

Analysis Of Margot's Character in *The Menu* and How She Overcomes Her Problems

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Abstract:

This study examines the character of Margot, the main character in Mark Mylod's 2022 film, *The Menu*. The investigation also explores Margot's problem-solving methods. This study utilizes Edgar V. Roberts' theory of characterization, a framework suitable for literary analysis. This theory focuses on Margot's actions, words, and thoughts, and how other characters perceive her. This research employs a qualitative approach with descriptive analysis. The film's narrative and dialogue serve as primary sources. Critical reviews and related analyses provide secondary data. Through this methodology, this study seeks to understand how each aspect of Margot's character contributes to her ability to adapt and survive in a dangerous situation. The findings indicate that Margot embodies the traits of brave, strong determination, and clever. Her actions and communication reflect these traits. Armed with these traits, she successfully overcomes the challenges she faces. She defies the norms established by Chef Slowik and ultimately escapes danger. This unique personality proved to be a key factor in Margot's success in escaping life-threatening

Keywords: character; characterization; methodology; film

Abstrak:

Studi ini mengkaji karakter Margot, tokoh utama dalam film *The Menu* karya Mark Mylod yang dirilis tahun 2022. Investigasi ini juga mengeksplorasi metode pemecahan masalah Margot. Studi ini menggunakan teori karakterisasi Edgar V. Roberts, sebuah kerangka kerja yang sesuai untuk analisis sastra. Teori ini berfokus pada tindakan, perkataan, dan pikiran Margot, serta bagaimana tokoh lain memandangnya. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan analisis deskriptif. Narasi dan dialog film berfungsi sebagai sumber utama. Ulasan kritis dan analisis terkait menyediakan data sekunder. Melalui metodologi ini, studi ini berupaya memahami bagaimana setiap aspek karakter Margot berkontribusi pada kemampuannya beradaptasi dan bertahan hidup dalam situasi berbahaya. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa Margot mewujudkan sifat-sifat pemberani, tekad yang kuat, dan cerdas. Tindakan dan komunikasinya mencerminkan sifat-sifat ini. Berbekal sifat-sifat ini, ia berhasil mengatasi tantangan yang dihadapinya. Ia menentang norma-norma yang ditetapkan oleh Chef Slowik dan akhirnya lolos dari bahaya. Kepribadian unik ini terbukti menjadi faktor kunci keberhasilan Margot dalam lolos dari situasi yang mengancam jiwa.

Kata kunci: tokoh; karakter; metodologi; film

INTRODUCTION

Film is a powerful medium for conveying stories and characters with deep meaning. “Film, as a form of modern literature, holds significant power as a mass communication tool” (Anwar & Juanda, 2016, p. 129). Through film, film viewers can feel and understand the characters' behavior and thoughts. “Characterization is an attempt to display the character of the character played with the aim of creating characters in a movie, novel, and other literary works” (Pamungkas & Prihandini, 2024, p. 33). *The Menu* (2022) tells the story of Margot, who attends a luxurious dinner on a remote island with her partner, who is actually her client. However, the dishes and plans of the renowned chef, Chef Slowik, conceal a terrifying secret. The film shows Margot struggling to overcome danger and escape a life-threatening situation. The main focus of this study is to analyse Margot's character through her words and actions. This Edgar V. Roberts' theory explains that character can be understood from their speech, actions, thoughts, and opinions. This theory is suitable for analyzing films that combine dialogue, visuals, and narrative. “In literature, the story and message were put and presented narratively through the author’s writing, while in a film, the story and message were put and presented differently, such as being communicated by the actor verbally and visually presented through the scene” (Ramadhan et al., 2023, p. 424). The main focus of this study is to analyse Margot's character from her words and actions. This study analyses how Margot's brave, strong determination, and clever character helped her survive and escape danger. This study also analyses how Margot survived danger.

This research is important in film and literary studies, and within the social and cultural spheres. Academically, this research enriches the study of characterization in film. The results of this study are expected to serve as a reference for other literary and film scholars interested in in-depth character analysis in visual media and dialog, and narrative. Margot represents a figure who challenges norms and inspires us about personal strength and the value of life.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A character is a figure or actor in a story who plays a significant role in driving the plot and conveying the message.” Character is a person, animal, or imaginary creature in a story, play, or another literary work” (hanisa, 2016, para. 2). Characters can be humans, animals, or objects given human-like characteristics to make the story more



vivid and engaging. Each character has a distinct personality, motivation, and goals. The presence of characters allows readers or viewers to understand the conflict and development of the story through the character's experiences. Characterization is the process of describing the traits, personalities, and behaviors of characters in a story. Through characterization, the writer or filmmaker shows how the characters think, speak, and act, and how others view them. Characterization helps the reader or viewer understand the characters more deeply and brings the story to life. “Characterization is the author's way of presenting the characters in the story so that the characters can be known by the readers” (Ni Made et al., 2021, p. 105).

Previous research plays an important role in this study because it serves as evaluation material, comparison, and supporting data. I found several studies that have analyzed the film *The Menu* (2022), for example, a study titled *Revenge and Killer Instinct in The Menu (2022) Movie: A Jungian Criticism* by Violita Putri Handika from Surabaya State University. This study examines the archetypes in Julian Slowik and finds that the findings show that. “The findings show that the depiction of Chef Slowik's persona includes: the leader, professional, perfectionist, and respectable. On the other hand, his shadow depiction includes: anger, vengeful, desperate, and manipulative. “The projection of Chef Slowik's shadow onto the guests reflects the conflict between persona and shadow, which creates inner tension that leads to acts of revenge, as a result of his inability to accept his shadow” (Handika, 2025, abstract).

This research, titled *The Function of Dramatic Persona in the Film “The Menu” (2022)* by Silvi Munawaroh and Nungki Heriyati from the Indonesian Computer University, examines the portrayal of characters in the 2022 film *The Menu*. This study aims to determine the portrayal of characters in the film *The Menu 2022*. “In examining the characters in the film, the result of this research found seven dramatic persona functions in the film. These include the villain, the donor, the helper, the dispatcher, the princess/prize, the hero, and the false hero” (Munawaroh & Heriyati, 2023, abstract).

RESEARCH METHODS

This study used qualitative methods to explore Margot's character in the film *The Menu* (2022). Data were collected from dialogue, narrative, and scenes, as well as additional sources to strengthen the analysis. The film was watched repeatedly to select data according to Edgar V. Roberts' characterization framework. Thematic analysis was

conducted to understand Margot's personality and coping strategies. The results are presented clearly and systematically. This method allows for repeat research with a focus on film text analysis and literary theory. Methodologically, this study uses a descriptive qualitative method with primary data in the form of film dialogue and narrative. Additional data from film reviews is used to strengthen and confirm the in-depth analysis of Margot's character within the context of the story.

Edgar V. Roberts' characterization theory divides character into four aspects: speech, actions, thoughts, and other people's opinions about the character. "Characteristics or characters in literary works are a general description of human behavior that determines the thoughts, words and actions that come from within humans through dialogue, actions and comments" (Mangangue, 2022, p. 5052). Margot in this film is seen through her dialogue and actions, which show her struggle and perseverance in facing increasingly complex problems. This study deepens the understanding of the application of characterisation theory in film analysis and shows the role of film in portraying strong characters who are able to persevere.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Margot Characterization

Brave

Margot showed courage in response to the behavior exhibited by chef Julian Slowik and his staff.

Refusing Chef Slowik's Food



27:00 – 27:39

Margot was different from the other guests. While everyone else seemed to be enjoying their food heartily, Margot refused the meal served by Chef Slowik. Her refusal was not simply because of the taste or appearance of the food, but because she sensed

something unusual and even dangerous behind each dish. She questioned Chef Slowik's intentions, which she believed were not simply to make ordinary food, but to test or control the guests through the food. Margot's courage to refuse in the midst of this tense atmosphere showed that she was not easily intimidated or coerced. She realized that going with the flow without thinking could have dire consequences. This decision is not just about food, but about maintaining her dignity and safety. Her refusal also symbolizes Margot's resistance to the control and manipulation that Chef Slowik is trying to impose, turning their encounter into a deep inner struggle between freedom and fear.

Against Julian Slowik's Staff



1:17:29 – 1:18:49

Margot faced a very difficult situation when Anna, a staff member at Julian Slowik's house, attacked her. However, instead of giving up or resigning herself to her fate, Margot showed extraordinary courage by fighting back to protect herself. She did not sit idly by waiting for someone to come and rescue her or accept her unfavorable circumstances. Instead, Margot tried hard to find a way to escape the danger that threatened her. Her calm and focused attitude despite being under immense pressure made her even stronger in the face of threats. Even when Anna used harsh words and displayed a cold and rude attitude, Margot did not let fear overcome her. She understood that giving up meant losing control of her own destiny, and that was something she could not accept. Margot's courage is a form of real resistance to the pressure and intimidation coming from the staff, indicating that she has a strong determination to defend her freedom and safety by any means necessary. The reason behind Margot's firm attitude is that she realizes that giving in will only trap her further in danger, while she must act quickly in order to stay safe and maintain her dignity. Her attitude shows that she is not someone who is easily broken, and she is ready to fight for her freedom and

her own life without losing hope.

Strong Determination

Margot entered Chef Julian Slowik's house not just to take the barrel, but also as a demonstration of her steadfast resolve to keep trying to get out of trouble and face difficult situations.

Enter Chef Julian Slowik's house, rather than just taking a barrel



1:16:29

When Margot entered Chef Julian Slowik's house, she not only took the barrel as requested by Chef Julian Slowik, but also showed strong determination to stand her ground by entering the chef's house. Her actions reflected her efforts to find a way out of the problem she was facing with her head held high and unwavering courage.

Clever

Margot's ingenuity is her primary means of survival. She uses her wits, not her physical strength, to outwit Chef Slowik.

Observing Chef Julian Slowik's room

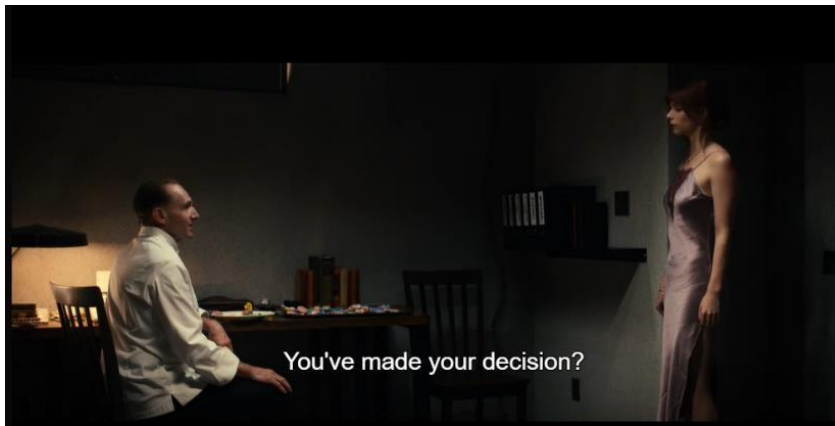


1:19:51– 1:20:52

Margot carefully examines every corner of Chef Julian Slowik's office, noticing small details that others might overlook. This demonstrates her astute observation of her surroundings as a way to better understand the situation and identify opportunities for the next step. Margot tries to maintain hope of leaving the island by entering Chef's house, seeking help, and examining each photo hanging on the wall for clues. Her efforts reflect a determination to find a way out despite the stressful situation

Margot Attempts to Overcome Her Problem

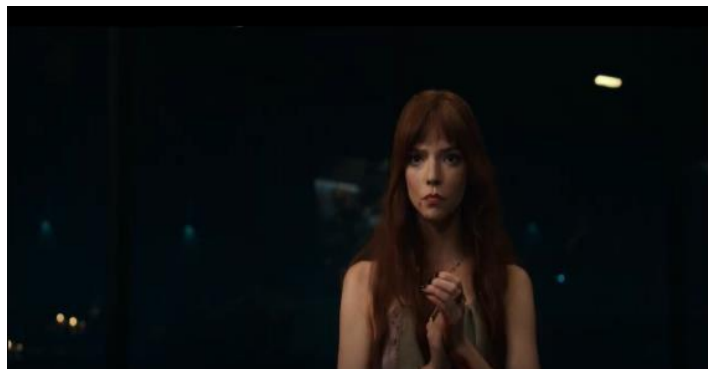
Confirming her status as not a guest as her should be



55:15 – 55:33

Margot firmly stated that she was not an ordinary guest, she was not a guest who should have been there, clearly expressing her position and views. This attitude shows awareness and courage in facing a situation that was not in line with her wishes.

Challenge & defy the chef by ordering food that is not on the chef's planned menu



1:28:28 – 1:30:34

Margot boldly challenged the chef by ordering a dish. There was no menu to choose from, as the concept of the restaurant was that the chef chose the dishes. Margot broke the strict rules. Her decision showed her independence and courage to challenge the rules in order to maintain her own priorities.

Praised the food she ordered (burger)



1:32:45 – 1:33:10

Margot offered sincere praise for the burger she ordered, expressing her satisfaction with the quality and flavor of the dish. With a simple expression, she expressed her honest appreciation for the effort and craftsmanship reflected in her bite. This is a form of appreciation.

Asked for 1 more burger to take home



1:33:16-1:33:22

Margot calmly gestures for another burger to be prepared for takeout, indicating her desire without having to say anything directly. This action demonstrated her intelligence in communicating subtly yet clearly in a tense situation.

CONCLUSION(S)

The conclusion of this study shows that Margot's character in the film *The Menu* is depicted as a brave, strong determined, and clever. These characteristics are not only evident in her actions and words, but also reflected in the way she thinks and how others perceive her. Margot does not just passively accept dangerous situations, but actively seeks ways to overcome and escape the threats she faces. With a careful approach and her courage, Margot successfully overcomes the obstacles created by Chef Slowik

and survives the danger. This study emphasizes the importance of in-depth analysis of characterization aspects that help understand the motivations and strategies of the main character in dealing with conflict. Recommendations for further research are to examine the character of the character in the film with a broader psychological or social interaction approach to enrich the understanding of how characters can survive in extreme situations. This research contributes to the development of film characterization studies using literary theories that are conceptually and practically relevant.

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