

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Thriller is “a work of fiction or drama designed to hold the interest by the use of a high degree of intrigue, adventure, or suspense” (Johnson). One of contemporary American authors who specialize in writing thriller novels is Jeffery Deaver. He is a “master of trick endings” (Ellison) and his books are “filled with surprises, . . . and set in a short time frame” (Ellison). His goal in writing his novels is “to give his readers the most exciting roller coaster ride of a suspense story he can possibly think of” (“About the Author”). He has received a lot of awards for his two collections of short-stories and 31 bestseller books. He has received the Ellery Queen Reader’s Award three times for Best Short Story of 1995. He has also been “nominated for an Anthony Award and six Edgar Awards from the Mystery Writers of America” (“About the Author”).

Deaver has written a great number of thriller novels but I choose *The Bone Collector* (1997) because this book is very captivating and intriguing. *The Bone Collector* is the first book in the Lincoln Rhyme series. There is no relation among the stories in the series and the cases are not related but they are all

investigated by Lincoln Rhyme and Amelia Sachs. Lincoln Rhyme is a quadriplegic who investigates different cases with Amelia Sachs. A quadriplegic is “a person who is permanently unable to move any of their arms or legs, often because their spine has been injured” (“Quadriplegic”, def. 1).

The Bone Collector tells the story about a murderer who is called ‘The Bone Collector’ because he collects various bones from his victims as souvenirs after he captures them. The person who is responsible for the investigation is Lincoln Rhyme, a quadriplegic who was once New York Police Department's head of forensics. An accident happens when he is collecting evidence in his last case. A beam falls and crushes his spine and makes him stay in bed forever, which only enables him to move his head and his forefinger. That is why he is helped by a patrol officer, Amelia Sachs, in doing the investigation and trying to catch the bone collector. This novel has been adapted into a movie with the same title, “starring Denzel Washington and Angelina Jolie. (It) was made by Universal Pictures in 1999” (“The Bone Collector (1997)”).

The readers are made curious by the development of the case in this novel. The murderer in this novel is so intelligent and meticulous that there is time when the readers ask themselves whether the detective is capable of capturing him. But in the end, the readers will be appalled by the detective's ability in searching for the murderer and the revelation of who the murderer really is, along with his motive in doing so. The readers can feel the intense suspenses and the urge to flip to the next page and finish the novel in one sitting.

As plot is the strongest component of this book, I have chosen elements of plot as the subject to analyze because of their twists in the end and the cliffhangers that the readers will experience while reading this book. This book is full of suspenses and surprises that the readers will not expect.

Elements of plot consist of suspense, surprise, and artistic unity. Suspense is “the quality in a story that makes the readers ask ‘what’s going to happen next?’ or ‘how will this turn out?’ and impels him to read on to find the answers to these questions” (Perrine 45). While surprise is “a sudden and unexpected turn in the action occurring at the end of a work. Such a conclusion is a trick ending if it has not been previously hinted at or prepared for” (Shaw 365). Last but not least, artistic unity is:

. . . the condition of a successful literary work whereby all its elements work together for the achievement of its central purpose. In an artistically unified work nothing is included that is irrelevant to the central, nothing is omitted that is essential to it, and the parts are arranged in the most effective order for the achievement of that purpose. (“Artistic Unity”)

Statement of the Problem

The problems that are going to be analyzed in this thesis are:

1. What are the suspenses in the novel?
2. What are the surprises in the novel?
3. How is the artistic unity presented in the novel?

Purpose of the Study

Based on the above statements of the problem, this study is conducted with the following purposes:

1. To reveal the suspenses in the novel.
2. To reveal the surprises in the novel.
3. To show how the artistic unity is presented in the novel.

Method of Research

I use library research in writing my thesis. First, I read Jeffery Deaver's *The Bone Collector* as the primary text. In order to support my analysis of suspense, surprise and artistic unity of the novel, I also read and elaborate some data from the Internet. Then, I draw the conclusion of my analysis.

Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of three chapters, preceded by the Acknowledgements, the Table of Contents and the Abstract. Chapter One is the Introduction, which consists of the Background of the Study, the Statement of the Problem, the Purpose of the Study, the Method of Research, and the Organization of the Thesis. Chapter Two is the Analysis of the Elements of Plot of Jeffery Deaver's *The Bone Collector*. Chapter Three is the Conclusion. Finally, the thesis ends with the Bibliography and the Appendices, which contain the synopsis of the novel and the biography of the author.