

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Research

Earth provides humans' needs, start from basic material, security to health (Wright, 2008). As in basic material, earth gives support for physical needs such foods and shelters that can be made of trees and in the security, humans are protected by mangrove forests which reduce the damage of tsunami and mass flood, while in health, trees producing free air for humans (Wright, 2008). Thus, based on the explanation, it can be said that earth is providing everything that humans need in order to live and survive.

Further, Wright (2008) also mentioned that the ecosystem has been exploited by humans in order to support their lives and from time to time, because of the massive population of humans, economic development improve to completely utilize the ecosystem both the goods and services. In other word, because of the escalation of humans' population, the resources in earth also getting reduce gradually and as the result, the earth starts being damaged. One of the examples can be noticed when a factory commits a forest clearance because of the high demand of wood pulp, palm oil and timbers so that it leads into deforestation. Hence, the further impact is shown when a big mass flood such tsunami strike to land.

Therefore, the environmental problem that exists on earth is reflecting the bad relationship between human and nature. As the matter of fact, the relation between humans and nature are supposedly to support each other. As it explained by Jiang

(2010) that the relationship between nature and human is interdependent which means that humans exploit nature to support their needs and then human must keep nature in return. Based on the explanation, it can be said that humans must learn to co-exist with nature by not exploiting it massively.

However, there are some people from all elements in the society noticed about the problem of the nature as the impact of humans' needs and wrongdoing, such as religious groups, farmers, loggers, business leaders who started to argue about the importance of nature (Cunningham et al, 2007). Interestingly, the writer also noticed that there are some litterateurs who also concerns about the condition of environment and they are reflecting it through their writings which in this case in the form of literary works.

In other word, literary works also play important role in changing the readers' belief about something, including the issue of environment. The readers will have a better understanding of environmental value through the experience in the story provided by literature so that it can be said that the story in the literary works has powerful impacts for readers. Hence, a story can be a better media to deliver an important message into humans' mind and hopefully, by providing the story for readers, literatures are able to deliver value that will change their point of view emotionally, especially about nature/environment.

Further, related to the nature condition that is written in literary works, the writer through this research is interested in discussing one of the novels that also telling the condition of nature entitled *The Kill Order*. *The Kill Order* is next work after he succeeded make the previous trilogy of *The Maze Runner* where in the story of *The*

Maze Runner trilogy, it tells about the struggle of teenagers who must escape from a maze but they never know the world that they live is in chaos. Meanwhile in this novel, Dashner gives a flash back before WICKED is created and it tells the causes of how earth starts to fall in catastrophe.

The story starts when the main characters, Mark, Alec and Trina spend their time in Appalachian Mountain after solar flares suddenly hit earth few months back. All of them with their friends and many other survivors are waiting for supply from the government, but without any warnings, a big ship from government starts shooting at them and killed almost all of the survivors including Mark, Alec and Trina. Then, after find out the location of the ship, Mark and Alec begin to infiltrate to the secret base silently and find out that government is no longer want to help the survivor since their supply also running out. In that case, they want to decrease the number of people who are still alive on the planet so that they can take all the supplies.

Knowing that information, Mark and Alec get out of there as soon as they can and inform to others about insane plan of government to the rest of the survivor, including their friends. Unfortunately, along with the story, one by one, their friends died because of the virus that is spread out in the dart that shot from the weapon of government. As the story goes by, the author is not only shows about the heroic things that Alec and Mark done, but James Dashner also portrayed how was the situation before and after the earth hit by solar flare since in the plot of the story, the author is writing it with progressive and regressive pattern so that the situation of the environment can be noticed.

Thus, in order to understand and describe the condition of nature in the literary work, the writer in this research applied the study of ecocriticism. Ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment and it take an earth-centered approach to literary studies (Glotfelty and Harold, 1996). In this case, Glotfelty (1996) considered ecocriticism as the newest form of literary criticism to emerge at the end of the twentieth century which concerns of human-induced environmental degradation which has forced humans to re-evaluate their relationship with nature. Therefore, based on the explanation, it can be noticed that the study of ecocriticism can be applied to analyze the condition of nature in the novel of *The Kill Order* by James Dashner.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the background of research, the writer formulates the research question as follow:

1. How are the nature conditions represented in the Dashner's *The Kill Order*?

1.3 Research Objective

Regarding to the research question, the objective of this research is to describe the nature conditions presented in the Dashner's *The Kill Order*.

1.4 Uses of Research

1.4.1 Theoretical Use

Theoretically, this research provides a theory from Garrard of ecocritical study so that hopefully, the study can give additional knowledge about ecocriticism. Moreover, the writer also hopes that this research can be used as one of the

references for the next researchers who want to conduct the research with similar topic discussion of ecocriticism.

1.4.2 Practical Use

The writer hopes that by reading this research, the readers are able to know more about ecocriticism and how the condition of nature and environment are described from real world adapted into literary works. Further, after read this research, both researchers and common readers hopefully understand that all of the catastrophe and chaotic situation in the fiction is the form of satire for the environment around them and it is reflected based on the real situation.

1.5 Scope of Research

Based on the literature aspect, there are many things that can be discussed from the novel of *The Kill Order* by James Dashner. However, in this research, the writer focuses in describing the portrayal of nature that are presented in *The Kill Order* by using Garrard's (2014) theory of Ecocriticism.