefore, theme is obviously needed in understanding a story.

I.2. Statement of the Problems

In *The Rocking-Horse Winner*, there was a high-society family that lived in poor condition and forced themselves to keep up their social position. There were a mother, a son, and a rocking-horse belonging to the son. Both the mother and the son are the main characters of the story, who desperately went after more money.

However, to understand the theme of this short story, the writer has three problems to answer :

1. What conflicts are experienced by Paul, the son, and what are the causes of the conflicts ?

2. What is the theme of this story ?

3. How far does the theme of this novel develop through Paul's conflicts ?

I.3. Objective of the Study

Dealing with the problems the writer has stated, the objective of this study is to describe the theme of *The Rocking-Horse Winner* so that the readers may understand the story of this short-story and bring out something valuable from the story.

In order to understand and to describe the main idea of the story, the writer will make a theme analysis by studying through the plot, setting, characters, and conflicts, especially Paul's conflicts. This way is supposed to lead him to the description of the theme.

I.4. Significance of the Study

This thesis is written hopefully that it will give understanding to the readers about the study of literature. It might be useful as a reference, or a model, of a literary-work analysis. Another student who wants to write a similar analysis of any other literary work may learn something from this paper, or use it as a comparison or pattern.

Since there hasn't been many theses in our university that deal with a short-story, the result of this thesis is supposed to be helpful for every student who wants to write a thesis dealing with any other short-story.

In more detail, this thesis will be useful for them as a comparison in describing a theme of a short-story.

Besides, this thesis can also be used as a comparison in looking for the characters, plot, setting, and conflict because they are the intrinsic aspects on which the writer is working on in describing the theme.

By reading this thesis, the writer wish that the readers will gain something valuable about human life and characteristics since the writer emphasize the analysis on the character of Paul and his conflicts.

I.5. Scope and Limitation

In this thesis, the writer will focus the analysis on describing the theme of *The Rocking-Horse Winner.* . The theme is the idea that puts the basis for the story, It emerges in the characters and whatever they do in action, as Sequel has said in his 'A Handbook for the Critical Analysis of Literature'; theme must be determined by closely analyzing the characters' conflicts -- what the conflicts are, and how the conflicts are concluded. Based on this, the writer will emphasize the analysis on the character of Paul and his conflicts to finally describe the theme of the short-story.

Besides, the writer will also analyze plot, setting, and characters to support the analysis to find the theme of this short-story.

I.6. Theoretical Background

This thesis concerns with the searching for the theme

of D.H. Lawrence's *The Rocking Horse Winner*. In analyzing the short-story, the writer will see the short-story from its existence as a work of art. He will focus on some intrinsic elements of the short-story. In this way, the kind of approach he uses is intrinsic approach.

Due to the fact that the writer will see the story from its existence as a work of art and focus on some intrinsic elements of the story, he will at once disregard any extrinsic aspects of the story. He will look at the story only by the criteria intrinsic to its own mode of being. In this way, it will be easier for the writer to go solely ' through the work itself. So, the theory that he chooses to use is the objective theory. The other reason why the writer uses the objective theory is that he doesn't have enough time to analyze this short-story from any of its external aspects.

1.7. Method of the Study

In writing this thesis, the writer applies library research. He collects many informations from encyclopediaes, dictionaries, books on literary theories, and any printed materials dealing with D.H. Lawrence's *The Rocking Horse Winner*. The main reference of this study is of course the short-story itself. However, some relevant books on literary theories are required as a support to understand the theories that are used in analyzing the short-story. Yet, some more books or printed materials are

also used as references. These can be seen in the bibliog-raphy.

The method used by the writer in this analysis is the descriptive method. He will make description about the short-story he is analyzing so as to find the theme of the story.

Another method used here is content-analysis method. This method emphasizes on the subject matter of a work of literature. By this method, the writer will focus on the text itself, or the intrinsic elements of the short-story, especially plot, setting, and characters. Those three elements are the elements that support the content of the novel, so that they will surely lead the writer to understand the theme of the short-story.

1.8. Definition of Key Terms
Conflict

A simple struggle between two or more opposing forces that can be a clash of actions, ideas, desires, or values. (Shaw, 1972;91)

In this thesis, the writer will talk about conflicts undergone by Paul as the main character. He will see two kinds of conflicts happening to Paul; the first is the inner conflict, a clash that happened in Paul himself, and the second is the social conflict, clash between Paul and any other character.

Theme

The theme of a piece of fiction is its controlling idea, or its central inside. It is the unifying generalization about life stated or implied by the story. (Perrine, 1966; 117)

Rocking-Horse

Toy horse that is able to be ridden by a kid, on which he can rock its body as if he were riding a real horse. In this short-story, rocking-horse is used by Paul, the main character, as the place on which he searches for what he calls luck. By riding his rocking-horse madly, Paul can predict the name of a horse that will be the winner in a following horse race. Then he bets on the horse and win some money from that.

Winner

In this short-story, the word 'winner' is attached to 'the rocking-horse'. Who is meant by 'the rocking-horse winner' here is the boy, Paul, because when riding his rocking-horse, Paul can predict the name of a horse that is going to be the winner in a following horse race. Then he bet on the horse and win money from that. But, the word 'winner' here has an ironic sense, because the winner finally died after he fell off his rocking-horse.

1.9. Organization of the Paper

This paper is organized into four parts or four chapters. The first chapter is *Introduction*, the content of which introduces to the readers what will be discussed in the following chapters. The first chapter has nine sub-chapters. The first one is Background of the Study, in which the writer gives a short explanation about literary work and the reasons why he chooses D.H.Lawrence's *The Rocking-Horse Winner* to analyze. In the second sub-chapter, the writer states his main problems to be answered in this thesis. The third sub-chapter, Objective of the Study, shows the readers the target to be achieved by writing this thesis. In the fourth sub-chapter, the writer tells the readers what advantages might be taken from reading this thesis. In the fifth sub-chapter, Scope and Limitation, the writer gives an exact limitation to the study, so that the discussion will not go beyond the limitation and the readers or critics will not question anything beyond it too. The sixth sub-chapter is Theoretical Background, in which the writer establishes the theory and approaches he applies in the analysis. In the seventh sub-chapter, the writer explain about the methods he uses in arranging the analysis in this thesis. In the eighth sub-chapter, Definition of Key Terms, the writer defines some terms used specificly in this thesis so that the readers will have the same interpretation with the writer

about the terms. The ninth or the last sub-chapter in the first chapter is Organization of the Paper which shows how this paper is organized.

In the second chapter, *Theoretical Framework*, the writer· will elaborate the theory and the approaches that he will apply in the analysis. He will tell the readers how he can· use such theory and approaches within his analysis.

The third chapter, *Analysis,* is the main body of this thesis in which the writer will explain how he can lead his way to the answer for the problems he has stated in the previous chapter, and finally he will describe and give a little explanation about the theme of the short-story he is analyzing, *The Rocking-Horse Winner.*

This thesis will end with *Conclusion* in chapter four. He will make conclusion about what he has explained in the previous chapters. Besides, in this chapter, the readers can find the answer for the problems that have been stated by the writer.

In addition, the Bibliography will give information about references the writer has used in writing this thesis so that it can be scientifically recognized.