

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

One of written works of expression is called literature. Klarer, in his book *Introduction to Literature*, states that literature can be interpreted as an expression that is formed in writing form. R.J. Rees also has the similar opinion about it. He argues that literature is defined as permanent expression of some thought, feeling, or idea about life and the world that are put in words (9). Certainly, it cannot be denied that people have conveyed the thought and expressed the idea through literature long time ago.

There are some kinds of literature, such as drama, poetry, and prose, including novel and short story. Mostly, both of them consist of characterization and plot but they can be distinguished by looking at the work. The form of short story is permitted to have a smaller development of milieu, a smaller variety complication of plot, a smaller variety of characters, and less sustained exploration of characters and motivates, and less focused style than novel (Abram 190). Thus, mostly, it is called as a short literary work of prose fiction (Abram 286).

Some plots, settings, and characters of short stories are possible to relate to the phenomena that happen, including the social phenomena created by the human as social creature. Then, it is known that God creates human by giving them a brain and desire, which makes them able to decide what they are going to

do or say as what they want. In literary theory, the consciousness that emphasizes personal existence, freedom, and choice is called as existentialism. Jean Paul Sartre states that Existentialism is a doctrine that states that every action and every truth that human chooses indicate their subjectivity (18). Human can be freely doing an action and deciding a decision as what they desire. He notes “man is free, man is freedom.”(29). He affirms it in a book entitled *Between Existentialism and Marxism* that is translated by John Matthews that a “man has a freedom to choose in whatever the circumstances, and whenever the sites, even to be a traitor or not” (33).

Relating to that statement, this study tries to analyze the existentialism in the *A & P*. The issue that will be analyzed is the choice that is taken by the characters in the short story. In the *A & P*, the story begins when Sammy is nineteen years old that is working as a checkout clerk at *A & P* supermarket, which is mostly populated by middle-aged housewives in the summer. Then, three young girls come into the supermarket in barefoot and only wear bathing suits. Considering the setting is located in the middle of town, exactly, north of Boston, in which there are some public places, they get reprimand from Lengel, a manager of *A & P* in front of some people that are in the supermarket, who sees them when they are going to pay their groceries to Sammy. However, it embarrasses them and makes their faces blushed. Then, Sammy thinks that what has been already done by Lengel is not a right thing. He decides to stop working there to assist them in the hope that it will attract their attentions.

The *A&P* is a comic short story that was first published in *The New Yorker* on July 22, 1961: page 22 – 24. It was written by John Updike. After graduating from Harvard University in 1954, in 1955, he began to be a staff writer, contributor editorials, fictions, poetry, essays, and criticism to *The New Yorker* magazine for a half century. He is the author of twenty-two novels, including the Pulitzer Prize-winning '*Rabbit is Rich*' and '*Rabbit at Rest*', fifteen books of short stories, seven collections of poetry, five children's book, a memoir, and a play (John Updike, *New Yorker*). John Updike full name is John Hoyer Updike. He was born on March 18, 1932 in Reading, Pennsylvania, U.S. and died on January 27, 2009 in Danvers, Massachusetts. Growing up in Shillington, Pennsylvania, many of his early stories portrayed his youthful experiences.

Then, the reason of this study uses *A & P* is because the human existence that exists in it which is portrayed by young age of Sammy and Queenie. Their age that are still young, also give effect to them in showing their existence. It includes the actions taken by the main characters that every decision has a consequence that they have to accept. Even, it is a short story not a long novel but implicitly, there is a lesson that can be taken as a lesson in going through life. Thus, based on the previous explanation, this study uses Existentialism theory for analyzing the *A & P* short story, which concerns on human existence. As being stated by Jean Paul Sartre, as the pioneer of existentialism in *Existentialism is Humanism* that a man determine moral for himself through the actions that they take. They are free to do what they want to do but they have to be responsible for what they have done (10). In line with that, he strengthened his argument in his

2. To find out the human existence of Sammy and the “Queenie” reflected in the *A & P* short story.

D. Scope and Limitation

In order to avoid an overlapping explanation, this analysis should have a clear scope. Based on the human existence exists in *A & P* short story, this analysis focuses on human existence of Sammy and Queenie characters that exist in the short story. Besides, it also concerns on the characterization of Sammy and Queenie characters that are reflected in *A & P* short story to connect it their human existence.

E. Significance of the Study

This research is done for three significances, theoretically, practically, and generally.

Theoretically, this research is expected to be able to be used as an information, source, or knowledge for the next researchers who need and are interested in analyzing the human existence that exist in short story, novel or others literary works. Practically, this research is expected to be a supporting reference for the next researchers who need and are interested in analyzing this subject. Generally, it might be also hoped to be useful for giving deep understanding about the *A & P* short story for any reader. It includes the short story itself and the implicit meaning or the value that can be taken as a lesson for

