

**FAMILY DISINTEGRATION IN NICHOLAS SPARKS “*THE BEST OF ME*”  
(2011) : A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY**



Submitted as a Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Getting Bachelor Degree  
of Education in English Department

by:  
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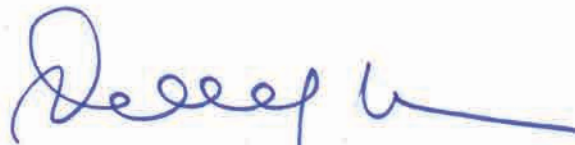
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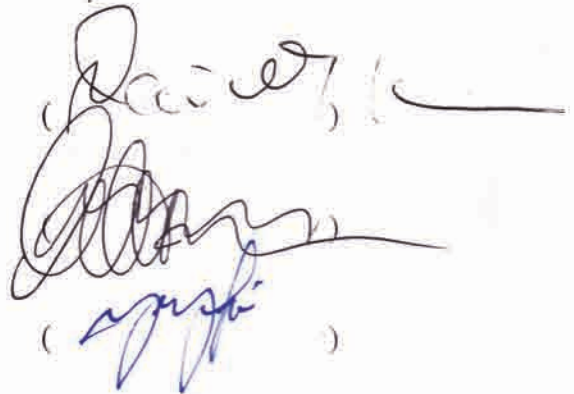
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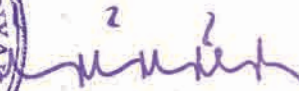
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**Abstrak**

Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian tentang *The Best of Me* oleh Nicholas Sparks yang dilihat dari perspektif sosiologi. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menemukan dan menjelaskan perjuangan Dawson sebagai karakter utama dan mengungkapkan makna yang signifikan dari perjuangan Dawson. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif yang menerapkan metode analisis isi. Objek dari penelitian ini adalah sebuah novel yang berjudul *The Best of Me* yang ditulis Nicholas Sparks pada tahun 2011 dan datanya adalah kalimat-kalimat yang berkaitan dengan perjuangan Dawson yang ditemukan didalam novel. Analisis data dilakukan dengan mengelompokkan dan mengkatagorikan data untuk menemukan kesimpulan. Untuk mendapat reabilitas, penulis membaca dan membaca ulang novel dengan hati hati sehingga dapat memasukkan data berdasarkan teori. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan tiga poin yang menyebabkan perpecahan keluarga, poin pertama tentang pendidikan, point kedua komunikasi dan poin ketiga pertengkaran keluarga. Digambarkan juga perjuangan Dawson dalam mempertahankan dirinya untuk menerima siksaan dari keluarganya tanpa bantuan orang lain dan berhasil melarikan diri dari rumahnya.

**Kata kunci** : *Keluarga, Sosiologi, Perpecahan.*

**Abstract**

This research is a study of Sparks's *The best of Me* viewed from sociological perspective. The objectives of the research are to find out and explain the struggle of Dawson as the main character to reveal the significant meaning of Dawson's struggle. This research is a qualitative study applying content analysis method. The object of this research is a novel entitled *The Best of Me* written by Nicholas Sparks in 2011 and the data are sentences related to Dawson's struggle found in this novel. The data analysis was conducted by classifying and categorizing the data to find the inference. In order to gain reliability, the researcher read and reread the novel carefully and then recorded the data into a systematic framework based on the sociological theory. The result of this research indicate three points which causes family disintegration; The first point is education, second point is communication and the third point is family quarrel. It is depicted by the Dawson's struggle in defending himself to accept the torture of his family without help from others and manage to escape from his home.

**Keywords:** Family, Sociology, Disintegration

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This research uses *The Best of Me* novel which is published in 2011. This novel written by Nicholas Sparks which is a beautifully written romance novel and relationship in family. This novel is Sparks's seventeenth novel following the theme of both love and heartbreak.

In *The Best of Me* novel by Nicholas Sparks, Dawson Cole and Amanda pair of lovers when they were in senior high school. After 20 years, they met again in a small house where their memories are in senior high school and that is Tuck's house. Tuck is an old man who met Dawson accidentally when Dawson tried to escape from his father. Dawson got into Tuck's old garage and that is where they got to know each other. They live together. Tuck is a good man and take care of Dawson. One day Dawson had grown up and discovered that Tuck had died. Dawson is sad because only Tuck he had at the time. Finally, Tuck handed over the little house to Dawson along with the beautiful garden of Tuck's wife relic.

Dawson family has been famous since his grandfather because the Cole's family has moonshiners business and they are known as a cruel criminal family. Dawson Cole, the one member of Cole's family, he is a good man and he does not want to imitate the behavior of his big family known to be cruel. He is gentleman, friendly, and polite to the surrounding community. But they do not believe in Dawson because he belongs to Cole family. Therefore, Dawson decided to run away from home and choose to stay at Tuck's home. He lived at Tuck's home without his father. He is happy to take care of the house and it is garden. Amanda who has free time, she decided to visit his teenager homes with him. They both spend time together.

The next day, Amanda and Dawson visited the Tuck's lawyer and they spread his ashes to the Tuck's wife's cabin. They had lunch, discussing, and spending time together. But Amanda has to go home and Dawson still lives at Tuck's home to repair his car. During this time, his cousin, Crazy Ted, stalking Dawson by sneaking to kill him. Crazy Ted had done something like this when on an explosion oil rig, Dawson knew it, they hit each other. Dawson goes to a bar by driving his car. When on the street, he mets his hordes of cousins and his father. Dawson did not know that beside his

car it was his cousins. Dawson's father was in front of Dawson's car and finally he was shot in the head by his own father. As the same time, Amanda's son had an accident and needed a heart, the Dawson's heart was finally donated to him. Amanda who knows this is sad.

According to Karen De Witt (1994), family is the one people which closest with us. They always with us and always full with love. People in the world have their own family with the characteristics in each person. They have their own characteristics to complete each others. Each family have their own ways to keep their family always compact and take care of each others (DeWitt, 1994).

Family is some people around us and they make us feel love with them, they the first people we met in our lives. Family is individuals who has special meaning. Time has passed, the ancient family is different from the present family. The ancient family loved their families so much that they guarded and love each others to survive as a whole family. A purpose is something you have to strive for. A family member must have a principle that makes their family complete and there is no possibility of split of.

In modern times, many families are not romantic and harmonious even they quarreled in front of their children. This are causes the child grow into a tough that cause juvenile delinquency. This certainly causes the child emotionally and psychologically hurt. The frequent domestic violence will cause a break in marriage. Based on Kilbride, Johnson, and Streissguth on the book of sociology by Kenneth J. Neubeck and Davita Silven (2005), maintain "one's birth-order position in the family may greatly affect siblings interactions as well as parents-child interactions". These interaction become part of one's socialization experiences. For example, firstborn children tend to be more strictly disciplined, to receive more attention, to remain in school longer, and to be higher achievers than later-born siblings. With second-born children, parents are more relaxed and tend to be less authoritative (Neubeck & Silven, 2005, p.153).

Family is the basic units of society. Among various social problems that arise, family divorce is one of the concerns in society. Every family has it is own problems depending they can solve the problem well or separation. It is concern to the public to

analyze the occurrence of divorce in the family. Family conflicts usually occur in relationship between family members. Conflict can not be solved if the related party has reached the climax in the problem.

Kanneth and Davita (2005) stated: Sociology is the scientific study about life in society. There are a way to be a good society and how to interact with people around us. In sociology, there is a science of how humanity regulates and maintains social stability and go about altering the society in which they live (p. 3).

## 2. METHODS

The researcher uses a qualitative research. It is a study, interpretation and also evaluation of the literary works. In this research paper, the researcher analyzes the novel using qualitative method because this type of research does not need numeral data at all (Nisa, 2017).

### a. Material Object

The object of the study is family disintegration reflected in Nicholas Sparks's *The Best of Me* (2011). It is analyzed by using a sociological study.

### b. Formal Object

The researcher used some books which discuss about family disintegration and Sociological theory as a material object.

## 2.1 Type of the Data and the Data Source

### a. Primary Data Sources

The source of primary data is Nicholas Sparks's *The Best of Me* (2011) published by Grand Central.

### b. Secondary Data Sources

The second data is from the others sources likes website, journal books, theory books, etc.

## 2.2 Technique of Collecting Data

There are the technique of collecting data, as follows :

- a. Reading the novel *The Best of Me*.
- b. Determining the characters of the novel.
- c. Make a small notes.



d. Distinguish based on the data to be used.

### 2.3 Technique of the Data Analysis

The technique used is to describe the novel, which contain parts of disintegration reflected in Nicholas Sparks's *The Best of Me* (2011). The first step was defining the problem dealing with the purpose of the study. Second step the data based were analyzed on the classification and characteristics that refer to the main problem.

## 3. RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Based on Swingewood and Laurenson, "sociology is essentially studies about human beings as social beings, objective study of man in society, a social process and learn about social institutions how humans work in society" (Swingewood & Laurenson, 1972, p.11). Literature is an expression of society. Only that literature depicts some aspects of social reality, to say that literature mirrors or expresses life is even more ambiguous (Wellek and Austin, 2011:90).

Disintegration is a terrible word, if it is happened in a relationship it will definitely end up not good. Disintegration usually occur in families, friends, brothers, and relationship between the other person. Many factors that affect the existence of damage in a relationship one of them is communication. If we do not establish good communication between human can be the slightest thing will cause a disintegration. Thus, we must keep the relationship in good shape by improving how to communicate well.

Family disintegration is one thing that does not want to be expected to happen for anyone. People really expect their family to be fine until the end. They do not want any divisions among them. For those who not selfish in repairing a relationship will definitely have a better relationship but if some of them do cheat or just want to have fun they will have a broken family. Make a family requires good relationship and communication, it is not just father and mother but their children too. They must know that communication and trust is the most important thing that must be owned by the family.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The researcher draws the conclusion based on the previous part. The conflict which is happened in the main character is interesting. Dawson has a high desire, he wants to escape from his family and make a better life. He wants to get their dreams without his father and brother. He is a strong, he wants to make any plans to escape from them.

After analyzing *The Best of Me* novel, the researcher made the end of the part of this research paper consist of two points; The first is about Dawson's struggle, Sparks comes an unforgettable tale in this novel. From *The Best of Me* novel we can take the lessons as a human we have to fight under any circumstances and must have a great desire to achieve what we want. Nicholas Sparks mentioned in this novel three things that cause family disintegration 1) education, 2) communication, 3) family quarrel. Dawson is main male character in *The Best of Me* novel, he is strong, independent, and not easily give up. A man was a victim when he was a child and he has received many blows, tortures, insults and pressures in his life. As a result the problems that occur in this novel are the result of bad treatment from his father. Sparks is able to make the novel with personality which characterization, plot, theme and the style of language. The reader can imagine the struggle that experienced by Dawson.

In the second is sociological approach. *The Best of Me* novel concern in sociology that show on the relationship and impact to the community. Sparks tells that so hard the struggle of a child left by his mother and must receive torture from his father and brother. He has a strong character and he wants to make any plans to escape from his family to have his better life. From the story the researcher can take the value that as a human we have to fight all of the problems.

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