

THE STUDY OF CONFLICT OF THE MAIN CHARACTER AS SEEN IN JOHN GRISHAM'S *A TIME TO KILL*

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INTRODUCTION

In this paper, the writer analyzes conflict as seen in the novel *A Time to Kill* by John Grisham. *A Time to Kill* tells a story of a white lawyer who helps an African American father whose daughter was kidnapped and raped. As the lawyer who struggles to bring justice for his client, he was faced with many problems and conflict. The purpose of this study is to describe the traits and setting that affected the main character's conflict. The theory applied for this study is structuralism. The precept of structuralism stems from the attempt to find relationships and connections among factors that appear like separate and discrete [1]. Thus, the significance of the study is analyzing intrinsic elements, which will also examine how and from what elements the conflict is formed. This study will reveal that intrinsic elements are interrelated to each other.

METHOD

The source of data in this research is taken from a novel entitled *A Time to Kill* by John Grisham [2]. In order to complete the research, the writer applies qualitative method by applying the close reading technique and also interpretation to get an understanding of the data. Interpretation is the exploration of those meanings and responding to a work of literature, people draw on their own understanding, background, and observation [3]. In analyzing the novel, the writer reads carefully and re-read the novel while taking the notes about particular data concerning to the intrinsic elements. The writer doing a silent observation technique to the data by questioning it until the data can be understood precisely. Data related to characters traits, setting, plot, and also conflicts in the novel are found out through words, phrases, and sentences. To answer the

research by way of examining special words, phrases, taking note allusion, and sentences related to the research problem.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Jake Brigance is an ordinary lawyer and a father who has a daughter. As a social creature, it's natural that he has empathetic trait towards Carl Lee as a father whose child has just been raped and tortured.

"Who would you report it to?" Carla asked

"I don't plan to report it," he said

She was not satisfied "I think you should report it. You want Carl Lee to do it, don't you?"

"No, I don't. But if he did, I wouldn't blame him because I would do the same thing" (64)

Based on the quotation above, when he found out that Carl Lee going to kill the rapist, he admit that the action was wrong by law but he added he wouldn't blame Carl Lee if he kills them, because he can feel it too. By showing this action it means he able to understand Carl Lee's pain, he able to put himself into someone's shoes.

Jake also have another trait called persistent. In finishing the case, Carl Lee and Jake has been through a lot. So, there was a moment when Jake is no longer Carl's lawyer but he still care about the case. Jake's persistent trait can be seen as in the quotation below

"Can I have a minute?" Jake asked as he closed the door.

"What's on your mind?"

"The Hailey Case. I had no idea it was coming. I expected to try the case in July."

"You owe no apologies, Jake. The motion to withdraw will be granted. It's not your fault.. Who's the new guy Marsharfsky?"

"Yes, sir. From Memphis."

"With a name like that he should be a hit in Ford County."

"Yes, sir." Almost as bad as Noose, thought Jake.

"He has no Mississippi license," Jake explained helpfully." (206)

The quotation shows us a situation where Jake is still doing the case indirectly. He meets Judge Noose to talk about the case. While, in fact, at that time Jake is not Carl Lee's lawyer anymore, because he was fired by Carl Lee as he cannot afford to pay him. Legally, he has no right to intervene in the case anymore but, no matter how many obstacles he faces, Jake still tries to get the case back and finish it. He continuing firmly, in spite of difficulty or opposition. The fact that Jake remained involved in the matter of the case even though he had been fired shows that his attitude was persistent regardless of his goals or intentions.

It is found that there are two settings; experiences and also the society which also can shape the characters traits.

Cat crossed his legs and laid a diamond-clustered hand on his knee. "Well, Sheriff, me and Carl Lee go way back. Fought together in 'Nam. We was pinned down near Da Nang, summer of '71. I got hit in the head, and, bam!, two seconds later he got hit in the leg. Our squad disappeared, and the gooks was usin' us for target practice. Carl Lee limped to where I's layin', put me on his shoulders, and ran through the gunfire to a ditch next to a trail. I hung on his back while he crawled two miles. Saved my life"(182)

From the quotation above, it can be justified that in the past, Carl Lee had experienced the war in Vietnam as a soldier. This experience has an impact on his traits, which is brave. Therefore, because of his tough character and with such experience and ability, he is capable of doing the murder plan to the two rapists which caused other problems. The analysis of settings is also required and important as the cause of the conflicts. The analysis of settings also required and important as the cause of the conflicts.

Based on the findings, there are two kinds of conflicts: internal and external conflicts. First, the external conflict that happen between Jake Brigance and Carl Lee Hailey.

"You wanted too much money, Jake. You're always gripin' over the money. Here I am sittin' in jail and you're bitchin' 'bout somethin' I can't help."

"Money. You can't afford to pay me. How can you afford Marsharfsky?"

"I ain't gotta pay him."

"What!"

The NAACP, thought Jake. No, they wouldn't hire Marsharfsky. They've got their own lawyers. Besides, he was too expensive for them. Who else?

Jake opened the door. "That's it. I'm fired. Just like that."(189-190)

The conversation above happens when Carl Lee hires a new lawyer named Bo Marsharfsky. He fired Jake unilaterally, without discussing it with him first. This is what creates tension between the characters, because legally or procedurally it is wrong. Carl Lee also blames Jake as if it were all because he kept pushing for money that he couldn't afford. Jake is offended by Carl Lee because he was dumped, but momentarily things are turning around, he needs Jake, but he doesn't want to admit his mistake and can't ask Jake to take over the case properly.

Another data shows another conflict between Jake and Carl Lee.

"Where have y'all been?" Jake asked suspiciously.

"Went to the hospital to see Looney."

"You what!"

"Nothin' wrong, is it?"

"I wish you would check with me before you make any more visits."

"What's wrong with seein' Looney?"

"Looney will be the star witness for the State when they attempt to send you to the gas chamber. That's all. He ain't on our side, Carl Lee, and any talking you do with Looney should be with your attorney present. Understand?"(136)

The quotation above describes a conflict when Carl Lee was granted a privilege by Sheriff Ozzie who is also a fellow Black man. He leaves the jail to see Deputy Looney, an officer whose legs get amputated inadvertently by Carl's M-16 at a hospital. This incident created a conflict between him and Jake. Jake debates over it because as a prisoner he shouldn't be given such privileges to leave the jail anytime, but that's what happened to Carl Lee. Jake thinks it's dangerous if Looney tells everyone and it won't be in his favor at the next trial.

Then, the next one is Jake's internal conflict. He has personal conflict such as guilty and doubt, he also faces a dilemma issues for personal decision.

Jake left the hospital after midnight with Bud still alive but everyone pessimistic. Along with

the broken bones he had suffered another major heart attack. Ethel had made a scene and blamed it all on Jake.

“You said there was no danger!” she screamed. “Tell that to my husband! It’s all your fault!”

He had listened to her rant and rave, and the embarrassment turned to anger. All eyes were on him. Yes, they seemed to say, it was his fault (338)

It is described in the data above that Jake feels guilty towards Ethel. This is because Jake promised her in taking and finishing the case, everything will be okay but in fact, it is not. Ethel’s husband died from the threats by Klansman. He feels angry at himself because in finishing the case, Bud Twitty must die. With that feeling, it seems it was true that he agreed to everyone that it was his fault.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The results of this study are traits of the character and setting can form the conflicts between character. From the four traits Jake has, two of them which are empathetic to Carl Lee and juxtaposed with persistent traits struggling in finishing the case can create the problem for him, his client, and people who close to him. The settings such as the experiences of Carl Lee Hailey and how society reacts to him and those involved in this case also show some tension on the characters’ traits. Indirectly, setting also helps in building character traits that also influence the story. The conflicts which occur between the characters also cannot be separated from the traits of the characters. Thus, it can be concluded that all intrinsic elements that have been analyzed are interrelated to each other. In this case, it can be concluded that the formation of conflict is inseparable from the influence of the traits of the character and also the setting revealed in the novel.

The writer hope that the results of this study expected to provide ethical values that can be useful to the readers. Hopefully through this analysis the reader can gain information which more relatable with the humanistic and social values contained during this novel. On the opposite hand, what the novel desires to convey, about the struggle of an ordinary white lawyer who wants to show that justice still exist to race of black in his county, especially the struggle to fight racism and injustice will be learned. Therefore, readers can get more point of view as insight or understanding in live the life for better direction for the future.

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