

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Every written text includes history or philosophy is literature according to David Carter's *Literary Theory* (17). It is as general definition of literature. Then, Arnold clarifies through the same book that literature is apart from its pleasing aesthetic qualities, and it has an educational role in people's lives (21). It means that literature not only tells us about an aesthetic form, but substantially, it also has an educational message. While in the other definition, literature is an imaginative work in the sense of fiction which is not literary true, (Eagleton 1). It means there is something hidden in the text by an author, and a reader should find and understand it. Robert says, Literature refers to compositions that tell the stories, dramatize situations, expresses emotions, and advocate ideas (1). This statement shows that literature as a reflection of life.

Basically, there are many forms of literature; one of them is novel (Ratna 192). Gill in his book *Mastering English Literature* states that novel is fiction story means something that specially made, formed, created, and imagined (120). The same thing also explained by Gill in his book *Mastering English Literature*, if novel as a work of art which is specially made and formed by the author (130). He also thinks if a novel becomes exists because the author has been determined to take its elements

inside a certain way (77). As a kind of prose, novel is written in a particular length (Eagleton 1). Such as *The Firm* by John Grisham which consists of 432 pages.

The Firm is a novel written by John Grisham, it was his second novel, and it was sold more than seven million copies (1993). *The Firm*, which was published in 1991, was his first big success and sold over twelve million copies in paperback in the United States alone. Its success enabled him to shift his focus from law to full-time writing. According to Grisham's official web site www.jgrisham.com, he had never wondered if he became a writer. It was effused in his famous quotation "I seriously doubt I wonder ever have written the first story had I not been a lawyer. I never dreamed of being a writer. I wrote only after witnessing a trial" (John Grisham).

As a thriller genre, *The Firm* has fast pacing. As Joyce G. Saricks has pointed out in his book entitled *The Readers' Advisory Guide to Genre Fiction*, he states thriller genre is the combination of fast paced, action and adventure with particular profession, such like espionage, medicine, or the law (71). However, the thriller genre contains suspense elements. The elements of suspense emerged because it tells an action-packed story that reveals the intricacies of that profession and the potential dangers faced by those involved in it (71). It means that in this novel contains some problems faced by Mitch, but then he can solve them. Davidson and Sternberg in their *The Psychology Of Problem Solving* state that problems are a central part of human life (10). While, Pursley in his *Skills to Pay the Bills: Mastering Soft Skills for Workplace Success* state that everyone experiences problems from time to time. Some

of their problems are big and complicated, while others may be more easily solved. But, people have the necessary skills to find out the solutions (98). From the description above can be concluded that problems are a part of human life and everyone must have experienced it, but people have to be able to think critically to assess the problems and find the solutions out.

Grisham tries to describe about an artful person through Mitchell Y. McDeere as main character in the novel. Before he has even left law school, Mitch is offered \$80,000 a year in the job of his dreams, and even though the firm of Bendini, Lambert & Locke seems peculiarly strict and conservative, Mitch moves with his young wife to Memphis, Tennessee to take up the job. However, the firm turns out to be even stranger than Mitch thought. Not only is it obsessively secretive, but its lawyers keep dying. When he is offered a job at the super rich law firm of Bendini, Lambert and Locke, he cannot believe his luck, with the kind of money they offer him; all his dreams can come true. But dreams come at a price. And the firm's price is very high, as high as Mitch's life, unless he fights, and fights hard. When Mitch is contacted by the FBI, he learns the real truth about the firm, and he begins to realize that he is in danger. Then, he tries to solve his problems and mystery contained in the firm. By his artfulness, he can identify the problems happened around him, and his artfulness is also able to keep him out of danger using his strategic plans.

Based on the background of the study above, the researcher is interested in analyzing the characteristic of Mitch as an artful person reflected in Grisham's *The Firm*.

1.2.Statement of the Problems

Concerning the idea, which has been presented in the previous background of the study, the researcher formulates the statements of the problem as below:

1. What kind of artfulness does Mitch have in the novel?
2. How does Mitch's artfulness help him to solve his problems?

1.3.Objective of the Study

Based on the statement of problems stated above, then the researcher formulates the objectives of the study as below:

1. To describe the kind of artfulness owned by Mitch in the novel.
2. To describe how Mitch's artfulness helps him to solve his problems.

1.4.Significance of the Study

The significance of the study involves theoretical and practical functions. Theoretically, the researcher does hope that it enriches the reader's development of knowledge in the literary theory that is related to the new criticism theory specifically in character and characterization. Then practically, this study can give useful contribution to the readers in understanding the contents of John Grisham's *The Firm* mainly concerning about how Mitch's artfulness which is portrayed in the novel, then how his artfulness helps him to solve the problems. Also, the writer hopes that this research can be a helpful reference for other researchers who are interested in conducting further research.

1.5.Scope and Limitation

In conducting the analysis of Grisham's *The Firm*, the researcher focuses on Mitch as main character represented in the novel in order to answer the statement of the problems stated above. Mitch portrayed as an artful person, it is able to keep him out of danger, complications and suspense elements happened in the story. As a result, the researcher focuses on the character, and the analysis used new criticism theory which is focused on character and characterization.

1.6.Method of The Study

This research is library based. Therefore the researcher uses some references to support the research, such as, the novels as the primary source, books, journals, articles and online sources that has correlation with the object of the research. The research is written mainly used descriptive method by the following steps:

1. Reading the novel for a few times, in order to understand the story and choose the interesting part to be analyzed.
2. Selecting and collecting the data either in form of dialogues or narrations that relate with Mitch's artfulness and how it helps him to solve his problems.
3. Analyzing the data:
 - a) The researcher analyzes the data collected related to Mitch's artfulness.
 - b) The researcher analyzes the data collected related to how Mitch's artfulness helps him to solve his problems.
4. Making conclusion based on the result of the analysis.

