

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Since a very long time ago, people have searched for the meaning of love, but even the great philosophers, with their profound definitions, could not fully touch its true essence. Love is a wondrous state, deep, tender, and rewarding. However, sometimes love is none of those things. “Love can be dirty, messy, unpredictable, awkward, complicated, embarrassing, loud, terrifying, sad, and lonely. It can also be powerful, warm, exciting, amazing, safe, silly, bizarre, quiet, simple, and breathtaking” (Ralph, 2000:10). Many people think that if only they had a girlfriend or boyfriend or whatever, then everything would be perfect. But it won't be. Relationships are difficult. People have to work at them, like anything else. Sometimes relationships definitely will not solve all of the problems. It will probably create plenty of new ones but people will have someone to help them deal with it. And that's half the battle, sometimes. As Harry F. Harlow (1958) describes that love is like a little old woman and a little old man who are still friends even after they have known each other so well. The little they know about love does not transcend simple observation, and the little they write about it has been written better using literature.

Literature is an interesting piece of work. People can see various aspects of life which exist in their surroundings. It expresses life through the

medium of language. It is written in a beautiful way or using beautiful words. There is no boundary in creating literature work because the writers can express their feeling and opinion freely.

One of the literature genres is novel. The source of ideas for a novel is unlimited because it is about people in life. The story of the novel is usually based on the personal experience of the writers. In writing their experience in the novel, the writers present the characters whose qualities are expressed in what they say and what they do.

The novel *Love Story* is a romantic and also tragic. *Love Story* was an undisclosed lesson in true love: pure, sweet, and a little naughty. The novel is a perfect mix of romance and tragedy, the message was so interesting that society would be eager to enjoy the novel. When *Love Story* was published in 1970 it became a number one bestseller because it sold more than 21 millions copies at that time.

The writer of *Love Story* is Erich Segal. Erich Segal was born in New York, 1937, as the son of a rabbi. He graduated from Harvard and wrote texts for musicals thereafter. Today he lives in New Haven and he is a professor for literature in New York. One of Segal's main points in writing *Love Story* was to promote the strength and the importance of the parent-child relationship.

Love Story is a novel which is sweet but also tragic. It is about Jenny Cavilleri and Oliver Barrett IV who falls in love at the first sight. Oliver Barrett IV is a student of Harvard meanwhile Jenny Cavilleri is a Radcliffe student. Oliver Barrett IV faces being disowned by the Barrett family if he

chooses to marry Jenny but he prefers to follow his heart and marry Jenny. Jenny supports Oliver through law school only then she has to give up to leukemia's at the end. The tragedy teaches everyone a lesson, most importantly Oliver's father, as he comes around to offer his help to Oliver in one minute too late.

The plot involves Oliver and his wealthy father, Mr. Oliver Barrett III. The relationship between father and son slowly falls apart, although it is restored by the end. The conflict begins when Oliver brings his bride-to-be home to his family. Oliver's parents do not react well to Jenny's background, which is from lower social class. The tension arises especially between the father and the son. Oliver Barrett III later tells Oliver that he will be disinherited if he insisted to marry Jenny. Oliver chooses to follow his heart and Jenny must work to provide the funds for his law school. Ironically, Oliver must ask his father for money to pay for Jenny's hospital treatments, but Oliver Barrett III does not find out about her illness until it is too late. Jenny's death brings bittersweet reunion between Oliver and his father on the last page of the novel.

The interesting thing of this novel is that it illustrates a particular point: *Love Means Not Ever Having To Say You're Sorry*. Love is not a fairy tale picture book where nobody has to say sorry. Love means saying sorry — and meaning it. That phrase has since become proverbial and is now listed in numerous books of quotations, including the canonical Bartlett's.

As I am interested in the novel, I would like to conduct a study about two beautiful—Oliver Barrett IV and Jenny Cavilleri—but totally different characters that fall in love with each other when they know they have nothing in common but love.

The writer read this novel several times because through this novel she can see and learn that love could make anyone even a richer man becomes ‘*blind.*’ Interestingly, love with its power could give someone strength to face all odds in life. Since the writer read *Love Story* at the first time, this novel has inspired her about how to love and to care. Those reasons make the writer presents *Love Against All Odds in Segal’s “Love Story.”*

1.2 Statement of the Problem

According to the background, the problem of this present study is:

What are the odds in love relationship between Oliver Barrett IV and Jenny Cavilleri in Segal’s Love Story?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

In relation with the research question above, this study aims at finding out the odds in love relationship between Oliver Barrett IV and Jenny Cavilleri in Segal’s *Love Story*.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The writer hopes that by reading the result of this study the reader will be able to understand the love between Oliver and Jenny, and how they endure against the odds. And also the reader can get the moral lesson from the story, about how to love someone, how to sacrifice, and appreciate what they have in life.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

To be relevant with the title and the research question this study is focused on the analysis the odds faced by the main character.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

1.6.1 Novel

“A novel is an extended work of fiction written in prose, usually in the form of a story. It is longer (i.e., more than 40,000 words) and more complex than a short story or novella; it is not bound by the structural and metrical restrictions of plays or poetry; and it is not composed of the traditional plots and linguistic formulas of the myth or legend.” (Webster Dictionary, <http://dictionary.laborlawtalk.com/Novel>)

1.6.2 *Characters*

“Character is an author’s representation of human being’s, especially of those inner qualities that determine individual’s reaction to various condition or attempts to shape his or her environment.” (Edgar V Roberts, 1977:54).

1.6.3 *Main Characters*

A main character is a character who plays an important and prominent role in the story (Perrish, 1977:494)

1.6.4 *Conflicts*

A conflict is a clash of actions, ideas, desires, or wills (Perrine, 1969:59).

1.6.5 *Inner Conflicts*

An inner conflict is a conflict within the main character who is torn frequently between contrasts and ways of life or between two aspects of the self, usually one that is “idealized” and one that is “real” (McKenzie, 1978:31).

1.6.6 *The Odds*

Odds is strong opposition or great disadvantages (Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary,1995:801)

1.6.7 Love

Love is a strong feeling of deep affection for somebody or something (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary,1995:699)