

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Literature is the flood of human emotions expressed through both the written and spoken word. Esten (1978) contends that literature is the representation of artistic and imaginative realities as a sign of people's life and society in common, with language as a tool and includes positives impact on human life. Literary works can also show anything related to the world through the fiction form or non-fiction form. Literature is not focused on just one subject, it is global. In other words, literature can cover any type of subject in its written. Through literature, we can get a lot of knowledge we did not know about before. Literature also deals frequently with our lives for example, in the psychological aspect.

Literature and Psychology have a convenient relationship, and both are closely related to people's lives. The difference is that in this psychological phenomenon it is real, and in literature it is imaginative. Those things deal with human behavior, characteristics, expression, and thought. Psychology in a broad sense is the scientific study of behavior, including externally observable behavior and internal thinking (Wortman, 1999).

In the Psychology of Literature, the characters become the main concern of the literary works. Characters play a huge role in making the story alive. A character often shows his/her personality by presenting a hint to the reader from the actions (Tirtaningtias & Setiawan, 2021). In fiction especially, the characters in the literary work are created by the author to express his feelings and thoughts about what is going on in the world.

Characters also deal with the personality. John (2001) said that personality reflects those characteristics of a person that explain suitable patterns of thinking, feeling, and behavior. This personality will not always be the same as the first, it can be changed along with the growth, environment, love, and the person, even from the character's experience of life.

Hudson (2015) says that a person can consciously change their personality by changing personal custom and doing it on an ongoing basis. A person's personality can change due to life events. These life events can occur in the developmental phases of a person's life span. People have their past, present, and future. Through the stages we have passed in life, our personalities may change. The personality changes are not only due to people growth but through any other aspect. Only the meaningful or intense events will have an impact on a person's personality. For example in *The Silent Patient* novel.

The Silent Patient novel becomes the data source for this research. *The Silent Patient* is a fiction novel written by Alex Michaelides published in 2019. This novel tells about a painter named Alicia who becomes a suspect in the murder of her husband, Gabriel Berenson. For the first time after she had married Gabriel, she was a good person. Nonetheless, this personality changes after she is charged with murdering her husband, Gabriel. In fact, Alicia was not the one who killed Gabriel, it is Theo. Theo discovers the fact that Gabriel is having an affair with his wife, and vents his anger by killing Gabriel. Furthermore, this incident makes Alicia turn into a bad person. By analyzing her personality before and after the murder, we can find out the personality change in Alicia's character and the cause of Alicia's personality changes which will explain in the discussion part.

Alicia is known as a beautiful woman, friendly, and loves her husband very much. Alicia always keeps notes about her daily life and her feelings about how much she loves Gabriel. One day, Alicia finds a suspicious person standing for a few minutes staring at Alicia's house. This incident not only happened once but many times and makes Alicia anxious. Unfortunately, this man managed to enter Alicia's house and kill her husband, Gabriel. At the time of the murder, the murderer gives a shocking fact about Gabriel to Alicia Gabriel had been having an affair with another woman who is Theo's wife. Due to this fact, Alicia is very shocked and disappointed because she had never thought that her husband had an affair. When the murderer asks Gabriel to choose between himself and Alicia who should die, Gabriel prefers not to die. However, the murderer chose to kill Gabriel and left the two of them behind. After this incident, Alicia turned into a quiet and messy person. And the police declared Alicia to be Gabriel's killer because she did not explain anything to the police about the murder, and becomes silent for about six years.

Due to personality changes that lasted a very long time, Alicia is taken to mental health called The Grove. In The Grove the changes that occur to Alicia are getting worse, she becomes a quiet and sensitive person. She does not want to socialize with patients and even staff, and she also does things that endanger the people around her and herself. She still does not want to talk but makes a painting called Alcestis. Alcestis is a female figure in Greek mythology. Alcestis is willing to sacrifice her life, in order to replace her husband who is cursed by death. The myth said, Alcestis rose again from the dead and never spoke again which is similar to Alicia's story, when the murder happen and Alicia willing to replace her husband death but then Gabriel choose not to die and this makes Alicia's become silent.

Feeling guilty with Alicia, Theo tries to become Alicia's psychiatrist in *The Grove*. He tries to dig up Alicia's background of life to know deeply about Alicia and the cause of her behavior changes. After undergoing the treatment with Theo, Alicia realized something similar to Theo with the murderer. Alicia discovers a fact from Theo's voice, perfume, and the words that he often says which similar with the word that the murderer said to Alicia when the murder happened. Then Alicia wrote all the facts she got into her diary and gives it to the police.

From that explanation, this paper will focus in analyzing Alicia's personality character before and after her husband's death and the cause of those personality changes. This paper will see the psychological aspect of Alicia's character using the Characterization and Personality Changes theory. The writer also chooses to use *The Silent Patient* novel since the writer likes to appreciate the story with an easy-to-understand language that makes the writer seem part of the book. Thus, it also gives the writer an insight about someone's personality from their psychological side.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the background of the study, the writer composes the research questions:

1. What are Alicia's characters before and after the murder in *The Silent Patient* novel by Alex Michaelides?
2. What are the causes of Alicia's personality changes?

1.3 Research Objective

For answering the research question, the writer put on the research objectives:

1. To find out how Alicia's character is described in the novel.
2. The second aim is to find out the cause of Alicia personality changes after the murder of her husband. Therefore, this paper will focus on Alicia's characters and the cause of her personality changes.

1.4 Use of the Study

The use of this study will be beneficial for society, also in academic world, and the future researchers. Thus, the use of the study of this research is divided into two parts, as stated below:

1.4.1 Theoretically Use

Theoretically, this research can be used by other future researchers to conduct a deeper analysis concerning the psychological aspect of someone's personality changes with the same theory. The theory also can be used for the future researchers to analyze someone's personality in other literary works.

1.4.2 Practically Use

Practically, this research can providing more knowledge about someone personality and personality changes of someone, the character that really closes in our live which is sometime can changes someone's personality from the live

event became a supporting characters of a story.

1.5 Scope of the Study

For limiting the discussion, the writer determine to use *The Silent Patient* book because it will find the answer of Alicia's personality, the personality changes and the cause of it as portrayed in the novel. This paper looks at the character of "Alicia" in *The Silent Patient* novel by Alex Michaelides. The concern of this book is describing Alicia's personality, the changes and the cause of Alicia's personality changes after the murder or the death of her husband. The writer also chooses to use *The Silent Patient* because the writer enjoying the story, in the way, by reading the main point in some pages.