

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Imagination of human mind is limitless, because they can imagine what do not exist in real world or not yet discovered. This mind can imagine about something really wonderful, and some of the creative thinker pour it into their literary works. Literature as an oral or written work that has various characteristic features such as originality, artistry, beauty in content and expression (Sudjiman, 1984: 68).

From literary works the authors can express their feelings, dream, thoughts, and what they see in their life. Furthermore, many people enjoy reading these works to study society and the other just to amuse themselves by the story. Prose is one of the literary works, according to Samuel Coleridge (1834:84), prose as words in their best order, where poetry is the best words in the best order. Prose includes different genres of fiction such as mystery, action, romance and others. It also includes non-fiction texts such as essays, scientific reports or newspaper articles. The distinction can be complicated when writers switch back and forth between the two forms. Klarer (2004:12) explains the short story, a concise form of prose fiction, has received less attention from literary scholars than the novel. As with the novel, the roots of

the short story lie in antiquity and the middle ages. The story about myth and fairy tale relate to the oldest types of textual works of short story.

In early 19th century, the era of American Literary, many authors published their works, one of them was Washington Irving. His short stories are *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* and *Rip Van Winkle*. The story of *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* tells about the main character, named Ichabod Crane. He leaves his home state of Connecticut to accept the position of school teacher in Sleepy Hollow. He soon takes an interest in Katrina Van Tassel, the charming, flirtatious daughter of a wealthy Dutch farmer.

As an outsider and a Yankee, Ichabod is unfamiliar with Sleepy Hollow's superstitions. He hears stories about the Headless Horseman, a Hessian soldier said to have lost his head in a battle not far from town. Gullible Ichabod believes the stories and becomes frightened. One night Ichabod attends a party where he has a chance to dance with Katrina. Afterward, the two speak in private, and Ichabod begins to suspect Katrina for using him to make Brom jealous. Ichabod tells his feeling to Katrina, but she rejects him. While he rides his horse to go home with a broken heart, Ichabod is pursued by the Headless Horseman. Ichabod flees Sleepy Hollow to lose the pursuit of the horseman and is never seen or heard from again after that night. The villagers only found Ichabod's horse that already in his house and Ichabod's hat dropped near the bridge.

The second story that will be discussed in this research is *Rip Van Winkle*. The story itself occurs in the time around revolutionary war in America and takes place the set in a small town of Catskill Mountain. There lived a kind man named Rip Van Winkle in this town. He has a family but he is not very happy with his family. Rip always tries to avoid his duty to work at his farm, and avoids his nagging wife at home. He almost spends his time to hunt squirrels in the woods and talks with people in the inn. Although he looks like a lazy person, he is very nice to children and people in this small town.

One day, Rip has enough of his nagging wife and tells himself to find quite place to breathe fresh air. He invites his dog named Wolf, to accompany him in the hunting of squirrels in the woods. Rip and Wolf walk far too deep in mountain area when they find a group of strange people. There are men playing ninepins who wear some old fancy suit like old portrayal in the painting. Rip joins them but none of them talk. Then Rip sits near their group and he secretly takes their drink. Only one sip he tastes it, and he wants to drink more. So, he drinks again and again until he sleeps. After long deep sleep, Rip wakes up but he does not realize that he has missed for twenty years. The revolutionary war is over and some his friends died in war, some move to other town. His children grow to adult. His son, Rip Jr. grows and looks like him. His daughter, Judith has her own family and gets child named Rip Van Winkle III. Finally, Rip stays to live with his daughter and tells his story in the people who visit inn in there.

The one of the most interesting things about this short story is the way that the lines between the supernatural and the reality are continually blurred, the ambiguity created by the story's events is partially responsible for the popularity of the tale long after its original publication. If the researcher examines the descriptions of the supernatural in relation to how they are side by side against the realistic, then the researcher can understand better how the supernatural and natural are conflated each other so that it becomes impossible to tell what is real. In the short story entitled *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, there are some symbols that are blurred. Those symbols deal with natural and supernatural. The second story of *Rip Van Winkle*, there are also many symbols that have relation with the supernatural phenomena in Catskill Mt. Therefore, the topic of discussion is about supernatural and natural aspect of the characters trait toward these symbols.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the topic of the study, natural vs supernatural, two problems are formulated in the following:

1. What are the symbols of natural and supernatural in Washington Irving's *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* and *Rip Van Winkle*?
2. How do the main characters relate the natural and supernatural symbols in these short stories?

1.3 Objective of the Study

To answer those problems as stated above, the researcher has objectives as the following:

1. To analyze what symbols of natural and supernatural is used in Washington Irving's *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* and *Rip Van Winkle* short stories.
2. To reveal how the main characters related the natural and supernatural symbols that occur in the stories.

1.4 Scope of the Problem

It is necessary to limit the scope of problem on what researcher will discuss in order to get detailed understanding. There are many symbols in *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* and *Rip Van Winkle*. Therefore, the researcher focuses on the natural and supernatural symbols in this research. Moreover, the researcher will reveal how the main characters named Ichabod and Brom (TLoSH) also Rip Van Winkle, Rip Van Winkle Jr. and Judith Gardenier (RVW) relate to the natural and supernatural elements that affect these main characters' lives in the stories.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Hopefully, the research can be contributed to something good for both the researcher and the readers. By reading the research, the readers will learn the elements of natural and supernatural in the stories of “*The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*” and “*Rip Van Winkle*”. Partically, the result of this research will motivate other people to do research on the same data but in different topic of research.