

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Talking about written art, it has close relationship with literature. Art is the personal expression of human being. The definition of literature is stated by R.J. Rees on his book entitled *English Literature for Foreign Readers* is as follows, “Literature is writing with expresses and communicates thoughts, feeling and attitudes toward life” (1973: 2). The quotation means that human can express their thought from what they have on life. Literature may also express one’s thought, feeling, believes and all activities of people. Literature does not only entertain us about stories but also teaches us a good experience. Literatures can also a truth in societies.

In addition, Edward H. Jones in his book *Outlines of Literature* states that, literature is simply another way we can experience the world around us through our imagination (1968: 1). It means that people can express their idea from their experience that happen in their daily life or their environment and shows it into literary works.

Rees also said that literature includes all written materials such as magazines, newspaper, dictionary, etc. Generally, literature is divided into three. They are prose, poetry, and drama (1973: 2).

In this writing, the writer is interested to analyzed drama. Drama is one of the literary works that is written to be acted, to be seen and to be felt. According

to Christopher Russel Reaske in *How to analyze Fiction*, drama is a work of literature or composition which delineates life and human activity by means of presenting various actions and dialogues between a group of character (1966: 14). Drama is the literary work that is performed on the stage. Drama makes the viewers enjoy because the viewers are not only see the action of the actor directly without imagining the acting anymore but also take the good influence from the story.

The writer is excited to analyzed drama. The interesting drama which is chosen by the writer is Lorraine Hansberry's drama entitled *A Raisin in the Sun*. Lorraine Hansberry created *A Raisin in the Sun* in 1959. At that time, the World War finished. Moreover, lots of black people were emigrating from the Southern Agrarian states to the Northern urban cities. This large emigration did not pass and they could not oppose it. The decade of the 1940's and '50's brought numerous transformations to the public American lives. In that time, black people were segregated by white people. Because of that segregation, they have a power in order to survive their living in the United States. Black people have segregated housing in the United States. In addition, during 1950's their segregation was legalized. Black people's civil rights were denied at the time. Thus, during 1950, The Civil Right Movement had begun (www.bookrags.com/guides/raisinsun/bio.htm)-[accessed on June 26, 2005]. This situation makes Hansberry write a play about the condition of United States during 1950. It also portray Hansberry's family who has moved into a white neighborhood. For certain time, her family segregated from the society. Her

family has obsession to survive in the United States and they have power to make their life better. However, the writer does not want to analyze about Hansberry's life. The writer only emphasizes on the obsession of black family to achieve better life in the United States.

A Raisin in the Sun tells about a poor black family's struggle for survival. The Younger family was waiting for a \$10,000 life insurance check, from Big Walter Younger, Lena's husband that passed away. Lena Younger, Walter Lee Younger and Beneatha Younger had plan to the money. Lena, the mother, would like it to buy decent house their apartment was very bad. Walter, the son of the family, wanted to spend the money in a liquor store. Beneatha, the daughter of the family, wanted to spend the money for her medical school, because she wants to be a doctor. All of their obsessions were aimed to get a better life for their family. They had their own obsession. Their obsession changed them from a solid family into a family who was always against to each other. Finally, Lena, the mother, bought house in a white neighborhood. Although their family got warning from the White Representative, but they were confident to move into that place.

From the story above, one of the issues reflected in the plays is the obsession of black family to get better life for living in the United States. They want their social status to rise. Although they have different obsession, they have the same purpose that is to make their life better.

From the explanation above, the writer is interested to analyze the obsession for better life in black family for living in the United States, which is experienced by the Youngers, Lena Younger, Walter Lee Younger and Beneatha

Younger in Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun*. The writer thinks that this writing has interesting problems to be analyzed and is never discussed before, therefore, the writer chooses this title to be her thesis.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In the statement of the problem, the writer presents some cases that will be the subject of analysis. The problems are to answer the following questions:

1. Why do the Youngers; Lena Younger, Walter Lee Younger and Beneatha Younger have obsession to achieve their better life in the United States?
2. What are the obstacles to achieve their obsession?
3. Can they reach their obsessed things?

1.3 The Limitation of Problem

The writer analyzes the play entitled *A Raisin in the Sun* written by Lorraine Hansberry, which is published in 1959. In analyzing this play, the writer limits the writing on the obsession of Lena Younger, Walter Lee Younger and Beneatha Younger, the obstacles to receive their obsession and the result of the obsession.

1.4 The objective of the Study

In the objective of the problem, the writer has purpose to answer the question in the statement of the problem as follows:

1. To explain the causes of the Youngers; Lena Younger's. Walter Lee Younger's and Beneatha Younger's obsession to achieve their better life for living in the United States.
2. To describe the obstacles to achieve their obsessed things.
3. To find out whether they can reach the obsessed things.

1.5 The Significance of Study

In this writing, the writer would like to get description about how a black family struggles to get better life. It can enrich the writer's knowledge about life.

In this writing explains about the obsession of the family in order to get a better life. Therefore, this writing will give a description for the readers about the efforts of a family to life better so they can survive. The writer hopes, by explaining this topic, the readers will receive a good influence from the story. The writer helps the readers think that literary works are not only merely and entertainment, but also as a means of communication values and moral teaching.

The aim of this writing is also presented for the other researches who are interested in Lorraine Hansberry's drama entitled *A Raisin in the Sun*. They can use the writer's writing as comparative material. Hopefully, it can enrich the literary itself.