PSYCHOLOGICAL CONFLICT BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN IN SUSAN GLASPELL’S *TRIFLES*

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Abstract

The problem in this paper is psychological conflict between men and women. In the Trifles drama by Susan Glaspell, women seem to have no freedom in terms of expressing opinions, ideas and ideas only because of male domination. Plus women feel inferior just because the man is superior. This is manifested in the act of having to obey what men say to women both in the family environment and in the community.

In this writing, the writer uses descriptive research as the method of collecting the data. As for the data analysis method, after determining the theory obtained from the related book, the formulation of the problem is analyzed using the theory of psychology. By using the theory of Sigmund Freud, the characters in the drama are then further analyzed to understand the shape, causes and consequences of a conflict. Authors carry out structural methods with understanding drama, male and female characters. Data collection techniques use qualitative techniques by taking notes in collecting primary data. In data analysis techniques, the author uses techniques by interpreting data.

The results of the research in this survey are: 1) Forms of conflict obtained from female leaders whose actions are limited by men. 2) The causes of conflict comes from movements of female figures who do not want to be underestimated by male figures. 3) As a result of the conflict, Mrs. Wright killed her husband because he could not stand the treatment of her husband anymore. In closing, this drama tells the story of conflict between men and women. The mutual respect is very important between men and women.

Keywords: Form of Conflict, Cause of Conflict, Result of Conflict

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1 INTRODUCTION

Literary works have various types including poetry, drama and novels. Drama is a type of literary work that describes human life, character, and human behavior through roles and dialogues that are staged. Drama stories contain of conflicts and emotions that are specifically intended for theater performances. Conflict is an important part and basic thing that must exist in drama scripts. Conflict serves as the cause of the emergence of dramatic situations that move a story. These situations form larger conflicts, these shows that conflict is the basic element of the story that functions as the main actor in reviving the events that shape the plot, and generally functions as the conveyor of the theme.

By focusing on the characters and conflicts contained in a drama script, it is closely related to psychological aspects. Some of the world in
literary works incorporate various aspects into it, especially humans. In general, these aspects of humanity are the main objects of literary psychology. Definitely the aim of literary psychology is to understand the psychological aspects contained in a literary work (Ratna, 2004:342).

One of the famous authors in the production of dramatic literature is Susan Glaspell. Susan Glaspell whose full name is Susan Keating Glaspell is an American playwright, novelist and journalist. First known for her short stories (fifty were published) and also Glaspell is known to have written nine novels, fifteen plays and biography. Often set in her native Midwest, these semi autobiographical tales typically explore contemporary social issues, such as gender, ethics and dissent. While featuring deep, sympathetic characters who make principled stands.

Since the late 20th century, critical reassessment of women’s contributions has led to renewed interest in her career and revival of her reputation. In the early 21st century Glaspell is today recognized as a pioneering feminist writer and America’s first important modern female playwright. Her one-act play Trifles (1916) is frequently cited as one of the greatest works of American theatre.

This one-act drama written by Susan Glaspell tells us about a murder of a husband, John Wright. His wife, Mrs. Wright her maiden name was Minnie Foster was the suspect since she was the last person seen when a neighbor Mr. Hale found Mr. Wright dead in his house. The following day after the finding, Mr. Hale came back to the house together with the Sheriff and County Attorney to gather evidence either to make themselves convinced that Mrs. Wright was the murderer or on the way around they might find fingerprints of the real murderer.

These three men were accompanied by Mrs. Hale the wife of the neighbor and Mrs. Peter the wife of the Sheriff. The two women were about to collect some personal belongings of Mrs. Wright who apparently was already in custody these personal belongings were, among other things, clothes and some stuff to quilt. Glaspell intentionally showed the contradictory traits between men and women.

The three men paid more attention to anything big or serious to collect evidence, because the crime done was also a serious one murder. On the contrary, the two women took a very close look at some trivial things such as, preserves, bread set, a large sewing basket and a piece cloth Mrs. Wright was quilting. In the end, it turned out that the women even found the evidence that strongly showed Mrs. Wright was the murderer from those trifles, while the men did not find any. However, to show loyalty to the same gender as accused by the County Attorney when Mrs. Hale defended Mrs. Wright when the County Attorney said bad things about how messy the kitchen of Mr. Wright's house was the two women kept the evidence for themselves.

II RESEARCH METHODS

In this chapter, the writer presents the research method. The research method consist of method of collecting the data, method of analyzing the data, technique of collecting the data, and technique of analyzing the data. The research method is one of the important parts in a research, in the form of ways that can be used to obtain answers to a study. The research approach contained in the research method is used as a foothold in implementing a series research activities. The choice of approach in research must be followed consistently in each research process from beginning to end, so obtain maximum.

2.1 Method of Collecting the Data

The data collecting procedures is focused in the process of the writer collect the data. In the collecting data the writer applies descriptive research. Descriptive research is the most widely used research design as indicated by the theses, dissertations and research reports of institutions. Descriptive research is designed for the investigator to gather information about present existing conditions. Descriptive research involves collection of data in order to test the hypothesis or to answer questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study. Descriptive study determines and reports the way
things are. The study has no control over what is, and can only measure what already exist.

Descriptive research descriptive is a research method that is describing objects according to what it is. Qualitative research is a research procedure produce descriptive data in the form of written or oral words from people and observable behavior (Margono, 2013: 36). The researcher uses qualitative methods because this method utilizes the methods of interpretation by presenting them in the form of descriptions. Qualitative according to Ratna, that is to make the whole use of by presenting in descriptive form (Ratna, 2004:46). The data generated through this method of written or oral words are presented descriptively.

2.2 Method of Analyzing the Data

In the procedure of analyzing the data, the primary data was taken from the drama itself, the writer tries to analyze the drama by using the information based on the drama. In doing this research, the writer starts by analyzing some intrinsic elements of drama, after that tries to find extrinsic element which becomes the basic of the problem that will be analyzed.

Intrinsic elements in literature usually we can find it inside the story itself. We can analyze it easily because all of the facts are inside the books. It could tell about the characters, plots, setting, moral messages, scenes, etc. Extrinsic elements of literature is about the things that can not really be found inside the story itself. It was not the material but the facts and information that supports and surrounds the story. It could tell about the author’s life, historical background, cultural background or social background. In the application, the writer uses structural method. According to Pradopo (2001:69), the researcher has role to explain literary work as a structure based on the elements that build them. From this quotation, structural method has functions to explain the intrinsic elements of literary work.

The procedure starts by reading the main source of research, which is the drama Trifles by Susan Glaspell. Then in order to have the audio visual understanding, the writer finds the movie Trifles. After understanding the story, the procedure moves to find the intrinsic elements in the drama, which are plot, theme, characters, setting of place, setting of time and point of view. After the data are organized, the writing is composed based on standard of thesis writing.

2.3 Technique of Collecting the Data

In collecting data, the writer take the data from the script of the Trifles drama by reading from beginning to end repeatedly. Then mark the dialogues that are related or relevant to the problem of researched. Data collection in this research was carried out by reading literary works repeatedly and carefully, then recording the information contained in literature or often referred to as a note-taking technique. That is, the data is obtained by reading research data sources carefully, carefully and repeatedly, especially those relating to the words, behavior, and actions of the characters studied. Repeated reading is done to get a deep understanding of the data being studied. Data recording is done to facilitate researchers in carrying out the analysis.

2.4 Technique of Analyzing the Data

The data analyzing procedures concern with the ways of the writer to conduct the research of the data. In this research the writer applies structural technique. It looks the internal factor of literature that covers the internal element of literary work such the actions of the main characters. Pradopo (2001:54) states that:

Peneliti bertugas menjelaskan karya sastra sebagai sebuah struktur berdasarkan unsur-unsur yang membentuknya.

The researcher has a chance to explain literary work as a structure base on the element that formed them (translated by writer).

From the explanation above, structural technique has two functions which explain the internal factor of literature. The primary data is taken from drama itself, the writer tries to analyze it by using the information in form of quotations based on the drama itself. In this research, the writer starts by analyzing some intrinsic elements of this drama, after that tries to find extrinsic element which becomes the basic of the problem that will be analyzed.
III RESEARCH FINDING

a. Form of conflict between men and women in Susan Glaspell’s Trifles

Everyone must have good side of personality, however, everyone must also have bad side of personality, so as John Wright. In another side, he was a hard person. People would not enjoy the time of day with him. He did not like something crowd but silence. It was right that Wright’s house was quiet that he did not do something that physically cruel. However, quiet here does not mean peaceful, but empty, lack of conversation. This situation happened because he never talked about his job or his duties to his wife when he was at home. He preferred silence to having conversation with his wife, therefore, the house seemed to be quiet. This hard character of John Wright was the way he showed his masculinity, strength and authority that no one could drive him.

"But he was a hard person, Mrs. Peters. Just to pass the time of day with him like a raw wind that gets to the bone". (1. 103)

From the statement above, we can see that Mr. Wright was a hard man. He could not accept what he did not like. See for example, the bird, the only thing that could make his wife entertained with its voice, he killed it because of the noise that he did not like without any consideration to his wife. He did not consider and did not care about his wife whether she would be sad or not, to vanish something she liked. The only thing he thought was throwing away anything he hated. Those characteristics of Mr. Wright emphasize that he was a dominating person in his family. He could order anything he wanted to do without considering another member of the family, his wife. He commanded anything that goes on in the family. By doing this, it is proven that he was superior to his wife. He did not give space even for his wife to enjoy her life as a woman. His absolute power beyond his wife made her oppressed.

"Wright was close. I think maybe that’s why she kept so much to herself. She didn’t even belong to Ladies Aid. I suppose she felt she couldn’t do her part, and then you don’t enjoy things when you feel shabby. She used to wear pretty clothes and be lively, when she was Minnie Foster, one of the girls singing in the choir. But that…oh, that was thirty years ago". (1. 56)

As what Mrs. Hale said above, we can see that John Wright had affected Minnie’s life. He changed her life from her virgin life which was lively and cheerful into a close family which was totally different from her past life. In relation to the male dominated society, Mr. John Wright is one example of the authoritative persons in that time. As a man, he had the authority to decide everything in his family. He had no consideration about his wife. He never talked to his wife in deciding everything in his family. He did not care about what happened in his wife’s life. He
did not feel that actually what he had done to his wife was a kind of disaster for her. She was really oppressed with the rule he made in the family which must be obeyed. Although Mr. Wright was a good man in the matter of habit, meaning that he did not do any crime and what usually bad man did at that time such as drinking, but he did something that gave bad effect to other. In this case, the object of the effect of his hard personality was his wife. John Wright had big influence in the life of his wife. From the text of the drama, it is shown that his wife did not join the Ladies Aid that usually done by wives, while when she was young and virgin, she was cheerful, and it was obvious that some time when she became a wife, she would also join it. The reality said oppositely that she totally changed after she married to John Wright. This shows that John Wright affected her conduct of life when she was single into the new one.

Mrs. Wright was cheerful, lively, liked to sing and wore pretty clothes when she was Minnie Foster. She was one of the singing girls who sang in the choir when she was single. She was real sweet and pretty, but timid and fluttery, just like the bird she used to have.

"She come to think of it, she was kind of like bird itself real sweet and pretty, but kind of timid and fluttery. How she did change". (1. 107)

"She used to wear pretty clothes and be lively, when she was Minnie Foster, one of the town girls singing in the choir. But that...oh, that was thirty years ago". (1. 56)

Unfortunately, she did change after marrying John Wright. She was not cheerful anymore after getting along her life with John Wright. The hard character of John Wright affected the way of life of Minnie Foster into the new character of Mrs. Wright. Mr. John Wright who was introvert and did not like noise, created a quiet and silent house, and automatically she had to live there and went to where the wind blew in that house. She had no chance to make any cheerfulness she had had when she was young. She surrendered to follow the rule in order to conform to the oppressive situation. Moreover, they had no children which could make the house a little brighter. She only had a bird, a canary, which could entertain her with its voice. It was the only thing she loved in that house. Something sounding, singing and could give her peace when she was in trouble, something which could reduce her loneliness when she was home alone.

"Wright was close. I think maybe that’s why she kept so much to herself. She didn’t even belong to the Ladies Aid". (1. 56)

From the sentences above, Mrs. Hale said that Mrs. Wright did not even belong to the Ladies Aid. This shows that she spent much time inside the house and made few interactions to others. Even the Hales, the closest neighbor of the Wrights, they did not know much about John Wright and his wife. John Wright was a close and introvert person and he never brought the company matters to his house. This made the condition in the house more silent and quiet. John Wright was comfortable with this kind of quiet situation in his house. As the opposite, his wife was tortured. Her real cheerful life must be changed into silence and quiet one. For years she had to accept this kind of life with her husband. She was tortured, oppressed and depressed with the life given by her husband. She could not do her part as a woman like what others could. She lived in her house without any relationship to her neighbors, even her closest neighbor, The Hales. Moreover, she did not belong to the Ladies Aid, a women’s group that sponsored by a church, regularly met to sew and quilt to earn money that was used for charity. This changing proved that she was affected by her husband. Her life with John Wright was a kind of prison for her because it was limited by his rule that woman should be home, taking care her husband and the house, not in the public sphere. From her marriage with John Wright, she got no joy and happiness. All she had was just tears and sadness with no one to share and no shoulder to cry on.

b. Causes of conflict between men and women in Susan Glaspell’s Trifles

There are four male characters in the text of the play, they are Mr. John Wright, Mr. George Henderson, Mr. Henry Peters and Mr.
Lewis Hale. These four characters have different personalities which represent certain purpose to criticize the male-dominated. Mr. George Henderson, the County Attorney, is the youngest and the most educated person. In the way he investigated the case, he often criticized women’s works that they did not work well and humiliated their opinions. He did not give any appreciation to women’s hard jobs to take care of the house. Sometimes he underestimated women’s opinion indirectly, by praising it while actually looking down on it.

The men character conversation consisting of Sheriff, County Attorney, and Mr. Hale gave an impression of being underestimated by the position of women and what they did. First, they commented on the kitchen as a place that would not find important items especially important evidence of this murder. Second, they underestimate women's feelings about the things they do. From the explanation above, it is clear how the form of dominance of women and women is the cause of the conflict between women and men.

" COUNTY ATTORNEY
I guess we'll go upstairs first and then out to the barn and around there, (to the Sheriff) You're convinced that there was nothing important here nothing that would point to any motive.
SHERIFF
Nothing here but kitchen things.
COUNTY ATTORNEY
Here's a nice mess.
MRS. PETERS
Oh, her fruit, it did freeze, (to the lawyer) She worried about that when it turned so cold. She said the fire'd go out and her jars would break.
SHERIFF
Well, can you beat the women! Held for murder and worryin' about her preserves.
COUNTY ATTORNEY
I guess before we're through she may have something more serious than preserves to worry about.
MR. HALE

Well, women are used to worrying over trifles". (1. 24-30)

Hale casually made a statement from where the drama took its title when Mrs. Peters drew attention to what she considered the significance of the preserved fruit jar. By doing so, he gently scolded women for not having the common sense and mental focus to pay attention to important things, but he suggested that men forgive them for their weaknesses because they were only women and therefore every day deal in small amounts, insignificant details. Furthermore, his patronizing tone was damaged throughout the game when the women finally tricked the men and proved their worth, and it was not by chance whether Glaspell made a woman unite after he said this sentence. Meanwhile, men spend all their time searching for evidence because they forget that evidence often consists of small things - especially when there are no eye witnesses involved.

" No its not cherful. I shouldn’t say she had the home making instinct.
Well, i dont know as Wright had, either “
(1. 41-42).

County attorney and Mrs. Hale represents the opposite parties in terms of understanding the authenticity of the household. On the one hand, Henderson assumed that women were fully responsible for the domestic domain and consequently concluded that the lack of enthusiasm in Wright's farmhouse had to be caused by the inability of Mrs. Wright. Mrs. Hale hated Henderson's ideas because he acknowledged that even though domesticity had physical aspects, most of it came from the emotional and mental state of the people in the household. In his mind, because John Wright did not have the ability to empathize with his wife and because he made him feel very lonely, he was the person who was truly responsible for the unhappiness in their home. Henderson continued to promise to return to the subject of the marriage status of the Wrights family.

County Attorney underestimated what women thought because he thought that what women were talking was trifle. Although he did
it indirectly, but it was obvious that he looked down on women’s opinions.

" COUNTY ATTORNEY
Well, Henry, at least we found out that she was not going to quilt it. She was going to what is it you call it, ladies?.
MRS. HALE
We call it knot it, Mr. Henderson". (1. 148-149)

From the statement above, Mr. Henderson indirectly underestimated the women’s opinion about the quilt that it was unimportant, while it was actually the sign of Mrs. Wright to knot the oppression she got which means to end it. The men did not find anything that might be of use to find the motive upstairs, while the women found the evidence of the sign of Mrs. Wright’s anger by examining even an unimportant thing. His statement seemed to adore what women had got by praising about the quilt, while actually he underestimated it and he thought that all of them did not get anything to find the motive. Mr. Henderson was also a man who defended his manhood when a woman had a bad comment about men. He thought that Mrs. Hale was loyal to her sex which means that she always defended women from men because she argued that men’s hands were dirty. This means that, as a man, Mr. Henderson did not agree when men were blamed for their fault or disability. He twisted it by arguing that women would always be loyal to their sex.

" MRS. HALE
Those towels get dirty awful quick. Men’s hands aren’t always as clean as they might be.
COUNTY ATTORNEY
Ah, loyal to your sex, I see. But you and Mrs. Wright were neighbors. I suppose you were friends, too’. (1. 34-35)

Mr. Peters was also a man who treated woman unkindly, especially when women were talking about the preserves needed by Mrs. Wright. He did not understand what the importance of those preserves was. Underestimating women’s important needs shows that he did not pay much attention to them. He was also a rude person, seen from the words he used when he insulted the women. He gave rude words to the women while he did not understand why they did that. This also means that he did not respect women.

" COUNTY ATTORNEY
Well, Mr. Hale, tell just what happened when you came here yesterday morning.
HALE
Harry and I had started to town with a load of potatoes. We came along the road from my place and as I got here I said, “I’m going to see if I can’t get John Wright to go in with me on a party telephone.” I spoke to Wright once before and he put me off, saying folks talked too much anyway, and all he asked was peace and quite-I guess you know about how much he talked about himself; but I thought maybe if I went to the house and talked about it before his wife, though I said to Harry that I didn’t know as what his wife wanted made much difference to John.
COUNTY ATTORNEY
Let’s talk about that later, Mr. Hale. I do want to talk about it, but tell now just what happened when you got to the house”. (1. 8-10)

Mr. Hale thought that women were used to worrying over trifles. He underestimated the women’s worry about the preserves needed by Mrs. Wright. He thought that all of those preserves were unimportant and it was not needed to be worried about. This was also said by Mr. Peters that he did not understand why women worried about something trifle. That Mr. Peters and Mr. Hale did not understand what women needed was the proof that they were careless even to their own wives. They did not understand what was the importance of something trifle which actually women wanted.
Mr. Hale represents a man who was careless and did not pay much attention to his wife. The worse, he underestimated the thing woman needed. Ironically, things that were underestimated by men were the signs to reveal the motive of the murder.

"COUNTY ATTORNEY
I guess before we’re through she may have something more serious than preserves to worry about.

HALE
Well, women are used to worrying over trifles". (1.29-30)

c. Result of conflict between men and women in Susan Glaspell’s Trifles

Mrs. Hale speaks there had been a crime committed by Mrs. Wright (Minnie Foster) against her husband. Motives and evidence were found found by Mrs. Hale and Mrs. Peters who were in the kitchen. Psychologically, Minnie is very depressed with her daily routine so she needs to find pleasure that can entertain her without having to leave the house. Finally he kept bird in a cage which at any time could accompany him whistling or singing.

The only thing that could reduce her sadness and her loneliness was the singing bird in the cage. On the other side, Mr. Wright did not like birds because they sang and made noise. The noise of the bird would just put him off. Therefore, he killed that canary by strangling its neck with a rope. Automatically, this harsh action made his wife upset and disappointed. The only thing she had was vanished by her own husband. She had nothing at all to be enjoyed then. She was more depressed with this kind of situation. She felt that she was killed for the second time, first John Wright had killed her freedom and the second he had killed the only thing she loved in this world. She had reached the tip of the iceberg, and she could not bear her anger anymore. She wanted to fight against this oppression and take revenge to what her husband had done to her and her lovely canary. Finally, she decided to kill him as what he did to her bird, by strangling him when he was in a deep sleep.

"That’s just what Mr. Hale said. There was a gun in the house. He says that’s what he can’t understand”. (1.66)

"I wonder how it would seem never to have had any children around. No. Wright wouldn’t like the bird a thing that sang. She used to sing. He killed that, too". (1.124)

From the statements above, it is shown that Mrs. Wright was really depressed with the death of her canary. After her freedom was killed, the only thing she liked got the same destiny too, killed. She got her limit of her patience and committed to take revenge by strangling her husband as what he did to her canary, although there was a gun in the house. Logically, people will shoot somebody when there is a gun in his or her hand to make it easier to kill, but it was different from Mrs. Wright. She preferred to strangle rather than to shoot. First, she wanted to end the misery she got from him, and second she wanted him to feel the same treatment her canary got. This shows that her anger was really in a high tension so that she killed her husband the same way as what he did to her canary. For her, killing her husband by strangling his neck was comparable to the death of her canary and worthier than using a gun. This means that she had buried and neglected all the oppression she got from her husband. She accepted and obeyed everything driven by her husband until the tragedy of the death of the canary. This tragedy was the turning point of her mind and she ended it all by killing him as the oppressor and the killer of her freedom.

"Well, as if she didn’t know what she was going to do next. And kind of done up”. (1.17)

From the statement above, Mrs. Wright intentionally murdered her husband because she wanted to take revenge for her freedom and her lovely canary that he killed. Besides, she wanted to be free from his oppression she got all those times. Moreover, Mr. Hale saw that she looked like a kind of done up, and then laughed. This is the proof that she had no regret in doing it and her laugh means a relief of being freed. The character of Mrs. Wright represents the women feminists in the American society whose mission is to fight against the patriarchal society. She was
the object of the patriarchal society that she could not be free during her life
2. with John Wright. As human being, she had the limit of her patience and finally she ended all the oppression she got. The patriarchal system applied in her family which was driven by her husband was over after colonizing for years. She showed him that it was true that he was strong and the canary was weak, so was she, but she could also be strong to end the oppression. By the bravery and strong will, she could end the misery in her life.

IV CONCLUSION

After analyzing the drama Trifles by Susan Glaspell, the writer make the conclusion as follows:
1. Form of conflict between men and women comes from the life of Minnie and John's household is not harmonious. Besides not being blessed with children, Minnie had to work hard to take care of homework and help John work in the fields. What a hard job but Minnie never complained. Besides that, Minnie had to face John's attitude which was too protective of him and strange according to his friends. Psychologically, Minnie is very depressed with her daily routine so she needs to find pleasure that can entertain her without having to leave the house. Mr. Wright, after marriage, was busy with his day-to-day work, not paying attention to his wife, he did not know what his wife wanted. so that here comes the forms of conflict.

2. Descriptions of the causes of domination revolve around gender issues and the prevailing patriarchal system. Men can freely regulate a woman's life and limit her space. In fact, psychologically the lives of women depend on men. For the problem of comforting himself, Minnie must see the fact that it is difficult to have the freedom to determine her own pleasure. Besides that, male domination of women's lives gives birth to hegemony that is quite tiring for women so that many surprising things arise in their actions. For example, disgusted with the behavior of men who criticize women's work, Mrs. Hale appeared as a brave figure by being very cynical. In addition, Mrs. Peters also carried out extraordinary actions by not reporting the evidence found.

3. Result conflict between men and women are The criminal actions committed by Minnie are classified in an act that is brave enough to oppose the flow. It is not appropriate for a woman to be able to kill a man, especially her husband. Minnie's legal eyes will certainly be punished with the greatest severity and may be a death sentence. It seems that from what is considered trivial or weak comes an unexpected force. It is ironic that women who are always subject to the system must appear as perpetrators of crimes against their own husbands. And even more painful, men are too complacent with their position so they don't realize the trivial things around them which can endanger their position.

Reading this thesis adds to the love of literature and understanding the message contained in a drama. The message contained in it can be used for life in this world, believing in men to be able to better understand and appreciate a woman. As a man, do not lower the dignity of women, let alone underestimate women because it will affect the men later. Hopefully not many more conflicts occur between men and women. Because both of them need each other. For other writers who want to do the same, this thesis can be used as material to add references, so that further researchers can produce better research.
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