

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

Humans have their own particular reasons or criteria for looking for their partners, especially in looking for their long-term partners through marriage. Basically, the discovery of that kind of partner can occur due to sexual attraction between two humans, which originates from human sexual preferences. The concept of human sexual preference itself has developed from human ancestors to modern times. However, the criteria or preference for determining a partner exists due to physical attractiveness and the desire to continue a long-term relationship. Then, the value of reproductive success is to give birth to offspring that appear as a product of adaptation in humans. Even more, human preferences are produced to solve human adaptive problems regarding survival because the main purpose of life since the beginning of human civilization has been to survive and be successful in reproduction. Therefore, it is not questioned anymore that as humans, we need to have certain criteria for finding a partner in order to survive because mating is strategic and the strategies are used to solve specific problems to achieve successful mating (Buss, *The Evolution of Desire* 6).

Finding the right partner can bring some benefits for both males and females to solve things in life, such as maintaining their offspring or reproductive success, emotional support, coping with challenges, evolutionary fulfillment, and many others. In fact, the mechanism for the development of human adaptive goals is the same as the evolution of psychology in humans, which means that evolutionary psychology influences the human brain to respond to various things adaptively. In addition, literature is also a huge factor that influences the

human brain. As artificial drugs are designed to influence human pleasure centers, literature can also influence human psychological adaptations (Buss, *Evolutionary Psychology: The New Science of the Mind* 418). Besides, through literature, we can see how someone survives, adapts, and finds solutions.

Literature is considered a form of art. Literature allows a person to step back in time and learn about life on earth from the ones who walked before us. According to Wellek and Warren, literature is a kind of reflection of human life because it portrays human feelings, thoughts, and perceptions (1973:3). Literary works are all works of literature. Literary works are born out of the imagination of a writer and contain of their own ideas, thoughts, and feelings. Generally, literary works represent life, and life is largely a social reality. The literary works that reflect much about social reality are novels. The novel is a prose work of considerable length and complexity that sets out to reflect on and express something about equality or the value of human behaviour (Taylor 46).

Characters in a novel are considered the same as humans who live in the real world and have various life problems such as fear of heights, the pain of being betrayed, surviving in a dangerous situation, retaining a marriage that cannot have children, and so on. Hence, characters in literary works are equal to human psychological mechanisms, where human psychological mechanisms will work adaptively to solve problems. Basically, humans cannot be separated from many problems in life. These problems come and trigger the human brain to solve and find solutions to these problems. Solving certain problems has continued to evolve from ancestral times until today, which has stirred humans to other levels of human evolution. Just like in the past, to solve the problem of mate selection, they had to be the

strongest, but now a person only needs to have charm to attract their mate. Carroll (2011) stated that people go into literature not just to play games with words but also to have the most intimate and forceful experiences (73).

The theory that simultaneously examines human nature in evolutionary psychology and literature is called literary Darwinism. Literary Darwinism has emerged as the most dynamic new movement in literary study in the past few years (Carroll, *Reading Human Nature: Literary Darwinism in Theory and Practice* 3). Darwinian literary studies are a powerful approach that integrates evolutionary social science with literary humanism in a work. One of Darwin's famous literary critics, Joseph Carroll, considered the human mind to have evolved by an adaptive process of natural selection (Greenberg 573-574). Literary Darwinism generally examines human motives related to survival in the form of fictional characters, such as in novels. According to Carroll (2011), literary Darwinism believes that human motives are the basic life goals that can influence human behavior (157). Besides that, this theory also believes that the meaning contained in literary works is related to real human goals and human biological needs (Whitfield 388). Therefore, literary Darwinism is an approach to literary criticism that is able to produce meaning in a literary work and align it with the way humans evolve, survive, and are resilient to problems such as real human life. Buss (2019) stated that, in literary Darwinism, survival is not only about surviving death, but also surviving to achieve reproductive success because organisms with many offspring will help with the task of survival (5).

Many literary works emphasize the survival of complex love relationships in human life, which provides a lot of teaching for readers about human resilience in surviving and finding solutions to every problem that they face. In Darwinian literary studies, resilience refers to

the capacity of a fictional character to adapt and survive over time, similar to what species do in Charles Darwin's theory of evolution. This perspective focuses on understanding character in responding to problems and persisting in them without caring about how many other problems will be encountered. In the context of literary works, resilience can refer to the defense of human relationships, such as in the contemporary romantic novel *All Your Perfects*, written by Colleen Hoover. This novel is considered a good choice because, right now, many people, especially young adults, are interested in her works. Besides, she has also won the Goodreads Choice Award for Best Romance three years in a row.

All Your Perfects is a novel that explores the challenges of a marriage facing an uphill battle. The story revolves around the theme of survival in a marriage, exploring how its characters, Quinn and Graham, navigate their relationship through adversity. Quinn and Graham's marriage is tested as they struggle with infertility and the emotional toll it takes on them. This novel depicts their determination to survive as a couple, even though they are faced with heartbreaking circumstances. This novel highlights the importance of communication, understanding, and the resilience needed to weather storms that can threaten a marriage. The story ultimately underscores the idea that love can endure through adversity and that a perfect relationship is often determined by how a couple handles imperfections and challenges together.

In regard to infertility, nowadays the problem of infertility has become a serious problem that occurs in marriages. Based on a study of 47,500 Danish women published in *Acta Obstetrica et Gynecologica Scandinavica*, it was stated that those who cannot have children after treatment for 3 times in a row will end up in divorce compared to those who managed to conceive, and as many as 27% of women declared no longer being with their partner

(Schoenberg). According to that, choosing a novel with the same problem will be very interesting and matter to people in real life in understanding the meaning of life, especially for couples who do not have children because of the conditions. Analyzing this novel will be very useful in finding the key for imperfect couples to discover other motives for natural selection. Natural selection refers to the struggle for survival, but sexual selection refers to the ability to find mates for the purpose of producing offspring (Jagadeshan 1). However, in this novel, readers will be given another perspective on human motives for surviving even with an imperfect partner, namely through mate selection and the role of imagination that influences the resilience of human relationships. Therefore, it can be seen that the benefits of having the right partner can maintain their possibility of surviving in a critical situation.

In consequence, the writer analyzes this novel in depth and focuses on aspects of the characters' relationships using a Darwinian literary perspective. The writer believes Colleen Hoover formed the main character in the novel to show that long-term relationships with the right partner will help humans survive despite difficult situations.

1.2 Identification of the Problem

Generally, the happy ending for married couples in romantic fiction novels is the formation of a small family with children. However, in the novel *All Your Perfects* by Colleen Hoover, Quinn and Graham, the main characters in the story, fail to have children of their own because of Quinn's infertility. Not only that, they even fail to adopt the child because of Graham's past criminal record. These shortcomings, miraculously do not make their marriage end up in divorce, they can resolve their adaptive problems and end happily even though they are unable to have children. In the end, they decide to continue a long-term

relationship and choose to survive until they grow old together with their loved ones in the hope of being happier.

Selecting the right partner is what ultimately helps the resilience of their relationship and provides a meaningful narrative to their lives after going through many problems, such as Graham's infidelity. Therefore, the writer analyzes the basic human motives of looking for a mate for a long-term relationship and the role of imagination of the main characters in the novel, Quinn and Graham. Hence, the writer means to find out the reason why choosing the right partner and the role of imagination can help human resilience in any difficulty.

1.3 Review of Related Studies

There have been several journal articles that discuss the same work and topic before. As one example, a scientific article discussing the same work written by Khairulina N.F and Boldova V.V entitled *the Specificity of the Concept of "Love" in the Novel "All Your Perfects" by Colleen Hoover* in 2023. In this article published in the book *Innovative Development of Science, Technology and Education*, they explore the concept of "love" to reveal the whole truth about the construction and struggles involved in a seemingly perfect love story. The results show various critical issues such as realism; a woman's experience in her joys and sorrows, and the rejection of idealization; the unpleasant aspects of real love. They also explain that love is not only about romance but also about pain that can only be overcome if we can find the right partner. The similarity between the two researches is that both use the same novel so that it can help the writer in exploring the meaning of the novel. While the difference lies in the perspective used.

The next research is from the Journal article written by Jovita Anugrah Santoso and Tri Pramesti, which has the title *Robert Sternberg's theory of triangular love in Colleen Hoover's All Your Perfects* in 2023. This article examines the complexities of relationships and the concept of triangular love. The result of this research shows the two characters, Quinn and Graham, have experienced the depiction of a perfect love style with three components of a relationship; intimacy, passion, and commitment. From this article, it can be concluded that Quinn and Graham have experienced happiness with each other, the receipt of emotional support from each other, the sharing of one's self and one's passions with each other, and the value each other in one's life. The similarity between this article and this research is that both use the same novel, and the difference lies in the perspective used, where this article discusses it from a psychological perspective, while this research examines it from the perspective of Darwinian literature.

There is also journal article that discusses the same topic, namely infertility in marriage. This journal article is entitled *Marriage Conflict in Paula Hawkins's The Girl on the Train*, written by Angelie Aurelia Janis, Mister G. Maru, and Delly Sabudu in 2019. This research has two objectives, namely to reveal two marriage conflicts and to find out the causes and effects of the two conflicts in the novel. The writers use qualitative research and an objective approach as a design in this research. The result of this research shows that the conflict occurs due to the character of Tom, a selfish husband who is never satisfied with his wife. The first marriage conflict occurs because Rachel could not give Tom offspring and the second marriage occurs because Tom has an affair with Megan from his second wife, Anna. These two researches have similarities that are very useful for the writer, namely related to

the topic of infertility and other marriage problems such as infidelity, and the difference lies in the objectives and approaches used.

In addition to journal articles, several theses have touches on the same work and theories as this research. The first comes from the thesis of Yogi Pratama Putra, under the title *Kurt Lewin's Inner Conflict Faced by Mr. and Mrs. Wells in Colleen Hoover's All Your Perfects* in 2022. In this thesis, he focuses more on analyzing the main characters' inner conflicts by using Kurt Lewin's theory, which is about what types of inner conflicts are faced by Mr. and Mrs. Wells and how they resolve their inner conflicts by using Kurt Lewin's theory. He found that Graham Wells experienced approach-approach inner conflict, and approach-avoidance inner conflict. Meanwhile, Quinn Wells experienced two types of inner conflict, avoidance-avoidance inner conflict and approach-avoidance inner conflict. He also revealed that Graham resolved his inner conflict with positive and negative valence. Then, for Quinn, it can be proven that she resolved her inner conflict with three kinds of valence, positive valence, negative valence, and neutral valence. Both researches analyze the same novel, *All Your Perfects* by Colleen Hoover, and equally focus on the problems faced and their solutions. Meanwhile, the difference lies in the theory and perspective used.

The thesis by Muhammad Iqbal entitled *Love as Darwinian Survival Mechanism in John Green's The Fault in Our Stars* in 2022. In this thesis, he reveals how the dynamics in romantic relationships have an adaptive function called the survival mechanism in a couple, which has a low chance of survival in life. This thesis applies the literary Darwinian theory by Joseph Carroll because it explains the concept of the basic human motives related to the mechanism of love and the role of imagination in solving adaptive problems of survival. His

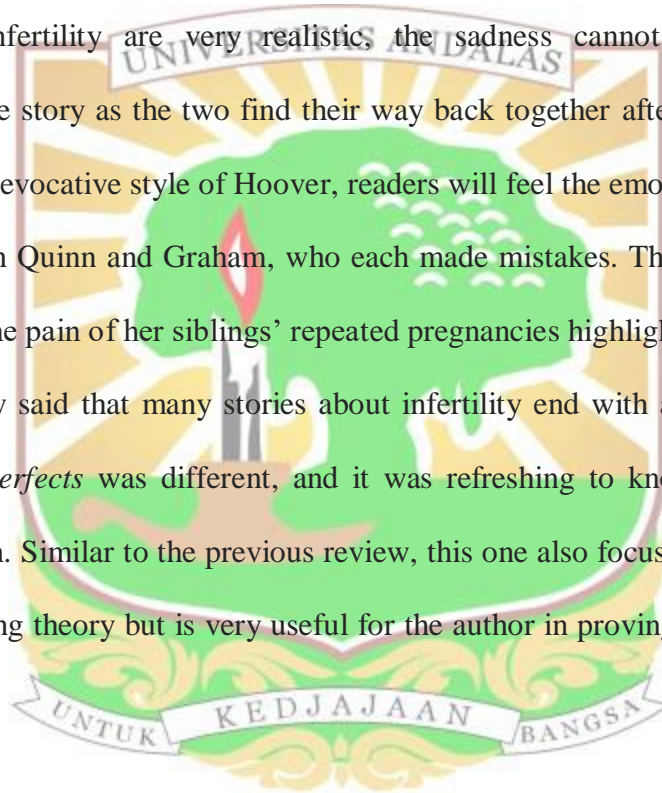
thesis explains how mate selection plays an important role in survival, where Augustus chooses Hazel for her beauty and kindness, and Hazel chooses Augustus for the goodness of him who can make time for her. Besides that, the role of imagination or the life of the mind also gives us an understanding of how, through imagination, people like Hazel can live more enthusiastically and want to survive longer after Augustus's death. The similarity between both studies lies in similar topics, such as the principles of mate selection and the role of a character's imagination. The difference between the two is the object used, where Iqbal used the novel *The Fault in Our Stars* by John Green and this research used the novel *All Your Perfects* by Colleen Hoover.

The next one is a thesis owned by Siti Maulina, *Sibling Rivalry in Literary Darwinism Perspective as Seen in John Shors' Beneath a Marble Sky* in 2021. In this thesis, she also uses literary Darwinism as the main approach which leads to looking for uncovering motives between siblings that steer the rivalry between siblings in the story. The researcher shows that a rivalry between siblings is enclosed by a survival motive in gaining power from each other and also portrays that family motives affect the relationship between siblings. The similarity between the two researches also uses the same approach.

Finally, to deepen the analysis of this research, it is very necessary to take some reviews of this novel. The first one comes from a review written by Saimah Haque on the website Off the Shelf, entitled *Colleen Hoover's All Your Perfects is an Emotional Roller Coaster*, which was published in 2018. In the review, she acknowledged that Colleen beautifully weaves a story in the past and present that shows the emotional roller coaster that exists in a marriage, wherein the story describes the narrative of what happens after "happily ever after." She

explains that the novel describes how Graham and Quinn fall in love and then how they face obstacles that threaten their marriage after 7 years. The difference between this review and this research is that this review only examines the content of the novel in depth without using the theory, but this is still very useful for the writer in understanding the content of the novel.

Another review is taken from a review written by Amy Alessio entitled *All Your Perfects*, which was published on the website Booklist in 2018. In the review, Amy said that although the details of infertility are very realistic, the sadness cannot take away from the heartwarming love story as the two find their way back together after being on the brink of divorce. With the evocative style of Hoover, readers will feel the emotions of this story while sympathizing with Quinn and Graham, who each made mistakes. The insensitive comments from others and the pain of her siblings' repeated pregnancies highlight their difficult journey very clearly. Amy said that many stories about infertility end with a miracle baby, but the novel *All Your Perfects* was different, and it was refreshing to know that Hoover took a different approach. Similar to the previous review, this one also focuses on the content of the novel without using theory but is very useful for the author in proving the uniqueness of this novel.



1.4 Research Questions

The writer understands the analysis through several questions. The following questions are:

1. What are the mating criteria for Quinn and Graham to be able to retain their marriage in an infertile condition in the novel *All Your Perfects* by Colleen Hoover?
2. What aspects can influence the resilience of human relationships in the novel *All Your Perfects* by Colleen Hoover?

1.5 Scope of the Research

This research will include limitations in analyzing the novel, thereby limiting the scope of the research. The writer focuses on analyzing how literary Darwinism explains the human criteria of finding and retaining a mate and the adaptive function of imagination in influencing the resilience of human relationships. Therefore, in exploring the research objectives and avoiding confusion, the writer limits the analysis of the relationship between Quinn and Graham.

1.6 Objectives of the Research

The purpose of this research is to reveal human motives in seeking mating criteria to be able to retain a relationship with an infertile partner in the Quinn and Graham relationship. This research also presents another important aspect that influences the resilience of Quinn and Graham's relationship, which is the role of the character's imagination function. In fact, the result of imagination is hypothesized to have an impact on the resilience of husband and wife relationships to changes in behavior to pursue a happier life even without children, which will result in a high chance of survival and successful reproduction. In addition, the writer aims to conduct this research to further introduce the existence of Darwinian literary studies in literary works, which will provide an in-depth analysis of the work.

