

## REBELLION OF THE MAIN CHARACTER IN LAUREN DESTEFANO'S *WITHER*

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**Abstract.** This study aims to reveal the rebellion of the main character in Lauren DeStefano's *Wither*. The discussion is focused on Rhine's rebellion which is triggered by dystopian-life that happened in society. In revealing the rebellion reflected in the novel, Mercuse's theory of rebellion and Millner's theory of dystopian-life are applied. The research method applied in this study is descriptive qualitative with intrinsic and extrinsic approaches. The writer finds out that among the nine dystopian society characteristics, the writer has found five characteristics that are reflected in *Wither*, namely the society is an illusion of utopia world; the natural world is being a banished and distrusted world; perception under constant surveillance; fear of the outside world; and information, independent thought, and freedom are restricted. Besides, the analysis of the main character's rebellion shows that the rebellion happens as the impact of the dystopian society faced by the main character. Rhine's rebellion is done in four ways – having the intention to escape from Linden's house, refusing to be consummated by her husband, having a relationship with Gabriel, and escaping. The reasons for Rhine's rebellion are wanting to be reunited with her brother and wanting to have freedom. The writer finds out that science and technology should be developed for human's better condition. Science and technology must not be expected beyond God's power. When science and technology are developed without consideration in terms of humanity, it will result in chaos.

**Keywords:** *rebellion, dystopian-life*

### INTRODUCTION

Life is inseparable from rules. sometimes the rules that are created can be constraining and ultimately limit the space of individuals or groups. In addition, the rules that are too restrictive of someone in power can also cause individuals or groups to feel tyrannize and do rebellion. Rebellion is opposition to one in authority or dominance. Rebellion may be carried out by individuals or groups to obtain rights, demand justice, or challenge norms.

According to Petersen (2009: 41), rebellion depends on community-based formal or informal organizations that connect resistance movements with the government. Being part of a community means that someone is connected with other individuals through a series of public activities and cooperation. Individuals in this group can be based on friendship ties that feel they have the same fate or direct family relationships. In addition, Mercuse in Kellner (1984: 373) implies individual rebellion with the concept of "The Great Refusal" where there is a rejection of the

system of domination and slavery (or oppression). It emphasizes rebellion and individual rejection of 'The Great Refusal' term the projections of individual visions of a freer and happier way of life.

The rebels carry out the action for some reasons such as they refused to obey the rules and did not want to be regulated, or they do not agree with the new ideas, new rules of individuals or groups that they rebel. Rebellion is likely to happen in a dystopian society. The term dystopia comes from Greek which means 'bad place' or a bad place and usually describes the utopian organization (modern socialism) of a society that has at least one dangerous defect. The term dystopia was created as opposed to utopia; a term originally created by Thomas More and applied to works that describe an ideal society. Contrary to utopian thought, some science fiction writers argue that in the future, humanity will destroy the whole world in an effort to seek to colonize nature. Problems such as nuclear war, overpopulation, and environmental pollution are some of the problems that humans will create to fulfill their desires for technological evolution (Demir and Selma, 2016: 426).

The concept of dystopian-life is contrary to the life of utopia. Williams in Millner (2004: 263) revealed that there are four types of characteristics of each (utopia and dystopia): (1) heaven or hell, (2) the world that is changed positively or negatively externally, (3) positive or negative will transformation, and (4) positive or negative technological transformation.

Based on Williams's statement, it can be said that there is such a great comparison between the perfect life of

utopia and the bad life depicted by the concept of dystopia. There are nine characteristics to identify poor life related to dystopia.

1. Controlled by propaganda

In a dystopian world, propaganda is used to control society. It is to affect the emotions, attitudes, opinions for ideological and political purposes.

2. Restriction of information, independent thought, and freedom

In a dystopian world, individuals' thoughts that could endanger the authority are strictly prohibited. The authority is the one who regulates everything both information, thought, and even freedom.

3. The figurehead or concept is being worshipped.

Someone who is considered to have the highest degree of authority to regulate everything is usually being worshipped. Not only a figurehead, a concept can also be worshipped.

4. Fear of the outside world

Fear of the outside world is caused by propaganda that tells people that the outside world is very frightening and causes citizens to feel that the country or place they live in is the safest place. In addition, the lack of information about the outside world also supports people having little knowledge about the outside world that causes them to fear the outside world.

5. Perception under constant surveillance

The citizens do not have privacy and security. All are under surveillance. The government or the figurehead is always watching and ready to give punishment to the rebel.

6. Banishing and distrusting natural world

The deterioration that happened in the world of dystopia has various kinds of problems. One of them is being banished and distrusted throughout the world.

7. Citizens conform to uniform expectation

As the information, independent thought and freedom are restricted, the citizens feel oppressed and they have the same expectation as overthrow the government, having freedom, etc. must have the same and uniform opinions

8. Individuality and dissent are bad

Individuality and having differences of opinion are considered bad. As a result of the propaganda being propagated, having different individual thoughts is a bad thing because the citizens must have the same and uniform opinions.

9. Society is an illusion of a utopian world.

A dystopian world is an illusion of a perfect society. All of the elements and what happens in the dystopian world are the opposite of the utopian world. The utopian world is depicted as a perfect society, the most comfortable and safest place to live in. Even one of the utopian characteristics is that

people are not interested in other places or want to go to other places because the place they live in is very pleasant.

## METHOD

This study is a qualitative study with a descriptive method. Qualitative research is research that intends to understand the phenomenon of what is experienced by the subject of research, such as behavior, perception, motivation, or action through descriptions in the form of words and language in a specific natural context and by utilizing various natural methods (Moleong, 2012: 3). Moreover, J. W. Creswell (2003: 18) states that the qualitative research method is to make knowledge claims based primarily on constructivist perspectives. The researcher collects open-ended, emerging data with the primary intent of developing themes from the data.

This study is qualitative because, practically, it helps the researcher gathers an in-depth understanding of human behavior and the reasons that govern such behavior in the form of textual evidence. In addition to its qualitative nature, the discussion in this study involves extrinsic and intrinsic elements. Therefore, this study applies both intrinsic and extrinsic approaches. The intrinsic approach is applied in this study because one of the discussions is to reveal the main characteristic of the main character as the protagonist character. Moreover, the extrinsic approach is applied since the analysis involves the discussion on dystopian society reflected in the novel and the rebellion of the main character. The extrinsic approach which fits to this study is the sociological approach.

The data in this study are quotations from the novel by Lauren DeStefano entitled *Wither*. The novel consists of 368 pages and was first published in 2011.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### A. Dystopian Society Reflected in DeStefano's *Wither*

The primary factor that triggers Rhine's rebellion is the dystopian-life that happens in society. In *Wither*, the country where people live is described as a bad and dangerous place especially for common people due to a virus that takes lives at a young age. The virus that spreads has turned out to be the result of perfecting the art of child care. Initially, science found a cure for cancer, then the intakes given to children resulted in them becoming very strong and healthy. The new generation of children is even free from allergies and seasonal minor disease and protected from virus spread through sexual contact.

"Seventy years ago science perfected the art of children. There were complete cures for an epidemic known as cancer, a disease that could affect any part of the body and that used to claim millions of lives. Immune system boots given to new-generation children eradicated allergies and seasonal ailments, and even protected against sexually contracted viruses (DeStefano, 2011: 8)."

However, this science only works for the first generation. For the next new generations, although they are born healthier and stronger than the first generation, a virus has made their life span shorter. The virus kills the girl by twenty and boys by twenty-five. This condition makes people panic and fear of the world.

"We, the new generations, are born healthy and strong, perhaps healthier than our parents, but our life span stops at twenty-five for males and twenty for females. For fifty years the world has been in panic as its children die" (DeStefano, 2011: 9).

Because of the deadly virus, the wealthier household of the first generation refuses to accept the fact that the virus will kill their sons, so they buy young healthy girls who are kidnapped from the side of the road or from their homes to be married to their sons. The kidnappers are called the "gatherers". The kidnapped girls who are considered being capable of giving birth to children are then sold to wealthy people to be married to their son and give birth to their children. Children born as a result of this kind of marriage are an experiment.

The wealthier households refuse to accept defeat. Gatherers make a living collecting potential brides and selling them off to breed new children. The children born into this marriage are

experiments".(DeStefano, 2011: 9)

The situation implies that wealthier households have more power over common people. With their wealth, they can afford to buy brides from gatherers and choose them as if the girls have no pride.

"House Governors own mansions. They purchase brides from Gatherers, who patrol the streets looking for ideal candidates to kidnap. The merciful ones will see the rejects into prostitution, but the ones I encountered herded them into the van and shot them all." (DeStefano, 2011: 6).

In society, it often happens that many young girls who do not come from wealthier households disappear because they are kidnapped by gatherers to be sold to the wealthier household.

"I've heard of this happening. Where I come from, girls have been disappearing for a long time. They disappear from their beds or from the side of the road." (DeStefano, 2011: 2)

The gatherers do not only kidnap girls from the side of the road but they also follow the girls into their house and wait for a chance to kidnap them. Thus, this society condition is very dangerous for girls. Most places in the country are not safe for the girls to live in.

"I had thought, before that night, that Gatherers swept

young girls from the street. While this is true, it isn't always the case. They can stake a girl out, follow her home, and wait for an opportunity. That is if they think she's worth the trouble if they think she'll get a good price" (DeStefano, 2011: 34).

The girls who are gathered by gatherers will then be shown to the buyers who are rich people. The rich people will decide to choose whom they will buy. The rest of the unselected girls will be killed or send to the brothel.

"Girls who don't pass their inspection are shipped to a brothel in the scarlet districts (...).

Just before someone shuts the door, I hear something inside the van where the remaining girls were herded. It's the first of what I know will be a dozen more gunshots." (DeStefano, 2011: 2-4).

The world becomes very dangerous for girls, so they have trouble finding a job and earn money. Many girls end up choosing to be the daughter of sugar daddy for the first generation of wealthier households or choose to work in brothels.

"I think of all the girls who dance in the park at New Year's parties, how some of them will slip into a car with a wealthy first generation. And all the brothels in the scarlet district with

blacked-out windows.”  
(DeStefano, 2011: 141).

In addition to causing chaos, the deadly virus also divides humans into two groups. The first group is the pro-naturalist that opposes seeking for an antidote. The second group is pro-science who wants to keep looking for a cure by doing experiments with corpses of the girls having been married to the wealthier people's sons and the babies that are born by the girls. They clash with each other's arguments. Pro-naturalists believe that the virus that killed humans at a young age is a natural case. That is why the pro-naturalists oppose the group that wants to keep seeking for an antidote. The pro-naturalists go to the streets and protest about the antidote seeking and leave damage.

“By now, much of the first generation has watched enough of its children die prematurely, and they are unwilling to experiment on yet another generation. They even join the protest rallies, violent riots that leave irreparable damage”  
(DeStefano, 2011: 11).

The research lab in the center of the city has been bombed and it has destroyed work and everyone hopes for an antidote that can save them.

“It's been years since I last went. The world has become too dangerous since then. After the city's only research lab was bombed, destroying

jobs and hope for the antidote in one fell swoop, things deteriorated rapidly.”  
(DeStefano, 2011: 81).

The country does not only become worse because of the virus but also by factories. Chemicals produced by factories pollute the environment. The waste from the factories pollutes the sea and land. Fish that are lured cannot be consumed and plants and flowers cannot grow because the soil has been contaminated with chemicals from the factories.

The virus and the polluted environment result in chaos in the country and a lot of human beings starve. Jobs are difficult to find and this results in poverty everywhere. A lot of homeless orphans are willing to be guinea pigs to get money so they will not starve and others become thieves to overcome hunger and to survive from the loot.

Inside the mansions where wealthier people live in, horrible things also happen. Rhine, one of the girls who is kidnapped and to be sold and married to the son of the owner of the mansion, finds out that an experiment to seek an antidote with the baby of Linden, the son of the house governor, without his knowledge. The experiment is done by the housemaster who is a doctor. The fact turns out when Deirdre, one of the maids in the mansion, tells the truth behind the death of Linden's baby. When the baby was born, Linden's wife, Rose who was half-conscious heard the baby was crying. Deidre who was in the corridor to change incense also heard the baby cried. When Rose went into labor, Rose was so in pain because Housemaster Vaughn has kept her heavily sedated so that she did not aware

of what happened. After the labor process finished and Rose came out to see the baby, Housemaster Vaughn told her that the baby gild did not make it.

All of the horrible things that happen in the country where Rhine lives illustrate how bad life is in a dystopian world that is reflected in *Wither*. Apart from the bad things that happen, dystopian society reflected in the novel can also be identified using some characteristics of dystopian-life. Among the nine characteristics of dystopian-life, five features can be found in *Wither*.

### Conciting Society as Utopian World

The dystopian life is also represented by the life in Housemaster Vaughn's mansion. The people that live inside the mansion have almost the same opinion that the world outside the house is not much better than inside the house.

"You don't remember your parents at all?" I say.

"Hardly," he says. "I barely even remember what the world outside of this place looks like (DeStefano, 2011: 101)"

From Rhyne's inquiries to the occupants of the mansion about the possibility of leaving the mansion, it can be inferred that the mansion is the best place to live for many reasons. One person said that he has been living in the mansion for years so that he does not remember that there is a world other than the mansion. Another person said that the mansion is the best place for her to spend the rest of

her life. The other said that there is no reason to leave the mansion.

### Banishing and Distrusting Natural World

The next characteristic of dystopian society reflected in *Wither* is the belief that natural world is a banished and distrusted world. The world occupied is not a safe and inhuman place. People ideally want to live safely and comfortably. The world where people live in should be secure and people live in a healthy way and death is only God's secret. In *Wither*, such conditions do not happen. In *Wither*, life does not seem natural. Nobody feels secure in terms of life safety and prosperity.

For people in general, life prosperity is difficult to be achieved. As it is mentioned in the previous section that the ocean and the land have been contaminated with dangerous chemicals from factories so that it is impossible for people to depend their life earning from the sea or the land. The only way for people from lower-class society to make a living is by working as labors in factories. This condition makes people live in poverty. Besides, there are lots of orphanage children who are starving and they become thieves to get food. Rhine tells about how she has to protect her house and her property in such a way so that thieves will not be able to break the house.

"Back home we covered our windows with burlap at night to give the impression of poverty and to keep out the prying eyes of new orphans looking for shelter and

handouts” (DeStefano, 2011: 20).

The world where Rhyne lives is not natural. The dystopian-life has made people banish the natural way of life and distrust the natural world. In addition to these conditions, the world also seems unnatural because people know when they will die and every day many people are fearful because of their death time that is getting closer.

### Perception under Constant Surveillance

Another dystopian characteristic that is reflected in *Wither* is perception under constant surveillance. This characteristic is reflected in the condition that happens in Housemaster Vaughn’s mansion. As a housemaster that has the highest hegemony in the mansion, Housemaster Vaughn watches everything that happens and makes the final word in the mansion. He will also provide punishment for things that do not suit his wishes.

“So much for Linden convincing his father to give us more freedom. Vaughn has the final word around here, even if he lets his son pretend otherwise” (DeStefano, 2011: 225).

Constant surveillance is conducted especially to Rhyne as the first wife of Linden. She is constantly monitored and escorted everywhere by Housemaster Vaughn. When Rhine draws up a plan to escape by trying to find a path to get out of the mansion, she is troubled by not being

allowed to go out except she is accompanied by Vaughn.

### Fear of the Outside World

Fear of the outside world is the next dystopian characteristic of the society that is reflected in *Wither*. Jenna, Cecily, and Gabriel admit that the mansion is a better place rather than the world outside the mansion, “This isn’t the worse place to die (DeStefano, 2011: 140).” Jenna admits that the mansion is not a bad place. She is even willing to spend the rest of her life in the mansion. Because Jenna knows how bad it is to live outside the mansion, she thinks that die in the mansion is not a bad idea. It is the sign that Jenna is fear of the outside world. Cecily who was raised in an orphanage knows how bad it is to live in an orphanage and she feels honored to be a wealthy Governor’s wife. Gabriel who was also raised in an orphanage also thinks that there is not much freer in the orphanage. Jenna, Cecily, and Gabriel think that the mansion is the best place for them compare to the outside world where they ever lived although living in the mansion means that they have to lose their freedom.

### Restriction of Information, Independent Thought, and Freedom.

In the world of dystopian, information, independent thought, and freedom are restricted. In Housemaster Vaughn’s mansion, Rhine and the two other brides have to occupy the wife’s floor and are not given access to the other rooms in the mansion. If they want to go to the other rooms or the garden, they must



be accompanied by Linden or Housemaster Vaughn.

“This one after everything that’s happened, I almost forgot that there are two others. Trapped in this house somewhere, behind other locked doors (DeStefano, 2011: 19).”

There is no freedom for the three wives and the other people who work in the mansion. Even, the people who work in the mansion never leave the mansion although they have been working in the mansion for years. They are threatened like captives. They even do not know the way out of the mansion. When Rhine and the other two wives were kidnapped and brought to the mansion, they were given gas sedation that made them unconscious so that they did not know where they went. They then become like captives in the mansion and don not have any information about the world outside the mansion.

## **B. The Representation of Rhine’s Rebellion**

The dystopian-life reflected in the novel is the reason of Rhine's rebellion. The bad environment that makes girls be kidnapped and forced to marry the wealthier household makes Rhine do the rebel.

In *Wither*, rebellion is done individually by the main character. Rhine is the protagonist character in the *Wither*. As the dystopian protagonist, Rhine fulfills two of the four characteristics of a

dystopian protagonist. That is to say, she feels trapped and is struggling to escape and she feels that something is wrong with the society in which she lives. This condition triggers her to do the rebellion. Rhine’s rebellion takes many forms i.e. having the intention to escape from Housemaster Vaughn’s Mansion, refusing to be consummated by her husband, having a relationship with Gabriel, and escaping.

### **Having Intention to Escape from Housemaster Vaughn’s Mansion**

The first representation of Rhine’s rebellion is having intension to escape from Housemaster Vaughn’s mansion. Rhine is having intension to escape after she finds out that she is being kidnapped. Upon arriving at Housemaster Vaughn’s mansion, Rhine realizes that she is kidnapped to become a bride. She is angry because she must be made a bride without her consent. She finally has the intention to run away from Housemaster Vaughn’s mansion.

“It’s the thought of my brother, alone in that empty house, that forces me to stop pitying myself. It’s counter-productive. Think. There must be some way to escape. The window clearly isn’t opening. The closet leads to only more clothes. The chite where the boy threw the dirty dishrag is only inches wide. Maybe, if I can win the House Governor’s favor, I’ll be trusted enough to wander

the garden alone. From my window the garden looks endless. But there has to be an end somewhere. Maybe I can find an exit by squeezing through a hedge or scaling a fence.” (DeStefano, 2011: 11).

After the wedding Rhine manages to get out of Housemaster Vaughn’s mansion. First, she tries to open the elevator door and it succeeds. However, the runaway experiment carried out through the elevator is completely unsuccessful because she is caught by Linden’s wife, Rose. Rhine makes another attempt to escape from the mansion when there is a big storm. She breaks through the window curtain of her bedroom and attempt to find the way out. She fails due to a storm attack. However, before she becomes unconscious and is saved by Gabriel, she can see the gate of the mansion. Rhine’s next attempt to escape is done by trying to get Linden’s trust. By getting Linden’s trust, she will get opportunities to go out with Linden to attend parties in the city. She finally gets Linden’s trust and is given the key card to the elevator and being asked to attend some parties in the city. While going out of the mansion, she tries to locate the gate of the mansion. She finds out that there is a way out in trees that border the residence and some of the trees are just holograms that cover the gate.

### **Refusing to be Consummated by her Husband**

Another representation of Rhine’s Rebellion is refusing to be consummated by her husband. She does this as a form of rebellion since her marriage with Linden is a forced marriage. Rhine refusal to be consummated by her husband is done in many ways. First, she refuses with a direct statement when Linden is having a desire for her.

“The kiss lingers for a while, and then I feel his fingers starting to unbutton my nightgown, and I draw back. “What is it?” he asks, his voice as hazy as his eyes.

“Linden,” I say, blushing, fixing the one button he’d managed to free. I can’t think of a suitable explanation, so I look at the moon.

“I is because the door is open?” he asks. “I’ll close it.” “No,” I say. “It’s not the door.”

“Then, what?” He tilts my chin again, and hesitantly I bring my eyes to him. “I love you,” he says. “I want to have a baby with you.”

“Now?” I say.

“Eventually. Soon. We only have such a short while together,” he says” (DeStefano, 2011: 268).

Rhine’s refusal is an indication of her rebellion. As the wife of Linden, Rhine should not refuse Linden’s desire for her and as a husband, Linden has the right to do the thing on the bed with her.

Another way done by Rhine to refuse to be consummated by Linden is by giving refusal signs

“And he kissed me. . . . A small noise escapes my throat, like a baby gurgling into its bottle. He draws back and looks at me. I’m blinking wildly.

“Linden . . .”

“Yes, yes. I’m here,” he says and tries to kiss me again, but I draw back. I put my hands on his shoulders to push him away, but I can see the strange pain in his eyes

(DeStefano, 2011: 221).

The rejection that Rhine does toward Linden is a form of rebellion because as a wife she should not refuse Linden’s desire.

### **Having Relationship with Gabriel**

After being kidnapped, Rhine is forcefully married to Linden. As the wife of Linden, Rhine should be loyal to Linden. However, Rhine does not love Linden and she turns out to have an affair with Gabriel, one of Linden's servants. Rhine and Gabriel fall in love with each other and they can not bear showing their feeling.

“Our lips touch, almost as soft as not touching at all. Then they press closer to each other, draw back uncertainly, touch again” (DeStefano, 2011: 186).

Rhine’s relationship with Gabriel is a kind of rebellion which means that she does not want to get married without a love bond because marriage must be based

on love. As a wife, Rhine is supposed to be faithful to her husband. However, because marriage is a forced marriage, Rhine betrays his husband as a form of protest.

### **Escaping from Housemaster**

Rhine’s escape plan is started by meeting Gabriel in the basement. She does this with the help of Jenna. Jenna tries to distract the attention of the resident of the mansion by firing the curtains of the living room. The Rhine uses this chance to go down to the basement to find Gabriel. When she has found Gabriel, she tells about her escape plan and convinces Gabriel to escape with her.

“I’ve found a way out,” I say, and I grab his hand and bring it to the key card hanging around my neck. “Linden gave me permission to use the elevator. And I found a way out. There’s a glitch in the trees that border the property. Some of them aren’t real. They’re a hologram (DeStefano, 2011: 279).”

Gabriel is persuaded by Rhyne. Thus, they make plans for their escape. When the time for the escape comes, Rhine goes out of the house and looks for Gabriel who is supposed to wait for her. Together they run to reach the gate and Rhyne tries to open the gate using the key card for the elevator but it does not work. As they are almost desperate, a servant who is sent by Cecily comes with the key card for the gate. Then Rhyne and Gabriel continue their escape to the city.

“We are finally free, and I have so much to tell him. Jenna. Cecily. And I know he must have things he wants to tell me, too DeStefano, 2011: 358).

The efforts made by Rhine to escape have paid off. Rhine and Gabriel can reach the city and are free from Housemaster Vaughn.

### **C. The Reasons for Rhine’s Rebellion**

Mainly, there are two reasons for Rhine’s rebellion i.e. wanting to be reunited with her twin brother and wanting to get freedom.

#### **Wanting to be Reunited with her Twin Brother**

One of Rhine’s reasons to rebel is because she wants to be reunited with her twin brother, Rowan. Rhine and Rowan are separated when Rhine is kidnapped by gatherers and sold to Housemaster Vaughn. Upon living in the house of Housemaster Vaughn’s mansion the thoughts of her brother who is at home alone make her tries to think that she can run away from the big house that Housemaster Vaughn has.

“It’s the thought of my brother, alone in that empty house, that forces me to stop pitying myself. It’s counter-productive. Think. There must be some way to escape” (DeStefano, 2011: 12).

During her living in Housemaster Vaughn’s mansion, Rhine feels homesick. She always remembers her brother who is

at home and also the memories she has been through with her family. She even tries to convey her inner message to her brother that she would be home soon.

Wait for me, I try to cast my thoughts to him, twin to twin. I’ll be home soon (DeStefano, 2011: 284).

Rhine misses everything she has left behind. She misses her parents and her twin brother and all the moments she has had with them.

“Things I miss. Things I love. Things that I have left behind, or that have fallen through my fingers. I want my mother to come and kiss me good night. I want my father to play the piano. I want my brother to keep watch while I sleep, to give me a swig of vodka when the pain is too bad. I miss him. I haven’t allowed myself to truly miss him in a long time, but now I can’t help it. A floodgate has opened. And I’m so tired and so lost, and I don’t know if I’ll ever truly be able to escape. I don’t know how I’ll be able to open the iron gate with its pointed flower. I wipe my tears on Gabriel’s handkerchief, which I’ve kept hidden in my pillowcase all this time. In the darkness I feel the embroidery, and I sob until my throat is raw, and I just hope, hope, hope that I’ll make it home” (DeStefano, 2011: 301).

The thoughts make Rhine wants to be free from Linden's house and do rebellion.

### Wanting to Get Freedom

Upon arriving at Housemaster Vaughn's mansion, Rhine finds out that she is not given any freedom. She is occupied on the wife's floor and is not given access to the other parts of the mansion. She is allowed to go out to the park of the mansion but with the company of her husband, Linden, or his father in law, Housemaster Vaughn. This situation makes her feel trapped and to be the captive of Housemaster Vaughn.

"I said I'd drag you kicking and screaming, and I will," I say.

"Don't you see what's happened? You've been captive for so long that you don't even realize you want freedom anymore. And don't say it's not that bad here (DeStefano, 2011: 19)."

Rhine's provocation to encourage Gabriel to escape from the mansion by arguing that Gabriel has been the captive of Housemaster Vaughn reflects her situation that she is also the captive of the house. Thus, she wants to get freedom by getting out of Housemaster Vaughn's mansion, as she tells Gabriel: "Gabriel?" There is true fear in my voice. "I want to get out of here (DeStefano, 2011: 112).

### CONCLUSION

Based on the result of the analysis, it can be concluded that *Wither* is a dystopian novel that reflects dystopian-life.

There are five characteristics of dystopian-life that can be found in the novel i.e. the society is an illusion of utopia world; the natural world is being a banished and distrusted world; there is perception under constant surveillance; there is a fear of the outside world; and information, independent thoughts, and freedom are restricted. When dystopian-life happens in society can cause rebellion that is carried out by people who feel oppressed or threaten inhumanly.

After conducting the analysis, the researcher found that as human beings, we should be wise towards something that we can not change. Humans should accept God's will. God has determined humans' destiny and humans have to accept that. Humans should not be ambitious by wanting to create a new technology in science that goes beyond the power of God. It must be understood that God is the almighty. There are no other powers in the world that can go beyond God's power.

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