

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

When two people can be said as a couple, they are certainly loved and needed each other. That what makes them want to make a single vow in front of the preacher is something called as marriage has happened. Based on the dictionary, marriage is the formal union of a man and a woman, typically as recognized by law, by which they become husband and wife (oxford dictionary). It can be said that marriage is a wicker work between a couple who agree to live together in the rule of God and law.

In marriage, the couple might decide to have children or not. If they want to have children they must take responsibility for taking care and giving education for them. Marriage is usually involving husband and wife. Thus, in marriage there is an agreement between husband and wife in taking job or not, in which the husband occasionally gives their wife the permission to work or not.

Marriage might not always as good as people imagine. It means that there might be any problem in marriage that can be solved by the couple, or even it will be unsolved, until the couples have no other ways, instead of divorce. The problems of divorce could be from internal and external factors. Internal factors here means there might no more agreement in their marriage. They might often argue for problems that occur in their house. While external factors could be from

the job of husband, or wife. They might often argue for their job. They think that they are the busiest person, so that they do not want to accept the condition of their partner (husband or wife problems). Those make the problems are becoming the unsolved problem, thus the divorce is only the appropriate way to solve the problem.

Divorce is the legal breakup of a marriage. Like every major life changes, divorce is stressful. It affects finances, living arrangements, household jobs, schedules, and more. If the family includes children, they may be deeply affected. For children, divorce can be stressful, sad, and confusing. At any age, kids may feel uncertain or angry at the prospect of father and mother splitting up.

Based on the statement above divorce can also be found in one of Nicholas Sparks' novel, the title is *The Last Song*. The story tells about the main character named Ronnie. She is a rebellious child who has taken the company of wrong kind of friends. It is because she has never been able to come out of her parent's divorce and has bitter feelings about it. Her life has never been the same. After her parents divorced and her father moved to North Carolina, Ronnie distances herself from her father and gives up playing music. Music is the hobby that she has learnt from her father but now it is another source of stirring up bad memories.

On her father's request, Ronnie and her brother, Jonah are sent to North Carolina to spend the summer with their father. Resentfully and rebelliously, Ronnie rejects her father's attempts to reach out to her and threatens to return to New York before the summer's end. It is during this summer that Ronnie meets

Will. Ronnie starts changing her mind. She finds herself falls in love with Will. Her strained relationship with her father starts healing slowly and gradually the bond is restored. All the characters seem real and are well defined. As Ronnie's life changes, the readers can feel the way she becomes mature from a rebellious teenager to a young woman of substance. Jonah is intelligent, adorable and a witty child and the way he cares for his father and sister is simply moving. Steve, too as a father does his best to spend meaningful time with his children. His unconditional love for his children, patience with Ronnie and his belief in her and finally his love for music is remarkable. Forgiveness is the key to happiness. Life is too short to hold grudges against others. So, it is to forgive and forget and move forward in life.

Based on the website of Nicholas Sparks this story talks about love and family. As we know that the Nicholas Sparks's works always tell about romantic and love story. Nicholas Sparks was born on December 31, 1965, in Omaha, Nebraska. He graduated from the University of Notre Dame in 1998. He lived in North Carolina with his wife who accompanied him for 13 years. Nicholas Sparks graduated in 1984 as a valedictorian from Bella Vista High school. The first work of Nicholas Sparks is *The Notebook*, the novel was published in October 1996 and made the New York Times best seller list. With the success of his first novel he wrote several international bestsellers, one of them is "The Last Song", it was published in 2010 (Nicholas Sparks Biography).

The Last Song is interesting to analyze particularly from intrinsic factors and the elements of conflict on the main character's life. The conflict starts when Ronnie's parents decide to divorce. Firstly Ronnie loves playing music, after her parents' divorce Ronnie dislikes to play music, and he hates her father so much. One day, in summer Ronnie and her brother visit her father's house. She ignores her father. But soon Ronnie meets Will, the last person she thought she'd never been attracted to, and finds herself fall in love with him, opens herself up to the greatest happiness and pain that she has ever known.

The problem of divorce mostly brings negative impact not only to the divorce couple but also to their children. It brings both internal and external impact. No couple dreams to divorce when they are getting marriage even no children wants their parent to divorce but it can happens although it is un acceptable for their children. That is the reason why the writer is interested to discuss this problem. *New Criticism* theory seems to be appropriate to conduct to analyze the impact of divorce experienced by Ronnie as the main character in the *The Last Song*. Based on this theory, the writer is guided on how to understand and give deep interpretation by splitting the internal form such as character and characterization, and conflict.

1.2. Statement of the Problems

Based on the background of the study above, the research question that the writer wants to discuss in this thesis is: What is the impact of parents divorce towards their daughter Ronnie?

1.3. Objective of the Study

Based on the statement of the problem above, the writer wants to know: The impact of parents divorce undergone by their daughter Ronnie.

1.4 Significance of the Study

In this thesis the writer focuses her analysis on the impact of parents divorce towards their daughter that is the main character, how the character of the main character's life changes. It is found in *The Last Song* that the effect of divorce can change the personality of the main character. As we know that Nicholas Spark's works, mostly talk about romantic (love). Indeed, there are several impacts of parents' divorce that can influence their daughter as shown in this novel.

However, this study is expected to give contributions to the readers; it may help them to try their best not to divorce as the impact of divorce as shown in this novel *The Last Song* brings negative impact to their children. For those, who accidentally meet their parents' divorce, can try to overcome their situation by not behaving negatively and try to think positively and find the best solution for their future. In general, the readers can gain more knowledge about some significant

impact of divorce in teenager's social life nowadays. Besides, this study also attempts to give contribution to the study of English Literature in the Faculty of Humanities, Airlangga University who is going to analyze the novel *The Last Song* which is possibly focusing on the impact of divorce.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

To search the impact of divorce, the novel is analyzed based on the text itself, which the writer includes only the analysis of main character, conflict. The writer does not include any other internal elements such as tone, atmosphere, theme as she realizes that she has no enough time to read and learn more knowledge related. This analysis does not discuss any other elements, or anything out from this novel.

1.6 Theoretical Background

The aim of this thesis is to analyze the impact of parents divorce towards their daughter Ronnie in *The Last Song*. To get deeper understanding and interpretation, the writer uses New Criticism theory to break up the problem. The writer analyzes the character and characterization, conflict. It is a method of analyzing a text, in this case, a novel, based on the text itself without adaption any other outside theories. All of elements found in a text are from the main idea represented by the text. New Criticism Theory itself talks about a theory which concerns on text only, without seeing who is the writer's background of the text, as Tyson (136) said that "some of its most important concepts concerning the nature and importance of textual evidence -the use of concrete, specific examples

from the text itself to validate our interpretations- have been incorporated into the way most literary critics today, regardless of their theoretical persuasion, support their readings of literature.” Secondly, close reading is used to interpret or analyze the text, it means that New Criticism Theory has a new critic to analyze the text itself by using “close reading” as a point. Thirdly, New Criticism Theory as an imaginative literature in analyzing a literary text which is called as an aesthetic experience is about something that can lead us as a reader to be the truth.” Fourthly, New Criticism Theory is about the author’s intention to make its interpret, as Tyson said that “New Criticism Theory knows on author’s intention which called ‘intentional fallacy’ to refer to the mistaken belief that the author’s intention is the same as the text’s meaning. Besides intentional fallacy, there is also affective fallacy means that it focuses on the text with its effects.” Fifthly, New Criticism Theory has formal elements or figurative language in analyzing a literary text after “closely read,” there are *images, symbol, metaphors, rhyme, meter, point of view, setting, characterization, and plot* (141). Besides formal elements, literary language also one of formal elements, as Tyson said that “Literary Language, in contrast, depends on connotation: on the implication, association, suggestion, and evocation of meanings and of shades of meaning, in addition, literary language is expressive: it communicates tone, attitude, and feeling.” Sixthly, New Criticism Theory is also as “*a play on words*” which means that the words that exist on literary texts have multiple meanings. As Tyson said that “new criticism, the complexity of a text is created by the multiple and often conflicting meanings woven through it, and these meanings are primarily of four

kinds of linguistic devices: (1) Paradox is thus responsible for much of the complexity of human experience and of the literature that portrays it. (2) Irony means that a statement or event undermined by the context in which it occurs. (3) Ambiguity occurs when a word or event generates two or more different meanings. (4) Tension is created by the integration of the abstract and the concrete, of general ideas embodied in specific images (136).

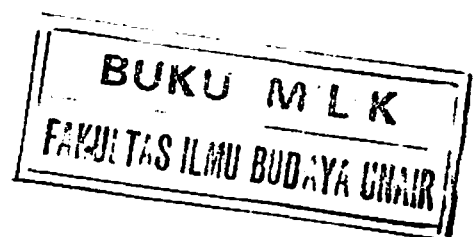
1.7 Method of the Study

To begin the study, the writer of the thesis reads the novel *The Last Song*. Then she reads to get detail information to formulate the problem interesting to her. When she has already been sure that the parents' divorce gives impact towards their daughter is the main, complicated and unique problem, and it is very interesting to analyze, she goes further to search data and information. She again makes notes and collects the primary data by quoting many lines related to the problem she analyzes from the novel *The Last Song*. To complete the information, she does not only search through Google search to get more information to support the analyses but also consults the problem to her lecturers, visits the library to get more information. In analyzing the data she uses interpretative analysis. The writer uses interpretative analysis as it is suggested in the theory of *New Criticism*. Interpretative is commonly used in paper research of literature. To interpret something is to put it in words that the reader can better understand. To analyze is to examine the parts of a work with the goal of determining the nature of the whole. Interpretive analysis can help discover deeper meanings within a literature work. Interpretative way is used to explain the meaning of an actions or

a conversation which happens in the novel. To break down the problem she analyzes, she uses the *New Criticism* theory focusing on internal elements that is character and characterization, and conflict available in *The Last Song*.

1.8 Definition of Key Term

Impact	: the effect of something happend
Marriage	: wickerwork between couple
Divorce	: Ended a marriage
Conflict	: the problem in a story which causes the action
Mental condition	: condition that affect a person in order to generate activity, a relationship with the other person, able to adopt to change and cope with adversity
Attitude	: action or attitude that indicates a sense of like or dislike of something
Behavior	: behavior is visible and that shows how our attitude towards something



Psychological condition : condition or circumstances of the person, such a emotion, which can affect the mental state

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CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW