

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

Literature is any writing made from creative ideas and imagination. A novel is one of the literary forms. In a novel, the writer could express their feelings or opinions about what they feel and what they want to say. They use literary Novel as their media to be creative while expressing their feeling about something particular. James H. Pickering and Jeffrey D Hoepfer, in their book entitled *Concise Companion to Literature* (1981), stated that Literature is born from someone who tried to understand, express, and then finally shared their experience through their works (307).

Racial Discrimination becomes one of the themes that writers often mentioned or included in their works. The term Racial Discrimination or Racism means treating other people poorly or differently based on their race. This act of discrimination is the most doing social problem in our society nowadays. This conscious or unconscious behavior then leads people would treat people poorly only because of the difference in skin color, religion, ethnicity, or looks. A few people from the majority race would treat the minority differently and think they are lower than them only because they look different. In his book, *Racism* (1999), Albert Memmi mentions racism as an act where people denigrate other races or people only because their appearance is different from usual (18). In sociological terms, racism showed because of the

stereotypes that arise in the middle of a society to a specific race or community. This means racial discrimination is not only related to an individual problem but becomes a majority problem since it is related to a specific race because of the stereotypes that spread in society.

The racial discrimination that happened to Black people in The United States was believed as an effect of the Jim Crow law years ago. Jim Crow law named after a Black show character in 1860's, Jim Crow. This law is used to marginalize the Black African American people, where they have no rights to vote, get a job, or get the same opportunities as white people. Black people who tried to attempt this law often being jailed, get violence or death. Because of that action, many Black people in The United States became a victim of racial discrimination. The law that happened in the past was ingrained in their society and became a habitual action that hard to get rid of until now. In 1960 the Civil Rights Movement happened and canceled the Jim Law Segregation legally, but instead, the racial discrimination still happened. Jim Wallis, in the book *America's Original Sin* (2015), stated that race embedded in The United States for a long time is all lie, people need to wake up and change the way it works from now on, and to change it need action from both sides (1).

In The United States, discrimination towards minority race often happens, not only by the citizen but sometimes done by the police officers that mistreat Black people because of the stereotypes that have been spread for a long time there. One of the famous cases of police brutality against Black people is the George Floyd case. George Floyd was a Black man killed by a white officer named Derek Chauvin on

May 25th, 2020. In the article by *The New York Times*, Floyd was dead after 9 minutes of being handcuffed and pinned to the ground and made him cannot breathe under the knee of Mr. Chauvin. This act of racism drew widespread outrage, made people angry, and created a #BlackLivesMatter movement in The United States. This movement is to show the government and people all around the world about the rejection of discrimination that police do to people of color in America.

Rachel Cargle is one of the many contemporary activists that stands up for Black people. Rachel itself is an activist, writer, lecture that introduces the public to white supremacy, racism, feminism, and many other issues. Cargle stood with Black people and fought for them to fight racism in The United States through teaching, her works, and social media. She writes some articles related to racism and white supremacy, one of them is Why You Need to Stop Saying "All Lives Matter" to lecture people about what Black Lives Matter movement intention and what makes it different from all life matters. She also built a foundation called The Loveland Foundation. This foundation is where many women of color healing from the stress and traumas they had.

Angie Thomas is an African-American writer. She became one of the critical figures when we talk about racial discrimination in literary works. All of her works talk about racism, police brutality, and discrimination. Her extraordinary first novel and also the famous one is *The Hate U Give* (2017). It was successful in the market and made her get many awards. The novel *The Hate U Give* (2017) talk about how the minority are treated in the United States. The non-colored people will live in a

nice place while the colored ones should be at the bottom. It also includes the death of Khalil's young man, who was shot by the police because of miscommunication and the wrong stereotypes about Black people. In addition, she is trying to describe the discrimination against Black people that happened in The United States and compare it by how the Americans treated them back. This novel proves how Racial Problem still has become a severe problem in America even today by seeing how it was famous after mentioning racial discrimination.

Dear Justyce (2020) by Nic Stone is one example of literary works (novel) that bring up racial discrimination as its theme. This novel talks about the difficulties of Black people in facing a society that discriminates against them. As the protagonist character, Quan should face many problems in many aspects. The hardest and serious one is the criminal justice system. The author showed how Black people should deal with various conditions in their environment by highlighting the problem of social fractures.

Andrea Nicole Livingstone or known as Nic Stone is an African-American woman writer. Her work is mainly using the Young Adult genre and brings Racial Discrimination as its theme. She was born and raised in a suburb of Atlanta, Georgia. Living in Israel, which is very different from The United States, she taught and made her realize differences in the world after graduating from college. After returning to America, she started focusing on her work and then wrote her first debut novel, *Dear Martin*, in 2017. This novel was a big hit and claimed as number 4th of bestselling books by the *New York Times*. *Dear Justyce*, which came out in 2020, is the sequel

from *Dear Martin* that discusses racial discrimination and police brutality that happened to a character named Quan.

There are two main reasons why the writer wants to do this research. The first reason is the social conditions that still not realize how racial discrimination is an important problem for a human being. The phenomenon still often found happened in society and is not being considered a serious matter. The discrimination that white people do to Black people is a disadvantage to Black people and makes them feel uncomfortable. The writer showed how a Black boy should face many problems and get non-equal rights because of his skin color. By the society, even at the juvenile crime he got no rights to speak and had to face the stereotype people gave him because of his race. That is why racial discrimination should be an essential thing to discuss because, in reality, we found a lot of this phenomenon. To be considered, Black people often get racial discrimination and have to fight it, especially the police brutality.

The second reason is that this novel shows the racial discrimination Black people should face portraying what they faced in society. The non-equal rights in life, the stereotypes that labeled them, and the injustice in law showed and described as the fundamental aspect of society. This novel also brings up a problem about police brutality and injustice. They have no right to explain and to speak their opinion about the law and felt powerless about it. It makes them have to be punished for a crime that they do not even do because of the stereotype of Black people who are always wrong. The writer wants to entitle this research, **“The Current Racial**

Discrimination Against Black American People Reflected in Nic Stone's *Dear Justyce*

1.2 Identification of Problem

As the author of the novel, Nic Stone, is a Black American who experienced racism. She tried to visualize how racism happened in America and what impact it had on Black people. Being a daughter of a police officer makes her know how cruel the society in The United States is toward Black people. An article by *Houston Matters* said, "At first blush, you'd think she was writing from the perspective of someone who's only had bad experiences with law enforcement, but that's not true. Stone is the daughter of a police officer." (2019). So this novel more likely came from her experiences by seeing and experiencing the racism in her circumstances.

Dear Justyce (2020) primarily contains racial discrimination and stereotypes about Black American People. The writer will only focus on the racial discrimination issues and the impacts it is caused. In the novel, the writer highlighted the racist environment of Black American People that makes them suffer more than white people. They also need to face that even police and law do not take their side. This kind of bad behavior is still happening in The United States, and make Black American People should deal with it for the rest of their life. They have no voice in society, even for themself.

Nevertheless, many people support them on many occasions like demonstrations like the most famous action done by people worldwide to prevent racial discrimination towards Black people by trending a hashtag called

#BlackLivesMatter in 2020. However, racial discrimination haunted them. This novel also gives an example about how Black People are not always are like the harmful stereotypes that have always been labeled to them for all these years.

1.3. Review of Related Studies

In order to create proper research, a preview of past research that is related must be done. So, it can be proved that this research does not duplicate previously published studies. In regard, these are various previous research that is related to the research subject which will be discussed in this subchapter:

The first is a thesis by Yuliana Indri Yanti entitled "The Portrait of Racial Discrimination Against Black American People in Angie Thomas *The Hate U Give* (2021) from Faculty of Humanities, Andalas University. In this study, she analyzed the racial discrimination in Angie Thomas *The Hate U Give* and gave views about how it is reflected in society's life. The author use Sociology of Literature as its approach. In order to reveal the racial discrimination in this novel, the author uses qualitative and descriptive research methods. The result found by the author is that there is racial discrimination in America. In the novel, people place non-colored people and people of color on different social statuses, making them get harmful treatment by society. The non-colored people would live in a nice place and get suitable treatment while the people of color are at their bottom and discriminated against. They did not get excellent access to education or good work, or legal protection from in-laws. Also, she found that racial discrimination makes the legal community, like the police would turn back and attack Black people instead of

protecting them as citizens. This novel helps the writer to understand racial discrimination in The United States, however, since the writer's topic is about the recent racial discrimination in The United States, this thesis cannot help the writer fully to understand about the racial discrimination in The United States.

The second is a thesis by Andi Ririn entitled Racism in *Stockett's The Help* (2017) Faculty of Cultural Sciences Hasanuddin University. In this study, Ririn has portrayed the racial discrimination that happened in Mississippi in America in 1960. Where racial discrimination against Black people becomes a turbulent time for society, he also included how Black people in America face discrimination and what action they take to fight back represented in this fiction. The author uses the structuralism approach to analyze it. This study helps the writer to understand how the Black people reaction to racial discrimination that year and what action do they take to get fair rights with white people, even though this thesis is not based on the modern era.

The third is an article by Wiecek entitled Structural Racism and the Law in America Today: An Introduction (2011). In this study, Wiecek mentions two different kinds of racism: structural racism and traditional racism. In traditional racism, he accused that the acts of discrimination are conscious and deliberate and come from individual behavior that is nasty. In comparison, structural racism attacks one racial group, which results in segregation, poverty, and rejection. This article helps us to understand the difference between racism in America and the effect that it could build on the society that has continued for years. The act of discrimination that

happened traditionally could be rooted in the society and then develop into structural racism if we did not prevent it from happening in our society. Thus this article is helpful for the writer because it contains an excellent explanation about the kinds of discrimination that happened to Black American people and the cause also the effect it. So it helps the writer understand racism in America.

The fourth is an article journal by Muh. Anshar Wadi, Faidah Yusuf, Waode Surya Darmadali titled Frames of Racism in Novel “*Dear Martin*” by Nic Stone (2017) in *Journal of Linguistics and English Teaching Studies*. In this study, the author found that the racial discrimination that happened in the novel *Dear Martin* is different from the usual racial discrimination in society. They called this racial discrimination as Color-blind racism, such as Abstract liberalism, which has two principles ideologies; Equal Opportunity and Meritocracy, Naturalization racism, Cultural racism, and Minimization racism. The researchers found that the minimization of racism occurs the most significant impact in this novel. In contrast, the majority race who does racism take racism as a simple thing and do not live with it. Although this article is based on the modern era, the racial discrimination in this novel showed kind slightly different from the physical racial discrimination.

The fifth is an article journal by Afifah Indriani and Afifah Wahyuni titled Institutional Racism in American Post- Civil Rights Movement in *Dear Martin* by Nic Stone (2017) in *E-Journal of English Language & Literature*. In this study, the author showed that after the Civil Rights Movement, where Black people did a demonstration to free themselves from discrimination, Black people thought they

were free from racial discrimination. Also, when Barack Obama, the first black president of the United States, was elected. They thought that racial discrimination was over, but instead, institutional racism still haunted them. It is caused by differences in their physical appearance, such as skin color and hairstyle. The stereotypes that arise in society also make it worse and label black people with many bad things; this proves that many white Americans still have racist ideologies. This article helps the writer analyze that racial discrimination inherited in the United States is still happening now, even after the Civil Rights Movement. Also, the first elected black president Barack Obama took his position. This research are helpful because it could prove why racial discrimination is still happening even after the latest Black Live Matter movement. There is still a lot of racial discrimination case in society.

The sixth is an article journal by Nensia titled Racism towards African American in Peter Farrelly's Green Book: A True Story in *Journal of Literature, Linguistics and Cultural Studies*. In this study, the researcher is trying to prove that racial discrimination in Peter Farrelly's Green Book movie happened in real life in the Jim Crow Law era. In the historical context, like racial discrimination, the distinction between White and people of color was reflected in the movie as it is in history. The discrimination that is happening is shown to spread from one region to another region, and the act of it also becomes worse and starts to become racial discrimination. This research is helpful to the writer because it shows how racial discrimination is growing in society and spreading because of stereotypes.

Based on all the studies above, the writer could understand that racial discrimination has still become the main problem in our society. It also becomes one of the most exciting things to talk about when exploring literary works, how racial discrimination cannot be separated from America because it inherits there. The writer will reflect on the racial discrimination that happened to Black American people in their everyday lives with several findings. The writer would also examine Stone's description of racial discrimination, where people often get unfairness and struggle to fight for it.

Based on all the previous studies the writer has reviewed, the weakness of all reviews above is the racial discrimination they discussed before the Black Lives Matter movement happened in The United States. Many of the majority race took racial discrimination as a simple thing and tended to ignore it even though it happened in society. It can be understood that there is still no massive movement done by the citizens to prevent racial discrimination towards black people and to support them. Not many articles and thesis talked about law injustice and police brutality. However, all the research above could give the writer understanding of the kind of racial discrimination that happened in The United States and the impact of it to deepening the writer understanding about the topic of racial discrimination. The position of this research is to show the kinds and impacts of racial discrimination in the United States toward black people that are reflected in this novel

1.4. Research Questions

This research will answer these questions:

1. What are kinds of racial discrimination happen in The United States reflected in *Dear Justyce* by Nic Stone?
2. What are the impacts of racial discrimination on Black people in The United States reflected in *Dear Justyce* by Nic Stone?

1.5. The Scope of The Research

In order to make the research not too broad and not focused on the topic. The writer put limitations on this research. The writer would say only focus on the racial discrimination that happened to Black American people. Therefore, this research will be divided into two main topics. First, what is the racial discrimination that happened to Black American People in the United States. Second, what are the impacts it has on Black American people in the United States. The writer uses the Mimetic theory by M.H Abrams to analyze the racial discrimination in the novel that reflected the actual condition of the black community in the United States. This research is expected to relate to the theory and practice of literary works. The analysis also finds how racial discrimination in The United States affects black people and their environment.

1.6. Objective of Research

The purpose of this study is to explain, describe and analyze the racial discrimination portrayed by Nic Stone in the novel *Dear Justyce*, based on the questions above. This thesis aims to understand the racial discrimination in the

modern era after the #BlackLivesMatters came up in America. This study also aims to describe how Black people fight for their rights from discrimination they experienced.

