

Chapter I

Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

A novel is a literary work that is based on a narrative story. Its story is supposed to entertain the reader. However, the experiences and life problems are usually the important points in the story; therefore, fiction must remain an interesting story, remain a coherent structure, and still have an aesthetic purpose. (Wellek & Warren, 1948: 212). Based on the theory, *It Ends with Us* is categorized as a novel because it contains experiences and life problems that are crucial points in the story. It also has an interesting story and maintains a coherent structure throughout.

It Ends with Us is a best-seller novel published in 2016 and written by Colleen Hoover. Based on the relationship between her mother and father. As of 2019, the novel had sold over one million copies worldwide and has been translated into over twenty languages. A sequel titled *It Starts with Us* was published in October 2022. She's an American writer who has published more than twenty novels and is well-known as the number one New York Times bestselling author. Colleen's famous works include, *All Your Perfect, Ugly Love, Maybe Someday*, and *November 9*. "*It Ends with Us*" is a contemporary romance novel written by Colleen Hoover. The story revolves around the life of the protagonist, Lily Bloom, as she navigates the complexities of love, relationships, and personal resilience.

Throughout Colleen Hoover's childhood, she casually told people she wanted to be a writer when she grew up. But after marrying her high school sweetheart at 20 and having three kids before the age of 26, that interest went on the backburner in favor of a more sensible path, pursuing a career in social work. It was not until a few years later that Hoover started writing. Her debut novel *Slammed* was self-published with the support of friends and family. It wasn't that publishers weren't interested in her, but rather that she didn't know where to start when it came to getting an agency.

The novel tells a story about Lily Bloom after overcoming a difficult childhood, Lily Bloom is now living in Boston and working toward her goal of starting her own company. Ryle Kincaid, a neurosurgeon she encounters, is charming and successful but upfront about his dislike of committed relationships. Lily and Ryle find themselves drawn to one another despite their early disagreements, and they embark on a passionate and deep love affair.

However, when Lily's first love, Atlas Corrigan, reappears in her life, things take an unexpected turn. She met Atlas, a homeless man, when she was a teenager and he had a significant influence on her. Lily finds herself in a challenging situation where her emotions for two very different men are conflicted due to her renewed connection with Atlas. Lily is forced to confront her past, present, and potential future when the narrative progresses and she must make a tough choice. The novel explores issues of domestic violence, personal development, and the complexity of emotions in people. It examines

the decisions Lily must make to defend herself and the people she loves, resulting in a heartwarming story and emotional ending.

In the novel *It Ends with Us*, it can be identified an important concern that could be explored as a research topic, which is the violence that often appears or is committed by the characters in the novel. The frequent physical violence inflicted on the narrator, Lily, by her partner, Ryle, caught the attention of the writer because Ryle was always able to persuade Lily to mend the relationship. For example, when Ryle persuaded Lily after he had pushed her down the stairs, causing injuries to Lily's lips and eyes. Ryle said "You are my wife. I'm supposed to be the one who protects you from the monsters. I'm not supposed to be one." (*It Ends with Us*:186).

Researching this novel is important because its themes and conflicts, such as domestic abuse and toxic relationships. According to Lenore E. Walker (1977), the first period of abuse is tension building, second is incident, third is reconciliation, fourth is calm. Lily Bloom, the primary character, experienced this cycle as a result of domestic abuse.

To understand the essence of a novel, a deep understanding of the novel is required. Structure is the relation of relations (Ahimsa-Putra, 2001:61). This means the relationship between various elements in a literary text, where these elements are interconnected to form a complete whole. In addition to close reading, proper structuring is also needed to avoid mistakes. Structuralism analysis is an analysis that emphasizes the intrinsic elements of

literary works (Nurgiyantoro, 2013:60). According to the structuralism theory by Robert Stanton, the narrative facts in a literary work, including novels, consist of three main elements: plot, characterization, and setting (Stanton, 2012). This is needed to determine whether the novel contains aspects of abuse. The purpose of structuralism analysis is to uncover and present as meticulously, thoroughly, and deeply as possible the interrelations of all elements and aspects of literary works that together produce comprehensive and understandable meanings (Teeuw, 2013:106).

Plot is the relationship between events that is causal, not just a chronological sequence of events (Nurgiyantoro, 2009:112). With that understanding, it is crucial to deeply comprehend the plot in order to analyze a novel effectively.

Characters exhibit a sense of "life" or "aliveness," implying they have a certain level of realism. Consequently, their actions and physical attributes are similar to those of real people (Sayuti, 2000:68). Characters possess three similar dimensions to humans, namely physiological, sociological, and psychological aspects (Wiyatmi, 2005: 30-31). Based on this understanding, characters in novels or literary works always reflect real life and real people. Characters are the agents who carry the events in a fictional story, enabling those events to weave a narrative (Aminuddin 2002:79).

Setting refers to the details concerning the location, time, and atmosphere of events in a literary work (Abrams, 1999:284). Setting, also

known as the foundation, refers to the concept of place, historical time relationships, and the social environment where the events of the story occur (Nurgiyantoro, 2013:302).

The fundamental storyline or general concept of a novel is its theme (Nurgiyantoro, 2009:70). The theme can also be referred to as the main idea, around which the author will develop the story.

In conclusion, this research aims to discover and analyze the forms of the cycle of abuse experienced by Lily Bloom as the main character and understand the phases of violence while she is in a relationship with Ryle in the novel "*It Ends with Us*" by Colleen Hoover.

1.2 Identification of the Problems

The novel *It Ends with Us* by Colleen Hoover, tells of a character named Lily as the narrator who in her story is always faced with violence. The violence that Lily experienced started when she was little, carried out by her father. Meanwhile, the violence that Lily experienced when she was an adult was carried out by her partner, Ryle.

The novel explores complex themes such as love, resilience, and the impact of domestic violence. The novel addresses the difficult choices Lily faces and the impact of her decisions on her life. It is known for its emotional depth and thought-provoking exploration of sensitive topics.

The problem identified for this research is to explore and analyze the forms of the cycle of abuse experienced by Lily Bloom in the novel *It Ends*

with Us by Colleen Hoover. By closely examining the patterns and outcomes of violent behavior within intimate relationships, the research aims to highlight the wider consequences of such violence and the significance of addressing this issue.

1.3 Limitation of the Study

The analysis of the cycle of abuse from this novel will focus on the narrator named Lily. This character was chosen because Lily not only suffered violence but also witnessed violence done by her father against her mother when she was a child. Not only that, but Lily is the narrator of this story, which means it is full of detail. Unlike the account of the violence suffered by Lily's mother, which was also described by Lily, the details of her experience were not as in-depth. Also, this novel is told by the narrator, Lily. Therefore, Lily is an appropriate character to be the center of this research based on the object of this research, which is the representation of the cycle of abuse that Lily Bloom experienced as depicted in the novel *It Ends with Us* by Colleen Hoover.

1.4 Research Questions

Concerning the previously mentioned issue, the research problems to be addressed in this research are organized into questions, such as:

1. How does Lily Bloom from the novel *It Ends with Us* by Colleen Hoover experience the cycle of abuse?

2. How Lily Bloom break the cycle of abuse that happened to her in the novel '*It Ends with Us*' by Colleen Hoover?

1.5 Objectives of the Study

Based on what stated in the research problems, the main objectives to be achieved of this research are:

1. To understand the forms of the cycle of abuse experienced by Lily Bloom.
2. To understand the resolution Lily Bloom took to break the cycle of abuse she experienced.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This research was carried out for the benefit of our society. A novel serves as a tool for educating readers about various life issues faced by humans. Through reading novels, readers can discern which behaviors are commendable and worth emulating and which ones should be avoided (Yenhariza, 2012: 168). As a result, the following are the primary interests that can be gained from this research:

1. The results of this research can raise awareness of violence in relationships. It is also can be used as an example and a medium to reflect on for those who are in toxic relationships. Moreover, the results of this research can be used as a lesson in reading patterns and the effects of violence on relationships.

2. The findings of this research can provide a useful example of abusive relationship and describe what steps should be taken to break the cycle.
3. Finally, the outcome of this research can be an example that structuralism can be used to analyze the cycle of abuse in the novel.