

# Representation of Mother Castrator in The Short Story of *Perempuan Buta Tanpa Ibu Jari* by Intan Paramaditha

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Abstract : Patriarchy is always cited as the main cause of gender injustice such as women's oppression, violence, gender, existence, and a lot more. Females oftentimes are victims of male dominance; however, females can also be dreadful figures, it is called monstrous feminine. Mother castrator is one of the monstrous feminine parts, it is showing a mother with obsession and a dominant character that destroys her children and it can be found in the short story *Perempuan Buta Tanpa Ibu Jari* by Intan Paramaditha. The purpose of this study is to describe a representation of the mother castrator in the story of *Perempuan Buta Tanpa Ibu Jari*. This research is descriptive qualitative research and the researcher finds that the mother castrator is represented in the story. It can be seen from the presence of a knife, mutilated body parts, and women's futures that are robbed. Mother castrator is a form of power and obsession of a mother to her children, and it is misused. As the result, it victimizes her children's physical bodies and future.

Keywords : *feminism, monstrous feminine, mother castrator, literature*

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## 1. Introduction

Women's issues related to oppression, violence, gender bias, existence, and struggle are themes that are widely discussed in people's lives. Patriarchy with its ideology is always cited as the main cause of the emergence of gender injustice resulting in oppression and violence experienced by women. The debate on how women should be treated in the political and social constellation keeps continuing until this day (Retno, 2018). Women's injustice in life starts from sex, education, and socio-culture, leading to their role in society or the public. Frequently, many women have to, one against the customs and culture in their own homeland for the demands of life (Linggar Dyah Satriyani, 2018). However, women also can be seen as monstrous creatures who can disrupt the patriarchal hierarchy. This view of women is called monstrous feminism.

The term was first proposed by Barbara Creed in her 1986 article, "The Monstrous-Feminine: An Imaginary Abjection," which analyzed the patriarchal depiction of female monstrosity (Creed, *Monstrous-Feminine*, 2016). According to Creed (2016), the monstrous-feminine concept draws attention to the role that gender plays in the creation of female monstrosity. According to the idea of the "monstrous-feminine," all human societies have patriarchal images of monster women that are ultimately connected to women's sexual aspirations and reproductive abilities. In other words, by demeaning a woman's sexuality and reproductive organs, patriarchal discourses have portrayed her as a horrible creature. According to the female monstrosity theory, women are terrifying beings. The depiction of women as castrated monsters in Freud's setting represents men's terror of the castration that women are capable of performing (Hartini, Sari, & Suhendi, 2022). Mother castrator is one of the monstrous-feminine issues. Many horror books center on the terrible mother. Her perversity almost always stems from possessive, domineering behavior toward her children, especially the boy. Casting mothers have the potential to perform castration actions on their sons and daughters (Hartini, Sari, & Suhendi, 2022).

*Sihir Perempuan* by Intan Paramadhita is a short story collection. It contains various short stories of women from different backgrounds. Within this novel, gender issues like feminism and monstrous feminism can be found here. The researcher decides to research because *Sihir Perempuan* represents various aspects of feminism including monstrous-feminine. Although most of the short stories in this book represent monstrous-feminine, the researcher only focuses on one short story, *Perempuan Buta Tanpa Ibu Jari* because it intrinsically represents the mother castrator in its story.

A previous study has been conducted by Hartini et al (2022). This study discovers that *Sihir Perempuan* represents monstrous women in most of the short stories. The title of the short story namely: *Pemintal Kegelapan, Vampir, Misteri Polaroid, Jeritan Dalam Botol, Darah, dan Sang Ratu*. Characters and characterizations, storyline, and setting are used as the story's facts. From these components, various departures from the fundamental nature of people can be discerned. The person shown is a monster. There are images of female monstrosities inside, including astral ladies, vampire women, possessed women, shaman women, and female ghosts. This previous study excludes *Perempuan Buta Tanpa Ibu Jari* from monstrous feminine. This is due to the absence of men as victims. The researcher has a different opinion from the previous study since the researcher found that the mother castrator character is present in the story of *Perempuan Buta Tanpa Ibu Jari*.

This study aims to describe the study of feminism in the novel *Sihir Perempuan by Intan Paramaditha*. The specific objectives of this research are 1) describing the mother Castrator in the presence of the knife and mutilated body parts, and 2) describing the mother castrator in the presence of women whose futures were robbed.

## 2. Method

This research is descriptive qualitative research. According to Yusuf (2014), qualitative research describes a phenomenon as it is or describes the symbol or sign that is researched according to what is real and in its context. The symbol can be expressed in the form of sentences and descriptions, even in the form of short stories. The source of this research is short story in *Sihir Perempuan* entitled *perempuan buta tanpa ibu jari*.

## 3. Result and discussion

Two of the most potent depictions of the hideous feminine in horror films—women as castrators and women as castrated—are the result of male castration anxiety. A woman is shown as having been castrated, either physically or metaphorically. In movies where she typically plays the victim, like in slasher movies, her body is repeatedly stabbed until it resembles a bleeding wound, representing her literal castration (Creed, 2007). Mother castrator is not only can be found in the story in which the male figure is the victim but also when the female figure becomes a victim of a mother that has power and is cruel.

In the story of *perempuan buta tanpa ibu jari* the mother of three sisters intentionally and cruelly orders her daughters to cut their own parts feet to fit the shoes that they have to try in order to be the queen. It can be noticed in these sentences:

*Ibuku menyodori pisau, "Potong jari kakimu. Kelak jika kau jadi ratu, kau tak akan terlalu banyak berjalan. Jadi kau tak membutuhkannya."Maka kuambil pisau itu dan kugigit bibirku saat aku berusaha memutuskan ibu jari kakiku. Kubuang bagian kecil tubuhku itu ke tempat sampah untuk menjadi santapan anjing (Paramaditha, 2017, pp. 29-30).*

*Hanya saja kali ini yang tidak masuk bukan jari, melainkan tumit. Seperti aku, ia mengamputasi sebagian kecil kakinya dengan pisau dapur (Paramaditha, 2017, p. 30).*

Within those sentences, the knife and mutilated toes and heels represent the mother's obsession with one of her daughters to be a queen in any way. Creed explains (2016), Understanding the monstrous feminine is particularly relevant to Kristeva's idea of abjection. Kristeva (1982) states that the abject offers a means of drawing an arbitrary line between things that threaten the identity of civilized society and it. The abominable does not "respect borders, positions, or regulations" and "disturbs identity and system order." Those things that threaten the integrity of the subject, such as bodily wastes, must be ejected from the body (Creed, 2016). The mucky bodily indeterminacies, excretions, leakages, affects (such as strong emotion, tears), and bodily responses (such as disgust or revulsion) that challenge the conceptual coherence of the narcissistic construction of the clean and proper body, which is itself a fantasy, are easily recognized as the abject (Harrington, 2018). The mutilated body part considered excretion, according to Kristeva, is abjection which is an element of monstrous feminine. Those two elements represent mother castrator with women as victims.

A woman figure whose future has been robbed can be considered as being castrated. Creed (2016, p. 444) also states that in other horror movies, a lady who has been symbolically castrated—that is, who feels she has been wrongfully robbed of her true destiny—evolves into a deranged monster. It can be concluded that a woman figure in a story whose future has been robbed by another woman can be considered castrated. In the story of *Perempuan Buta tanpa Ibu Jari* the mother figure tries to hide one of her daughters, whose name is Larat, in order to prevent her from being proposed to. It occurs because she wants her other daughters to have more chances of being proposed to or becoming queen. It can be noticed in these sentences:

*Ibuku marah sekaligus takut kami menjadi perawan tua, sehingga ia menyuruh Larat bersembunyi di loteng jika tamu datang. Begitulah, dalam kompetisi para perempuan harus menyingkirkan lawan dengan penuh kebencian. (Intan Paramaditha, p.28)*

Hiding Larat is a form of attempting to rob woman's future. However, what happened is the opposite. Her mutilated daughters' future are the women the future being robbed by their own mother unintentionally. It can be noticed in these sentences:

*Sejak kejadian itu kami hidup dalam kemiskinan untuk membiayai ibu yang sakit-sakitan. Ia mati dengan mata terbelalak; masih tak rela menerima cercaan orang sekitar dan kenyataan bahwa kami akan selamanya jadi perawan tua. ... Kami dua perempuan buta tak berguna, bertahan dengan mengamen di sudut jalan. (Intan Paramaditha, p.32)*

#### 4. Conclusion

Intan Paramaditha includes a variety of short stories about women from varied origins. This book addresses gender issues including mother castrator. The story of *Perempuan Buta Tanpa Ibu Jari* represents the mother castrator within the story, but, since it lacks the male victim and only presents women as victims, it is difficult to address it.

There are two segments that are showing the mother castrator in the story. The first is the presence of a knife and mutilated body parts (abjection) in the story and two daughters as victims. The second is the present attempt of robbing someone's future. The victims, that is future being robbed, are two mutilated daughters. Although they are still alive, they have no future and have to struggle for the rest of their lives.

A woman can be a figure that has power over man and disrupt patriarchy. However, on the wrong hand, power can be misused. A woman with power and obsession must be careful with her own decision and order. Otherwise, people around her can be victims because of her power, and sometimes it can happen unintentionally.

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