

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

This research is qualitative, as it aims to describe and uncover Kaneki Ken's character arc by using the hero's journey theory to analyze his character arc. According to Creswell (2007), qualitative research is best and most often used when the aim is to explore the issue or problem at hand. A qualitative research begins with "assumptions, a worldview, the possible use of a theoretical lens, and the study of research problems inquiring into the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem." (Creswell, 2007, p. 37). The research conduct begins with inquiry, the data are collected from a textbook, and the data analysis is inductive while setting a certain pattern or theme in it. The end result of the research is in a form which includes "the voices of the participants, the reflexivity of the researcher, and a complex description or interpretation of the problem, and it extends the literature or signals a call for action." (Creswell, 2007, p. 37).

Referring to Creswell's (2007) statement, a qualitative research is arguably the best choice for this research. This is due to its nature that requires an assumption of a problem, an analysis that establishes certain patterns, and a result that includes the argument of the researcher with a complex description or interpretation of the analyzed problem. Therefore, the research is descriptive and interpretive in nature, giving descriptions of the particular events concerning Kaneki in *Tokyo Ghoul*, before coming into conclusions with reasons based on the result.

3.2. Data Collection

The data are the English version of the chapters of the manga *Tokyo Ghoul*, written by Ishida Sui and published by Shueisha, whereas the English translation comes from the version translated by the company Mangareader. *Tokyo Ghoul* is a series consisting of several related story segments with a single theme. This segment of a story is also known as an arc.

An arc is a section of a manga that has its own beginning and ending, portraying different themes of the story. A manga may contain only a few arc, but in some cases, a manga can contain tens of arcs with different themes on each arc. Each and every one of these arcs is interconnected to create one whole story of a manga. However, in other cases, an arc of a manga may start fresh without any connection to the previous arc. For example, in order to understand the current arc discussed in this research, it is not necessary to read from the first chapter of *Tokyo Ghoul*, but it is necessary to read this arc in order to understand the next arc of the manga.

Tokyo Ghoul itself is a manga series that centers on the story of a college student named Kaneki Ken. The story takes place in modern-day Tokyo, where creatures known as ghouls roam the city. Ghouls are superhuman beings with the appearance of a human. They have two main differences with humans. Firstly, they cannot eat human food. Any human food they eat will taste terrible and ruin their digestive system, making them sick and fragile. Secondly, they have an extra organ in their body that produces extra limbs depending on where the organ is located. In order to survive, ghouls need to eat human flesh. This makes their existence a threat to humanity, which is why, in Tokyo, an organization called CCG aims to erase the existence of ghouls. Kaneki Ken was turned into a half-ghoul after being attacked by a girl he dates, who turns out to be a ghoul. After becoming a half-ghoul, Kaneki was accepted into a ghoul organization whose members try to live as humans working in a café, named Anteiku. There, he began his adaptation to become a ghoul who lives as a human.

Chapter 50 until 80 of the 6th, 7th, and 8th volume are the chapters taken in as the research data, since they are the chapters concerning most of Kaneki's change. Starting from his ordinary life where he is already a man-made ghoul, up until his presumably drastic change are the chapters between the fiftieth and the eightieth, consisting of approximately 400 pages. These approximate 400 pages portray a single arc with the most apparent and drastic change. However, several excerpts before and following the selected chapters are used in order to show and highlight the change that occurs in Kaneki's character arc. Since the data are in the form of digital comic pages, they were

first downloaded from the company's website <http://mangareader.net/> before finally being analyzed.

3.3. Data Analysis

Firstly, the fiftieth until the eightieth chapter, and other following chapters are downloaded. Afterwards, segments of the story were divided and referred to as a single "event". According to Genette (1980) as cited by Meister (2011), narrative events here means a change in the story's narrative elements, which refer to a change in character, setting, conflict, and resolution. Further into the analysis, Vogler's (1992) hero's journey theory were utilized. The phases of the hero's journey are used to define each of the segmented events. The events' title were stated as the matching phase in the hero's journey theory. Afterwards, the events were described in order to find out whether a development in character arc has taken place or not. If an event contains a development in character arc, the development is mentioned and categorized into one of the three character arcs, based on Sicoe's (2013) theory. The kind of character arc and segmented events will then be discussed to discover the reasons and interpretations that can be made from this development in character arc. The discussions center on Kaneki, character elements, and other literary elements that contribute to the change that takes place in the event, such as setting, other characters, timeline, etc. This is done in order to find out the kind of journey and characterization Kaneki experiences.

Further into the discussion, the implication that can be made out of Kaneki's journey is discussed along with the amount of fandom he has. It has been mentioned previously that Kaneki is famous for being the protagonist of the 4th best-selling manga in Japan in 2014. With such fame, the manga has managed to gain its own sequel. As an individual character, Kaneki also ranked the 1st among all other characters in the publisher company's official character popularity poll. In order to find out the implication that can be derived out of his journey and the reason behind his popularity, further discussions center on Kaneki and his possibility to become idolized. To find out how Kaneki has the potential become an idolized character, the theory of empathy

proposed by Aristotle as cited in Bywater (2004) is used to analyze Kaneki's characterization.

3.4. Data Presentation

Here is an example that can perhaps illustrate how the analysis is carried out. Let's take, for example, the event where Kaneki goes out on a date with the girl he has a crush on, Kamishiro Rize. This event can be seen in the first chapter of the manga. The start of the event is when Rize bumped into Kaneki's book. The two of them did not know that they like the same book and the same author, and upon discovering this fact, Kaneki manages to come up with a topic and indirectly ask Rize out for a date. At first, the date is peaceful and full of joy. It would seem that they are both getting along well. They go to a restaurant, and many other places. Later on, Rize asks Kaneki if they can go somewhere secluded. Kaneki agreed to Rize's proposal. Hence, they went to a nearby construction site with hardly anyone around, especially since it was already night time. Rize reveals that she is a ghoul, and proceeds to attack Kaneki. Fortunately, a steel beam from the construction site came down on the two of them. Rize sustained fatal injuries, and disappeared after this event. Kaneki, on the other hand, wakes up in a hospital, and finds out that he himself has been turned into a ghoul.

Up to this point, it can be concluded that Kaneki and Rize's date event is the Call to Adventure phase of the hero's journey. The date event begins when Kaneki has a crush on her. Kaneki has a crush on a girl, and he needs to do something about it. When she bumped to him because of a book they like, he needs to either ask her out on a date or just leave it be and let another point in the story develop. The only narrative element that changes during this date event is the setting. However, this change does not indicate a change on the action or resolution of the characters involved. Therefore, the end of the date event is indicated by the change of the characters' action, where Kaneki was hospitalized, while Rize disappeared.

This date event, however, does not show a development in character arc that can be analyzed. Kaneki was simply hospitalized, and has not shown any development in personality or characterization in this event. Further analysis and discussion will be

conducted as Kaneki advance through the story. Below is an example of how the analysis of the first act of the hero's journey can be defined in the form of a table.

| Hero's Journey Phase | Description | Development in Character Arc | Discussion |
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| Ordinary World | Kaneki and his best friend, Hide have a chat in a café. They talked about various things, including Kaneki's current love interest. A waitress ran off with a flushed face after she is mistakenly accused as Kaneki's crush by Hide. Kaneki proceeds to tell Hide his love interest who is named Rize. | - | This is the ordinary world where the protagonist, Kaneki, initially comes from. He lives in a seemingly ordinary world, where he carries out activities normally without any apparent disturbance. |
| Call to Adventure | Kaneki asks Rize out on a date after they bumped to each other because of a book they like. They went to various places. Rize then asks Kaneki to come with her to a secluded place near a construction site, where she reveals herself as a ghoul and attacks | - | After being attacked by his ghoul crush, Kaneki wakes up to find out that his ordinary world has been disrupted. Becoming a man-made ghoul is the first call he experiences to begin a life-changing |

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| | Kaneki. After waking up from a construction site accident, Kaneki finds out that he has become a ghoul. | | journey. |
| Refusal of the Call | Kaneki tries to eat human food, but he throws up for each bite he takes. He cries in agony and depression as he tries to imagine how terrible his life would be as a ghoul. However, he is determined to never eat human flesh, further proclaiming to himself that he is a human. He proceeds to eat anything he can find in his home, until he relaxes when he found out that he can taste coffee just like usual. | Growth | Despite the protests of his body towards human food, Kaneki remains true to his human nature. He refuses to acknowledge that his life would need to change because he is a ghoul now. This act of reaffirming or reinforcing his belief can be interpreted as a growth arc. |
| Meeting the Mentor | Forced by his ghoul instinct to look for food, Kaneki wanders an alley in the night. He found the waitress from the other day being picked on by an old man. He | - | After wandering the alleys, Kaneki finds the waitress and the “boss”. These two characters are arguably the mentor characters Kaneki |

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| | <p>tried to look away before the old man notices him. When the old man notices him, the old man's head was cut in half by the waitress, who revealed herself to be a ghoul. Then, an old man she called "boss" came and offered his assistance to Kaneki. He gave him what looked like human flesh in a package in order to help him.</p> | | <p>would need in order to continue his life as a ghoul, since they are shown to be ghouls who are willing to help one another.</p> |
| <p>Crossing the Threshold</p> | <p>After being knocked unconscious by Touka for wanting to eat his own best friend, Kaneki wakes up inside a bedroom he presumed to be the inside of a café. The owner, Yoshida, reassures him that his friend and Touka are okay, and invites him to join Anteiku, a ghoul organization with the purpose of sheltering ghouls. Wanting to</p> | <p>Change</p> | <p>The event where Kaneki lost control of his hunger and wanted to eat Hide can be said as a moment where Kaneki finally crosses the threshold between the two worlds. He acknowledges that he is no longer human, but he would like to keep his human world</p> |

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| | protect the life and friend he has as a human, Kaneki accepts. | | and attributes. Therefore, he decides to change his perspective on ghouls and joined the organization. |
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