CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Every human being wants to get a freedom in their life. It is the right that every human had and fight for. They have rights in order to maintain their life, including the way of thinking, choosing, and making decision. Through freedom, humans can choose what they want to be or to do in their life because there is no determination to it. They are free to shape themselves and their lives and create their own values through their decision in life (Sartre qtd in Maureen 11-12). Indeed, they have to be responsible for the decision they have made, no matter if it will make their life better or even worse.

However, not all people can reach the freedom itself. People who are not getting the freedom in real life, will try to get it by creating another world. They are making a world where they can express everything, such as; their thought, their creativity, their opinion, their critique, and so on (Stephenson). Therefore, they create their world in the form of writing, which is known as literary work. Literary work is a writing which persistently and provocatively engages with the aspect of experience, thought, and feeling (Bennet and Royle 35). Literary work also considers as a mirror reflecting human's life (Simma 03). It is the reflection of human's life since it is taken from the condition that happen around the author or experienced by the author.

Literary work is divided into three genres, those are; poetry, drama, and prose (Klarer 03). Poetry is defined as a work appeared in verse which has rhythm

Purnamasari 2

that creates the sense of harmony in every line (Cuddon 678). Drama refers to a work which appeared in text or script which intended to be performed in the stage and played by actors (Cuddon 237) and Prose is a spoken or written discourse which is not patterned in lines, either in metric verse or free verse and its function is to describe, to explain, to narrate, or to express the content of the work itself (Abrams 246-247). There are two kinds of prose, those are; fiction and nonfiction. Fiction considers as a narrative work which not written based on the factual events. It is the creation from the imaginative thought of the author. While non-fiction refers to a work which is written based on fact that happened in a certain time (Abrams 94).

One of the prose fiction forms is novel. Novel is a writing that is organized by the action, the narrative of thought, and the dialogue of the characters to the artful pattern of plot (Abrams 286). The term novel is derived from Italian word '*novella*' which means 'tale' or 'piece of news' (Cuddon 560). It is a narrative writing which includes characters, actions, incidents, and plot (561). Novel can be defined as an extended narrative that tells the dramatize story of human experience or individual character. Thus, novel is an artful work which contains plot, character, setting, theme, and others.

In this study, the researcher is using one of the novel from an author named Sidney Sheldon. Sheldon was born in Chicago during the Great Depression on February 11th, 1917. He was known as an author with crime fiction genre. Most of his works is come with woman as the main character. As what was reported on *hachettebookgroup.com*, in his interview, Sheldon said that the reason

Purnamasari 3

he used woman as his main character because he wanted to change the myth of the "dumb blonde". He believed that woman is not only pretty in the face but also pretty in the brain. Moreover, he was inspired by the women in his life; his mother, his old wife – Jorja, and his new wife – Alexandra, who had strong personalities and physically attractive. One of his novels which shows the figure of a beautiful smart woman is *If Tomorrow Comes*.

If Tomorrow Comes tells about the freedom of a woman, named Tracy Whitney, who was getting unfair treatment from people around her. Tracy lived in a harmonious life before she was trapped by a gang of mafia. She was accused for thievery and premediated murder, and being prisoned for fifteen years. No one helped her, even her boyfriend, Charles, was ignoring and leaving her. Feeling that her life was destroyed, Tracy felt hopeless and alienated by people around her. Yet, Tracy did not want to give up. She tried to face her downfall by working as a thief just like what she was accused before.

The condition that happen to Tracy can be categorized as a revolt toward human's freedom in showing his existence. Humans as a conscious being are thrown into the world which full of absurdity (Audi qtd in Cendana 15). They exist without any explanation of why they live and what is their purposes. A world without purpose, value, or meaning is literary senseless, worthless, and hopeless. Mostly people, who were in an absurd situation, will choose to kill themselves because they cannot cope with the absurd condition. However, by killing or doing suicide to end the absurdity of life does not encounter the absurd itself. Rather, it is only become more absurd (Lewis 14). Therefore, Camus stated that there are three consequences from the absurd; revolt, freedom, and passion (Camus 42). These consequence are the truly freedom of human being from the absurd situation.

From the background above, the issue that the researcher takes is about the changing of Tracy Whitney's life; from harmonic life into miserable life. The researcher will be using absurdism as the main theory, since it is suitable for evaluating the life of the main character. This study also applies New Criticism as the supporting theory to describe about the character of Tracy Whitney.

1.2 Statement of Problem

From the background of the study above, the researcher is interested to analyze these formulated questions:

- 1. How is the characterization of Tracy Whitney in *If Tomorrow Comes*?
- 2. How is the absurdity portrayed in Tracy Whitney's life in *If Tomorrow Comes*?
- 3. How is the consequence from the absurdity in Tracy Whitney's life in *If Tomorrow Comes*?
- 1.3 Objective of the Study

Based on the statement of the problem above, the objective of the study

has goals to reveal:

- 1. the characterization of Tracy Whitney in *If Tomorrow Comes*.
- 2. the absurdity in Tracy Whitney's life in *If Tomorrow Comes*.
- 3. the consequence from the absurdity in Tracy Whitney's life in *If Tomorrow Comes*.

1.4 Scope and Limitation

To get a focuses discussion, this study will be limited on the novel written by Sidney Sheldon entitled *If Tomorrow Comes*. It focuses on the characterization and the life of Tracy Whitney as the main character in *If Tomorrow Comes*.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to give valuable contribution in both theoretical and practical. Theoretically, this study will enrich the readers' knowledge in the literary theory which is related to absurdism. It will also help the readers, especially those who have interest in literature, to get the description of what absurdism is and how it applied in the literary work.

Practically, it is hoped that this study can be used as a helpful reference for other researchers who want to analyze using the same novel or other novel using absurdism theory. While for common readers, this study is hoped to help them understand how the absurdity in life is.

1.6 Method of the Study

In this section, the researcher discussed on how the data were collected and how the analysis will be conducted. This study applies qualitative methodology and uses library research. The qualitative methodology means that the analysis will be presented in descriptive way. While the library research means that this study is using books, journals, articles, and undergraduate theses which are related to the subject matter that will be analyzed. The main source for the analysis is the novel from Sidney Sheldon entitled *If Tomorrow Comes* that is published in 1985. Also the researcher will be the instrument in analyzing the data. These are the following steps of the analysis:

- 1. Reading the novel carefully in order to understand the novel well
- Selecting and collecting the data related to Tracy Whitney's characterization and life.
- 3. Analyzing the collected data by dividing into three sections of analysis, the first is analyzing the characterization, the second is analyzing the absurdity in the character's life and the third is analyzing the consequence from the absurdity in the character's life.
- 4. Making conclusion from the result of the analysis
- 1.7 Definition of Keyterms

There are some definition of keyterms used in this study. These are the explanation of the keyterms:

Life-changing : An event experienced by a person that change because of some factors – biology and the passage of time, self-generated, and the circumstance or fate. (Abigail Brenner via https://www.psychologytoday.com)