

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

People pass through some stages of human development. Erik Erikson (1977: 222) reveals that human's development comprises eight stages from infancy to adulthood. During each stage, a person experiences a psychosocial crisis which can produce positive or negative outcomes for personality development. In Abraham Francis's *Social Work in Mental Health* (2014: 78), it is said that Stanley Hall was the first psychologist to advance the psychology of adolescence in its own right and to use scientific methods to study them. He defined this period to begin at puberty at about 12 or 13 years, and end late, between 22 years to 25 years of age. In this phase, a person will face a difficult time in life. Many things they have to accept to survive. During this time, one of the psychosocial problems that often be found in adolescents over recent decades is rebelliousness — an obviously serious problem that parents often ignored.

Rebelliousness in adolescence is not a new theory for most of parents. Almost every teen experiences some kind of rebellious stages in their puberty. Some of them tend to fight for more freedom. Carl (2007: 55) divides adolescent growth into 4 stages: early adolescence and the change for the worse (ages 9–13), Mid-adolescence and the fight for more freedom (ages 13–15), late adolescence and the desire to act more grown up (ages 15–18), and the challenge of living on one's own (ages 18–23). However, most parents become frightened about teen rebellion and they prefer to avoid that problem by paying less attention. Parents tend to be worried while facing a rebellious teen because they do not want to put their relationship in danger.

For the most teenagers in today's generation, as they are entering a new phase of life (adolescence), they may have some conflicts that run into their heads. It is like an option they have to choose between two contradictory or very different things. Sometimes, they have to face a really great struggle for resisting what they think it is not good for them without any acceptance. Teenagers tend to refuse things that does not make them feel good, because the phase they are living

makes them become very selective persons. In other words, if they do not want thing rule or treat them, they will make some efforts to fight only to obtain what they really want.

The fact above also occur in Patterson & Tebbetts' *Middle School: The Worst Years of My Life*. The main character, Rafe Khatchadorian, twelve years old, has the same problem with his new phase of his live. As what has been declared by Francis (2014: 78) and Carl (2007: 55), Rafe belongs to early-adolescence where most of kids like him tend to fight for freedom. In his adolescence, Rafe had to face a fact that he feels pressed his surroundings and is not capable to adapt them. Thus, Rafe has to come into a contact with psychological problems called rebellion to resist the authority.

Rafe feels that his new school does not fit him. While living with new people, it is hard for Rafe to make an adaptation toward the current atmosphere of a formal school. Besides, Rafe is demanded to suffer from bullying in his new school which also takes a part of his disobedience. Thus, it became a major problem for his psychosocial conflict. The other cause of his rebellious behaviour is his family. Rafe's future step-father is a cruel man who always yells at him and Georgia. Rafe's future step-father often reprimands him and his sister whenever they make a mistake. Furthermore, the last cause of his rebellion is his depression caused by his loss. It is hard for children to comprehend or accept the permanence of death (Marlene, 1996: 28). Rafe lost his twin brother when they were only three years old. Knowing that his twin brother has died, Rafe kind of suffers from depression. Consequently, Rafe ended up becoming a rebellious adolescent.

The problem above attracts the writer's interest to conduct the study of rebelliousness in Patterson & Tebbetts' *Middle School: The Worst Years of My Life*. Despites the rebelliousness is a phenomenon that many of adolescents will ever pass through. The way the author present the story genuinely inspires the writer to conduct an analysis of rebelliousness in Patterson & Tebbetts' *Middle School: The Worst Years of My Life*.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Dealing with the background that has been mentioned above, the thesis writer would like to formulate the problems as follows:

- a. Why does Rafe rebel in James Patterson & Chris Tebbetts' *Middle School: The Worst Years of My Life*?
- b. What are the impacts of Rafe's rebellion in James Patterson & Chris Tebbetts' *Middle School: The Worst Years of My Life*?

## 1.3 Objective of the Study

Referring to the statement of the problem above, the objective are formulated as follows:

- a. To find out why Rafe rebels in James Patterson & Chris Tebbetts' *Middle School: The Worst Years of My Life*.
- b. To find out the impacts of Rafe's rebellion in James Patterson & Chris Tebbetts' *Middle School: The Worst Years of My Life*.

## 1.4 Scope and Limitation of the Study

There are many psychological aspects that can be analysed in James Patterson & Chris Tebbetts' *Middle School: The Worst Years of My Life*. This study, however, only deals with the discussion of one of the main characters — Rafe. In discussing the main character here, the study is limited by only discussing Rafe's rebellion.

## 1.5 Significant of the Study

The thesis writer hopes that a life phenomenon like teenage rebellion found in Patterson & Tebbetts' *Middle School: The Worst Years of My Life* could be accepted as a good and valuable lesson to the study of literature. Furthermore, this thesis is also expected to give an understanding and encourage the students of English Department, University of 17 Agustus 1945 Surabaya, to analyse literary work.

## **1.6 Organization of the Study**

The first chapter is the introduction part. It consists of background of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, and organization of the study. The introduction shows a brief discussion of the thesis. The second chapter is the review of related study. Literary theories that are needed to help the writer analyse belong to this chapter. In this thesis, literary theory includes theory of rebelliousness, theory of adolescence, and theory of depression, and theory of bullying which are related each other. The third chapter is research method. It discusses the research design and theoretical framework or literary approach used by the writer for this study. This chapter also explains the procedure of collecting data and where the data was taken from. The fourth chapter is the analysis of the study. This chapter discusses why Rafe rebels and the impacts of his rebellion which will be analysed according to the literary theory and the psychological approach as the basic of the study. At last, the fifth chapter is the conclusion. It concludes the whole discussion of the previous chapter.