THE STUDY OF THE MAIN CHARACTER'S CONFLICTS IN RELATION TO CHARACTER AND SETTING IN THAT CAMDEN SUMMER BY LAVYRLE SPENCER

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Abstract
The purpose of this research is to study of the main character’s conflict in relation to character and setting in That Camden Summer by LaVyrle Spencer. Using structuralism theory, the writer found a relationship among intrinsic elements such as character, setting and plot. This research is using close reading method. Based on the result, the writer found Roberta has external conflicts that were influenced by her and other characters traits.

Key words: conflicts, setting, plot, character

Introduction

Problem or conflict is an argument disagreement, differences in principles, opinions or even interesting about something. Conflict does not only happen because big things like war, but also because little things like debates, fights or even gossip.

Every person must have a difference in opinion. For example someone in the selection of clothes, the A and the B. Tastes of A and B must be different, and there will be a difference in giving their own opinion which will lead both of them to debates.

Man created by God surely has a different nature. There are grumpy, taciturn, active, troublemaker, lazy, and others. This is the nature of the differences that sometimes trigger 2 or more to contradict each other.

Many conflicts that human should faces in their life such as conflict of family, conflict of economy, conflict of society and others. This can be experienced by anyone young and old, men women and even among toddlers can have conflict. Conflicts can occur anywhere and anytime. Conflict can also be found in a story such as novels, drama, short story and other. This conflict can be seen in the literary work that is novel That Camden Summer by LaVyrle Spencer. Therefore, the writer decided to analyze this novel as a research object.

LaVyrle Spencer was born July 17, 1943 is an American best-selling author of contemporary and historical romance novels. She has successfully published a number of books, with several of them made into movies. Twelve of her books have been New York Times bestsellers, and Spencer was inducted into the Romance Writers of America Hall of Fame in 1988. Her first novel is The Fulfillment (1979) and has made into movie with name The Fulfillment of

The novel tells about a newly free-thinking divorced woman named Roberta Jewett return to her hometown of Camden, Maine and she discovers that small-town folk consider a divorced woman little more than a prostitute. Condemned by her mother and scorned by neighbors, Roberta nonetheless perseveres in her struggle to forge a good life for her girls and herself. Behaving like no “respectable” woman in her hometown such as gets a job as a nurse, learns to drive and buy her own car make Roberta having many struggles from entire town. But she is fight it with all her power to prove that she can life and responsible to her family and even better than others. And when she meets a widowed carpenter Gabriel Farley, she learns to open her heart to man and to love again. Right now, it is for real happiness forever.

From the explanation above, the writer will analyze the conflict of the main character.

**Method of Research**

In this research, the writer is use the close reading to understand the research object in novel That Camden Summer by LaVyrle Spencer. According to Madden in Exploring Literature Writing and Arguing about Fiction, Poetry, Drama, and Essay, a close reading “is not once reading, it is a re-reading” (55). Re-reading is to a read something such as magazine, newspaper, book, etc. more than one time or several times.

To understand the data, the writer must read the novel for several times to get the author purpose inside the novel. After that the writer will collect the important data to supporting the research and analyze it based on theory the writer uses.

**Analysis and Finding**

**Character and Setting of the Novel**

**Roberta**

Roberta is the center of all the characters. Roberta is a divorced woman who has a job as a traveling nurse. Divorced status that Roberta carried has its own views by family and society. She has a modern thought on her status as divorce and is brave to fight against divorce thoughts and opinions of the society on her status in Maine. She is also independent to make her own life.

**Modern**

Roberta has advanced or modern thinking about a woman who can do everything that is done by men. According to Oxford dictionary modern is “of ways of behaving, thinking, etc new and not always accepted by most members of society.” The modern trait is implied the following conversations.
Here is conversation that shows that Roberta has modern mind and different way or thinking on divorce.

“The... well, you know...” Grace stirred the air as if she were folding cake better. “The divorce,” she whispered. “Why are you whispering, Grace?” Grace’s demeanor stiffened a degree but she spoke aloud once again. “Don’t be obtuse, Roberta. Did you really do it?” “Yes, I did it.” “Oh, Roberta, how could you?” (21)

From the quotation above, it can be seen that Roberta has new way of thinking about divorce. Roberta believing marriage can be separate for a couple who doesn’t have commitment to continue the marriage. And marriage can be holding on when a couple have a commitment to love and understanding each others. Grace said “Oh, Roberta, how could you?” It is hard to believe by Grace who have conventional about marriage, believe marriage can’t separate by human but God. She also doesn’t agree on Roberta’s divorce because it’s not usual a woman got divorce.

**Independent**

In this research Roberta also showed as figure that is independent. Roberta tries to providing a living for herself and her daughters when she was still married and after divorce. According to Oxford dictionary independent is “confident and free to do things without needing help from other people; having or earning enough money so that you do not have to rely on somebody else for help”

On the conversation in the story Roberta showed her desire to go to college and do not work in the mill as the women in the neighborhood.

“Eighteen. It was right after I graduated from high school. She wanted me to go to work in that infernal mill, and I absolutely refused. She thought I’d just settle down right here and wait on her, do everything she wanted, just like Grace. But my grandmother had died and left Grace and me each a small inheritance. Grace gave hers to Elferd to buy his first piece of property and start his business. I took mine and went away to college, which upset my mother a lot. She thought I should have done what Grace did, and of course she never stops reminding me how Grace stood behind her husband when he needed her
From the quotation above, it can be seen that Roberta has shown her independent of not following Myra wish. Roberta says “I took mine and went away to college” this quote gives information how Roberta have independent-minded on education. She shows her desire to get more education and not settle down like her sister which only let the men control everything.

**Brave**

Robert shows her brave in action and in providing resistance to people’s opinion about her divorce status. According to Oxford dictionary brave is “willing to do things which are difficult, dangerous or painful; not afraid.” This bravery is formed because of the differences that are believed by the society.

This is some evidence in the story that shows how brave Roberta.

To hell with them all, she thought, let them think what they will. If women could go to the battlefront as nurses, they could divorce as well. (3-4)

From the quotation above, it can be seen that how brave Roberta is for not afraid about other people's thoughts on her status. And if a woman can go to the battlefield as a nurse, a woman can divorce.

**Cultural Setting**

According to Oxford, cultural is “customs, beliefs, art, way of life, etc of particular country or group.” So cultural setting is a society condition it can seen through the way of life, manner etc.

Boston, where Roberta continues her education as a nurse has become a metropolis or modern city. As a modern city, Boston opened up opportunities to work and continuing education for anyone both men and women. As a modern city, Boston also had foresight to divorce of someone and society of Boston did not make it because considers it as a personal problem.

**Plot and Conflicts of the Main Character**

**Plot of the novel**

**Exposition**

The exposition of the novel starts when Roberta moved back to her village, Camden.

Roberta Jewett had hoped for fair weather the day she moved her children back to Camden, Maine. Instead, a brew of needly rain and thready fog had followed the Boston boat all the way up the coastline. (1)

From the quotation above, it can be seen that Roberta and her children moved back to Camden after long not came. She is going with a boat from Boston and the weather not good enough to traveling.

**Rising Action**
The rising action is the exciting force, gains in interest and power as the opposing groups come into conflict. (Harmon and Holman; 171). In this story the rising action start when Myra come to Roberta’s home to speak about her divorcing.

“But the disgrace, Roberta. It’s all over town that you’ve divorced him.” “He kept mistresses, Mother.”

“But it just isn’t done, Roberta! Not by respectable women. You don’t understand. People whisper the very word.” (91)

From the quotation above, it can be seen that Roberta had told Myra her reason to divorcing and Myra responses only her disagreement and show to us Myra conventional trait.

Climax

The climax happen between Roberta and Elfred happen when Elfred starting grabbed her hair, forced to kiss her. Even Elfred is also twisting Roberta hand and pushing Roberta down to the ground. Elfred threatening Roberta with a cigarette in his hand to conquer Roberta in order to follow his will.

Her eyes were shut in humiliation, but she felt him raise up and shrug off his suspenders, transferring the cigar to the other hand. A knee to her stomach, a flip of her skirts, a yank at her waistband, a tug on his own drawers… and at last he flung the cigar into the weeds…] He pinned her wrists above her head, grinding gravel into them as he got between her knees and forced them wide with his own…]

[... and the ignominy of being entered against her will, of being treated like a disposable nonentity, less than human. (238-239)

From the quotation above, it can be seen that Roberta feel humiliated to be treated Elfred against him. How Elfred one by one to undress and then he himself Roberta then discard cigarette making Roberta does not move. Even though Roberta is keep fighting even it useless. Elfred holding Roberta wrist to her head, forcing the knee Roberta open with his knees. Roberta bear it all by imagining herself away from what is happening, far from Elfred and immorality, far from inhumane treatment.

Falling Action

Falling action is the conflict is resolved, the tension allegedly slackens. After Roberta told to Myra everything that she had in her mind, she asked the truth from Myra.

Studying her, letting her own weariness show, Roberta said
quietly, “Now I have to know, Mother. Are you one of the Benevolent Society who wants to see my children taken away from me?” It took Myra a long time to gather her equilibrium and whisper, “No. I didn’t know a thing about it till now.” Roberta breathed a hidden sigh. “Well, that’s one good thing anyway.” (310)

Through the quotation above, it can be seen that Mr. Boynton needed time to think everything. “The inquiry is dropped,” he said simply. “Sorry, Mrs. Jewett.” It is show how Mr. Boynton also closed Roberta case and apology about everything.

**Roberta vs Myra**

The relationship between Roberta and Myra never runs smoothly. This is because of inequality in giving affection between Roberta and Grace. Everything is done by Roberta is always considered wrong by Myra and all done by Grace are always right. Besides they have different traits which are potential to be conflict. Roberta is modern, independent, and brave, while Myra is conventional or traditional and unloving.

In a conversation Roberta debates with her mother about her divorced and about lack of understanding why she must divorce her husband.

“But the disgrace, Roberta. It’s all over town that you’ve divorced him.” “He kept mistresses, Mother.” “Oh, please!” Myra slammed her eyes shut and held up both hands. “Please, don’t be vulgar.” (91)

From the quotation above, can be seen that Roberta as a modern women told her reason why she is divorcing her husband.

Mr. Boynton said, “If we could have a few minutes to talk this over…” (361)

The schoolroom door opened and Mr. Boynton stood before his pack of board members, who avoided eye contact with everyone in the hall. “The inquiry is dropped,” he said simply. “Sorry, Mrs. Jewett.” (362)

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**Resolution**

The resolution is when the children defend Roberta and show to all of board member how they have much fun in Roberta home, have a new experience and how their feel free in there. And it is very different in their home.

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Myra said “But the disgrace, Roberta.” It shows Myra respond on Roberta divorced and her disagreement on it, and also show Myra’s conventional thinking of divorce.

**Roberta vs Elfred**
The relationship between Roberta and Elfred never run good. This is because by the trait of Elfred nasty. He’s always doing something inappropriate not only with Roberta but also with women in Camden. Roberta just got a bad response due to a divorce that carried Roberta status. Elfred also has a conventional nature. It is seen by the quarrel between Elfred and Roberta about cars.

On the conversation Elfred told his opinion on divorce and a job that Roberta took.

“You must admit, Birdy, not many women do it. And it will look rather fishy, your taking a job that’ll carry you all over the countryside.” (23)

Based on the quotation above can be seen Elfred opinion on women divorce and not many women doing divorced. Elfred said “And it will look rather fishy” this quote show how Elfred is believe in Roberta taking a job as travelling nurse make everything worse and suspicious.

**Roberta vs Benevolent Society**
The conflict between Roberta and Benevolent Society happened after Gabe Farley beaten Elfred in front of his family. They are argument it happen because of Roberta to be the cause of conflict between the two men. They are also gossip that Roberta tempted Elfred and move on to Gabe Farley, she is playing them both. They are think that Roberta unmoral and doesn’t deserved to raise her children.

“What about those Jewett children? Shouldn’t somebody look into it and see that they’re removed from their home if it’s being run like a bordello?” (290)

From the quotation above, it can be see how Benevolent hypocrite trait that they have plan to look Roberta’s children condition and take them away if their home run like a bordello. They even don’t know how Roberta home looks like.

**Conclusion**
Based on the results of the research, the writer can provide conclusions about the conflict in *That Camden Summer* by LaVyrle Spencer.

The writer found Roberta as a modern woman gets opposition from Camden society that still has the views and traditional values. Boston as a modern city, allowing women to divorce and have a job. Camden as traditional town, assume that divorce is a disgrace for the family because it is contrary to the traditional values that are trusted by the community of Camden. As well as having a job as a traveling nurse by nature a
woman is to maintain and nurture the family not to work outside the home. Roberta also is encourage changes in society, such as the divorce is not a disgrace but it is common for married couples are not able to maintain the commitments that have been made. Even in the absence of a husband, Roberta still able to feed herself and her children and provide proper education for them.

**Bibliography**


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