

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

*The Thief* is about a liar named Polly. She lived with her family. Polly lied for the first time when she was 8 years old. When she was playing with her cousins, Jim and Lizzie, she was accused for cheating them. She was hit and she was so angry about it. Then, she took her aunt's book and threw it away.

She also lied to her headmaster at school. And when one of her friends, Abigail Robinson, said that Polly had a bad attitude, Polly got angry and stole Abigail's watch and crushed it with her father's hammer.

Polly had a boyfriend named Tom. Tom loved music and he had some Compact Discs (CD). Polly felt that Tom loved his collection better than Polly. Polly got angry with Tom. The situation got worse when Tom said that Polly often had a chat with Alex Swain, but Polly denied it. As the result, Polly stole Tom's CDs and throw it away to the road that a truck crushed it. Later on, Tom asked Polly about his CDs but Polly lied and said that she knew nothing. Tom knew that Polly was lying and then their relationship was over.

After getting separated with Tom, Polly was alone, but not for a long time. It was because Polly felt in love with Alex Swain who was 5 years older than her. Polly's life and attitude changed since she had relationship with Alex because he trusted all of Polly's words so that Polly loved him so much and became a good person.

Polly's life was much better than before until the day she flew from London to New York to attend her friend's wedding party. At the plane, Polly met a rude man

named Trevor Lant. Lant did many bad things to Polly during the flight and she had started to hate Lant. Polly then wanted to get revenge against Lant. On the way back to London, Polly took revenge to Lant by stealing his case. She finally destroyed all of Lant's stuff except of his 5000 pounds. After that, Polly felt that she was wrong and had done something wrong. Then, she tried to look for Lant's address to 'pay Lant back'. One day, when Polly was in Alex's house, she was very surprised to meet Lant there. Lant told Alex something bad about Polly, and ironically Alex trusted Lant without asking Polly about the real fact. Finally, Alex ended his relationship with Polly. Polly felt so angry and disappointed since Alex did not trust her.

The writer chooses this novel because its story is interesting and easy to understand than the other books the writer has ever read. The main character, Polly, usually took revenge against someone who had made her hurt or she hated. Polly became a liar because she did not find true love from her family, friend, and boyfriend. They also did not trust Polly. Those conditions made Polly took revenge against them in her own way. Stealing things from people who had upset her was something Polly did quite a lot. Only she did not call it stealing but 'taking'.

In analyzing *The Thief*, the writer uses Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalytic Theory. The writer found in the novel that the main character (Polly) usually took revenge against someone who had made her hurt or upset. Polly did her stealing and destroying activities using her instinct of revenge. Sometimes she also waited for the appropriate condition and situation to take revenge. What happened to Polly can be related with Freud's Psychoanalytic Theory. Freud stated that every human being has three basic personality structures. They are *id*, *ego*, and *superego*. *Id* is the only one of the three structures which is unconscious. He also said that every human being runs instinct which is included into *id*. This condition also happened to Polly, moreover

when she used her *id* to steal others' belongings, *ego* to delay to destroy those belongings, and *superego* when she felt guilty for what she had done to take revenge.

Therefore, the writer decides to use Sigmund Freud's Structural Theory in analyzing *The Thief*. The writer will also use psychological approach because this analysis will deal with the psychological condition of Polly.

## **1.2. SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

This study is focused on Ruth Rendell's *The Thief* which was published in 2006. The writer will mainly analyze the stealing behavior of Polly as the main character of this novel. In addition, the writer will use Sigmund Freud's theory called Psychoanalytic Theory, especially on the structure of human psyche.

## **1.3. PROBLEM FORMULATION**

1. What kinds of action and reactions does Polly carry out?
2. How can those actions and reactions be identified?
3. How is Polly's case categorized from the point of view of Psychoanalytic Theory?

## **1.4. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

1. To know what kinds of actions and reactions which Polly carries out.
2. To know how those actions and reactions can be identified.
3. To know how Polly's case is categorized from the point of view of Psychoanalytic Theory.

## 1.5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The writer expects that this study will give enough information and explanation in understanding and using psychological approach and Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalytic Theory to analyze a literary work, especially novel.

## 1.6. DEFINITION OF TERMS

### 1. *Id*

*Id* is the part of unconsciousness and the most primitive part of psyche which consists of stimulus and desire, needs, and instinctive impulse. It works based on principle of satisfaction and always be in contradiction with Superego.<sup>1</sup>

### 2. *Ego*

*Ego* is the part of psyche which handles transactions with the outside area based on principle of reality. Ego acts as the mediator between *Id* and Superego.<sup>2</sup>

### 3. *Superego*

*Superego* is the part of ego which takes place in conscious condition and adapts with moral values from parents or society. Superego blocks the impulses of *Id* which cannot be accepted by parents or society which makes superego always be in contradiction with *Id*.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Corsini, Raymond J. *The Dictionary of Psychology*. Philadelphia: Taylor & Francis Group. 1999

<sup>2</sup> Kartono, Kartini DR. & Gulo, Dali. *Kamus Psikologi*. Bandung: CV. Pionir Jaya. 1987

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*