CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

In contemporary literary culture, canonical texts are increasingly reimagined through other media, including film, theatre, and popular music. When a classic work such as Edgar Allan Poe's *Annabel Lee* (1849) is transformed into a modern concept album like Alesana's *The Emptiness* (2010), the affective tone and narrative emphasis of the source text inevitably undergo significant shifts. In line with Linda Hutcheon's view of adaptation as "repetition without replication," such transformations do not simply reproduce an existing story, but reconfigure its themes, structures, and moods to address new audiences and generic conventions, for instance the post-hardcore scene targeted by Alesana. Within this context, the study of literature cannot be separated from the study of how literary works are interpreted, adapted, and received across media. Reading literature is not only an act of decoding language, but also a sustained cognitive and emotional process through which readers negotiate meaning, value, and relevance. In educational settings, including the teaching of Indonesian language and literature, literary learning is expected to shape students' character, broaden their perspectives, and refine their sensitivity to human experiences. Language education primarily trains communicative competence, whereas literary education foregrounds ethical, emotional, and aesthetic awareness.

Literary appreciation does not stop at reading and writing texts; it also involves interpreting, analyzing, and evaluating how literary works are reshaped in new forms. Readers learn to recognize the beauty of ideas and techniques in a work, and to see how themes such as love, death, and despair are articulated through symbolism and imagery. In a contemporary context shaped by globalization and digital media, literature increasingly encounters other arts, including music, not merely as decoration but as a site of reinterpretation. Poetry, with its condensed language and carefully chosen words, is especially rich in this regard, since its images and emotional tones can be reworked when it is adapted into other media. Linda Hutcheon (2006) argues that adaptation is not a matter of simply copying an existing work, but of creating "a new version in a different form," a process that allows older stories to be reimagined for new audiences and cultural contexts. In this study, the focus is on adaptation rather than on straightforward poetry musicalization: the case of Edgar Allan Poe's Annabel Lee

(1843) and Alesana's concept album *The Emptiness* is approached as a complex transmedial transformation in which narrative structure, symbolism, and emotional focus are altered. By examining what is repeated and what is changed between poem and album, this research treats adaptation as a critical space where literary themes, images, and voices are renegotiated rather than simply transferred into sound.

Alesana is an American post-hardcore band formed in October 2004 in Baltimore, Maryland. The founding members were Shawn Milke, Dennis Lee, Patrick Thompson, Steven Tomany, and Daniel Magnuson. The band name is inspired by Aliceanna Street in Baltimore, where two of the members raised. Since their inception, Alesana has become well-known for blending emo, post-hardcore, and pop-punk influences, creating music marked by both melodic and heavy sounds plus theatrical storytelling. Their first EP, "Try This With Your Eyes Closed," was released in 2005, followed by their debut album, "On Frail Wings of Vanity and Wax," in 2006. They gained further attention with subsequent releases including "Where Myth Fades to Legend," "*The Emptiness*," and "A Place Where The Sun Is Silent". Current main members of the band are Dennis Lee, Shawn Milke, Patrick Thompson, Shane Crump, and Jake Campbell. Over the years, the band has had several changes in their lineup. They have released many concept albums, one of which is "*The Emptiness*." This album was inspired by books and showed a move toward more complex stories.

Alesana is an American band that plays post-hardcore and emo music, they were formed in Raleigh, North Carolina, in October 2004 by Shawn Milke, Dennis Lee, Patrick Thompson, Steven Tomany, and Daniel Magnuson. The band's name comes from Aliceanna Street in Baltimore, Maryland, where some of the members used to live and play music together. They started to become well-known with their first EP, "Try This With Your Eyes Closed," in 2005, and their full-length album "On Frail Wings of Vanity and Wax" in 2006, their music mixes melodic and heavy sounds, and they often include pop-punk elements, and their lyrics are usually dramatic and tell stories. Although the group has had some changes, the core members are Dennis Lee, who does screaming vocals, Shawn Milke, who sings and plays guitar and piano, Patrick Thompson on guitar, Shane Crump on bass, and Jake Campbell on guitar. Later albums like "Where Myth Fades to Legend," "*The Emptiness*," and "A Place Where The Sun Is Silent" helped establish their reputation for creating concept albums and delivering emotionally powerful performances.

The Emptiness is the third studio album by Alesana, released in January 26, 2010 and defines the band's discography because it marks their first full transition into a rock opera and really improves their success for the adaptation of music from contemporary literature era. The Band's itself has screamo, post-hardcore, metalcore, symphonic rock, rock opera, emo band. The background and recording, Guitarists Shawn Milke and Patrick Thompson began the album's writing process by spending six weeks working "around the clock" on the rough versions of the album's tracks, the previous albums have various references to mythology of many culture, *The Emptiness* begans its tour first in Europe, while touring in Europe, Shawn Milke and Dennis Lee decided to create a horror influence for their work, "*Annabel Lee*" (1843), by Edgar Allan Poe, faint references are also made in the liner notes to '*The Tell-Tale Hearts'*(Poe:1843) and '*The Cask Of Amontillado"*(Poe:1846) .

Alesana wanted to create a real concept album, where each song is like a chapter in a bigger story, not just a group of separate tracks. The band members often talk about how much they love Poe and other classic Gothic writers. The themes of death, madness, love, and loss from those writers have a big influence on the album's dramatic sound and the way the lyrics are written. The story revolves around a sad and complex main character whose deep sadness and obsessive behavior match the dark emotions found in Poe's poetry. This character is central to the story told in "*The Emptiness*". Alesana tried to push the limits of how storytelling and music can work together by mixing the strong musical style of post-hardcore with elements of horror and creative storytelling. In interviews, the band explained that they wanted the album to feel like an immersive experience, they wanted it to have repeating themes, different perspectives, and a strong sense of emotional flow, not just a list of songs. Just like trying to understand the plot of a novel or a gothic short story, they hoped listeners would pay close attention, look for hidden clues, and engage more deeply with the lyrics. "*The Emptiness*" shows how Alesana uses references to other works and adapts old ideas in a new way, using modern music to make these ideas relevant and meaningful today, therefore, when a well-known literary piece like Edgar Allan Poe's "*Annabel Lee*" is turned into a modern musical album, the original message and feelings change in several ways. Alesana's album "*The Emptiness*" doesn't just tell Poe's story again; it changes the feeling and message of the poem so it can connect with new people, especially fans of post-hardcore music. One big change is how the lyrics and music

come together by turning poetic words into songs with powerful melodies and strong vocals, Alesana helps listeners feel the deep sadness and strong feelings of Poe's poem in a more direct and emotional way. This matches what Linda Hutcheon (2006) says in her theory: "Adaptation is repetition, but repetition without replication, bringing together familiarity and novelty in a creative act of reception" (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 4). People still recognize the main ideas from Poe's original work like love that lasts forever and the pain of losing someone, but now those ideas are shared through guitar sounds, changes in song speed, and powerful performances. Adapting a work also helps create new cultural meaning in Indonesia, adaptation is often about balancing tradition with new creativity. Professor Bambang Sugiharto, an important literary theorist, explains that "Adapting a literary work in Indonesia often involves a process of cultural negotiation, where the old is continually reinterpreted through new artistic forms" (Sugiharto, 2011). In the case of "*The Emptiness*", Alesana doesn't just copy Poe's poem. Instead, they use music to re-imagine and bring the story into the present, making it something today's audience can relate to.

In *The Emptiness*, Alesana take Edgar Allan Poe's poem Annabel Lee (1843), which centers on love and loss, and rework it into a narrative trajectory marked by sadness, obsession, and psychological disturbance. The album strengthens and darkens the poem's emotional register, illustrating Hutcheon's claim that adaptations can "add new layers and feelings that aren't in the original, sometimes changing the main emotional focus or how the story is seen" (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 10). The music grows more intense, the lyrics become more violent and paranoid, and the story presents the protagonist's guilt, anger, and confusion in a way that is more explicit than in Poe's text. Indonesian scholars such as Isnaini Yulianita Hafi and Bambang Sugiharto emphasize that musical and artistic adaptations often mediate between individual emotion and shared cultural experience. Their observations support the view that an album like *The Emptiness* does not simply restate Poe's themes, but relocates them within a contemporary soundscape and subcultural context, where questions of trauma, guilt, and identity are negotiated through music.

1.2 Identification of the Problem

Based on the problem identification, the ideas and story of Edgar Allan Poe's poem "*Annabel Lee"* from 1843 are deeply and on purpose changed in the album called *The Emptiness*. As mentioned before, Poe's poem gives a rich experience by mixing

feelings of sadness with beautiful poetry. But when this story becomes adapted, there are more difficulties. The band uses new symbols and a different style that combines dark, gothic images with a strong emotional and mental viewpoint. Because of this, some people might find it harder to understand what Poe was trying to say originally. This can lead to different meanings that need careful looking. People might miss the band's main messages in the lyrics, which could either match or be different from what Poe originally meant.

1.3 Limitation of the Problem

I identify that the analysis of the intertextual adaptation of Edgar Allan Poe's poem "*Annabel Lee* (1843)" into the lyrics of Alesana's concept album *The Emptiness* is the main goal of this study, which is based on the problem identification. An interdisciplinary method is used for the analysis, which is backed by literary and cultural frameworks, especially Linda Hutcheon's (2006) theory of adaption. The study focuses only on examining how the band's artistic decisions translate Poe's story and ideas from depressing romance to psychological terror.

1.4 Formulation of the Problem

Based on the problem limitation, I formulated my research problem in the following three questions:

1. What narrative and symbolic similarities and differences can be identified between Edgar Allan Poe's poem *Annabel Lee* (1849) and Alesana's concept album *The Emptiness* (2010) as its adaptation?
2. How does *The Emptiness* transform Poe's narrative structure, characterization, and setting in adapting Annabel Lee into a darker story?
3. How do Alesana's artistic decisions reshape Poe's themes of love, grief, and madness within the framework of Linda Hutcheon's theory of adaptation?.

1.5 Objective of Research

Based on the formulation of the problem above, the objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To examine the lyrical and narrative transformation of Edgar Allan Poe's poem "*Annabel Lee* (1849)" as it is adapted into Alesana's album *The Emptiness*.
2. To identify and analyze the specific lyrical and structural changes that reflect the shift from Poe's original themes to a new, darker perspective.

3. To examine and analyze the band artistic decisions to shift the themes of Poe's story and ideas from depressing romance to psychological terror.

1.6 Benefit of the Research

1. This study can serve as a useful reference for future work that explores psychological or thematic topics in poetry and literature. It offers a new look at how Poe's unique style represents despair and emotional struggle.
2. To understand how Poe uses irony and imagery to build complex emotional narratives within his poetry.struggle are represented in classical poetry, particularly through Poe's distinctive style.

1.7 Systematic Organization of the Research

CHAPTER 1: **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter provides the background of the research, problem identification, problem limitation, problem formulation, and the objectives and benefits of the study. It also outlines the theoretical and methodological framework to be used.

CHAPTER 2: **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS**

This chapter presents the theories that will be used for this research. It will include a detailed discussion of Linda Hutcheon's theory of adaptation (2006)

CHAPTER 3: **RESEARCH METHOD**

This chapter explains the research method, approach, and design that will be used. It discusses the object and data of the research, along with the techniques for data collection and analysis.

CHAPTER 4: **A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF EDGAR ALLAN POE'S ANNABEL LEE AND ALESANA'S CONCEPT ALBUM 'THE EMPTINESS' USING LINDA HUTCHEON'S THEORY OF ADAPTATION**

This is the core chapter of the research. It will analyze the lyrical and narrative transformation from Edgar Allan Poe's "*Annabel Lee* (1843)" to Alesana's *The Emptiness* to answer the research questions. The analysis will focus on how themes and imagery are adapted and how they reflect a shift in psychological and cultural perspectives.

CHAPTER 5: **CONCLUSION**

This chapter provides a summary of the entire study, presenting the findings and conclusions derived from the analysis. It also offers suggestions for future research.