### CHAPTER II

#### LITERARY REVIEW

This chapter discusses about the theories which are going to be used as the guidance for analyzing the study. Since the researcher wants to reveal about the main character's characterization and the absurdity of the main character's life in the novel, therefore new criticism and absurdism theories are chosen. New criticism will be used to analyze the characterization, while absurdism will be used to analyze the absurdity that occurs in the main character's life and how the main character encounters it. Futhermore, this chapter also discusses about some previous studies to support the study completely.

# 2.1 New Criticism

New Criticism is a kind of movement in literary criticism which developed in America around 1920s. The name of New Criticism itself was taken from a book entitled *The New Criticism* by John Crowe Ransom which published on 1941 (Selden et al 19). Other prominent writers who influence the development of new criticism as a theory and practice are I.A. Richard, T.S. Eliot, Cleanth Brooks, Robert Penn Warren, and many more (Abrams 180). New Criticism discusses about the relationship between the ideas of text and its form. It examines what the text says and the way it is said. New Criticism focuses on the text of the literary work without considering the context outside the text, including the historical, biographical, and intellectual background (Selden et al 19). It ignores the mind and the personality of the author, the sources, and the history of ideas,

political, and social implications (Cuddon 544). New Critics believe that the author's intention tells almost nothing about the text of the literary work. They assure that the text of the literary work has more meaning than the author realized. Thus, the interpretation of text could be discovered through the text and the language provided by the text itself (Tyson 148).

Seeing that New Criticism concerns only on what was on the text, therefore reading in an exact and careful way are needed. This is known as close reading methodology. Close reading is known as the way the readers examine the text's meaning carefully through all the evidence provided by the language of the text itself, such as images, metaphor, point of view, character, setting, and so on (Tyson 137). Close reading also considers as examining a piece of literary work by understanding the structure and pattern that shape the work (Gillespie qtd in Nevada 21). It means that close reading emphasizes on the elements inside the text or intrinsic elements which readers should pay their attention to – such as theme, setting, plot, character, and others.

Since the researcher wants to reveal about the description of the main character in Sidney Sheldon's *If Tomorrow Comes*, then the researcher will explain more about the character and the characterization.

# 2.1.1 Character

Character is defined as the life of literature; it is the object of curiosity, fascination, affection, dislike, admiration, and condemnation (Bennet & Royle 60). Character is a person represented in a dramatic or narrative works who interpreted by readers which provided with particular moral, intellectual, and

emotional qualities that shown through its dialogue and action (Abrams 32-33). Character is created to help readers distinguish between fiction and non-fiction works of literature. Character plays an important role in every literary works. Without the presence of the character, the literary work will be as plain as food without salt. Character attracts readers to feel what the character is feeling. Like in romance genre, when the character is falling in love, it will make the readers feel happy about it or when the character is having some problems, then readers will also feel the feeling of having problems. Those things happen because the character was created by the author as real as human.

Character can be defined as a life-like or character that resembles people in real life when it is meet some requirements; the first is characters should have a plausible name, they should saying and doing things that seems convincingly like people say and do in real life. The second is a fictional characters should have a certain complexity and a number of different traits. The third is the tensions, contradictions, and multiplicities of the characters should cohere in a single identity. It means that the traits, problems, and anything about the character should appear in unity (Bennet & Royle 62).

In the book of *Aspects of the Novel*, Forster divided the character into two kinds; flat and round character. Flat character is referring to a character which has only one trait. It means that the character will remain the same from the beginning until the end of the story. Flat character is often described in a single sentence, easy to recognize, and mostly remembered by the readers easily. While round character is known as a character which has more than one trait, and it is more

complex, also it may changes along with the story (67). Round character is in temperament and motivation and is represented with subtle particularity; such a character therefore is as difficult to describe with any adequancy as a person in real life, and like real persons, is capable of suprising us (Abrams 33).

According to Altenbernd and Lewis in their book *A Hanbook for Study*The Fiction, character is divided into two types; those are protagonist and antagonist. Protagonist defines as a character who represents ideal norms and values. Readers are sometimes giving sympathy towards the protagonist character. Thus, it can be said that protagonist character is the hero in the story. Different with protagonist, antagonist refers to a character who causes a conflict in the story (Qtd in Rufqoti 13). Another way to know the types of character is by seeing the position of the character in the story. If the character is always appear in almost of the whole story, then, it is known as major character. Whereas, if the character is only appear in some parts of the story and told less than the major character, then, it is the minor character (Nurgiyantoro qtd in Rufqoti 13).

## 2.1.2 Characterization

In order to help readers understand about how the character in the story is built, the author draws it through the characterization. Characterization is the method that used by author in creating a fictional character through describing the character's actions, speeches, thoughts, physical appearances, and what the other characters say or think about the character itself (Shaw qtd in Yulia 11). Characterization also considers as the way the author creates or builds the character in a specific way. According to Abrams, in *A Glossary of Literary* 

*Terms*, there are two ways in creating a character in the literary work, those are; showing and telling. Showing means the author shows the readers about both external and internal side of the character through the character's speech, actions, inner thought, feelings, and response to events. Whereas telling means the author describes and evaluates the motives and dispositional qualities of the character (33-34).

Another way to characterize the character is by looking at the indirect and direct presentation of the character itself (Holman 138). Indirect presentation considers as the way the author describes the character via the character's speech or action. It means that to get the depiction of the character's characterization, readers should interpret from the way the character's act, think, or say. Different with indirect presentation, direct presentation is the description about the character which comes from the author as a story teller in the story or from the other characters in the story. It means that the informations about the character are directly shown to the readers.

Moreover, there are four ways to know the character's characterization in the novel; the first is through the speech and thought of the characters, the second is through what the characters do or act, the third is through other characters' point of view, and the fourth is through the author as the narrator of the story (Holman 139).

## 2.2 Absurdism

Absurdism was coined for the first time by Albert Camus, which concept has its root from the philosophy of existentialism. Existentialism itself is a

philosopical movement which deals with humans condition and their existence (Cuddon 294). It was originated from a Danish thinker, named Soren Kierkegaard, which then followed by other existentialists such as Jean Paul Sartre, Albert Camus, Friedrich Nietzsche, and so on. Existentialism became influential in the middle of 1900s in which many people are faced with death and destruction. The World War II which gave rise to widespread feelings of despair led to the idea that people have to create their own values in the world. Existentialism also insists that choice have to be made arbitrarily by individuals, who thus create themselves, because there is no standards to determine their choices (http://www.spiritweb.org/philosophy). Whereas absurdism, which influenced by the philosophy of existentialism, was developed after the World War II. It started when the absurdity was deeply felt by people who lived in the post World War II. They were starting to questioning about the purpose of their existence. They felt that their rights as a human being are not respected anymore, which can be seen through the huge number of innocent people who were tortured, raped, and even killed by other humans. These make the values of humanity that had already existed become meaningless. It created a feeling that their lives were purposeless, meaningless, and senseless, or in other word, absurd (Kostelanetz qtd in Kurniawan 10).

The word absurd is considering as no purpose, no goal, or no objective. it refers to the situation which is incomprehensible, uncertain, senseless, and chaotic (Esslin qtd Kurniawan 08). Absurd also can be said as a condition in which human existed from the nothingness – which later he will give himself essence,

and came toward the nothingness or in other word death (Abrams 01). Absurd is known as the condition when a man desperately demands meaning and clarity of the world around him, but he finds himself confronting a universe that is irrational and meaningless (Camus qtd in Raskin 157). It is related to human condition in which he faces with nothingness, that is, the encounter of human's need and the silence of the world (Camus qtd in Davachi 09). As what Camus stated in *The Myth of The Sisyphus and Other Essays* that;

... man stands face to face with the irrational. He feels within him his longing for happiness and for reason. The absurd is born of this confrontation between the human need and the unreasonable silence of the world. This must not be forgotten. This must be clung to because the whole consequence of a life can depend on it. (20).

Camus also argues that the absurd arises because the world fails meeting human's demand about the meaning of life (Nagel 721). It is when a hope of a man does not go as he expected or hoped. To Camus, man is confronting his obscurity in the world and since he cannot change it, then he rebels against it. Hence, it can be assumed that absurdity is the confrontation between man and the irrational world (qtd in Davachi 09).

Through his work, *The Myth of The Sisyphus and Other Essays*, Camus described about the concept of absurdity in Sisyphus' life. Sisyphus is the figure from greek mythology whom the gods condemned to rolling a rock to the top of the mountain; "The gods had condemned Sisyphus to ceaselessly rolling a rock to the top of the mountain, whence the stone would fall back of its own weight. They thought with some reason that there is no more dreadfull punishment than futile and hopeless labor" (75). It can be seen that, Sisyphus is an example of the human

condition who is struggling hopelessly to achieve something. The punishment which given by gods to Sisyphus is a kind of hopeless and futile action. Sisyphus has to roll a rock to the top of the mountain, even though he knows that the rock will always go back down. But Sisyphus does not surrender with the punishment and still do it over and over again. In his action, Sisyphus finds that he is truly free and the gods cannot control his thoughts. He can scorn the gods' attempts to punish him, to be authentic to his inner self and choose to be happy. Sisyphus does not try to escape his absurd task, but instead resists suicide (Camus qtd in Yasemin 05). However, the story of Sisyphus gives something to learn. Although in his life, man is faced with many kinds of problems which make he feels hopeless, disappointed, stress, even alienated, he must keep living his life and avoid to do suicide. By avoiding the suicide, it means that he is respecting his own existence in the world.

According to Camus, the depressing existential problems of a man, including anguish, suffering, sickness, disease, anxiety, death, and so on, which conspire to render human existence becomes meaningless. Therefore, living the absurd means a total lack of hope, a permanent rejection, and a conscious dissatisfaction (Lewis 13). Camus also writes in his essays;

Before encountering the absurd, the everyday man lives with aims, a concern for the future or for justification (with regard to whom or what is not the question). He weighs his chances, he counts on "someday", his retirement or the labor of his sons. He still thinks that something in his life can be directed. In truth, he acts as if he were free, even if all the facts make a point of contradicting that liberty. But after the absurd, everything is upset (38).

From the quotation above, it can be seen that many people already think about their futures – even their families' futures, but the futures that they have already planned are not going as they want. Hence, they will feel hopeless, disappointed, frustrated, alienated and other bad feelings.

## 2.2.1 Hopelessness

Hopelessness is the feeling of despair which happen when there is no hope in life and find that life is not worth living anymore (www.differencebetween.net). It is defined as the feeling of a person in which he does not have any confidences and hopes in his life. As what Camus said in his essay;

If I were tree among trees, a cat among animals, this life would have meaning, or rather this problem would not arise, for I should belong to this world. I should be this world to which I am now opposed by my whole consciousness and my whole insistence upon familiarity. This ridiculous reason is what sets me in opposition to all creation (Camus 34).

It means that hopelessness is considered as the feeling of failure in obtaining the hopes. The hopeless person will considers himself as a failure because he cannot overcome the obstacles and difficulties in his life. The feeling of hopeless occurs when a person thinks that his life is not going as he expected or wanted.

### 2.2.2 Alienation

Alienation refers to the act or the result of the act in which someone becomes strange to something or somebody around him. According to Keniston, most usage of alienation share the assumption that some relationship or connection that once existed that is 'natural', desirable or good, has been lost (Qtd in Saleem 70). As what Camus said in his essay;

... in a universe suddenly divested of illusions and lights, man feels an alien, a stranger. His exile is without remedy since he is deprived of the memory of a lost home or the hope of a promised land. This divorce between man and his life, the actor and his setting, is properly the feeling of absurdity (Camus 06).

It means that a feeling of alienation happens because man cannot go back to his old condition in which he still accepted in society. A man is feeling strange with his surrounding and being estranged by the people around him. The feeling of being alienated leads to the absurd situation. When a man feels alienated, he will go and look for another life.

Generally, people who live in absurdity will choose to end up their lives by killing their own selves. They believe with ending up their lives, they can avoid the long painful and disease in their life. However, doing suicide is not a solution to encounter the absurd. For Camus, suicide is a confession of a man that his life is not worth living. Suicide is not an option, not a solution to facing the absurd. He construing it as cowardly (Lewis 14), and for him suicide is repudiation (Camus 37). Another choice is by doing religious solutions. Camus defines this religious solution as a philosophical suicide. In this case, a man wants to escape from reality and try to find a peace in his life. He chooses to get rid of the world rather than himself (qtd in Yaesemin 03-04). Camus believes that to adopt a religious or supernatural solution to the problem of the absurd is destroying the reason of living, which is as fatal as physical suicide. For him, suicide, either it is physical or philosopical, is not authentic or valid solution to the problem of the absurd because doing a suicide means that human rejects the revolt and the protest against injustice and senselessness (qtd in Lewis 14). The last

solution to the problem of the absurd is accepting and embracing the absurd itself. Since absurd is unavoidable, therefore the proper response is by accepting the absurd courageously (Lewis 14).

Camus stated that the appropriate way to deal with the absurd situation is by doing a revolt (qtd in Lewis 14). Camus argued that the existential authenticity demands that people are admit to theirself that their plans and projects are for the most part hopeless and vain. This is the existential revolt to affirm the absurdity of life and continue living (qtd in Timrayner 04). Revolt is an attitude of heroic defiance or resistance to anything that oppresses human beings (Simpson). It considers as a refusal to accept the loss of human lives and a pressure on viewing death as a scandal (Raskin 159). It is a constant confrontation between man and his own obscurity (Camus 36). Through revolt, humans can challenge the world for something new. No matter if the result is satisfying or not. The most important point is the process of the revolt itself which gives meaning in humans' life. Just like what Camus said in his essay;

It may be thought that suicide follows revolt – but wrongly. For it does not represent the logical outcome of revolt... Revolt gives life its value. Spread out over the whole length of life, it restores its majesty to that life. To a man devoid of blinders, there is no finer sight than that of the intelligence at grips with a reality that transcedens it (36).

It means that, doing revolt is better than suicide. Eventhough humans still do not know about the result from their revolt but through revolt, humans can find their meaning and values in life. They do not think about the upcoming condition from their revolt, whether it is good or bad.

Therefore, Camus defines three consequences from the absurd, those are; revolt, freedom, and passion (Camus 42). It means that, when human is revolting towards the absurdity in his life, thus he will get his freedom which then becomes his passion. Revolting the absurd does not mean escaping from the absurd, but accepting the absurd itself. Humans will keep living the absurd because they cannot go back to the situation before. From there, human will get his truly freedom and enjoy his condition.

From the explanation above, the researcher will analyse the novel entitled *If Tomorrow Comes* written by Sidney Sheldon by using two theories above. The first theory is New Criticism which is used to analyzed the characterization of the main character; independent, courageous, and intelligence. Meanwhile, the second theory is absurdism which is used to analyze the life of the main character, that is; the feeling of hopelessness and alienation. Also, it is used to analyzing the action of the main character in facing her absurdity in life, that is; by doing a revolt.

## 2.3 Review of Related Literature

In order to enrich the knowledge, the researcher reviewed some previous studies which have relation to this study in some aspects. Here are some previous studies that have been done by other researchers before.

The first previous study came from Windi Astuti who analyzed the same novel by Sidney Sheldon *If Tomorrow Comes*, but with different focus. She examined about the feminist ideas which represented in Tracy Whitney's character. In her work, entitled *Feminist Ideas in the Novel If Tomorrow Comes by Sidney Sheldon*, she proposed two main problems; the characterization of

Tracy Whitney and the portrayal of feminist ideas in Tracy Whitney character.

From her analysis, she found that the feminist ideas were drawn in Tracy Whitney character as an educated, independent, obstinate, heroic, struggle, courageous, and decisive woman.

Another work came from Erni Nurhayati Soraya from Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta. In her work, entitled *Woman's Rebellion in Sidney Sheldon's Novel If Tomorrow Comes (1985): A Feminist Perspective*, she revealed about woman's rebellion through feminist perspective that portrayed in the novel by Sidney Sheldon *If Tomorrow Comes*. Soraya found that woman can endure the oppression condition in life. Woman is struggling with her own effort in order to get her right and prove that she can do what the man do. Soraya also conclude that rebellion is the reflection of the feminism.

Similar to the two previous studies above, this research is also using the novel written by Sidney Sheldon entitled *If Tomorrow Comes*. This research also focuses on Tracy Whitney character as the main object in analyzing the novel. Whereas, the differences between this research and those two previous studies above is this research concerns in the life of Tracy Whitney as the main character and how Tracy Whitney lives her miserable life in her own. While the two previous studies above are focusing on the feminist side of Tracy Whitney.