

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Science fiction, which is “highly imaginative fiction typically involving actual or projected scientific phenomena” (English Dictionary 373), has been regarded as “a distinct literary genre” that insistently occurs as “a social phenomenon”. Sociologists, psychologists, historian of ideas, and political scientists began to turn to it on the assumption that it was an important aspect of the “sign of the times” (Parrinder xiv). People can find science fiction in literary works dealing with “scientific topics, space travel, aliens, and recognizably Earth-variant worlds or life forms that have not been touched by magic” (Introduction to Science Fiction). For example, there are novels which have future characteristic in science fiction genre like scientific topics in Carl Sagan’s *Cosmos*, alien in H.G. Wells’ *The War of The World*, space travel in Alastair Reynolds’s *Pushing Ice*, and Earth-variant worlds or life forms that have not been touched by magic in Orson Scott Card’s *The Memory of Earth*.

Rodman Philbrick is an American science-fiction author whose works are famous among teen readers around the world. Meanwhile, Lynn Harnett, Philbrick's wife, is an author and journalist who collaborates with her husband in writing some novels like *The Haunting* and *Strange Invaders*. *The Haunting* is a horror novel about twelve-year-old Jason, and his little sister, Sally, who is terrorized by a series of ghostly occurrences that target children. Meanwhile, *Strange Invaders* is a science fiction novel about Nick and his twin sister Jessie. Both of them saw the strange glow hovering over Harley Hills.

I like science fiction because there are many elements of suspense and surprise in it. This is the reason for me to choose Philbrick and Harnett's novel, *Abduction*, for my study. This novel concerns the mystery of alien existence and unlike other works by Philbrick, the major character in this novel is not a detective but two teenagers, Luke and Mandy.

I am going to analyze the suspense and surprise, two important elements in this science fiction novel. In addition, I am also going to reveal how the suspense and surprise create the artistic unity in the story. Suspense is "when reader's curiosity is combined with anxiety about the fate of some sympathetic character" (Perrine 45). It also "makes the reader ask 'What's going to happen next?' or 'How will this turn out?' and impels him to read on to find the answer to these questions" (45). Perrine says that suspense can be achieved by introducing mystery, which is "an unusual set of circumstances for which the reader craves an explanation, or to place the hero or heroine in a dilemma" (45). Meanwhile, surprise is an element that is "proportional to the unexpectedness of what happens; it becomes pronounced when the story departs radically from our

expectation” (47). Finally, artistic unity is “the various stages of the story (which) are linked together in a chain of cause and effect” (Perrine 49). In other words, there is “nothing irrelevant that does not contribute to the total meaning; nothing that is there only for its own sake or its own excitement” (Reuben).

Statement of The Problem

Based on the Background of the Study previously explained, the statement of the problem is formulated as follows:

1. Which events in the novel contain elements of suspense?
2. Which events in the novel contain elements of surprise?
3. How do the suspense and surprise create artistic unity in the novel?

Purpose of the Study

The Statement of the Problem reflects the purposes of the study, which are

1. to identify the elements of suspense in the novel.
2. to identify the elements of surprise in the novel.
3. to show that the suspense and surprise create artistic unity in the novel.

Method of Research

I used library research in writing my thesis. Firstly, I read *Abduction*, which I chose as the primary text. Then, I searched for references from printed and on-line sources to support my analysis, which was on suspense and surprise elements of the novel. After this, I collected the data from the novel to support my analysis of suspense and surprise. I also tried to find out how the suspense and surprise had created the artistic unity in the novel. Finally, I drew the conclusion and wrote the thesis.

Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of three chapters. The first chapter is the Introduction, which consists of the Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the Study, Method of Research, and Organization of the Thesis. The second chapter is the Analysis of the Elements of Suspense and Surprise, which involves an explanation on how the suspense and surprise create the artistic unity in the novel, which is Rodman Philbrick and Lynn Harnett's *Abduction*. The third chapter of the thesis presents the Conclusion. Finally, the thesis ends with the Bibliography and the Appendices, which contain the Synopsis of the novel and the Biography of the authors.