

**CHARLIE'S STRUGGLES IN CRYSTAL MALDONADO'S *FAT
CHANCE, CHARLIE VEGA***

A THESIS

Presented in a Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Sarjana Degree in
Department of English Literature



BY

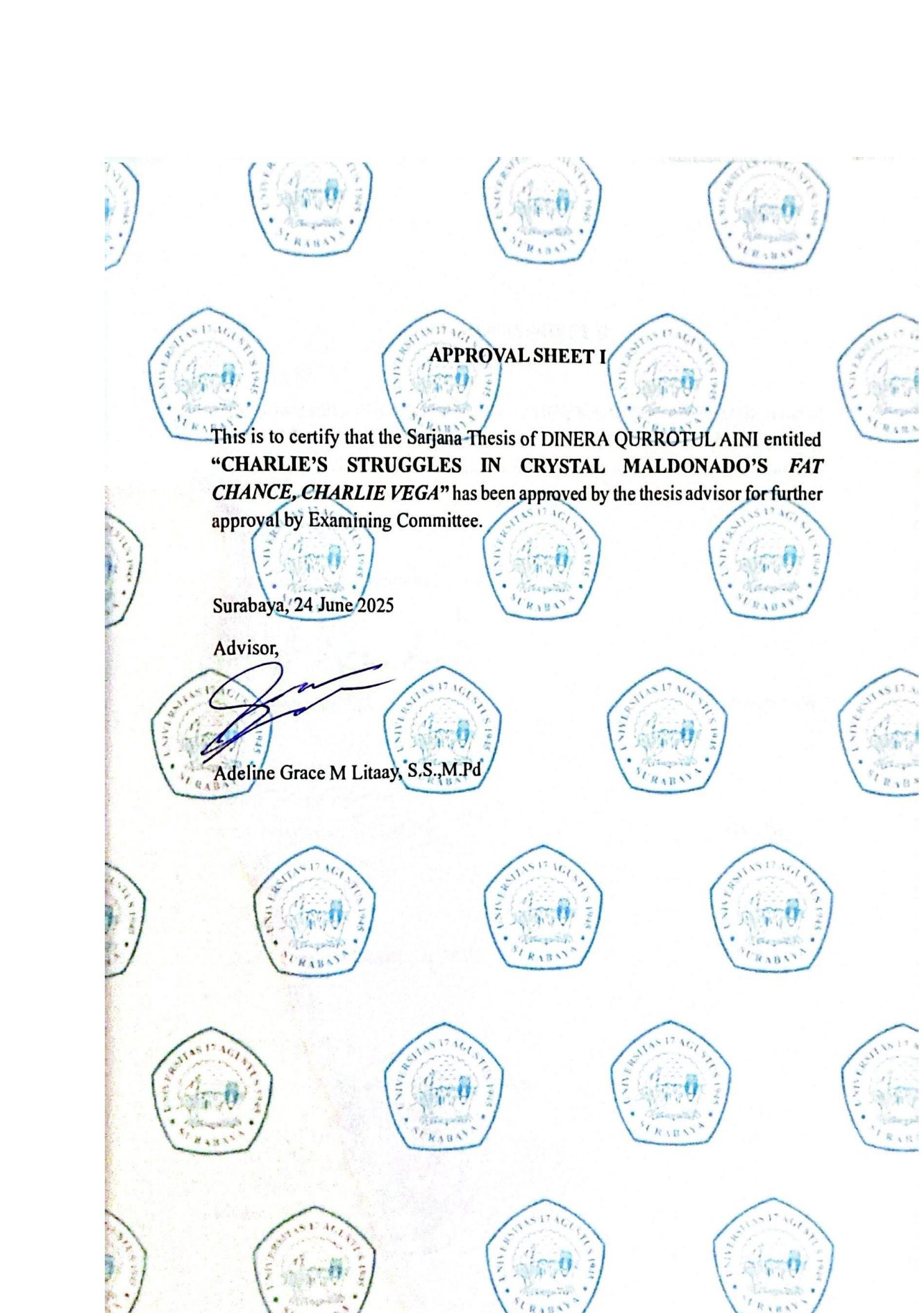
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Surabaya, 24 June 2025

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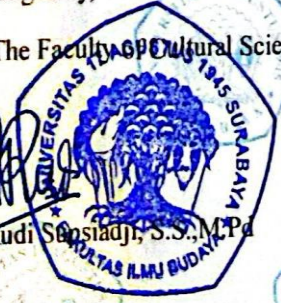


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Surabaya, 24 June 2025

Dinera Qurrotul Aini

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ABSTRACT

This thesis discusses the struggles faced by the main character, Charlie Vega, in Crystal Maldonado's *Fat Chance, Charlie Vega*. The research highlights how the novel depicts issues of body image, identity and intersectionality especially the overlapping challenges of race, gender and body image experienced by a Latina teenage girl. This study aims to describe the impact of the intersection of race, and body image on Charlie Vega's life, and identify the types of struggles she experiences. The intersection of these factors shapes the way Charlie sees herself and reinforce the conflicts she faces, such as discrimination, and restrictive cultural expectations. Using qualitative method and theories of struggle and intersectionality, a psychological approach is also applied to analyze the internal and external conflicts that Charlie experiences. In the face of various life challenges, the protagonist finds a way to survive through writing, which is not only a means of escape but also helps her build a new view of herself. Joining the #fatacceptance community gave her a safe space to express herself and feel accepted, while expanding her perspective on body acceptance. The intersection of influences from peers, family, and the wider society shapes her emotional journey and identity, presenting different types of struggles: negative struggle, positive struggle, inevitable struggle, and chosen struggle. Through this process, the protagonist learns to understand and accept her complexity, and finds strength in the community and personal perspective she creates.

Key words: *Body Image, Intersectionality, Race, Self-Identity, Struggle*