

THE BRAVERY ACT OF MINNY JACKSON AND AIBILEEN CLARK IN THE HELP NOVEL BY KATHRYN STOCKETT

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the elements of the novel which include the plot, characters and characterizations, as well as the setting in The Help by Kathryn Stockett, then to describe the acts of courage of Minny Jackson and Aibileen Clark. This research is a qualitative descriptive using a feminist approach. The results of this study are as follows. (1) The theme of slavery. The two main characters of the black race. Both have different characters. Background in the City of Jackson, Mississippi in the 60's circa 1962 to 1963. (2) Acts of courage Minny Jackson and Aibileen Clark in The Help by Kathryn Stockett.

Keywords: *The help novel, Feminism*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan unsur-unsur novel yang meliputi alur, karakter dan penokohan, serta latar dalam The Help karya Kathryn Stockett, kemudian mendeskripsikan tindakan keberanian Minny Jackson dan Aibileen Clark. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian deskriptif kualitatif dengan menggunakan pendekatan feminis. Hasil penelitian ini adalah sebagai berikut. (1) Tema perbudakan. Dua karakter utama ras kulit hitam. Keduanya memiliki karakter yang berbeda. Berlatar belakang di Kota Jackson, Mississippi pada tahun 60-an sekitar tahun 1962 sampai 1963. (2) Tindakan keberanian Minny Jackson dan Aibileen Clark dalam The Help karya Kathryn Stockett.

Kata Kunci: *Novel The help, Feminisme*

1. INTRODUCTION

Literary work is art in the form of expression, thought, imagination and emotion. According to Felta Lafamane, literary works are expressions of personal human feelings in the form of experiences, thoughts, feelings, ideas, enthusiasm, beliefs in the form of images of life that can evoke charm with language tools and are described in written form. There are many literary works. One of them is a novel. Novel is a literary work that contains essays in the form of prose. Before the 21st century the racist attitudes of whites against blacks were very strong, racist thoughts could make someone have bad prejudice against other people. The racist treatment experienced by black people is felt in all areas of life. Such as employment, health, education, religion and many more. Racism itself is generally interpreted as a belief system or can also be said as a doctrine which states that biological differences in the human race can determine a cultural or individual achievement, based on this understanding, a certain race has a higher influence or position and has the right to regulate other races that are considered inferior (Irab, 2007; Sihombing et al., 2020). The practice of slavery in the western world in the mid-15th century between the European and African continents led to the birth of bad stigmas against black people. Because this event caused people to be indoctrinated indirectly about differences in race and skin color that have been passed down from generation to generation. Seeing the current conditions, it seems as if racism has become a common thing. Over time, many people have become aware of the dangers of racism in the norm of life, and have begun to demand justice in terms of skin color and gender equality through anti-racist organizations and campaigns such as literary works. Literary work is a branch of art that is created based on ideas, feelings, and creative thoughts related to cultural elements expressed through language. Many posters, films, and novels have appeared based on true stories experienced by the author or based on the story of a character about discrimination against race, religion or skin color. Wish to have their voices heard by people and to let people know how they feel about what they went through. This is what motivated an American writer named Kathryn Stockett to create a novel entitled *The Help*.

The Help is a novel that tells the story of the oppression of black women who work as maids or household assistants in white people's homes. The main characters described in this novel are Minny Jackson and Aibileen Clark, Aibileen and Minny are two best friends. Both are two black helpers. Aibileen, works for the Leefolt family, raising May Mobbley, daughter of Elizabeth and Raleigh Leefolt. They experienced many acts of discrimination by their employers. They had to use a different bathroom because their

employers, who are black people, believe that black people carry infectious diseases. Discrimination is a form of attitude and behavior that violates human rights (Ihromi, 2007:7). This is what makes them feel bored with the acts of discrimination from their employers, they begin to dare to violate the orders of their employers. Such as using the same toilet to oppose racist actions from differences in skin color in the house. The courage and unique actions of what the main character experiences make the story interesting to discuss. Because basically humans are created equal, racist actions must begin to be eliminated from the thinking of the general public because they violate the norms of life and cause divisions between humans.

2. METHODOLOGY

A method is a procedure or method that can be used to achieve a solution to the problem being discussed. In this study, the method used by the author to describe the actions taken by Minny Jackson and Aibileen Clark in the novel *The Help* by Kathryn Stockett is a qualitative descriptive method. Qualitative descriptive research is often chosen as a research method for writing up findings. Descriptive research is research that has been used to describe a situation, subject, behavior, or phenomenon systematically. The purpose of descriptive research is to make descriptive notes about structured depictions relating to the events studied. Qualitative research is research that collects and analyzes non-numeric data in practice. The qualitative descriptive method is a qualitative research whose description uses facts, phenomena or events obtained from data as they are, both natural and man-made. According to Lexy J. Moleong, a qualitative method is data collected in the form of words and pictures. Qualitative methods do not use statistical work data like numbers. The approach used in this study is a feminist approach. The feminist approach is an approach that focuses on the image of women in literary works that discuss the gender of a woman.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The purpose of this study is to analyze the story from the novel *The Help* about the main characters Minny Jackson and Aibileen Clark, maids who work at homes of white races who have different thoughts towards the black race which are more towards discriminating against black racial figures. Many books tell stories about slavery or discrimination against the black race. But *The Help* offers a different story and taste of writing. The theme is the main idea or main idea that underlies a piece of writing so that it can unite the elements together to build a literary work. The theme also affects the reader, if the theme raised is interesting then it can attract the reader's attention to explore

the topics discussed in books, short stories or novels. The novel *The Help* raises the theme of slavery and the perspective of racism by employers against workers. Where in the 60s, slavery was still a trend in America. The slave referred to in this novel comes from black Africans, while the master comes from white Americans. At that time it was described that white people were considered the highest race of black people. Characterization, The story in this novel has the same strong main character where employers come from white people and workers come from black people. Following are the main characters in the novel *The Help*. Aibileen Clark, A black woman, Aibileen, works for the Leefolt family, raising May Mobbley, who is the daughter of Elizabeth and Raleigh Leefolt. Aibileen used to have a son who had big dreams, unfortunately his son died in a very tragic accident. It took Aibileen to rise from the grief of losing her son, and realize that the world still goes on. Aibileen, who has dedicated her entire life to being a maid in a white family, prefers to focus on caring for white babies. Until he grew up as a child, he would move on to another white family. May Mobbley is Aibileen's 17th baby. Wisely, Aibileen always instills a good attitude and character in every baby she cares for. This is in stark contrast to white mothers who tend to neglect their children and place more importance on their lives and social gatherings. Minny Jackson, In this novel, Minny is described as short and fat in stature, Minny is famous for her delicious cooking which has been recognized throughout the Jackson area, making her favored by employers who want to employ her. However, it was a pity that he had a big mouth and a tone that was difficult to control, which caused him to frequently change white employers. Finally, he worked for Celia Foote, an unpopular white woman and nemesis of Hilly Holbrook, leader of the Jackson Junior League, a social gathering of white women. Minny Jackson herself has a husband who is a drunk who often beats him when he is under the influence of alcohol. Background, Setting serves to give a picture of the atmosphere that seems real about the events that occur in the story. So that the reader can get an idea of the atmosphere that occurred in the event. This novel is set in Jackson City, Mississippi in the 60's around 1962 to 1963. At that time intolerant attitudes towards black African-Americans were still high, and slavery was still common. The bravery act of Minny Jackson and Aibileen Clark, The first action is an action directly shown to the person concerned orally or verbally. This action was carried out by Minny Jackson to her former employer Hilly Holbrook at Hilly's house to be precise in the dining room. The action taken was to give Hilly a homemade pie whose basic ingredient was dirt. Even Hilly, who didn't know how to eat it as usual and had already eaten 2 slices of pie, until

finally Minny told the basic ingredients of the pie. She said "Eat My Shit". And Hilly also wanted to vomit what she had eaten.

The next action is direct action in the form of being addressed to the person concerned through physical actions. Like what Minny Jackson did when she was caught using her employer's toilet. Minny pressed the flush button on the toilet seat in her employer's toilet. Then Minny deliberately slammed the lid of the sitting closet loudly so that Hilly could hear it. Even Hilly, who heard that, became upset and angry. The next action was when Hilly marked the tissue paper in her toilet to find out the amount of tissue used. Because of this, Minny felt intimidated, so she secretly brought her own toilet paper from her house without Hilly's knowledge. He also didn't forget to make fun of Hilly by calling him "stupid". The last action was to gather black people to conduct interviews about what they experienced against white people. They conduct interviews for writing books. Until finally the book was selling well in the market.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of research conducted on 2 black characters in the novel, it can be concluded that racist doctrines against black people were very strong in the 60s when slavery was still common. The two main characters feel bored because of the non-discrimination that happens to them, this becomes the climax of this novel when the two main characters take revenge in a quite unique way. In this story, Aibeleen Clark and Minny Jackson have different personalities. Where Minny is famous for her big mouth which makes her hated by her employer and often moves from one employer to another. But Minny is also famous for having very good cooking, to the point that it is famous throughout the city of Jackson. Meanwhile, Aibeleen has a wiser and kinder personality. Because Aibeleen works as a nanny and has experienced something that changed her outlook on life because she lost her beloved son.

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