



**ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION
TOWARD THE MAIN CHARACTER
IN LEILA MOTTLEY'S *NIGHTCRAWLING***

A THESIS

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

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2026

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The writer states that the thesis entitled “Economic Exploitation Toward the Main Character in Leila Mottley’s Nightcrawling” was compiled independently and is the original work of the writer. This thesis has never been submitted as a requirement to obtain an academic degree at any educational institution. The writer certifies that she has not quoted any material from other works or publications, except those clearly mentioned in the references.

Semarang, January 26th, 2026

Yosefine Anestasya Sihole

MOTTO AND DEDICATION

“May He grant you your heart's desire and fulfill all your plans!”

- Psalm 20:4

“There is surely a future hope for you, and your hope will not be cut off.”

- Proverbs 23:18

This thesis is dedicated to

My beloved father and mother,

for their endless love and support.

APPROVAL

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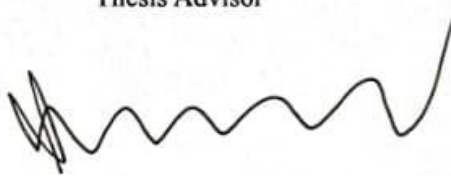
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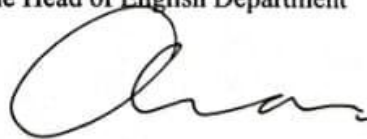
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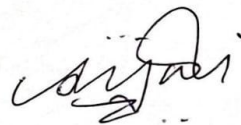
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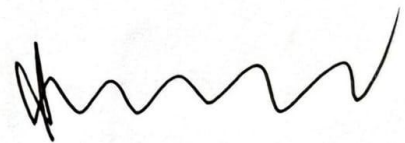
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Praise and gratitude be to the Lord Jesus Christ for His grace, guidance, and blessings. It is by His strength and favor that accompany me through every step of this journey, enabling the completion of this thesis entitled “Economic Exploitation Toward the Main Character in Leila Mottley’s *Nightcrawling*”.

On this occasion, I would like to express my highest appreciation and sincere gratitude to my thesis advisor, Hadiyanto, S.S., M.Hum., for the time, patience, and valuable guidance given throughout the process of writing this thesis. Through the suggestions and directions provided, the completion of this research became possible.

My gratitude is also extended to:

1. Prof. Dr. Alamsyah, S.S., M.Hum., as the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University.
2. Dr. Oktiva Herry Candra, M.Hum., as the Head of the English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University.
3. Eta Farmacelia Nurulhady, S.S., M.Hum., M.A., Ph.D., as the academic supervisor of the writer.
4. All lecturers of the English Department, Diponegoro University, for the knowledge and academic experiences provided during the study period.
5. My beloved parents, for their prayers, support, and unwavering love. Thank you for being a constant source of strength and encouragement throughout the completion of this study.

6. The Function Coordinator of BSKLN (ASPASAF), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, for the beneficial discussions during my internship, which provided new perspectives for this thesis.

The writer realizes that this thesis is still far from perfect. Therefore, constructive criticism and suggestions are greatly welcomed for future improvement. Finally, it is hoped that this thesis will be beneficial for readers who are interested in similar topics.

Semarang, January 26th, 2026

Yosefine Anestasya Sihole

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ABSTRACT

This research thesis discusses the economic exploitation experienced by the main character, Kiara Johnson, in Leila Mottley's *Nightcrawling*. The primary objective of this research thesis is to analyze the depiction, causes, and forms of economic exploitation, to examine the effects on Kiara's life, and to explore her development of class consciousness and resistance through intrinsic literary analysis and a Marxist perspective. The research applies a Marxist literary approach and uses library research as its method, relying on the novel as the primary source supported by secondary scholarly sources. The intrinsic analysis focuses on character, setting, and conflict, while the Marxist perspective centers on concepts such as surplus value, labor subsumption, and the reserve army of labor. The findings of this research thesis reveal that Kiara's exploitation is depicted through labor intensification and absolute surplus value. It is caused by her separation from the means of production and the capitalist drive for accumulation, manifesting in forms of formal, real, and hybrid subsumption. These lead to profound effects, including alienation, physical degradation, and the accumulation of misery. Ultimately, the novel illustrates how the working class is trapped in a cycle of poverty where survival demands the sacrifice of humanity.

Keywords: Alienation, Physical Degradation, Accumulation of Misery, Class Consciousness, Sacrifice of Humanity