

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

In society, people seem to be treated differently based on their religions, race/ethnicity, appearance, physical strength, or other distinguishing characteristics. Those kinds of differentiation cause inequality. However, those kinds of differentiation also linked to some aspects which have connected with their life such as their setting or background. Sometimes setting or background of a person becomes such indicators to treat a person. This issue has already existed in every layer of society. In some cases, this issue becomes a measurement on how society treats people. When a person belongs to poor people, he will get a different treatment from a person who is included in rich people (Saunders 45).

Those who belong to rich people have such position or power to manage those people under his position. It cannot be denied that poor people will get different treatment from society. It is because they have no power and also have no opportunities to give their opinion in society. People who belong to the rich people typically have a better live chance than those who do not. It is because they have greater access to a better quality education, food or nutrition and health care, police and private security protection. Those situations are in contrast with the poor people which have limited access to such kind of those facilities.

This kind of situation makes differentiation of how people will treat other people by looking their material. Two of short stories that tell about that situation

are Liliana Heker's "The Stolen Party" and Wong Meng Voon's "Doubt". Although both short stories come from different countries and different cultures, but both authors show similar conditions of lower class lives. Both of them portrayed the same issues about how a person got different treatment from other people that occur in the main characters' lives. "The Stolen Party" and "Doubt" also have the similar plot and same conflict caused by a birthday party.

Heker began her literary career at age 17, mentored by Argentine writer Abelardo Castillo. She was a collaborator in Argentina literary magazine "*The Paper Cricket*". She has published several short story books which have been collected in "*Cuentos*". Heker was born in 1943 in Argentina; she wrote and edited left wing literary journals during the Dirty War of state sponsored violence in the 1970s and 1980s, using veiled critiques as a means of protest and engaging in vigorous debate with exiled writers such as Julio Cortazar. She was born in Buenos Aires and her professional writing started at the age of 17 (Diaz 185). As chief editor of the literary periodicals 'El escarabajo de oro' (1961-1974) and 'El Ornitorrinco' (1977-1986) she has influenced in a decisive way the literary life of her home country for over twenty years. In 1987 her first novel "*Zona de clivaje*" was published, for which Liliana Heker was awarded the Primer Premio Municipal (Online). "The Stolen Party" became one of the famous works were published in 1994.

Wong Meng Voon, a Singapore citizen was born in Perak, Malaysia in 1937. He received his MA degree from the University of Singapore and his PhD from the University of Washington, USA. One of Singapore's leading short story writers, Dr. Wong has been writing since 1966. In 1981, he won the Cultural

Medallion Award for Literature in Singapore, and the South East Asia Writer's Award in Thailand. He is mostly known for his mini-fiction and is currently active in promoting the Chinese mini-novel form to the world through his creative writings and critical studies. "Doubt" itself is one of his literary work with other short stories included in his short stories book collection entitled *Glimpses of the Past: Stories from Singapore and Malaysia* that published in 1981 (Online).

"The Stolen Party" is a short story telling about a child who came from a poor economic condition named Rosaura. She lived with her mother who worked as a housekeeper in the house of rich people, Sefiora Ines. Oneday she was invited by Luciana, the daughter of Sefiora Ines. Luciana invited Rosaura on her birthday party. Rosaura was very excited. But actually her mother did not allow her to come to the birthday party. Her mother wanted her to realize about "who you are" and "where you're coming from". Her mother tried to make her daughter understand well about their class position. She tried to make her daughter aware that they came from a poor family and actually they were not allowed to come to that party. But Rosaura still wanted to go to the party. Luciana and Rosaura were friends. Sometimes, they spent their time together to play and did their homework. It made Rosaura wants to come to Luciana's birthday party. In the birthday party, Luciana dressed up beautifully and became a beautiful girl and she also got many presents. Luciana also invited a magician to entertain all of the guests who came to her birthday party. In the end of the story, all visitors were given a yo-yo and bracelet souvenirs. Rosaura wants it, but they did not give her any of those souvenirs. Instead, gave souvenir to Rosaura, Seniora Ines give her money which made Rosaura very dissapointed.

The second object is "Doubt". The story itself told about a child named Hsiao Ying who came from a poor economic family and she wanted to come to Lucy's birthday party. Lucy was her cousin, But Lucy came from a rich family. Lucy's family invited Hsiao Ying and her mother to come to the party. When she prepared herself to come to the party, Hsiao Ying asked her mother about the birthday party. Deep in her heart, her mother knew that actually her daughter also really wanted to celebrate her birthday party next month, because Hsiao Ying would turn five next month. But again, her mother tried to remind her about their condition. Her mother worked as a "kueh" seller every day. And it did not enough to fulfill their daily live need. It means to celebrate her simple birthday party was very impossible. Her mother tried to make her daughter understand about the condition. In the end of the story, they attended the party and the entire guests did not want to talk with them. The guests underestimated them because they looked like a poor family that came from different degree with the guests. After the party was over, Hsiao Ying really wanted to celebrate her birthday party. But her mother still made her to understand about their condition. When Hsiao Ying slept at night after the party, she dreamt about her birthday party. She looked very happy in her birthday party. She saw her mother smile in her birthday party. Although it was just a dream but overall Hsiao Ying felt happy because she could celebrate her birthday party in her dreams.

In this study, the writer analyzed both short stories using new criticism theory. What becomes the main focus of this study is how the setting and characters affect the conflicts of the main characters in "The Stolen Party" and "Doubt" short stories. According to Tyson in his book *Critical Theory Today*,

new criticism believed their interpretations were based on the text itself (132). It is also supported by Rene Wellek and Austin Warren in their book *Theory of Literature*, the main part of new criticism which focused on intrinsic approach is based on the text and the structural points of literary works (75).

Conflicts in both short stories become interesting because setting and the characters caused some conflicts for the main character. Those settings and characters are then analyzed related to its effects towards the conflict of the main character. Like what Wellek (139) states, this study is a new criticism study because the writer considers one or more elements of fiction, such as setting, and characters into her analysis.

1.2. Statement of the Problems

After reading both short stories and determining the topic as it has already explained before, there is a question that could be answered. The question is:

- How do the setting and characters affect the conflict of main characters in “The Stolen Party” and “Doubt” short stories?

1.3. Objective of the Study

Regarding to the statement of the problems, the aims of the analysis is to find out some influences of the setting and characters toward the conflict of main characters in “The Stolen Party” and “Doubt”.

1.4. Significance of the Study

By analyzing the topic of the study in “The Stolen Party” and “Doubt”, hopefully the reader will understand and learn more about the elements of fictions which affect the conflict of the main characters. The writer also hopes that this study also intended to give contribution toward the study of literature in English Department of Airlangga University, especially to the ones related with this theory.

1.5. Scope and Limitation

As the writer explained before, the objects of this research are “The Stolen Party” and “Doubt”. Therefore, the writer limits her analysis on the conflicts of both main characters in those short stories. The writer focuses on some factors especially the setting and other characters which affect the conflict of the main character. This study concern to both short stories since it is analyzed using new criticism theory. The setting and characters become consideration in this study because they have such effect onto the conflict of both main characters in “The Stolen Party” and “Doubt” short stories.

1.6. Theoretical Background

To analyze both of short stories issues are related to conflict which occurred in main character, the writer considers the new criticism theory suggested by Louis Tyson. New Criticism is used to explore and understand the work itself. New Criticism theory is focusing on the literary work in isolation from other aspect outside the work such as character, setting and conflict (132).

The writer analyzes these stories analysis from intrinsic angle where all elements of fiction are connected to one another. Finally, from the intrinsic elements, the writer analyzed how they affect the conflict of the main character in “The Stolen Party” and “Doubt” short stories.

1.7. Method of the Study

Since the focus of the research is two short stories entitled “The Stolen Party” by Liliana Heker and “Doubt” by Wong Meng Voon, thus the main sources of the data are the short stories themselves. The writer will read both short stories first and then search the interesting issue as the basic analysis. The writer uses the close reading as her method in collecting the data. Close reading is done by observing fact, details, passage about the text, focusing in special passage and analyzing it in detail. On this step, the writer can gain the important ideas presented in the works. In this study, the writer chooses new criticism theory as the main tool for analysis. The writer analyzed how the narrative elements like setting and characters affect the conflict of the main character.

After close reading, the writer makes the data classification and selecting the data related to the analysis itself. In the process of close reading, the writer found the interesting issues about how characters and setting affect the main characters’ conflict in “The Stolen Party” and “Doubt” short stories. After the writer finds the interesting issues, firstly, the writer classified kinds of conflicts which occurred in both main characters. After the writer finds the conflict, the writer finds out how the setting and characters influence the main characters’ conflict.

In the process of writing in this research, the writer also uses the library and online sources research. The writer collects the data from various books, articles, reviews and other printed materials that have related with this study. After doing these steps, the writer arranges them in order to get a good understanding about both short stories especially the issue that will be analyzed.

1.8. Definition of Key Terms

In order to clarify some important key terms used in this thesis here are the definition of those key terms:

Character : The representation of a person or a thing in narrative work of art, literature, or drama.

Conflict : Opposition between characters or forces in a work of drama or fiction, especially opposition that motivates or shapes the action of the plot.

Effect : Result; a change or changed state occurring as a direct result of action by somebody or something else.

Setting : The time, place, and circumstances in which a narrative, drama, or film take place.

CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW