

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### Background of the Study

Scot Gardner is an Australian novelist known for his children and young adult novels. He has written fourteen novels such as *White Ute Dreaming*, *The Other Madonna*, *One Wheel Drive*, and many others. Gardner often writes about troubled people who may either fall apart when they have troubles or become complete after surviving their troubles. His writing inspiration comes from his experience as a counselor and his love for listening to people's stories, both the old's and the young's because in his opinion, "young people dream big, old people have lived." His novels cover a wide range of topics, from absurd fantasies for children to the unpleasantness of life and tragic comedy for young adults ("Scot Gardner").

Gardner has written some novels, such as *Gravity*, which was shortlisted for The Victorian Premier's Literary Awards 2007, *Happy as Larry*, which won the 2010 WA Premier's Book Awards for the category of young adult book, and

*The Dead I Know*, which was short-listed for WA Premier's Book Awards: Young Adults and won the 2012 Children's Book Council of Australia's Book of the Year Awards for the category of older readers ("CBCA Book of the Year: Congrats to Scot Gardner and Kate Constable!"). His third novel, *Burning Eddy*, was shortlisted in the NSW Premier's Literary Awards for the Ethel Turner Prize for Books for Young Adults and for the Children's Book Council of Australia Book of the Year for Older Readers ("Burning Eddy").

In this thesis, I choose to analyze one of Gardner's novels, *Burning Eddy* because the story is very interesting. The story gives the readers a different perception of life and a way of handling problems for young adults, and this is very helpful for the readers. "*Burning Eddy* is a poignant story about growing up, about family, and about friendship" (Murphy). The protagonist of the novel is a fifteen-year-old boy named Daniel Fairbrother. He is unhappy about his life because he has a bad relationship with his father. He does not have any friends and he does not have a girlfriend, either. Furthermore, he is bullied at school. One day, he meets Eddy, who teaches him about the meaning of life, how to forgive others, and many other things. Daniel's life starts to change after he meets Eddy. He then develops into a better person in the last chapters of the novel. The changes of Daniel's characteristics are very prominent in the novel. Thus, I decide to analyze the portrayal of the protagonist of the novel as the topic of my thesis.

The literary element that I choose to analyze in this novel is the portrayal of the protagonist. "*Portrayal*, which comes from Latin words meaning "to draw forth," "to depict," refers to the portrait (characterization) of individuals presented in literary selections..." (Shaw 295) while the definition of protagonist is "the

leading character of a drama, novel, or other literary works. The person is not always a hero of a work, but he is always the principal and central character” (Shaw 305). In analyzing this novel, I use formalism because the issues in *Burning Eddy* are clear and I do not need to use any sources from other books.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The problems I would like to discuss are:

1. How is the protagonist portrayed in the novel?
2. What is the purpose of the author in portraying such a protagonist?

### **Purpose of the Study**

Based on the above problems, the purpose of the study are:

1. to show the portrayal of the protagonist in the novel.
2. to show the purpose of the author in portraying such a protagonist.

### **Method of Research**

In writing this thesis, I use the library research. I begin the study by reading the primary text, Scot Gardner’s *Burning Eddy*. Then, I search for some additional information to support my analysis. This is done by browsing the internet and reading some reference books. Next, I analyze the portrayal of the protagonist of the novel. Finally, I draw a conclusion from my analysis.

## Organization of the Thesis

The thesis is presented in three chapters and is preceded by Table of Contents, and Abstract. Chapter one is Introduction, which consists of Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the Study, Method of Research, and Organization of the Thesis. Chapter Two presents Analysis of the Portrayal of the Protagonist in Scot Gardner's *Burning Eddy*. I conclude my analysis in Chapter Three. This thesis ends with Bibliography and Appendices, which present the synopsis of *Burning Eddy* and the biography of Scot Gardner.

