

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Novel is able to reflect the conditions of social community in detail and realistic. According to Sumardjo, novel reflects the way society thinks in facing the troubles at environment (Sumardjo, Jacob, & Saini, 1991). In another word, novel can be a realistic portrayal of reality. In addition, novel reflects the picture of real characters, characters that depart from social reality and can convey dialogues and conversation that can stir and move the hearts of the readers (Amelia & Diantika, 2017). Additionally, in 2005, Nurgiyantoro believes that through novels, readers are invited to do exploration and self-discovery (Nurgiyantoro, 2005). Thus, the researcher believes novel has big possibility to portray the reality and the real issues in the real world. It is also in line with the statement by Davidsen in 2018 who said that novel has developed and it has resulted in various idealistic and allegorical interpretations of literary representation of reality (Davidsen, 2018).

As the literary work that can reflect the reality, novel portrays many issues in the real world (Setri & Setiawan, 2020). Among many problems and issues that exist, the researcher chose one of the issues that often happen, which is related to racial conflict or racism. The issue related to racial conflict and racism is chosen by considering the fact that it still frequently occurs. An article that is written by Horowitz, Brown, and Cox revealed that more than 150 years after the 13<sup>th</sup> amendment abolished slavery in the United States, the legacy of slavery, as the example of racism, continues to happen (Horowitz, Brown, & Cox, 2019). In addition, the act and case of racism has a big impact on the position of colored people in the society of American (Horowitz, Brown, & Cox, 2019). Moreover, 6:10 or 58% of the Americans agreed that race relations in the United States are bad (Horowitz, Brown, & Cox, 2019). The data revealed in that article proven that racism still becomes a big issue that continuously happens.

Racism itself, according to Hafizh in 2016, can be defined as a belief that has two components, namely the difference and power (Al-Hafizh, 2016). In other words, racism can be committed when there are differences and power in a situation or in a person. Racism comes from mental attitude that looks at other people as if they are different from us permanent and unbridgeable (Samanik, 2018). These different feelings then encourage the community the race you feel superior to dominate and dominate other racial communities. In specific, racism can be defined as the belief that humans are divided into separate and exclusive biological entities known as “race” (Smedley, 2021). Briefly, racism is an act that differentiates humans based on their race.

Additionally, Hafizh in his article, grouping the human race into three major groups, namely the Mongoloid race or yellow race, Negroid race or leather race black, and the Caucasoid race or white race (Al-Hafizh, 2016). Racial grouping does not necessarily make one race superior to another. However, in social life these facts give birth to a social class that encourages racism. In reality, especially among Americans, the social class that is considered having more power and may commit the act of racism is the white race. Goodman, Moses, and Jones in 2012 discussed the origin of the "white" race, which considered itself the most superior in the Americas. White supremacy began at the time of the expansion by white English Protestant Anglo Saxons in the continent (Goodman, Moses, & Jones, 2012). Attitudes of racism are not only shown to blacks and local natives, namely Indians (Goodman, Moses, & Jones, 2012). However, to other white citizens of different religions with them. At that time, whites had privileges in various walks of life that could not owned by races outside of it (Goodman, Moses, & Jones, 2012).

Considering the unsettling cases related to race and racism and the fact that novel is able to portray the reality, the researcher decided to conduct a research about the existence of racial issue as portrayed in novel. To conduct the analysis, the researcher chooses one of the novels entitled *Dear Martin* by Nic Stone. *Dear Martin* is a novel that was published in 2017 by Crown

Publishing Group and written by Nic Stone. This young adult novel tells about Justyce McAllister, an African-American teenager who is bound by the Ivy-League. From the plot and the story of Justyce McAllister who is a smart white people that argues that colored people are always associated with crime and violence or narcotics, the researcher assumes that the novel may contain the materials of racial issue, specifically racial profiling.

Racial profiling itself is a term that is used by the police of generalizations based on race, ethnicity, religion, or national origin, rather than individual behavior, specific suspect descriptions or intelligence (Cleary, 2000). Racial profiling is an act committed as the effect of racial discrimination that is included as racial issue. Racial profiling is committed and used as the basis for suspicion in directing discretionary law enforcement actions such as stops, identity checks, questioning, or searches a person based on their race (Delsol, 2021). Simply, it is defined as the behavior of the police that initiated traffic stops by using race or skin color as the indicator (Ranti & Nurmaily, 2021). It refers to the behavior of the police and other law enforcers who tend to target African-American and Latino poachers in the streets of major cities in America as perpetrators of crime such as drug dealers, theft, robbery, sexual harassment, etc. If we want to explore further into their past history, of course *Racial Profiling* is closely related to the history of slavery in the United States, especially southern America such as Atlanta and Georgia. The most famous case of racial profiling is the case happened to George Floyd in America. Floyd passed away in police custody on May 25 because of the racial profiling that was done by the police officer. He was died because the police saw him as a bad person just because of his race (Gal, Kiersz, Mark, Su, & Ward, 2020) . That tragedy may be a case that can open the eyes of the world that the racial issue of racial profiling is dangerous and should not be continuously committed.

Unfortunately, the Americans believe that America has achieved racial equality, there is no such

thing as racism or discrimination, and equality of opportunity is available to everyone, whether white, black or latin. Impressed racist isn't it? White people tend not to care and ignore racial issues that are clearly still going on around them. In this way, their views, which at first seemed not racist, became hidden weapons which they were sometimes unaware of. They become ignorance who no longer cares about people who are still victims of racial discrimination in America. This form of racism is often brought to the table of argumentation by whites. From this ideology, those who do not experience racism will find it very easy not to care or be ignorant of racial issues that are still faced by colored people (Stone, *Dear Martin*, 2017).

Considering that, the researcher brings the issue of racial issue, especially racial profiling into this analysis. A novel entitled *Dear Martin* is used as the object of analysis. The researcher assumes that the novel contains the portrayal of racial profiling by the experience of the main character, McAllister, who was arrested by the police. The researcher believes that *Dear Martin* is about criticizing the acts of racism of law enforcement against African-American adolescents in the modern United States.

## **1.2 Research Question**

According to the background of the study as written above, the researcher created research question to be answered in this research. The research question is: what racial issues are faced by the main character Justyce McAllister in *Dear Martin* novel?

## **1.3 Research Objective**

To answer the researcher question, the researcher also created the research objective. This research is to explain and describe the racial issues that are faced by the main character Justyce

McAllister in *Dear Martin* novel.

## **1.4 Use of the Study**

In this research, the researcher hopes and believes that this research can be useful for society and other future researchers. Thus, in the use of the study, the researcher divided it into two, as written below.

### **1.4.1 Practical Use**

In practical use, this research can raise the awareness of society about the unsettling cases of racial profiling and racial discrimination. The definition of racial discrimination and its portrayal in literary work can be an insightful knowledge to society.

### **1.4.2 Theoretical Use**

Meanwhile theoretically, the theories and definition inside this research can be a guidance and knowledge for other future researchers who want to conduct a research or analysis under the same topic or issue, which is about racial profiling and/or discrimination. It also can be guidance for the researchers who want to conduct a research in social field or area.

## **1.5 Scope of the Study**

To avoid broader discussion, the researcher limits the research by setting scope of the study. This research focuses on the characteristic of racial profiling behavior as suffered by the main character named Justyce McAllister in the novel entitled *Dear Martin*.

