

## CHAPTER II

### UNDERSTANDING OF ELEMENT OF FICTION: PLOT

#### 2.1 What is Plot?

E.M. Forster in his book *Aspect of The Novel* (1927:93) quoted Aristotle's plot theory says that plot is confronted not only by "human beings more or less cut to its requirements", but, rather, "finds them enormous, shadowy, and intractable, and three-quarters hidden like an iceberg. It attempts to persuade these "unwieldy creatures" of the "advantages of the triples process of complication, crisis, and solution. E.M. Forster (1927:93) says that plot from story by defining the former as a narrative of events, the emphasis falling on causality. 'The king died and then the queen died,' is a story. 'The king died and then the queen died of grief' is a plot. The time-sequence is preserved, but the sense of causality overshadows it.

Another kind of plot according to E.M. Forster (1927:94) 'The queen died, no one knew why, until it was discovered that it was through grief at the death of king.' This is a plot with a mystery in it, a form capable of high development. It suspends the time-sequence, it moves as far away from the story as its limitations allow. In the case of the story, we say 'and then? While in the case of the plot, we ask 'why? The fundamental difference between "these two aspects of the novel" is that story "can only supply curiosity", whereas plot "demands intelligence and memory also". In this part, the reader will be able to

remember incidents and create connecting threads between them. This allows the novelist to delay explanations and introduce human mystery to the narrative.

Gwynn (2002:7) stated that in the Poetics, Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) gives first importance to plot as an element of a play, and most readers would agree that it holds a similar position in a work of fiction. Indeed, if we tell a friend about a short story we have enjoyed, we will probably give a synopsis or brief summary of its incidents. Plot may be defined as a story's sequence of incidents, arranged in dramatic order. One is tempted to insert the word "chronological," but doing so would exclude many stories that depart from this strict ordering of events.

Plot develops a series of complications or intensification of the conflict that leads to a moment of great tension. Author uses techniques in writing plot to make the story interesting or to add a twist and turn.

There are four types regarding to plot:

- 1. Suspense** - Frequently involves dilemma, for instance:  
Caught in a bad situation with a choice in a boating accident, you can save either your mother or your husband from drowning.
- 2. Flashback** - The author waits until the story is moving and then flashes back to reveal biographical data or deep psychological reasons why a character acts as s/he does. It focuses more on why things happen, rather than on what happens.

**3. Telescoping** - It's a matter of economy. The author cannot describe every motion of the character or event during the time the story covers. S/he has to choose the significant and merely suggest the others by saying they happened, without much description.

**4. Foreshadowing** - The outcome of a conflict is often hinted at or foreshadowed before the climax and dénouement. These clues are usually very subtle which remain foreshadowed until the story ends.

Plot refers to the series of events that give a story its meaning and effect. In most stories, these events arise out of conflict experienced by the main character. The conflict may come from something external. As the character makes choices and tries to resolve the problem, the story's action is shaped and plot is generated. In some stories, the author structures the entire plot chronologically, with the first event followed by the second, third, and so on, like beads on string. However, many stories are told with flashback techniques in which plot events from earlier times interrupt the story's current events.

To be a plot, the events must be processed and made creatively so that the results of processing and making itself is something beautiful and interesting, particularly in relation to the relevant works of fiction as a whole.

## **2.2 Elements of Plot**

When we talk about plot, it means that we talk about the actions or events which usually resolved at the end of the story. According to Kenny (1966:14) in Wiyatmi (trans.2008:37) says that the plot as the events are displayed in a not simple story, because the author sets the events was based on a causal connection. The plot is basically sequences of events in logical and chronological relations are interrelated and are caused or experienced by the characters. The plot outline is divided into three parts, namely early, middle, and end. The first part contains the exposition that contains instability and conflicts. The middle part contains the climax which is the height of the conflict. The final section contains troubleshooting.

Plot is known for having a narrative structure and is divided into five parts. The five parts are: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and dénouement.

### **2.2.1 Exposition**

Exposition is the beginning part of a story. It introduces the main characters in the story. Gwynn (2002:8) says that exposition provides the reader with essential information—who, what, when, where—he or she needs to know before continuing. The exposition shows how the characters are related to each other, who the central characters are, and their aspirations.

Exposition in a story usually describes a stable situation, even if it is not an entirely happy one. It provides enough interest and information to encourage readers to continue reading the book.

### **2.2.2 Rising Action**

The rising action introduces the conflict or problem in the story. The protagonist starts to reveal some of their problems and goals. This part also reveals the events where it becomes complicated and the conflict raised. The complication includes the appearance of some circumstance or event that shakes up the stable situation and begins the rising action of the story.

According to Gwynn (2002:9) complication in a story may be either external and internal, or a combination of the two. However, the rising action is also the body of a story; it comprises a number of scenes containing action and dialogue. It builds some crisis moments, but the dénouement of the complication seems at hand but quickly disappears.

### **2.2.3 Climax**

Climax is the critical point at which the central character is about to win or lose all. It features the most conflict and struggle which the most probable outcome of the main conflict is finally revealed.

Gwynn (2002:9) says that the central moment of crisis in a plot is the climax, or moment of great tension, which inaugurates the falling action of the story, in which the built-up tension is finally released. Some stories, particularly those involving a heavy use of suspense, have a steep “dramatic curve” and the writer uses all of his or her skills to impel the reader toward the final confrontation.

However, the climax does not mark the end of conflict. Climax only determines how the conflict will be decided. Conflict may be divided into four major types:

- 1. Character's struggle vs. nature** – The protagonist struggles with some natural forces (tornado, harsh climate, etc.)
- 2. Character vs. character** – The problem the protagonist faces is one involving another character
- 3. Character vs. society** – The protagonist faces a problem involving something in the society in which they live (racism)
- 4. Character vs. self** – The character has some internal struggle inside themselves

#### **2.2.4 Falling Action**

The falling action is when the built-up tension is finally released. Protagonist has to react to series of events that have been changed after the climax. They perform the necessary plot actions to fulfill the protagonist's fortunes that are now clear after the climax. It is where all the loose ends are being tied up, however, some author makes this as a tricky part where some plot might have been tied-up for the reader or left as questions for the reader to think about.

#### **2.2.5 Dénouement**

Dénouement (resolution) is a French word which literally means *untying*. This part reveals the final outcome or result of conflicts in the story. Gwynn (2002:10) says that the dénouement returns the character to another stable

situation. Just as fairy tales traditionally end with “And they lived happily ever after,” many stories conclude with an indication of what the future holds for the character.