



**EMBODIMENT OF ISOLATION: EXPLORING BODY IMAGE
IN “THE WHALE” (2022)**

A THESIS

**In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for S-1 Degree Majoring American Studies in the English Department,
Faculty of Humanities Diponegoro University**

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**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
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SEMARANG
2026**



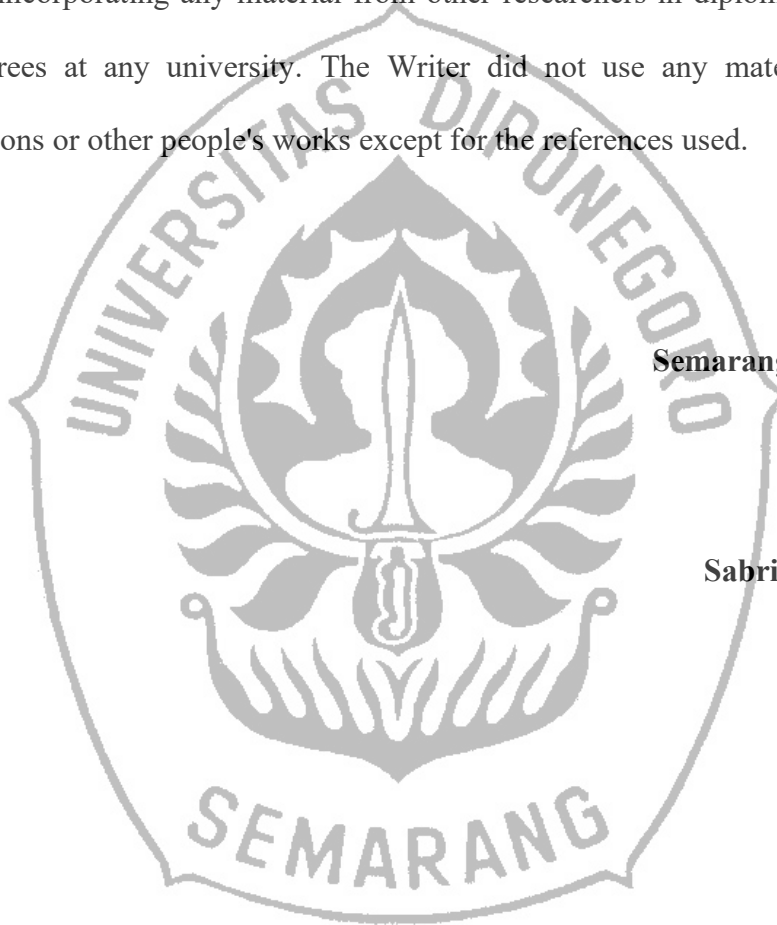
PRONOUNCEMENT

I sincerely declare that this thesis, titled “*Embodiment of Isolation: Exploring Body Image in The Whale (2022)*”, is my original work. This thesis is created independently without incorporating any material from other researchers in diploma, S-1, S-2, and S-3 degrees at any university. The Writer did not use any material from other publications or other people's works except for the references used.

Semarang, 29 April 2026



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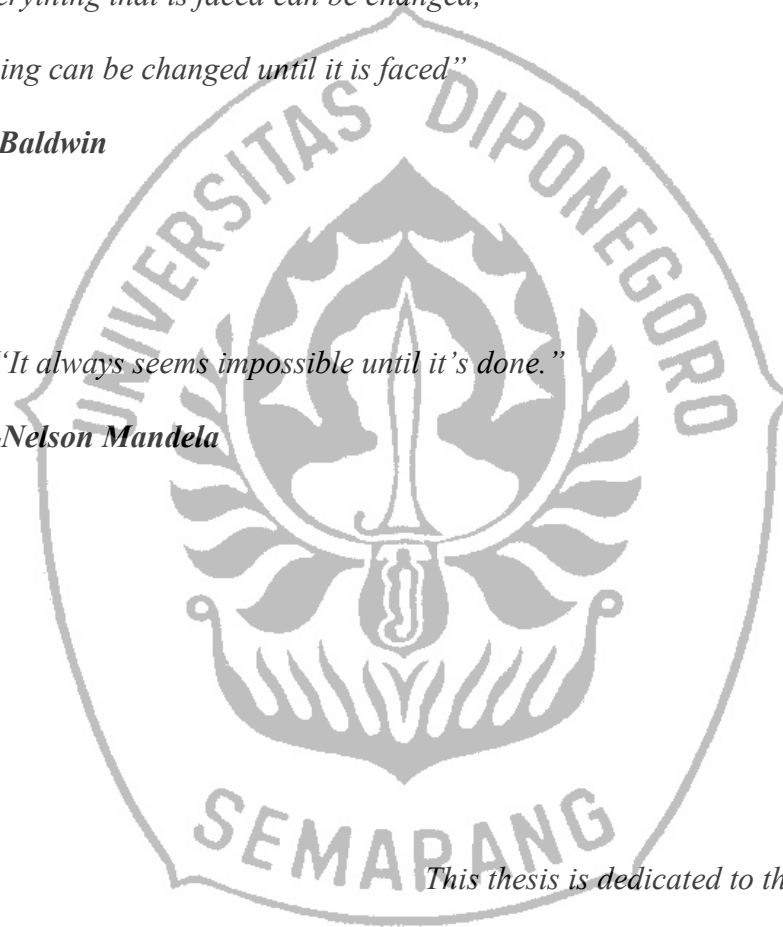
MOTTO AND DEDICATION

*“Not everything that is faced can be changed,
but nothing can be changed until it is faced”*

-James Baldwin

“It always seems impossible until it’s done.”

-Nelson Mandela



This thesis is dedicated to those who support

and expect the best from me,

and most importantly, to myself.

APPROVAL

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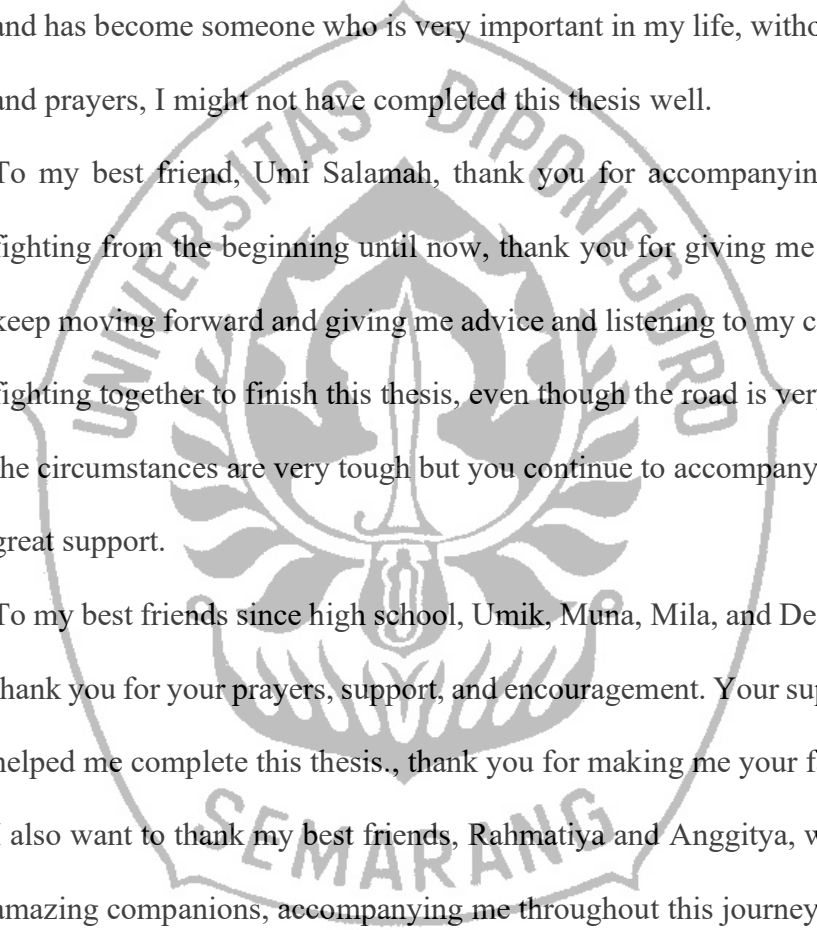
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- 
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Semarang, 29 April 2026

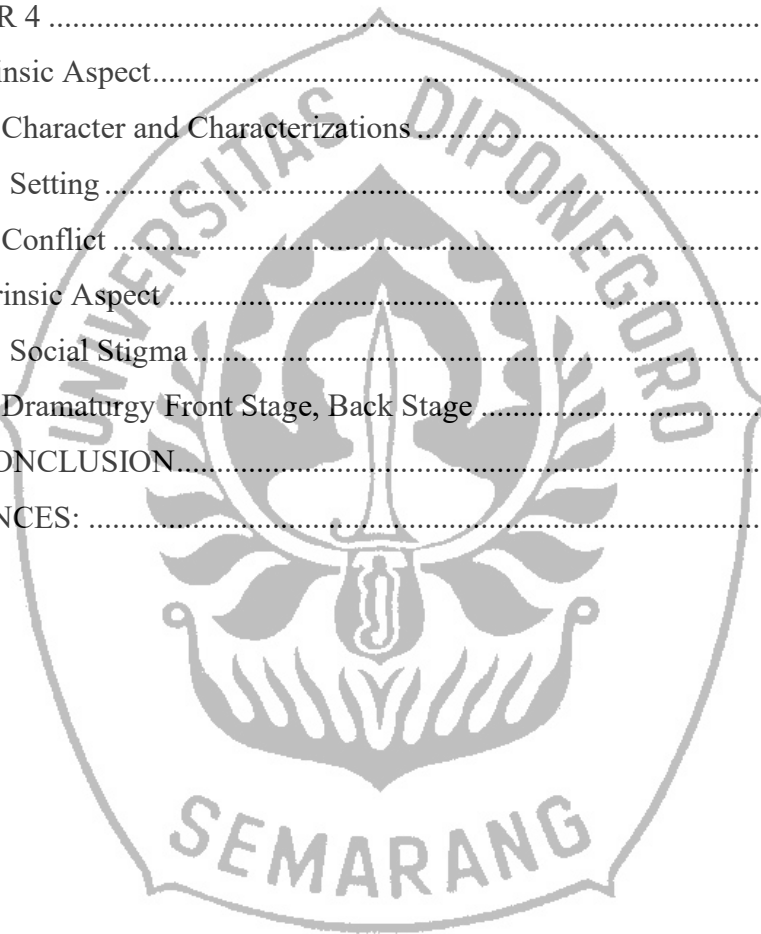
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sabrina Velia Aditya".

Sabrina Velia Aditya

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ABSTRACT

This thesis research discusses the representation of body image and obesity as a form of social stigma and how the main character overcomes this stigma in American society, by focusing on the character Charlie in the film *The Whale* (2022). This research thesis aims to analyze the portrayal of body image and obesity as social stigma and to examine how the main character negotiates a stigmatized identity through front-stage and back-stage performances. This research thesis uses a sociological approach, which is based on stigma theory and dramaturgical theory proposed by Erving Goffman. The primary data for this research is the film *The Whale* (2022), and the secondary data is derived along with sources from journal articles, books, and other theoretical references. The result of this thesis research shows that the intrinsic aspects discussion exposes Charlie's characterization as a stigmatized individual who experiences both physical and emotional struggles, as well as his internal and external conflicts. The extrinsic analysis includes an analysis of the representation of body image and obesity as sources of social stigma, leading to negative representation, social rejection, and emotional distance. In the stigma seen through Charlie's actions, both in public and in private, where he gives an image of himself in public while showing his weaknesses in private.

Keywords: body image, social stigma, front stage, back stage.