

CHAPTER I

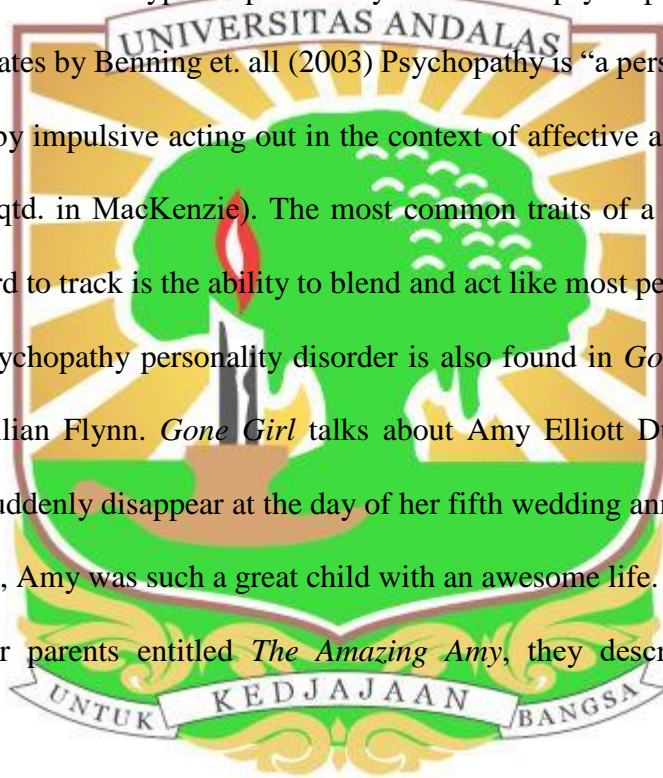
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

According to American Psychiatric Association, Personality disorder is a way of think, feel and behave that deviates from the expectations of the culture, causes distress or problems functioning, and lasts over time (Psychiatry.org 2018). One of the well-known type of personality disorder is psychopathy personality disorder. As states by Benning et. all (2003) Psychopathy is “a personality disorder characterized by impulsive acting out in the context of affective and interpersonal detachment” (qtd. in MacKenzie). The most common traits of a psychopath that make them hard to track is the ability to blend and act like most people.

The psychopathy personality disorder is also found in *Gone Girl*, a novel written by Gillian Flynn. *Gone Girl* talks about Amy Elliott Dunne, a married woman who suddenly disappear at the day of her fifth wedding anniversary. When she was young, Amy was such a great child with an awesome life. Through a book written by her parents entitled *The Amazing Amy*, they describe Amy’s life exaggeratedly.

The Amazing Amy is always a step ahead of Amy, which triggers a hidden competition in Amy herself. So that, when Nick appear on Amy’s life, Amy see an opportunity to beat *The Amazing Amy*. Unfortunately, unlike *The Amazing Amy*, Amy’s marriage does not occur smoothly since Nick is not really the man of her dream. In the following years after marriage, Nick starts to change and he even has an affair with a young girl. It is her fifth wedding anniversary as the climax of



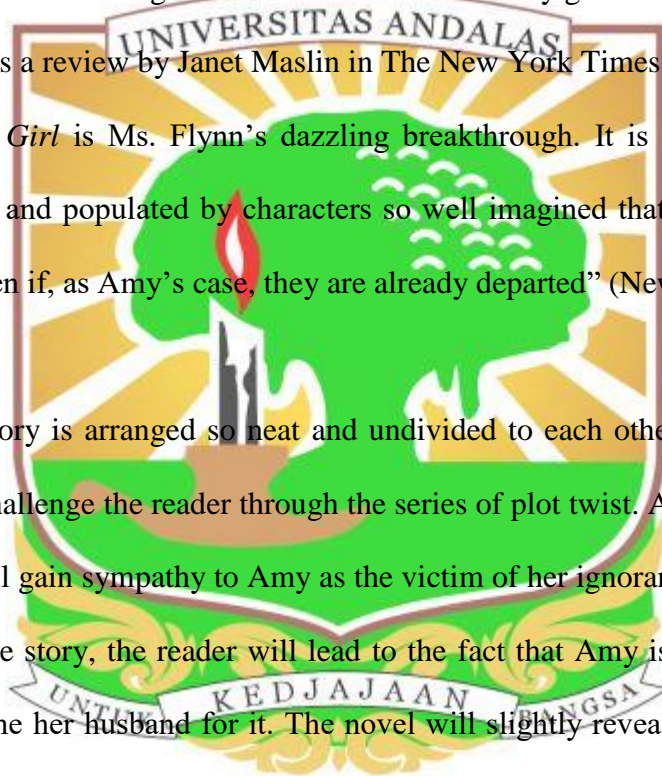
Amy's disappointment. As the lesson for her husband, she sets a scenario for her own death in order to frame him.

In framing her husband, Amy writes a diary that will lead Nick to be the only suspect in her disappearance. The diary does not totally tell the truths but Amy's scenario. It tells about Amy's side of the story from the moment she first meet him, where Nick used to be gentle, care and such a loving person but then after a few years of marriage he turn into an evil and Amy get scare of him.

There is a review by Janet Maslin in The New York Times website and she argues "*Gone Girl* is Ms. Flynn's dazzling breakthrough. It is wily, mercurial, subtly layered and populated by characters so well imagined that they're hard to part with—even if, as Amy's case, they are already departed" (Newyorktimes.com 2012).

This story is arranged so neat and undivided to each other, because each chapter will challenge the reader through the series of plot twist. At the beginning, the readers will gain sympathy to Amy as the victim of her ignorant and unfaithful husband. In the story, the reader will lead to the fact that Amy is counterfeit her death and frame her husband for it. The novel will slightly reveal the characters' secret which will deceive the reader's sympathy.

There are many issues that can be analyzed from this novel. One of them is about self defense mechanisms of the main character to overcome her problem. The defense mechanisms later provide her to the extraordinary behavior that shows she has some psychological issues. According to Tyson (2009), "Patterns of behavior because of our repetition of destructive behavior reveals the existence of some



significant psychological difficulty that has probably been influencing us for some time without our knowing it” (11). In her defense, Amy is showing some extraordinary behavior that indicate her with psychopathy personality disorder which arises because of her psychological problem.

Martin Kantor in his book entitled *The Psychopathy of Everyday Life* (2006) states that psychopath personally does violence to individual who “deserves it” according to consistent, predictable standards (12). As the writer see it, Amy’s way in teach her husband a lesson is similar to a person with psychopathy personality disorder because she thought that her husband deserves to be taught.

Gone Girl is undoubtedly full of Amy Elliot’s psychological issues. This is the reason why the writer decided to write about her novel to be analyzed by psychological analysis for literature research. This novel has indeed successfully attracts the attention since it is contemporary but it could achieve prestigious awards. The writer also find that Flynn’s work is magnificent and captivating, and sees that analyzing one of her best novel and also the latest, *Gone Girl* would be very challenging.

Analysis of the work will refer to the literary theory of psychoanalysis proposed by Sigmund Freud and self-defense mechanism because the writer wants to emphasize that among id, ego, and superego of the main character are not balance. Since her childhood, she already feel repressed by fictitious character created by her parents that always win her over everything. Then, when she is married, she also finds her husband cheating with a younger an attractive girl than



her. By using psychological approach it can be seen the psychological problem that exists in Amy that cause it.

Therefore, based on the explanation above, the writer decide to conduct a research entitled “The Struggle of the Main Character with Personality Disorder as seen in *Gone Girl* by Gillian Flynn”

1.2 Identification of Problem

Amy Elliott is a smart and idealistic woman who is the most important character in the story. The writer believes that since her childhood, Amy has already been repressed by her parents through the fictitious character *The Amazing Amy*. Thus, because of that fictitious character is better in anything than herself, Amy then obsessed to be perfect in order to exceed it. In the other hand, Amy is intimidated by *The Amazing Amy*. However, the writer sees that her parents indirectly pushes Amy to compete with *The Amazing Amy*.

Unfortunately, when Amy decides to marry Nick in order to beat *The Amazing Amy*, she does not win. She does not marry the man of her dream just like *The Amazing Amy* when it turns out that her husband has an affair with his student.

Looking from her childhood until adolescence time, Amy is suffering enough from the existence of *The Amazing Amy*, so the writer presume that Amy has shown self defense mechanism. Therefore, in order to explore Amy Elliott’s character, the writer intend to examine the psychological problem that she experiences.

1.3 Scope of the Research

This research focused on Amy's psychopathy personality disorder and her defense mechanism which rises because of her psychological repression during childhood and continued by her husband's affair.

1.4 Research Questions

There are two main points that need to be analyzed:

1. What are Amy's self defense mechanism in dealing with psychopathy personality disorder.
2. What are the indications of her psychopathy personality disorder.

1.5 Objective of the Research

This research aims to find out Amy's repression during childhood which causes her psychopathy personality disorder and what are her defense mechanism. It is important to examine how Amy solve her problem that she faces since her childhood. By using the theory of Sigmund Freud Id, Ego and Superego, the writer want to start the research by figure out the childhood experience which gives the contribution to Amy that at the end commit murder.

1.6 Review of Related Studies

In conducting the research, the writer find a few researches related to the novel and the theory. The first related study is a thesis conducted by Siti Alifah Tamir (2017), student of English Department of Andalas University. Her thesis entitled *The Study of Uniqueness and Gynocriticism in Gillian Flynn's Novels Entitled Gone Girl and Dark Places*. This research applies the theory of gynocriticism and the concept of *antiheroine* to the female character. As the result

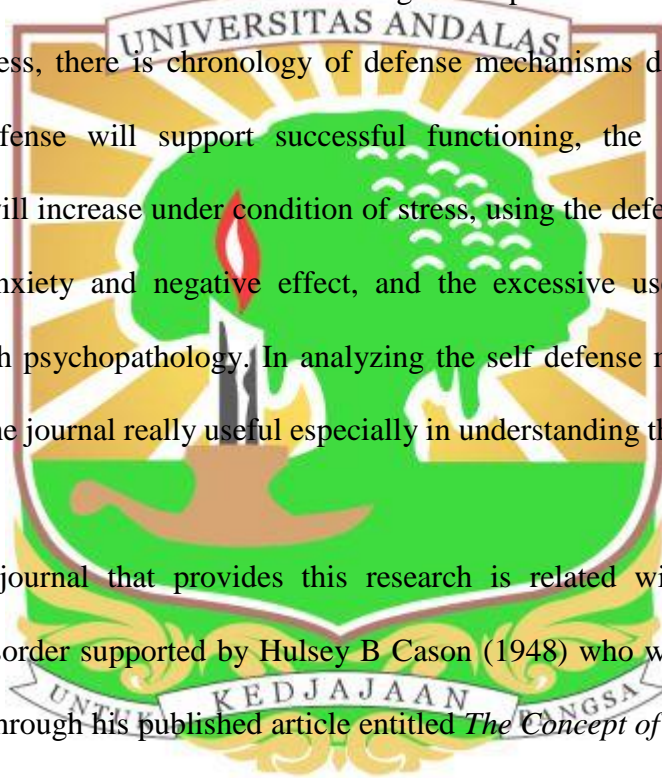
of the analysis, the researcher find out that Gillian Flynn has a unique feature in her writing as gynocritics criticism. The elements are lies in the anti-heroine character, multiple plot twist, he overuses of taboo and bothersome subjects and the everlasting conflict between love and morality. These features also represent woman's personal theme, woman uniqueness in characterization and woman's experience as the center of the story. The writer found this research provides so much help in understand more about Flynn's women characters especially since the writer also analyze the psychological problem of woman character of *Gone Girl*.

The second related study is thesis conducted by student of State University of Surabaya, Gilang Pertiwi Wening (2016) entitled *Amy's Personality Disorder in Flynn's Gone Girl: A Psychological Approach*. According to Wening, humans have certain personality but they are not born with it. Personality can be affected or developed by the environment where someone is live and by whose people he/she interact with. There are people who cannot deal with the situation around them which called antisocial personality disorder which is divided into eleven types that have different characteristic for each of them. From her research paper, she provides 6 out of 7 characteristics that Amy's have that sign her to be categorized as an antisocial personality disorder, there are failures to conform social norms, deceitfulness, impassivity, irritability and aggressiveness, reckless disregard for the safety of self or others, and lack of remorse. The research helps a lot in explore the main character's personality disorder since it talks only about the personality disorder's issue of the main character without connecting it to the defense mechanism. Thus, the writer's research here is to fulfill their lack of analysis which

is related to the main character defense mechanism which is believe as the key of the main character's behavior.

Another review is about a writing by Cramer (2009) with his article entitled *Seven Pillars of Defense Mechanisms Theory*. Cramer states that unconscious mental process referred to defense mechanisms which is different from conscious coping strategies. He presents seven basic tenets or pillars of defense mechanisms theory such as defense mechanisms are the cognitive operation that operate outside of the awareness, there is chronology of defense mechanisms development, the mature of defense will support successful functioning, the use of defense mechanisms will increase under condition of stress, using the defense under stress will reduce anxiety and negative effect, and the excessive use of defense is associated with psychopathology. In analyzing the self defense mechanisms, the writer found the journal really useful especially in understanding the application of defenses.

Other journal that provides this research is related with psychopathy personality disorder supported by Hulsey B Cason (1948) who was an American Psychologist through his published article entitled *The Concept of Psychopath*. He states that psychopathic behavior is more common during childhood and adolescence than at any other period of life, but marked symptoms often decrease after certain life experiences, not infrequently between the ages of 30 and 40. Regards to the childhood and adolescence memory of Amy Elliott, she has some traits that able to put her on psychopathy personality disorder which are self-assertion, pugnacity, vanity, conceit, selfishness, and envy. As Cason said, an



individual should be diagnosed a psychopath if he has the symptoms, regardless of how long or how short a time he may have them. The assists of this research would help a lot in recognizes the psychopathic symptoms of the main character.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

This research is about a psychological approach. Actually, there are many experts in this discipline but the writer prefer to emphasize the theory of Sigmund Freud about id, ego, and superego because his theory is more suitable with the writer's analysis. By the assist of self defense mechanism, the writer want to analyze the main character's cope to deal with her problem.

- **Psychoanalysis, Psychology of the Character**

Even though literature is a fiction, but it depicts the real human being, the character that portrays in fiction reflects the real character of human in real life. As quoted from Bernard J. Paris (1997) in his book entitled *Imagined Human Being*, he states "What fascinated me most about literature is its portrayal of human beings and their relationships". In another word, literature is the reflection of the reality. Includes the character of the literary word may reflect human being. Paris also mentions this "These characters are not flesh and blood creatures, of course, but are imagined human beings who have many parallels with people like ourselves".

Hence, the writer focus on the psychological approach based on psychoanalysis theory introduced by Sigmund Freud. As Tyson (2006) mentions "if psychoanalysis can help us better understand human behavior, then it must certainly be able to help us understand literary text, which is about human behavior (11). From the statement, it can be seen that analyzing literary text is similar to

analyzing human being. Thus, in order to elaborate the main character's personality disorder, the writer apply the theory of psychoanalysis by Sigmund Freud.

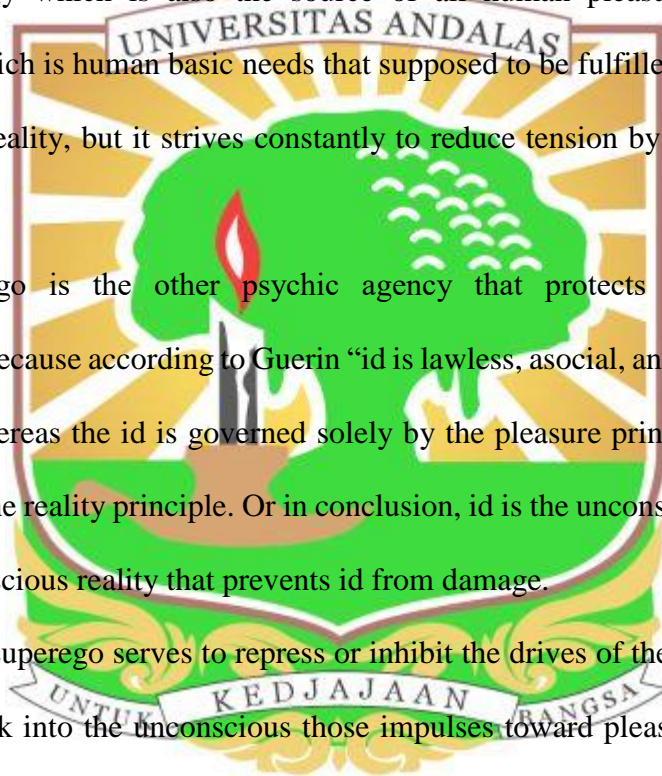
- **The Provinces of the Mind**

Feist in his book *Theories of Personality* (2010) mentions Freud idea as the provinces of the mind that divides the model of human psyche into three parts, there are id, ego and superego (27). Id is the unconscious part which is deal with all psyches energy which is also the source of all human pleasure, desires and aggression which is human basic needs that supposed to be fulfilled. The id has no contact with reality, but it strives constantly to reduce tension by satisfying basic desires.

The ego is the other psychic agency that protects id's dangerous personalities because according to Guerin "id is lawless, asocial, and amoral" (157). Therefore, whereas the id is governed solely by the pleasure principle, the ego is governed by the reality principle. Or in conclusion, id is the unconscious desire and ego is the conscious reality that prevents id from damage.

Thus, superego serves to repress or inhibit the drives of the id, to block off and thrust back into the unconscious those impulses toward pleasure that society regards as unacceptable, such as overt aggression, sexual passions, and the Oedipal instinct (Guerin 158). Superego can be inferred as moral principle that is ordered to keep id and ego balance.

Since Amy Elliott id, ego and superego are not balance, the writer believe that it causes her personality disorder which comes from defending herself from repression that she experience during childhood. Tyson (2006) argue that the central



concept of all psychoanalytic thinking is the existence of the unconscious. This is actually supports Freud theory that unconscious is the part of mind beyond consciousness which nevertheless has a strong influence upon our actions.

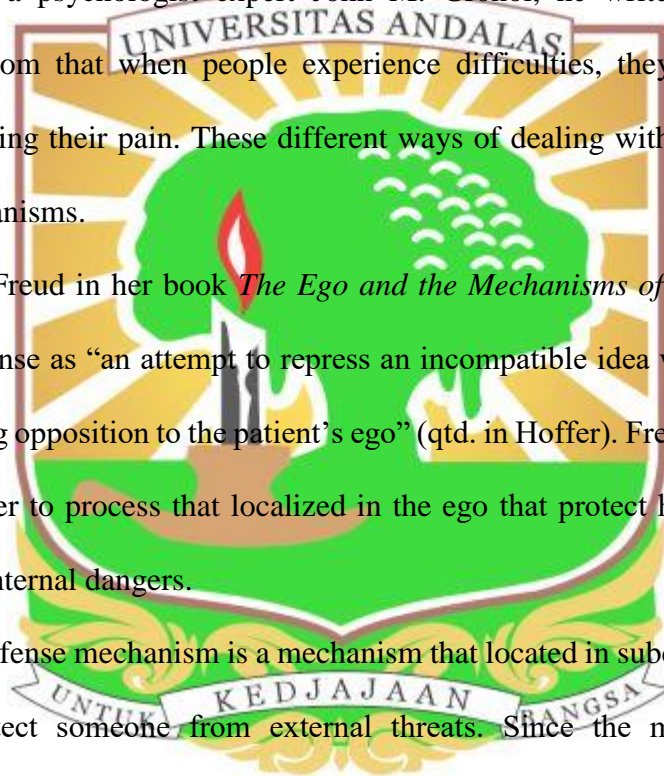
- **Self Defense Mechanism**

Defense mechanisms are one way of looking at how people distance themselves from a full awareness of unpleasant thoughts, feeling or behavior. According to a psychologist expert John M. Grohol, he writes in his article Psychcentral.com that when people experience difficulties, they have different ways of handling their pain. These different ways of dealing with pain are called defense mechanisms.

Anna Freud in her book *The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defense* (1936) describes defense as “an attempt to repress an incompatible idea which had come into distressing opposition to the patient’s ego” (qtd. in Hoffer). Freud uses the term defense to refer to process that localized in the ego that protect human’s anxiety arising from internal dangers.

Self defense mechanism is a mechanism that located in subconscious which arises to protect someone from external threats. Since the main character’s psychological problem does not just occur without any reason, it is believes that by utilizing the defense mechanisms theory will support the analysis of the main character.

There are several types of self defense mechanisms developed by Anna Freud, as refer to Saul McLeod (2019) there are repression, denial, projection, and displacement. The early type and most important defense mechanism found by



Freud is repression. As McLeod says that repression is “an unconscious defense mechanism employed by the ego to keep disturbing or threatening thoughts from becoming conscious.” In other words, it is a condition where ego keep any ideas, conflicts, memories or any thought which is dangerous away from the conscious. Next, denial is defense mechanism that according to Tyson (2006) is “believing that the problem doesn’t exist or the unpleasant thing never happened” (15). It means that the person refuse to feel or have the unpleasant experience in themselves. Then there is projection that describe by Anna Freud as “a psychological defense mechanism in which an individual attributes unwanted thoughts, feelings and motives onto another person” (qtd. in McLeod). Specifically, a person will accuse someone for some feeling that they have but deny that they have it in themselves. At last, there is displacement. Tyson mention that displacement is transfer the anger with one person onto another person, usually to the one who would not fight back (11). In other words, displacement is release the unpleasant feeling towards a more acceptable object.

- **Psychopathy Personality Disorder**

Before coming to the characteristics of the psychopath, the writer would like to differentiate between psychopath, psychopathy and psychopathic. According to Cason (1948) “Psychopathy is used in definitely limited sense and not in more general meaning of organic pathology, abnormality, or psychology. Psychopath refers to a person with this diagnosis. Psychopathic may refers to a person, traits, tendencies, behavior, etc.” (297). In other words, psychopathy is the disease or

disorder, psychopath is the person who experienced it, and psychopathic refers to anything that related to it.

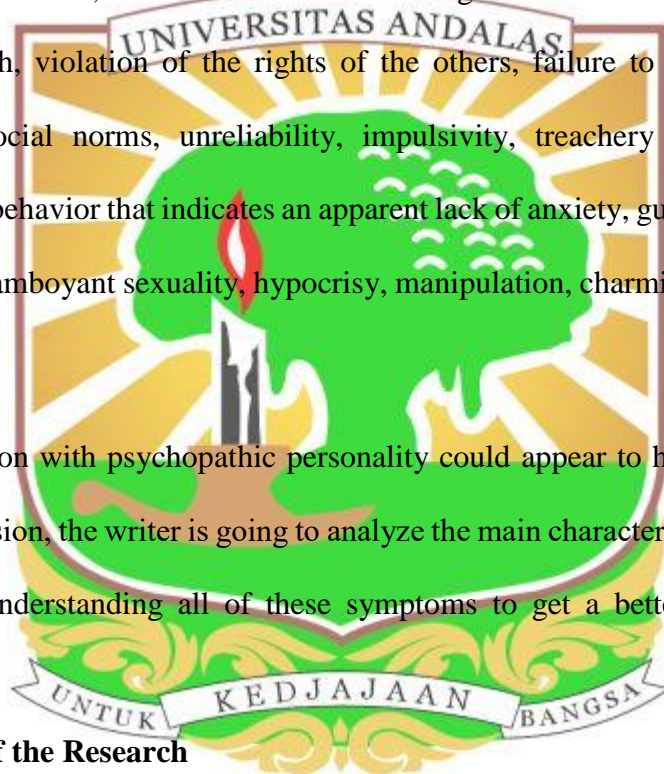
Martin Kantor (2006) in his book *The Psychopathy of Everyday Life* states that in their appearance there is nothing that could be highlighted in psychopaths that different from common person, they will advertise their true nature in their appearance which is no single characteristic look either mild or severe psychopaths (30). In their behavior, there are 14 traits that distinguish them from ordinary people such as speech, violation of the rights of the others, failure to conform to age appropriate social norms, unreliability, impulsivity, treachery and disloyalty, aggressively, behavior that indicates an apparent lack of anxiety, guilt, and remorse, criminality, flamboyant sexuality, hypocrisy, manipulation, charming and conning, and lying.

A person with psychopathic personality could appear to have an ordinary life. In conclusion, the writer is going to analyze the main character's psychological problem by understanding all of these symptoms to get a better result in this research.

1.8 Method of the Research

In conducting the research, the writer focus on three steps to finish this research. There are collecting the data, analyzing the data and presenting the result of the analysis.

First, in collecting the data, this is the library research method which deals with book and materials. There are two kinds of data that that is used in this



research, primary data which is taken from the literary itself and secondary data which is taken from literary theory books and article related to the theory.

The second step is analyzing the data. The primary data is the main point that should be analyzed in order to finds out the traits of main character's psychopathy personality disorder and the self defense mechanism. Thus, the writer continue to analyze the three psyches zones id, ego, and superego of the main character and discover what kind of psychological problem that can be found in herself.

The last step is presenting the result of the analysis at the end of research. Since this is a qualitative research, the descriptive method will be applied. In his book Social Research Method (2012), Bryman states that qualitative research can be construed as a research strategy that usually emphasizes words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data (36). So that the result of analysis will present in arguments, opinion and statement in descriptive explanation about the discovery of research that conducted.

