

# **Sarcastic Jokes in Matthew Perry's Memoir:**

## ***Friends, Lovers, and the Big Terrible Thing***

**A Research Paper**

Submitted to The English Department Faculty of Arts and Letters

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Bachelor Degree



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## DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I declare that this paper, titled '**Sarcastic Jokes in Matthew Perry's Memoir: *Friends, Lovers, and the Big Terrible Thing***', is entirely my own original work. I fully acknowledge that I have referenced and cited ideas and statements from other sources where appropriate, in line with academic standards.

I have not knowingly included any content that violates scientific integrity. Should any ethical issues arise or if another party claims ownership over parts of this work, I am prepared to take full responsibility and accept any consequences accordingly.

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## APPROVAL PAGE

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## DEDICATED PAGE

*“At the start, I was full-on the joke man, cracking gags like a comedy machine whenever I could (probably to the annoyance of everyone), trying to get everybody to like me because of how funny I was. Because, why else would anybody like me? It would take fifteen years for me to learn that I didn't need to be a joke machine.”*

-Matthew Perry-

## **Abstract**

This study investigates the use of sarcastic humor in Matthew Perry's memoir *Friends, Lovers, and the Big Terrible Thing* from a linguistic pragmatics perspective. Sarcasm is analyzed as a form of indirect speech-act that conveys implicit meaning and emotional nuance. Using Grice's Cooperative Principle, Speech Act Theory, and theories of humor, the research identifies, categorizes, and interprets sarcastic utterances found throughout the memoir. The findings reveal that sarcasm in Perry's narrative operates as a multifaceted communicative strategy—serving as a defense mechanism, a tool for self-reflection, and a narrative device to engage readers. Sarcasm enables Perry to frame personal trauma, addiction, and identity with levity while maintaining emotional depth. Through qualitative textual analysis, this study demonstrates how sarcastic humor can convey deeper truths in memoir writing, offering insight into the linguistic, emotional, and narrative functions of sarcasm. The results underscore sarcasm's role in shaping reader empathy, authorial voice, and autobiographical authenticity.

**Keywords:** sarcasm, jokes, pragmatics, memoir, Matthew Perry, indirect speech acts, memoir, Grice's maxims

## PREFACE

All praise and gratitude to Allah SWT for His guidance and blessings that allowed the writer to complete this thesis, titled '**Sarcastic Jokes in Matthew Perry's Memoir: *Friends, Lovers, and the Big Terrible Thing***'

The writer chose this topic because the writer has always been a huge fan of Matthew Perry—his work, his humor, and of course, Chandler Bing. The writer also has a deep love for comedy, especially stand-up and sarcastic humor. This personal interest sparked my curiosity to explore how humor, especially sarcasm, can shape narratives and impact people's lives in profound ways.

The writer realises this thesis may not be perfect and welcomes any constructive feedback. The writer also hopes this work contributes meaningfully to future studies on humor and inspires others to see its deeper value in storytelling and life.

Bandung, June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Fauzan Rafles

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