

LIFE STRUGGLE IN THE FAULT IN OUR STAR BY JOHN GREEN

Dinar Syaharani¹, Inti Englishtina²

e-mail: *dinarsyaharani79@gmail.com

²intienglishtinamail@gmail.com

Affiliation ^{1,2}Universitas 17 Agustus 1945 Semarang

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this analysis is to describe the main characters and characterizations and find out the theme in *The Fault in Our Star*. The writer uses qualitative methods to conduct this research. For analysis, the writer uses a qualitative approach. This research is entitled "Life Struggle in *The Fault in Our Stars* by John Green". The main reason the writer chose this topic is because the novel tells about the life struggle against the characters' illnesses. The second element analyzed in this case is the theme, how does he survive in a sad situation. The third element in the novel that will be discussed is that the writer will discuss in more detail the life struggles faced by the characters in the novel. Finally, the writer hopes that this paper will be useful for the readers, especially to better understand the intrinsic elements of the novel.

Keywords: *character, theme, plot, novel, main characters.*

INTRODUCTION

Novel became a modern literature nowadays. The novel contains a story about the series of a person's life surrounded by people. With each character shows his character and attitude. In the novel the writer finds plots, characters, perspectives, themes, conflicts. According to Kosasih (2012: 60) novel is an imaginative work that tells the full side of the problematic life of a person or several characters and Susanto (2012: 32) states that literary works (novels, short stories, and poetry) are imaginative, fictional, and author's expressions. Based on those opinion, we can conclude that a novel is the imaginative work that are inspired by real experiences or imagination are then poured into a piece of writing. *The Fault in Our Star* draws the writer's attention to analyze the novel. The characters in the novel have different characteristics and life struggles. The writer is

also curious about the character and wants to know more about the story. The writer is interested in analyzing this novel because the conflict in the novel is quite complicated so it is interesting to analyze. In this study, the writer discusses the two main characters in the novel. Then the writer analyzes the main character's internal conflict. Hazel is a 16-year-old woman, and she has had cancer since she was 13, a cancer that requires her to carry an oxygen cylinder wherever she goes. Despite her flaws, Hazel does not despair until she met August, a man diagnosed with cancer that must force him to lose his legs. But August has a fear of death and a fear of being forgotten by those around him.

METHODOLOGY

This study aims to find and describe the manifestations of the characters in the story, themes, and the life struggle that occur in the novel *The Fault in Our Star*. Based on these objectives, the method used in this research is descriptive qualitative research. According to Lin (2009:1), "Qualitative research of literatures does not focus on the quantity and completeness of literature materials. It focuses on personal literature researches and chooses small samples or characteristic of cases according to the interests of the researches and subject requirements. When conducting descriptive qualitative research, the data is gathered in the form of words or images rather than numbers (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982).

The main procedure that the writer uses to get the data is by reading and identifying by making important notes that help the writer to analyze the novel. In detail, the steps that the writer will take during the research process, these steps based on the USC Library's online sources are as follows:

1. Reading

The writer reads the novel *The Fault in Our Star* and tries to understand the lives of the characters in the novel, and this will be extremely helpful for further research.

2. Identifying

After reading novel, the writer identifies the characters in the story into character classifications. This will help to know the classification of characters in the novel.

3. Describing

After the writer knows what he wants to identify, in this section the writer explains in detail the characters included in the novel.

4. Concluding

After going through three stages of reading the novel, identifying, and explaining, the author concludes what kind of characters are contained in this story. Not only that, but the writer also determines the themes and struggles of life that he goes through.

DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis conducted by the writer of the characters in the novel entitled *The Fault in Our Stars*, it is divided into two, namely the main character and supporting characters. Main characters such as : Hazel and August and supporting characters are : Isaac, Mrs Lancaster, Mr Lancaster, Kaitlyn, Peter Van Houten, Lidewij, Dr Maria, Patric, Caroline

The two main characters of the novel *The Fault in Our Stars* are Hazel Grace Lancaster and Augustus Waters. Hazel is a sixteen-year-old girl who has been living with terminal cancer for several years, while Augustus is a seventeen-year-old boy who has lost one of his legs to osteosarcoma. The novel follows their journey as they meet and fall in love while navigating the challenges and limitations imposed by their illnesses.

a. Hazel Grace Lancaster

Hazel Grace Lancaster is one of the main characters in the novel *The Fault in Our Stars*. Hazel is 16 years old, she has thyroid cancer which requires her to carry an oxygen tank as a respirator. This is shown by:

“No, it’s fine,” I said. The cylindrical green tank only weighed a few pounds, and I had this little steel cart to wheel it around behind me. It delivered two liters of oxygen to me each minute through a cannula, a transparent tube that split just beneath my neck, wrapped behind my ears, and then reunited in my nostrils. The contraption was necessary because my lungs sucked at being lungs” (*Page 11*)

b. Augustus

Augustus sees his illness as a challenge to be overcome, and he encourages Hazel to live life to the fullest and find joy in the world around her. Augustus

Waters was a former basketball player and his cancerous osteosarcoma left him with the loss of one of his legs. He can't drive the car very well because of his left leg has been amputated and replaced with a prosthetic leg which even so he still struggles to drive. This can be proven by dialogue :

“Augustus Waters drove horrifically. Whether stopping or starting, everything happened with a tremendous JOLT. I flew against the seat belt of his Toyota SUV each time he braked, and my neck snapped backward each time he hit the gas. I might have been nervous—what with sitting in the car of a strange boy on the way to his house, keenly aware that my crap lungs complicate efforts to fend off unwanted advances—but his driving was so astonishingly poor that I could think of nothing else. We’d gone perhaps a mile in jagged silence before Augustus said, “I failed the driving test three times.” (Page 18)

c. Issac

Isaac is a friend of August who also has cancer. He has lost his eyesight due to the disease and is awaiting surgery to remove his other eye. Isaac's sarcastic humor is a recurring element throughout the novel, and there are several instances where he provides comic relief. Here are a few examples of Isaac's sarcastic humor from "The Fault in Our Stars":

"I'm in love with you, and I'm not in the business of denying myself the simple pleasure of saying true things. I'm in love with you, and I know that love is just a shout into the void, and that oblivion is inevitable, and that we're all doomed and that there will come a day when all our labor has been returned to dust, and I know the sun will swallow the only earth we'll ever have, and I am in love with you." (Page 153)

d. Kaitlyn

Kaitlyn is a friend who always supports Hazel

"The other thing about Kaitlyn, I guess, was that it could never again feel natural to talk to her. Any attempts to feign normal social interactions were just depressing because it was so glaringly obvious that everyone I spoke to for the rest of my life would feel awkward and self-conscious around me, except maybe kids like Jackie who just didn't know any better." (Page 30)

e. Mr. Lancaster and Mrs. Lancaster (Hazel's parents)

Hazel's parents are loving and supportive, but they are also deeply affected by their daughter's illness. They are overprotective at times, and they struggle with the fear of losing their daughter. However, they are ultimately shown to be strong and resilient, and their relationship with Hazel is a source of comfort and strength for all of them.

Mr. Lancaster is Hazel's father. He really cares about Hazel. Unlike Hazel's mother, she only understands Hazel's cancer broadly and spends most of her time working. Mrs. Lancaster is shown as a very caring mother who is always worried about Hazel and her life. He looked worried about Hazel's alleged depression. For this reason he enrolled Hazel in the Support Group. Even though he was hovering over Hazel most of the time, he tried to make her feel like a normal teenager,

Me : "I refuse to attend Support Group."

Mom : "One of the symptoms of depression is disinterest in activities."

Me : "Please just let me watch America's Next Top Model. It's an activity."

Mom : "Television is a passivity." Me: "Ugh, Mom, please."

Mom : "Hazel, you're a teenager. You're not a little kid anymore. You need to make friends, get out of the house, and live your life."

Me : "If you want me to be a teenager, don't send me to Support Group. Buy me a fake ID so I can go to clubs, drink vodka, and take pot."

Mom : "You don't take pot, for starters."

Me : "See, that's the kind of thing I'd know if you got me a fake ID."

Mom : "You're going to Support Group."

Me : "UGGGGGGGGGGGGGG."

Mom : "Hazel, you deserve a life." (Page 10)

f. Dr. Maria

Dr maria is the doctor who accompanied Hazel against her thyroid cancer.

"Everyone figured I was finished, but my Cancer Doctor Maria managed to get some of the fluid out of my lungs, and shortly thereafter the antibiotics they'd given me for the pneumonia kicked in." (Page 19)

g. Patrick

The leader and the only adult in the Support Group. He is known for his warmth and assertive optimism. As a result of cancer, Patrick lost both of his testicles.

“I noticed this because Patrick, the Support Group Leader and only person over eighteen in the room, talked about the heart of Jesus every freaking meeting, all about how we, as young cancer survivors, were sitting right in Christ’s very sacred heart and whatever.” (Page 9)

h. Petter Van Houten

Peter Van Houten is a crucial character. Peter Van Houten is the reclusive author of Hazel's favorite book, *An Imperial Affliction*. Hazel idolizes him and longs to learn more about the book's ambiguous ending. Augustus arranges a meeting between Hazel and Van Houten in Amsterdam, but the meeting does not go as planned.

*My favorite book, by a wide margin, was *An Imperial Affliction*, but I didn’t like to tell people about it. Sometimes, you read a book and it fills you with this weird evangelical zeal, and you become convinced that the shattered world will never be put back together unless and until all living humans read the book. And then there are books like *An Imperial Affliction*, which you can’t tell people about, books so special and rare and yours that advertising your affection feels like a betrayal. (Page 23)*

i. Lidewij

Lidewij is Van Houten's assistant who helps arrange Hazel's meeting with him. She becomes a friend and ally to Hazel and Augustus and helps them navigate their way through Amsterdam.

“He has an assistant,” Augustus said. “Lidewij Vliegenthart. I found her. I emailed her. She gave him the email. He responded via her email account.” (Page 41)

j. Caroline

Caroline is a former lover of August who has cancer

“Right, but really, I mean aside from us obviously, cancer kids are not statistically more likely to be awesome or compassionate or perseverant or whatever. Caroline was always moody and miserable, but I liked it. I liked feeling as if she had chosen me as the only person in the world not to hate, and so we spent all this time together just ragging on everyone, you know? Ragging on the nurses and the other kids and our families and whatever else. But I don’t know if that was her or the tumor. I mean, one of her nurses told me once that the kind of tumor Caroline had is known among medical types as the Asshole Tumor, because it just turns you into a monster. So here’s this girl missing a fifth of her brain who’s just had a recurrence of the Asshole Tumor, and so she was not, you know, the paragon of stoic cancer-kid heroism. She was . . . I mean, to be honest, she was a bitch. But you can’t say that, because she had this tumor, and also she’s, I mean, she’s dead. And she had plenty of reason to be unpleasant, you know?” (Page 95)

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis conducted by the writer, the novel *The Fault in Our Stars* has the theme Struggle for Life, this can be proven through the storyline of the novel. The writer analyzes the theme of the novel based on the characters, plot, and setting of the story. The struggle can be seen from the amount of optimism the characters have for living life. The main characters in this novel are Hazel and August, they have a malignant cancer. In the middle of their story, August experienced something quite serious, where he found out that there were cancer cells in his lungs, until finally August's life could not be saved. Hazel is deeply saddened by August's death, but she must live her life well. *The Fault in Our Stars* novel uses language that readers can easily understand and an interesting storyline. So that the reader can feel what is in the story, because this novel tells the story from the first-person point of view, namely Hazel. In conclusion, John Green's novel, *The Fault in Our Stars*, presents a poignant depiction of life struggle and the human experience of illness. Through the characters of Hazel and Augustus, Green explores the physical, emotional, and existential challenges of living with cancer, as well as the complex relationships and connections that can emerge in the face of mortality. The analysis of the novel using content analysis method revealed that the main characters in the novel have unique characteristics that are shaped by their individual experiences with illness. The themes that emerged from the

novel revolve around love, mortality, pain, and the power of language to make sense of difficult experiences. The struggles faced by Hazel in particular were examined in depth, revealing her attempts to find meaning in her life and to make a positive impact on the world despite the challenges she faces. Overall, *The Fault in Our Stars* offers a powerful portrayal of life struggle and the resilience of the human spirit in the face of adversity. It is a poignant reminder of the importance of human connection, the value of love and relationships, and the enduring impact of our actions, even in the face of mortality

REFERENCES

- Dr. E. Kosasih, M. P. (2012). Dasar Dasar Ketrampilan Bersastra. In M. P. Dr. E. Kosasih, *Dasar Dasar Ketrampilan Bersastra* (p. 176). Yrama Widya.
- Fithroni, N. (2017). Psychological Relationship in The Fault in Our Star.
- Green, J. (2012). The Fault In Our Star. In J. Green, *The Fault In Our Star*. America: Dutton Books.
- Green, J. (2012). The Fault In Our Star. In J. Green, *The Fault In Our Star* (p. 11). America: Dutton Books.
- Ho, L. (2022, november 02). Retrieved from Lifehack:
<https://www.lifehack.org/879481/quotes-about-struggles-in-life>
- Indo, P. (2022, October 3). Retrieved from Pustaka indo:
<https://www.pustakaindo.co.id/pengertian-novel-menurut-para-ahli-beserta-unsur-novel-lengkap/>
- Jacob Sumardjo, 1. S. (1986). *Apresiasi kesusastraan*. Jakarta: Gramedia.
- Jordan. (2023, february 28). Retrieved from Learn about writing:
<https://www.nownovel.com/blog/main-character-writing/>
- Kenney, W. P. (1966). How to Analyze Fiction. In W. P. Kenney, *How to Analyze Fiction* (p. 103). Boston: Monarch Press.
- Klarer, M. (2005). An Introduction to Literary Studies. In M. Klarer, *An Introduction to Literary Studies* (p. 176). Landon and New York: Routledge.
- Manderos, F. (2016). Analisis Karakter Tokoh Hazel Grace Dan Augustus Waters Dalam Novel The Fault In Our Stars Karya John Green.

- Melani, B. (2002). Membaca Sastra : Pengantar Memahami Sastra Untuk Perguruan Tinggi. In B. Melani, *Membaca Sastra : Pengantar Memahami Sastra Untuk Perguruan Tinggi* (p. 247). Indonesia Tera.
- Meyer, M. (2014). Literature To Go. In M. Meyer, *Literature To Go* (p. 64). Bedford/St. Martin's.
- Meyer, M. (2014). Literature To Go. In M. Meyer, *Literature To Go*. Bedford/St. Martin's.
- Niode, S. H. (2015). Analisis Tema Dalam Novel The Fault In Our Stars. 1.
- Pengetahuan, S. (2022, November 21). Retrieved from Seputar Pengetahuan:
<https://www.seputarpengetahuan.co.id/2021/11/pengertian-novel-menurut-para-ahli.html>
- Risma Yanti, V. K. (2021). An Analysis Of The Main Character Of Struggling Against Cancer In The Novel “The Fault In Our Stars.
- S, F. E. (2023, March 8). Retrieved from FIDA ELFITRIANI S BLOG:
<http://felfitriani.blogspot.com/2017/01/mengenal-sosok-john-green.html>
- Saragih, W. S. (2018). Optimism And Pessimism Of Hazel Grace In Jhon Green’S .
- Scribesworld. (2023, March 1). Retrieved from Scribesworld:
<https://www.scribesworld.com/john-green-biography/>
- Stanton, R. (1965). An Introduction To Fiction. In R. Stanton, *An Introduction To Fiction*. New York: Holt, Rinehard and Winston.
- Sumardjo, J. d. (1998). Apresiasi Kesustraan. In J. d. Sumardjo, *Apresiasi Kesustraan*. Jakarta: PT. Gramedia.
- Susanto, D. (2012). Pengantar Teori Sastra. In D. Susanto, *Pengantar Teori Sastra* (p. 272). CAPS.
- Tarigan, H. G. (2015). Prinsip-prinsip dasar sastra. In H. G. Tarigan, *Prinsip-prinsip dasar sastra* (pp. 242-243). Bandung: Angkasa.
- Trigonalmedia. (2023, January 3). Retrieved from Trigonal Media:
<https://www.trigonalmedia.com/2015/08/pengertian-tema.html>