

# BOOK REVIEW OF *BRAVEHEART* WRITTEN BY RANDALL WALLACE

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## ABSTRAK

Sebuah novel karya Randall Wallace yang berjudul *Braveheart* merupakan salah satu novel terbaik yang berlatarbelakang sejarah. Buku ini tidak hanya mengisahkan betapa heroiknya William Wallace, akan tetapi juga dibumbui dengan kisah cinta yang sangat tragis, sehingga buku ini menarik untuk dibaca.

Tujuan penulisan tugas akhir ini adalah untuk mengungkap tema, konflik, setting, karakter, serta kelebihan dan kelemahan novel *braveheart*. Dalam mengkaji buku ini penulis menggunakan metode penelitian perpustakaan dan pendekatan struktural untuk menganalisa tema, konflik, setting, dan karakter, serta memaparkan beberapa kelebihan dan kelemahan yang dimiliki oleh novel *Braveheart*.

Berdasarkan hasil seluruh pembahasan, penulis menyimpulkan bahwa novel *Braveheart* merupakan novel yang sangat menginspirasi karena di dalamnya banyak sekali pelajaran yang dapat kita ambil. Keberanian, kepemimpinan, dan kejujuran Wallace patut untuk kita teladani. Tidak hanya itu, buku ini juga banyak mengajarkan tentang kehidupan politik, sosial, dan moral. Walaupun banyak yang menyangsikan keotentikannya, buku ini sangat layak untuk dibaca bagi pembaca yang lapar akan sosok inspiratif.

## I. Introduction

Most famous literary works, including novel, is generally love story. *Braveheart* is also one of love story novels, but, the story emphasizes more on heroism than romantic side. This book tells us not only the secret relationship between William Wallace, one of Scots' patriots and Murron McClannough, his wife, but also the struggling against tyranny from King Edward I. The author, in his work, not only creates this book based on his presumption, but he also traces historical story from Scotland and England directly. Here, William Wallace is described as one of inspiring figures which has exemplified natures, such as brave, leadership, and truthful.

## II. The Author

Born on July 28<sup>th</sup>, 1949 in Tennessee, Randall Wallace is known as an American screenwriter, director, songwriter and novelist. His family originally came from Scotland and Ireland. His interest on telling hidden pasts and untold histories has set him apart in Hollywood. One of his works is *Braveheart* which tells about the forgotten Scots' independence patriot, William Wallace, who tried to inspire and to lead Scots to reclaim his country from England which was led by King Edward I in the thirteenth century.

At the time he visited Scotland, he saw the statue of William Wallace that guards the entrance of Edinburg Castle. Then, he set to research on this story by travelling through Scotland and England and reading as much as he could about William Wallace. He, then, added his own imagination because of the lack of information to tell this story. He, the father of two sons, now live in Southern California.

<http://www.wallaceentertainment.com/about/randall-wallace/>

## III. Summary of The Book

*Braveheart* is an epic historical book by Randall Wallace which tells about the struggle of William Wallace, one of the Scotland patriots, to obtain freedom of his country from King Edward I, King of England, in the thirteenth century. In the shire of Elderslie, Scotland, little Wallace just lived with his father named Malcolm and his brother named John because his mother had died in his childbirth. His father was a farmer who owned his own lands, and a patriot who wanted Scotland ruled by Scots. One day, his father and his brother tried to attack the English, but both of them were died. After the funeral, little Wallace was taken by his uncle, Argyle, lived abroad. Then, Argyle took care of him and also trained him how to use the sword after he learned how to use the head.

About twenty years later, Wallace has grown up and returned to the village. He met his childhood friend, Hamish Campbell and also his childhood lover, Murron McClannough. He, then, married Murron in secret, because the existence of *Prima noctes* and he did not want to share his woman with others. At the earlier, he was not too concern about the rebellion against English, but, after Murron was killed by English Lord, he became very angry and joined in rebellion. He gave the Scots courage to fight against English for their freedom. Then, he got noble title because of his leadership in the Battle of Stirling which delivered the Scots' first triumph.

After the title ceremonial, Wallace decided to urge the Scottish nobles to invade England but they refused him because they were too afraid of King Edward I. Robert the Bruce, who would be the King of Scotland, took an interest on Wallace and wanted to meet and talk with him. Robert the Bruce suggested him that he will not won against English without the Scottish nobles. But, Wallace was still

stick on his decision. Wallace, then, said to Robert that if someone followed the courage, so, everyone would follow you. According to the statement, Robert prepared to help him to invade England. In the Battle of Falkirk, Wallace was defeated because there was the Scottish noble, Lochlan, who betrayed him.

The Princess Isabella, the daughter-in-law of King Edward I, who has interested in Wallace since listening to his story about Wallace's wife at her first meeting with him met again in secret. She has actually helped him by reporting the King Edward strategy. After that, Wallace was invited by the Scottish nobles on the meeting, but, he was betrayed by them and handed over to England. Robert the Bruce did not know who the victim of this betrayal was and finally he knew that the victim was his father. Robert the Bruce was disappointed. Wallace was executed in front of the crowd.

At the time Wallace almost died in his execution, the butcher forced him to say "mercy", but Wallace with his loyalty of courage groaned "freedom". Meanwhile not long after the execution of William Wallace, King Edward I died. After the execution, Wallace's body was torn to pieces. His head was set on London Bridge, meanwhile, his arms and legs were sent to the four corner of Britain for warnings. However, this warning did not make the spirit of the Scots go down, it made the spirit of the Scots, especially Robert the Bruce increased to get the independence of his land, Scotland.

## **IV. REVIEW OF THE BOOK**

### **4.1 Theme**

The main theme of this book is the struggle against tyranny, which still carries a relevant message for freedom lovers everywhere. The book provides a dramatic and entertaining story that involves passion for freedom, secret love, politics,

and war. William Wallace, the protagonist of the story, tries to take over Scots' freedom from King Edward I, King of England. This book serves not only struggling on the battles, but also romantic, dramatic, and even tragic scene that happen in Wallace's life.

### **4.2 Conflict**

Conflict is what drives story. As Perrine has remarked, "conflict is a clash of action, desire, ideas, or goods in the plot of a story or drama" (1988: 1408). Conflict is a contradiction between characters in the story line. Conflict may be a physical, mental, emotional, or moral. A character in the story can encounter two types of conflict; they are internal conflicts and external conflicts. Internal conflict may happen in a character if the character is set to oppose his or her internal will or conviction, while, external conflict can happen between character and another character.

In this book, many conflicts have been suffered by Wallace, both internal and external. Internal conflict which was suffered by Wallace is that he imagines meeting with his murdered wife, Murrone. After an ambush Dolecroft's cavalry, he rests in the forest and then he sits down on a pad on moss.

"Murrone! Is—is it you?" William cried out

Joy exploded on his face; he heaved himself heavily to his feet and ran to her but stopped before he touched her, as if she might evaporate. But it was Murrone without question! Overwhelmed, he clutched her (Wallace, 1995:117).

Before he died, he sees Murrone again in his execution.

"And in the last half moment of his life, when he had already stepped into the world beyond this one, he glimpsed someone

standing at Hamish's shoulder. She was beautiful, smiling, serene. She was Murrin" (Wallace, 1995:271).

Meanwhile, the external conflicts suffered by Wallace are diverse. Physical, non-physical, individual and group, all of them he suffered. One of non-physical conflicts was between Wallace and Robert the Bruce about how to face England. Wallace wanted to invade England although the Scottish nobles did not help. But Robert the Bruce doubted it because the Scottish nobles did not help.

"No. but nobles. . . can help . . ."

But even as Robert the Bruce was struggling, Wallace pouncing. "Nobles? What does that mean--- to be noble?" (Wallace' 1995:150).

Physical conflicts, in groups, happened between the Scot's patriots and British soldiers. It began from an ambush Dolecroft's cavalry, Battle of Stirling, to Battle of Falkirk.

### 4.3 Setting

Setting is the background and atmosphere of the story. It can be place, time and social or spiritual condition when events occur. Introduction of location, time and social circumstances is able to deliver the illustration of the story. For instance, in the beginning of the book the author gives a briefly illustration about the setting to ease the reader to understand the book.

"THE SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS ARE A LAND OF EPIC BEAUTY: cobalt mountains beneath a glowering purple sky fringed with pink, as if the clouds are a lid too small for the earth; a cascading landscape of boulders shrouded in deep green grass; and the blue lochs, reflecting the sky. In summer, the sun lingers for hours in its rising and setting; in winter, day is a brief union of

dawn and twilight. In all seasons the night is a serenade of stars, singing white in the silence of an endless black sky" (Wallace,1995:3).

In general, setting of time in this book happens in the end of thirteenth century. The story began in 1276 where it described Scot's condition which had no king invades by England under the reign of King Edward I. In the beginning, a truce submitted by England is actually just a trick. The meeting between British delegates and Scot's nobles ended wrongly with Scot's nobles' massacre.

"Hanging from the rafters of the barn were thirty Scottish noblemen and thirty pages, their face purple and contorted by the strangulation hanging, their tongues protruding as if they were tasting the dusty light" (Wallace, 1995:7).

Meanwhile, the story ended in 1305 where Wallace got his death penalty in London. In the beginning, the purpose of the death penalty was as a warning to Scots to stop the rebellion. But, the Scots led by Robert the Bruce were not afraid, even they became more eager to face England.

"It did not have the effect that Longshanks planned. The story of William Wallace's torturous death and the courage with which he face it kindled a fire in the bellies of Scots a blaze that could not be extinguished. They rallied behind the only man who seemed capable of leading them: Robert the Bruce" (Wallace, 1995:271).

Meanwhile the setting of place takes in Scotland and England. In Scotland, the Scots condition was very discomfort by British rules, the enactment of *prima noctes* for instance.

“The riders stopped in front of the bridge and groom. The nobleman was gray, in his fifties. His face was plump, his cheeks red and puffy above his beard. He rose in his stirrups and announced “I have come to claim the right of *prima noctes*! As the lord of these lands, I will bless this marriage by taking the bride into my bed on the first night of her union!” (Wallace, 1995:63)

While in London, discomfort was also suffered by Princess Isabella. A romantic story in her marriage’s life that she dreamt went wrong. She tried to care her husband, but, she got harsh by him.

He slapped her. A quick sharp blow, smacking across her face. She staggered but recovered her balance. In that eternal instant just after blow, when everything she had ever assumed about her future was changing forever, she felt her own pride stiffen and made a point of remaining standing and not falling down as her husband had (Wallace,1995:96).

In this book, the portrayal of the setting is complete, clear, and tidy. This is accomplished by the author so that the reader can describe the situation and the conditions easily.

#### 4.4 Characters

Character is one of basic elements in the literary work, particularly in the short stories, novels and dramas. Characters can be determined by direct explanation of their appearance, attitude and personality or explicitly explained in the narration. Characters can be categorized into major and minor based on the function during the course of the story.

The major characters:

1. William Wallace; the protagonist of this book. He has long legs and muscle chest and the strength of his father’s heart. He is the inspiring figure who keeps up courage and freedom in his life. Even until the death come he still inspires the Scots, especially Robert the Bruce to get their freedom.
2. King Edward I; he is important in this book because he is the one who fights against William, the one who stands against him and captured him in the end. He is old and had grey hair. Longshanks, his nickname, is a ruthless king.

The minor characters:

1. Princess Isabella; he is princess of Plantagenet. She married to Edward II, Son of King Edward I. She has blue eyes, and a yellow hair. She expects to share her thought, feeling, and dream with her husband.
2. Murrone McClannough; she is Wallace’s wife who dies in the hand of England Lord. She is the most beautiful girl in the village. She married to Wallace secretly to avoid *prima noctes*.
3. Robert the Bruce; he is one of Scottish nobles. He has dark brown hair, moustache, broad shoulders and thick chest. He is the most inspired by Wallace and further becomes King of Scotland.
4. Hamish Campbell; he is Wallace childhood who accompanies Wallace in every battles.

#### 4.5 The Strength and the Weakness

4.5.1 The strength of *Braveheart* novel:

- a. This book gives inspiring figure, William Wallace, to the reader. The reader can see how heroic this man is. Wallace gives the Scots courage and puts all his energy into fighting for Scotland Independence until his death

penalty. He also teaches the Scots to value their freedom and independence above else. We also can emulate his brave, leadership, and truthful, in our real life.

- b. This book gives many messages about social, moral, and politic. Greedy and lust are human diseases that happen in the past and still exist until nowadays. In this book, King Edward I's character reflects greedy, and the enactment of *Prima noctes* reflects lust.

### 3.5.2 The weakness of *Braveheart* novel:

The book gives controversy about the accuracy of history. Many parties argue that this book contains many historical errors. For example, the existence of *Prima noctes*, it really exists or is just a myth.

## VI. Conclusion

The writer has an opinion that *Braveheart* is one of his favorite historical books. The story emphasizes more on heroism than romantic side. This book tells us not only the secret relationship between William Wallace, one of Scots' patriots and Murron McClannough, his wife, but also the struggling against tyranny from King Edward I. Here, William Wallace is described as one of inspiring figures which has exemplified natures, such as brave, leadership, and truthful. This book also teaches us many lessons about political, social, and moral life.

However, the book shows a controversy about historical inaccuracy. We can see historical errors like the existence of *Prima noctes*, love story between Wallace and Prince Isabella, etc. Despite the historical evidence, is it accurate or not, or is the accidental error or not, this book is recommended for the reader that hungers about inspiring figure.

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