

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Domestic violence is an issue often found in a family circle involving unpleasant behavior of one family member to another that leads to a conflict or even violence among them. In *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, the word “domestic” means, “concerning family relationships and life at home”; while the word “violence” means “behavior that is intended to hurt other people physically”. Nevertheless, I find that physical abuse is not the only problem found in domestic violence, there can also be psychological abuse that is mainly about hurting the emotion and the soul of the victims.

“...different kinds of violence - physical, psychological...”  
(<http://www.osi.hu/vaw/propbycount.php?count=kyrgyzstansezim>)

Therefore, I come to the conclusion that domestic violence is a situation that happens in a family involving physical violence as well as psychological abuse done by one family member to another.

Physical violence can be found when one is hurt physically by another person, whereas psychological abuse is when one is being tortured emotionally by the discouraging words and attitude of others which makes one feel bad or even frightened.

There are many versions of domestic violence, whether it is done by a husband to his wife, a mother or a father to her/his children, and so on; however, in this thesis, I would like to concentrate on the issue of domestic violence done by a husband to his wife.

The issue of domestic violence is rarely known by outsiders. Sometimes it cannot be easily found out that domestic violence is the cause behind all the swollen cheeks, black and blue on one's body, and so on; moreover, many times it is difficult to judge whether it is a domestic violence or not because instead of letting people know the truth, the victims often cover it up by telling a made-up story. They often keep their secrets for certain reasons.

I am interested in the issue of domestic violence in marriages, including the causes, the reactions of the victims, and also the resolution of this kind of problem. The two novels I have chosen, namely The Woman Who Walked into Doors and Black and Blue, tell about domestic violence experienced by the female protagonists of the novels.

The Woman Who Walked into Doors is a novel written by Roddy Doyle and was published in 1996. Roddy Doyle is an Irish writer who won a Booker Prize in 1993. The title of the novel, The Woman Who Walked into Doors, is taken from an Irish euphemism for a battered wife, as represented by Paula Spencer, the major female character of the novel. This novel is a best-selling novel and a little bit controversial in the writer's home country, Ireland. It is a little bit controversial since it tells about domestic violence happening in Ireland which is considered Ireland's "dirty little secret"; moreover, Doyle successfully portrays the real life of a battered wife in the novel. (<http://www.nadn.navy.mil/EnglishDept/ilv/doyle.htm>)

Black and Blue is a novel written by Anna Quindlen, a Pulitzer-winning columnist, and was published in 1998. Anna Quindlen is known for her ability to create wonderful female characters or true heroines (<http://www.randomhouse.com/features/aquindlen/conversations.html>). Her novel, Black and Blue, is on the list of selected novels in Oprah Winfrey's book club. It is chosen so that women can read it and it can encourage women with a similar problem to that faced by the major female character in the novel.

Domestic violence has been one of the issues that feminists are trying to deal with; therefore, in analyzing the issue of domestic violence in the two novels, I use the theory of feminism. Fundamentally, the theory of feminism is about the equality of women with men and that there is no difference between them (Charvet, 1982:1, 2). It also concerns the acknowledgement of women as human beings who deserve respect from the opposite sex, not disrespect or even worse, abuse.

I believe feminism theory focuses on the freedom of women to decide what to do and not to do and that no one can pry into women's affairs concerning her pursuance of happiness as independent beings, or, in other words, in determining their final step to reach what they think is good in their definition of being happy and free.

According to John Charvet in his book Feminism, he says that women are in the same level of value with men in respect to their common nature as free individuals (Charvet, 1982:1). In addition, women as individuals also have the right to do whatever they want with their life (Charvet, 1982:7). Therefore, using feminism approach, I would like to reveal the issue of domestic violence and also the cause of it.

Considering the various aspects of women's life affected by domestic violence, I will make use of different theories of feminism. Among many, I will quote Naomi Wolf concerning her theory on Beauty Myth, Mary Radford Ruether's theory on the relation between religion and women, bell hooks' theory regarding male's superiority and female's identity, Carole Sheffield's theory about 'sexual terrorism', Marxist Feminism, and Simone de Beauvoir's theory concerning women as the Other.

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

In order to analyze the novels, I would like to state the problems as follows:

1. What are the forms of domestic violence in Roddy Doyle's The Woman Who Walked into Doors and Anna Quindlen's Black and Blue?
2. Why does the domestic violence happen to the two female protagonists?
3. How do the two female protagonists eventually deal with the domestic violence?

### **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

Based on the statement of the problem, the purposes of the study are:

1. To analyze the forms of domestic violence in both novels.
2. To show the cause of domestic violence happening to the two female protagonists in the two novels.
3. To show how the two female protagonists eventually deal with the domestic violence.

### **METHOD OF RESEARCH**

The method of research that I use is library research. I start by reading the literary work I have chosen entitled The Woman Who Walked into Doors by Roddy Doyle and Black and Blue by Anna Quindlen, and some information from the internet concerning the biography of the two authors as well as some interviews with the authors. I also read reference texts which are related to the topic, namely theory of feminism. Next, I collect data from the books and finally draw a conclusion from what I have analyzed.

### **ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS**

This thesis begins with the Preface, in which I present my opening remarks, and then it is followed by the Abstract, which is about the important part of the thesis written in Indonesian. I present this thesis in four chapters. Chapter I is the Introduction, which contains Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the Study, Method of Research, and Organization of the Thesis. The next two chapters are Chapter II and Chapter III presenting the analysis of domestic violence in Roddy Doyle's The Woman Who Walked into Doors and Anna Quindlen's Black and Blue. The last chapter is Chapter IV, the conclusion, which contains the comparative study of the two novels. Then, this thesis ends with the Bibliography, which contains a list of reference books used in writing this thesis, and the Appendix, which presents summaries of the two novels as well as the authors' biographies.