

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Literature is important for human being life, because it is closely related to life. According to Rees (1973: 2) in *An Introduction for Foreign Readers*, “Literature is a writing which expresses and communicates thoughts, feeling and attitudes toward life”. People can convey their idea and build a motivation of life for other people surround them by using literary works. Sometimes people can not have a good communication with the others, so through literature they can express what they really want. Another definition of literature which can support the explanation is affirmed by Meyer (1997:1),

“Literature is a term used to describe written texts marked by careful use of language, including features such as creative metaphors, well-turned phrases, elegant syntax, rhyme, alliteration, which are aesthetically read or intended by the author to be aesthetically read and are deliberately somewhat open in interpretation”.

People may imagine something which is beautiful and express it through a literary work. For example people apply their imagination in a poem. By writing a poem, people can change their life because it influences the problem of human’s life itself.

Moreover, there are three forms of literature, prose, drama, and poetry. Each of them has its own interesting works to be read and analyzed. In this research, poem is chosen as the primary data. According to Kennedy and Gioia’s statement (2005: 698), poetry is a rhythmical composition of words expressing an

attitude, designed to surprise and delight, and to arouse an emotional response. It can be said that poetry consists of some words which has more meaning and it is used to get the reader's attention.

Hence, poetry also contains such an emotional expression which has connotative meaning for each word. By studying poetry, the researcher has to use imagination to understand the meaning of the certain poems because poem is the imaginative and creative writing that expresses someone's thought, feeling and emotion. Here, this research focuses on analysing the characteristics of the Goddess of Greek Mythology through Rita Dove's "Demeter Waiting" and "Persephone, Falling", because there are some symbols shown the characteristics of those goddesses.

Additionally, the reseacher is interested in Rita Dove because she is the first African American poet laureate of the United States. Some of her poems dealing with the characteristics of the Goddess of Greek Mythology are "Persephone, Falling" and "Demeter Waiting". She published those poems in 1995 as a part of her collection *Mother Love*. It is about the relationship between mother and daughter. To build such an emotion, Dove uses the story of the Greek goddesses, Demeter and Persephone, a famous mother-daughter pair. Persephone is a headstrong young goddess. She is abducted by Hades, the king of the underworld, because of her recklessness and she does not listen to her mother's advice. While Demeter is Persephone's mother who loves her daughter. She has maternal characteristic.

The setting of this poem is the part of the story when Persephone falls. It is an ambiguous meaning. First, it means that Persephone falls into the pit and the second she falls from her mother's protection. Meanwhile, Demeter tries to save her daughter by making a deal with Hades. She always waits for her daughter in the spring, because Persephone has to stay in Underworld for a half of the year. The topic that is chosen is about the characteristic of the Goddess of Greek Mythology through the symbol in "Demeter Waiting" and "Persephone, Falling" written by Rita Dove, because their characteristics influence the human being. In analysing the poem, the researcher gets the conclusion that Demeter has the characteristic of every mother in the world. She does anything to her children in order to protect them out of the danger. While, Persephone represents the youthful girl who has labile character. On the other hand, the positive message which can be taken from those goddesses' characteristics is that a mother and a daughter will always protect each other.

## **1.2 Statements of the Problem**

The problems that are analyzed in this research are:

1. What are the characteristics of the Goddess of Greek Mythology in Rita Dove's "Demeter Waiting" and "Persephone, Falling"?
2. What are the symbols dealing with the characteristics of the Goddess of Greek Mythology in Rita Dove's "Demeter Waiting" and "Persephone, Falling"?

### **1.3 Objective of the Study**

The symbols of the characteristics of the Goddess of Greek Mythology in Rita Dove's "Demeter Waiting" and "Persephone, Falling" are chosen as the object of the research. There are some purposes of writing this research are as follows:

1. To find out the characteristics of the Goddess of Greek Mythology in Rita Dove's "Demeter Waiting" and "Persephone, Falling".
2. To analyze the symbols dealing with the characteristics of the Goddess of Greek Mythology in Rita Dove's "Demeter Waiting" and "Persephone, Falling"

### **1.4 Limitation of the Problem**

This analysis focuses only on the characteristics of the Goddess of Greek Mythology in Rita Dove's "Demeter Waiting" and "Persephone, Falling". The analysis is about the symbol which represent the characteristics of the Demeter and Persephone. They are a famous pair between mother and daughter in Greek Mythology. Demeter is Persephone's mother who is also known as the representation of summer, because she will make the earth full of flowers when her daughter comes back to the earth. While Persephone represents the young girl who has childish characters.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This research consists of several purposes which can make the researcher and also the reader interested in studying literature especially the poem. The researcher will understand the deep meaning of the poem itself. The meaning not only shows the emotion of the poet but also gives some messages which are related to human life, for example love. On the other hand, the reader will enjoy the atmosphere that produces in such a poem and they will also learn about the characteristics through the symbols dealing with the Goddess of Greek Mythology in Rita Dove's "Demeter Waiting" and "Persephone, Falling". The researcher hopes that this research will encourage other researchers to write further research.