

Grace Reed's Superiority Over Samantha Reef in Huntley Fitzpatrick's "My Life Next Door"

Midna Nur Marsyadiah

13020112130042

Fakultas Ilmu Budaya Universitas Diponegoro

ABSTRACT

This extended essay tries to analyze superiority complex from the character of Grace Reed in Huntley Fitzpatrick's novel *My Life Next Door*. In writing this paper, the writer uses library research that is done by reading books, articles, or any written visual documents related to the topics. While in answering questions, the writer tries to analyze intrinsic aspect and extrinsic aspect with Alfred Adler's individual psychology theory about superiority and inferiority complex. The purpose of this study is to show the kinds of Grace Reed's superiority over Samantha Reed, the causes on why superiority is exist in Grace Reed's character and to the effects of Grace's Reed superiority towards Samantha Reed. The result show that Grace Reed's superiority can be seen from how Grace Reed behave in everyday life, the factors from the circumstances and the conflicts that happened to the character.

Keyword: *Superiority, Grace Reed, Samantha Reed, and Politics.*

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Some people expect to be more dominant than others. An individual with dominant personality may enjoy controlling and bossing others, and may get angry if he or she is demanded to obey others. The superior people are usually or even always more dominant over the inferior people. According to Schultz, throughout our lives, we are driven by the need to overcome this sense of

inferiority and to strive for increasingly higher levels of development (2009: 132).

It means that our desire for superiority is affected by our inferiority feeling.

In this extended essay, the writer chooses superiority complex of the mother over her daughter based on the novel *My Life Next Door* by Huntley Fitzpatrick. In writing this paper, the writer refers to Alfred Adler's on individual psychology theory concerning superiority and inferiority complex. Since superiority and inferiority complex occur and are experienced by all normal human beings, this kind of complex is worth studying. The writer tries to briefly discuss superiority and inferiority complex in the novel *My Life Next Door* to show the readers that superiority and inferiority complex may cause unexpected problems to certain people.

In the novel *My Life Next Door*, parents' superiority is an interesting case to be discussed as this novel talks about a woman who wants to have a superiority attitude caused by inferiority feeling she has experienced. The writer wants to explain that the reason of Grace Reed's superiority upon her daughter, Samantha Reed, is not only because Grace is a parent and is stronger than Samantha, but there are other reasons to influence Grace's superiority.

1.2 Study Problems

1. What kind of attitude which show that Grace Reed is superior?
2. What is the factor of Grace Reed's superiority?
3. What is the effect of Grace Reed's superiority towards Samantha Reed?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1. To analyze what kinds of attitudes showing that Grace Reed is superior.
2. To explain the factor of Grace Reed's superiority.
3. To explain the effect of Grace Reed's superiority towards Samantha Reed.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Intrinsic Element

According to Wallek and Warren intrinsic elements are the element that builds the literary work itself. Intrinsic elements of a novel element directly participate and build the story (1962:75). In this extended essay, the writer will use character and characterization as the intrinsic element of the novel.

Character is the characteristics of a person in a story. In order for a story to seem real to the reader, its characters must seem real. According to Holman, the creation of images of these imaginary persons so credible that they exist for the reader as real within limits of the fiction is called characterization (1960: 79). A character is divided into static character and dynamic character.

2.1.1 Superiority and Inferiority Complex

Superiority and Inferiority complex is a psychological theory stated by Alfred Adler. Inferiority complex is an acute feeling of inferiority, often resulting in shyness or exaggerated aggressiveness. On the other hand, superiority complex is an exaggerated opinion of one's abilities and accomplishment. Such a person may feel inwardly self-satisfied and superior and show no need to demonstrate his or her superiority with accomplishment or the person may feel such a need and work to become successful (Adler, 1930: 395). In both cases, persons with a superiority

complex are given to boasting, vanity, self-centeredness, and a tendency to denigrate others.

2.2.2 Striving for Superiority

Inferiority feelings are the source of motivation and striving because human are motivated simply to get rid of inferiority feelings and work for something more. Adler describes his notion of striving for superiority as the fundamentals fact of life (Adler, 1930: 395). Superiority is the ultimate goal toward which humans strive. Adler does not mean that superiority is the usual sense of the word, nor does the concept relate to the superiority complex. Human motivation is in terms of expectation for the future and instincts and primal involved are insufficient as explanatory principles. Only the ultimate goal or superiority or perfection could explain personality and behavior. Human ultimate goal is superiority or perfection which makes the whole personality complete.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

3.1 Research Approach

In relation to background of the study, the writer uses psychological approach in writing this essay. This study will use theory of individual psychology by Alfred Adler. Adler called his approach individual psychology because it focuses on the uniqueness of each person (Schultz, 2009: 130). The analysis will focus on superiority and inferiority complex.

3.2 Method of data Collection

In analyzing superiority and inferiority complex in the novel *My Life Next Door* the writer uses library research. The writer applies library research by reading the text and finding another information from other sources, such as book and internet. By using this method, the writer can obtain information that will serve to provide information about the object discussed.

4. ANALYSIS OF GRACE REED'S SUPERIORITY UPON SAMANTHA REED IN *MY LIFE NEXT DOOR*

4.1 Grace Reed's Superiorities Over Samantha Reed

4.1.1 Grace Reed's Superiority in Samantha's Life

Grace Reed is a state senator campaigning for the second term and has a youthful appearance, high fashion, ambition in perfect house. She wants her daughters to fit her political image perfectly. Grace Reed always belittles her new neighbor, the Garretts, and forbids her daughters to get in touch with them "...the messy family who lowers real estate values, here they are right next door..." (Fitzpatrick, 2012:4). In this case, Grace Reed has a superiority complex in which she has a tendency to denigrate others.

In the novel, Grace Reed represents a mother who has an ambition of perfect life causing her daughter, Samantha Reed, to follow what she wants in her life. Grace Reed's superiority upon Samantha Reed can be seen in their daily life. Since she comes into politics, Grace Reed is rarely around Samantha. However, when she is around her, she becomes involved in Samantha's life, such as checking to see if Samantha's hair is properly conditioned and making sure that Samantha is in bed

by a certain time each night. Grace does not like if her daughters are all free in the summer. Grace sets her daughters, Samantha and Tracy, to have a job during the summer. As a result, Samantha has two part-time summer jobs. Firstly, she becomes a lifeguard at the country club and secondly, she has a job at a local restaurant.

4.1.2 Grace Reed's Superiority in Politic

Since Grace Reed starts political campaign, she always demands Samantha to come to political events with her and ask Samantha to say that she is really proud of Grace. In this case, it is like Grace who involves Samantha in her campaign for her own benefit. Samantha actually does not enjoy it, but she must do it because her mother asks her. Lately, Samantha gets tired of hearing what her mother said in her campaign. She feels like that it is not her mom.

Ever since Grace Reed meets Clay Tucker, her boyfriend who is ten years younger than her, Grace always puts Clay first in everything. As it is written earlier, Grace Reed is a perfectionist woman and one night she has found out that her vacuum cleaner is broken when she is about having a dinner with Clay. Even though the room is already clean, Grace is mad because she wants her room to be perfectly clean. Grace then blames Samantha and yells at her. Grace Reed is really obsessed with her political career and Clay. She never really cares about Samantha anymore. Besides, Grace always asks Samantha to do something to please Clay and everything which will give benefit to her election.

4.1.3 Grace Reed's Superiority in Samantha's Relationship

Grace Reed truly dislikes the Garretts' family and Samantha secretly has a secret relationship with one of the Garretts' kids named Jase Garrett. One day, Grace Reed finds Samantha's relationship with Jase. By the time she figures it out that she is strongly opposed with Samantha's relationship. One day, Grace Reed's car accidentally hit Mr. Garret that puts Mr. Garrett in a coma. However, Grace Reed does not stop her car when she hits Mr. Garrett to check on him. When Grace and Clay talk about this accident at home, Samantha hears all the conversation and asks her mother to confess her mistake to the Garretts because the Garrett' household is in turmoil. Grace Reed refuses to take a responsibility because it will ruin her campaign, instead she tells Samantha to keep her mouth shut.

4.2 The Factors of Grace Reed Superiority Feeling

4.2.1 Grace Reed got dumped by her former husband

In Grace Reed's character, she shows strive for superiority because she gets dumped by her husband in the past and raises her daughters alone. Since then, Grace Reed wants to prove that she is a great mother, even though she is a single parent.

4.2.2 The presence of Grace Reed's new boyfriend

Since she comes into politics and running for reelection, Grace Reed becomes a person that Samantha hardly recognizes especially when Clay Tucker, Grace's new political advisor and boyfriend, comes into her life. After Clay Tucker comes into Grace's life and Grace comes into politics world, she becomes more confident that she is a super woman. Other than that, Grace Reed also wants Clay

Tucker to see her as a super mother. Grace tells all good things about Samantha that Samantha reflects herself perfectly.

4.2.3 Grace Reed does not want to get dumped again

Another factor that makes Grace Reed reflect her superiority towards Samantha is because she knows that Clay only takes an advantage from her. When Samantha figures out that Grace Reed is the person who hits Mr. Garrett, Grace insists Samantha not to tell anyone because if she does such a thing, Grace Reed will lose her opportunity in campaign and Clay Tucker will leave her.

4.3 The effects of Grace Reed's Superiority Upon Samantha Reed

4.3.1 Samantha Reed lost the figure of mother from Grace Reed

As it is written earlier, since Grace Reed comes to politic activities and meets Clay Tucker, she becomes a different person. She barely cares about Samantha anymore. However, the presence of Clay in Grace's life makes Samantha unhappy because she finds that Clay is controlling her mother too much. Grace also orders Samantha to listen to Clay.

4.3.2 Samantha Reed got depressed after her break up with Jase Garrett

After hit-and-run accident upon Mr. Garrett by Grace Reed, Mr. Garrett lies in a coma in the hospital. The Garrett household is in turmoil and Samantha is wracked with guilt over what she knows. She tries to talk to her mom and Clay again about how wrong it is for them to hide this accident, but they threaten to pull some of the Garretts' hardware store contracts if Samantha does not break up

with Jase. This would place the family in even more financial problem. After Samantha breaks up with Jase Garret, she gets depressed, quits her jobs, spends hours in her room, and does not want to talk with anyone about her problems. It makes Tim, Samantha's best friend, confused on what happens to Samantha. Samantha goes through a hard life after she breaks up with Jase. This is clearly seen that Samantha cannot do anything even it is for her own good if Grace Reed demands her to do something, she must do it.

5. CONCLUSION

Huntley Fitzpatrick's *My Life Next Door* shows superiority complex of a mother named Grace Reed upon her daughter named Samantha Reed. Since Grace Reed running for the election, Samantha Reed becomes hardly recognize her mother anymore. Grace always demands Samantha to live in Grace's way for her own benefit especially after Clay Tucker, Grace's new boyfriend, comes into her life, Grace asks Samantha to obey Clay Tucker. Grace Reed also always looks down on her new neighbor called the Garrett and when Grace Reed finds out that Samantha has a relationship with Jase Garrett, Grace strongly opposed their relationship. By the time Samantha finds out that Grace is the one who makes Mr. Garret, the father of Samantha's boyfriend, falls unconscious in the hospital because of hit-and-run accident, she asks Grace to confess her fault to the Garrett but Grace doesn't want to do it because it will destroy her career. Grace Reed and her boyfriend, Clay Tucker, threaten to pull the Garretts' hardware store if Samantha tell anyone about the accident and force Samantha to break up with Jase

Garrett. After the break up, Samantha becomes depressed. From this case, it can be seen that Grace has successfully destroys Samantha's life because of her superiority. As a daughter and weaker person, Samantha cannot do anything to resist her mother.

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