

Book Review of The Murder of Roger Ackroyd

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Prose, poetry and drama are categories of literary works. Those categories consist of two genres, fiction and nonfiction. Novel is one of the fiction categories of literary works. Novel has more attractive than other literary works because it tells the story about human life that may happen in the reality. That reason makes the readers easy to understand the story in a novel.

The Murder of Roger Ackroyd is one of the best known detective novels which is written by Agatha Christie. The writer chooses this novel because the

story is very interesting. This is the story of crime in an unexpected ending. It is full of suspense and suspicion. The mystery that is encircling all of the characters in the novel makes it more interesting. The way Agatha Christie, the author, makes the narrator of the story as the real murderer, surprises the reader. Those reasons make the writer interested to analyze this novel.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The writer's purposes of the writing are:

1. To describe theme of the novel *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*.
2. To reveal strengths and weaknesses of the novel *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*.

2. REVIEW OF THE BOOK

In this chapter, the writer presents the themes, the strengths and the weaknesses of *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*.

2.1 The Theme of the Novel

2.1.1 Major Theme

The writer finds that the major theme of the novel *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* is the murder of Roger Ackroyd that was stabbed with a dagger in his room when he was reading the letter from his fiancé.

2.1.2 Minor Theme

The minor themes of the novel are greediness and blackmail. Money makes Dr. Sheppard become a greedy man. He authorizes anything to make money, even he has to blackmail Mrs. Ferrars, a rich widow. His action leads him to hide his behavior, then provokes him to do another crime.

2.2.1 Logical Deduction

The novel is so interesting because the story is reasonable. It leads the reader to think that the case is really unresolved because it seems there is no one can commit the crime without people even realizing. This logical deduction makes the story seem real and great. Logical deduction is the method of problem solving in a detective story to find the murderer.

2.2.2 Full of Suspense and Surprise

The Murder of Roger Ackroyd's Agatha Christie is full of suspense that makes the reader more interested to keep reading. The first suspense comes when Dr. Sheppard meets the stranger on the way home from Roger Ackroyd's house and then he receives a telephone call from Parker, Ackroyd's butler, saying that Roger Ackroyd has been murdered. Christie makes the readers wonder who the "bad guy" is and why they did but they don't usually guess the right person. At the end of the story, it is revealed that Dr. Sheppard is the murderer even though there is no clue that indicates Dr. Sheppard as a suspect.

2.2.3 Interesting Description of Characterization

The author uses interesting description in describing some characters. The writer thinks that Hercule Poirot, Caroline, and Flora Ackroyd are described most interestingly.

1. A Unique Man, Hercule Poirot

In the novel, the narrator says ‘An egg-shaped head, partially covered with suspiciously black hair, two immense moustaches, and a pair of watchful eyes. It was our mysterious neighbour, Mr Porrott’ (Christie, 1985: 8).

2. A Curious Person, Caroline

Comparing the characters with anything that relate to their personalities is also used in describing character in this novel.

“If Caroline ever adopts a crest, I should certainly suggest a mongoose rampant. Caroline can do any amount of finding out by sitting placidly at home. When she goes out, it is not to gather in information, but to spread it. At that, too, she is amazingly expert” (Christie, 1985: 1).

3. An Elegant Lady, Flora Ackroyd

The selection of the words to describe Flora Ackroyd is very attractive.

The author compares Flora with things that the readers can imagine it clearly.

“The first thing that strikes you about her is her extraordinary fairness. She has the real Scandinavian pale gold hair. Her eyes are blue - blue as the waters of a Norwegian fiord, and her skin is cream and roses. She has square, boyish shoulders and slight hips” (Christie, 1985: 14).

2.3 The Weaknesses of the Novel

Apart from those strong points, *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* also has some weak points. Those weak points are plot structure and point of view.

2.3.1 Plot Structure

The writer considers that the plot structure of this novel is disorganized according to Freytag pyramid. The climax also comes at the three last chapters, so the structure becomes exposition, complication, climax, falling action, climax, and resolution.

2.3.1 Point of View

The Murder of Roger Ackroyd uses first person point of view. Dr. Sheppard is the narrator of the story. The whole story is narrated through his eyes, so readers may think that he is more important than Hercule Poirot, Agatha Christie's famous detective. Readers will never think that he is the culprit, but at the end of the story, they find out that he is the murderer. Readers may feel disappointed because they find out that Dr. Sheppard is not a good person, but an expert liar.

3. CONCLUSION

This Novel, in general, tells about the murder of Roger Ackroyd that was stabbed with a dagger in his room when he was reading the letter from his fiancé. There are two ideas that appear in the novel briefly and give way to another minor theme, greediness and blackmail. This novel has strengths and weaknesses inside, but the

weak points are covered by the strong points. The strengths of this novel are logical deduction, full of suspense, and interesting description of some characters. The author presents some clues, but still manages to completely surprise the reader at the end of novel. That is what makes this novel full of suspense.

This novel is one of Agatha Christie's most interesting novels. Furthermore, I recommend this novel to those who love an intellectual challenge and an amazing surprise at the end of the story.

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