



**A STUDY THE CHEATINGS AND THEIR EFFECTS  
UPON THE CHEATERS IN BEN JONSON'S  
*THE ALCHEMIST***



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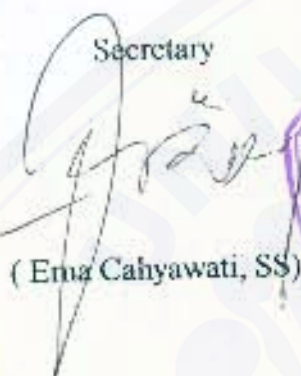
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## APPROVAL SHEET

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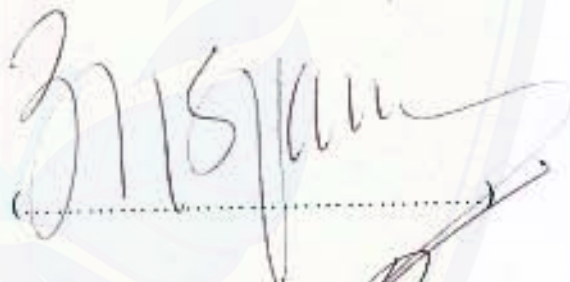
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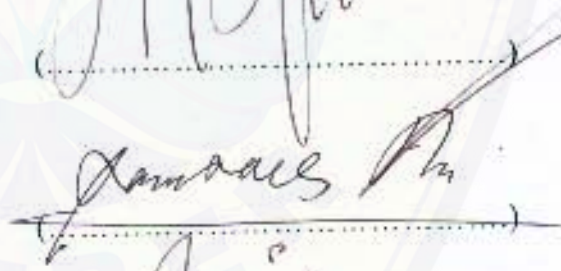
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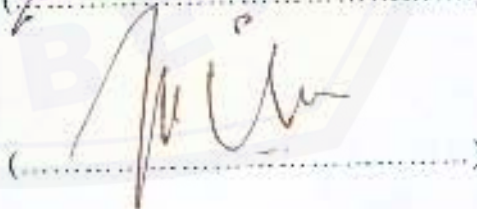
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(.....)

*With my deepest love, this thesis is dedicated to:*

1. *My father and my mother.*

*Your prayer is my success, your love is the great support for me.*

2. *My younger brother, Wawan.*

*Thanks for your help.*

3. *My younger sister, Ratih.*

*Our togetherness cheers up my life.*

4. *My friends, Ira, David, Eka, Prapti, Mimin, Uus, and all the members of Swapenka.*

*Thanks for your companion and your support.*

5. *My Alma mater.*

***MOTTO :***

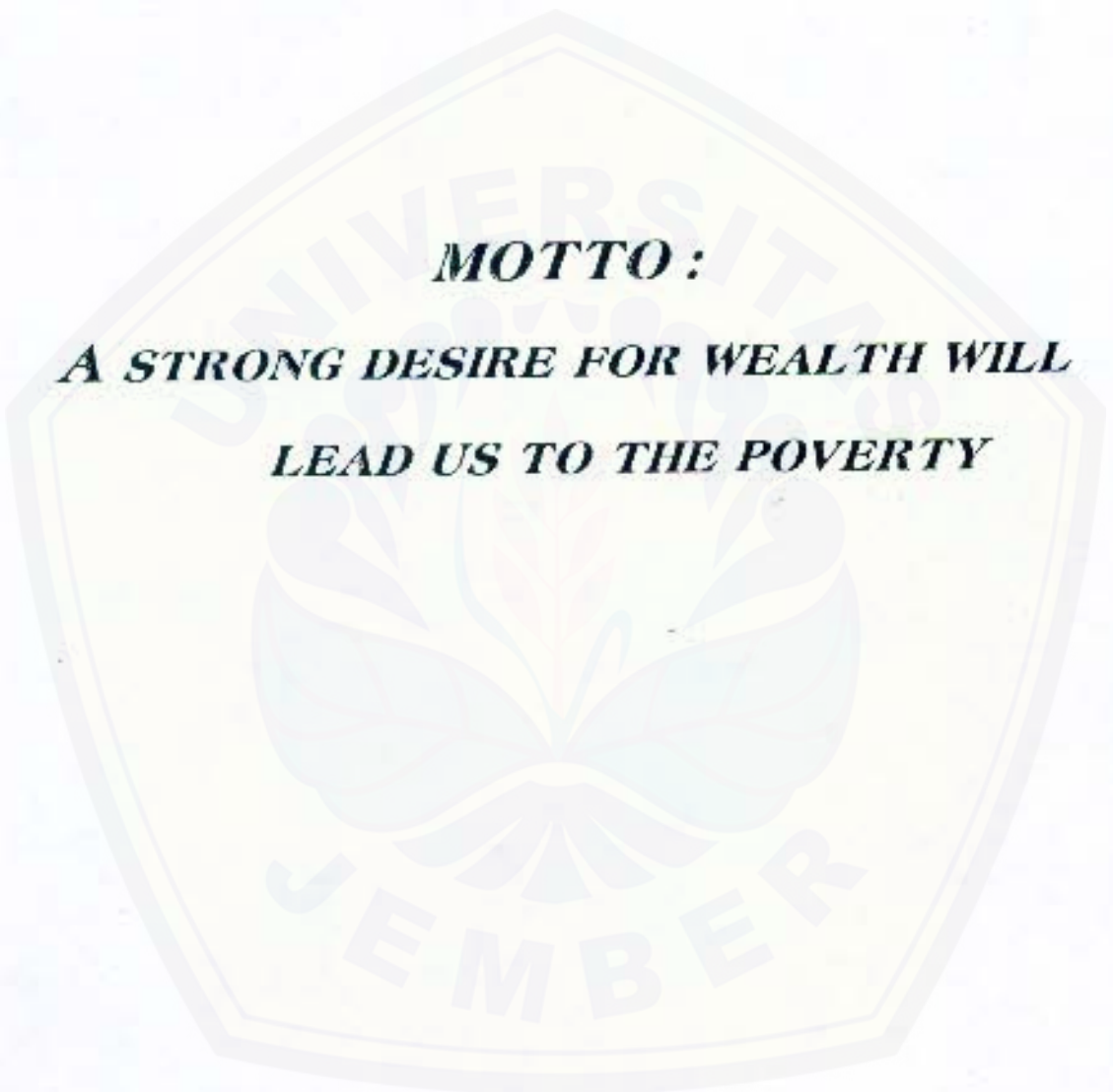
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LEAD US TO THE POVERTY***

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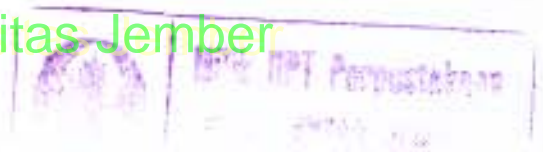
I am aware of my weakness as a human being, hence this thesis could not be finished without the guidance of the persons from whom I get a great deal of support, motivation, suggestions. On this occasion, I would like to give my sincere thanks to :

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## CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 The Rationale

The word literature is not quite strange for us. Literature in general is everything written, whether it is about life, love, or just an imagination of its author. Literature refers to written (and spoken) composition created by the author for a certain purpose to the readers.

Studying a literary work is not easy. The readers do not only read it but also to understand the messages expressed by the author. There are many advantages got from reading a literary form, for example:

By reading a literary form, someone will understand the life of the author and get more valuable lessons expressed in the literary form such as; wisdom, honesty, vice and virtue.

Wellek and Warren ( 1965 : 95 ) state "life is, in large measure, a social reality eventhough the natural world and the inner of the individual are also object of literary imitation".

It means that a literary work mirrors or expresses life through the writer's imagination. By using his imagination, he can creates his work, in addition that he depicts or imitates some aspect of social reality of life. A play is one of literary forms, reflecting human's life that is designed to be performed by action and dialogues among the characters. Reaske notes that a drama is a work of literature or a composition of life and human's activities by means of presentation ( 1966 : 5 ). That quotation shows that a play differs from other literary forms because of its dialogues and the performance on the stage.

A play may describe a social problem in a certain society, such as Jonson's comedy play that will be discussed in this thesis, entitled *The Alchemist*. It is a play about human's strong desire to be rich quickly by cheating the others using the art of alchemy. This play was written in 1610 and was published in 1612. Alchemy is an art of

changing base metals into gold. The theory of alchemy comes from the Aristotelian's notion that every substance is composed of varying proportions of four elements, earth, air, water, and fire, and the observed facts state that one element can act on another to produce the third. This is the basis of the view that base metals can be transformed into gold by given the right materials and formulas for transformation. The main character in this play is Face. He is a poor servant and he has a strong desire to be rich without working, so that he creates a group of cheaters with his friends, Subtle and Dolcommon. They have a great plan to practice the art of alchemy to cheat the others and use Lovewit's house as the basecamp. Lovewit is Face's master. He is not at home when Face and his friends practice the cheatings, but their plan, further does not run easily because of the return of the host. This kind of trick often happens in our society and therefore, it is interesting to analyze the cheaters' experiences and the effects of cheatings upon the cheaters themselves.

### **1.2 The Problem to Discuss**

*The Alchemist* is called as a comedy. The play tells about the poor people who have a great dream to be rich quickly without working. The main character of this play is Face. He is Lovewit's servant who is trusted to take care the house while the host goes to London, but he uses this chance to plan cheatings with his friends Subtle and Dolcommon. They use Lovewit's house as the basecamp and each of them have a certain field of job, for example: Subtle is a doctor, a palm reader, and also as an alchemist. Face is a man whose job is to bring the victims to Subtle, while Dolcommon is prepared as the queen of fairy. This event can be found easily in social life that money and wealth become main source of a crime.

consequences of the cheating. These can be found through the actions and the dialogues among the characters in the play.

### **1.6 The Method of Analysis**

The problem in this thesis is analyzed by using deductive method. Deductive method is analysis from general to particular one. *Oxford Advance Learners Dictionary of Current English* notes that deduction is a conclusion reach by reasoning from general laws to a particular case (Hornby, 1974:225). Hadi also states that deductive method is used to describe or to draw the conclusion of certain knowledge from general to particular case ( 1994: 41 ). The discussion begins with the explanation of the causes of cheating and the cheating activities then goes to the conclusion that is the effects of the cheating upon the cheaters themselves. Library research is used to find out data and information that supports the analysis.

### **1.7 The Hypothesis**

Hypothesis is a very important way to get the exact conclusion in a thesis. Macmillan notes that a hypothesis is educated "guess" or tentative explanations about a correct solution to a problem, descriptions, and possible relationship of differences (1992:35). The hypothesis in this thesis is trying to find out whether it is true or not that cheating brings psychological effects upon the cheaters themselves.

### **1.8 The Organization of the Thesis**

This thesis is constructed into five chapters. The first chapter is introduction with eight sub chapters they are the rationale, the problem to discuss, the scope of study, the goals of study, the hypothesis, the approach to use, the method of analysis, and the last sub chapter is the organization of the thesis. The second chapter is the biography of the

author and the synopsis of the play. Chapter three explains the meaning of the terms. There are two main terms explained here, they are cheating and effect. Chapter four is the discussion of the play including the factors that support the cheatings , the activities of cheating and the effects of cheating upon the cheaters. Chapter five is conclusion of the whole discussion.





## CHAPTER II

### THE BIOGRAPHY OF THE AUTHOR AND THE SYNOPSIS OF THE PLAY

#### 2.1 The Biography of the Author

Ben Jonson was born on June 11<sup>th</sup>, 1572, in Westminster. He was the last son of a clergyman who died a month before his birth. His father was not a prosperous man. After the death of his father, a master of bricklayer married his mother. A few years later, Jonson went to Westminster school, where the great historian, William Camden was at the time but Ben got no success in his study, so he decided to work as a bricklayer assistant.

Jonson could not stand as a bricklayer anymore, therefore he went to the wars in the Low Countries, where he finally killed an enemy. There were no more evidences known about this time. In 1592, at the age of twenty, he was back from the wars and got married with Anne Lewis on November 14, 1594.

In 1597 Jonson joined with theatrical company of Philip Henslowe and got a four-pound loan. The play (*The Isle of Dogs*) was the first play of Ben Jonson's life in prison. In 1598 he produced the first play on which his reputation raised: *Every Man in His Humour*. In 1599 he produced a play entitled *Every Man Out of His Humour*. A duel in which Jonson killed an actor made him stay in jail again. This situation inspired him to produce tragedy plays such as: *The Spanish Tragedy*, *A Richard Crookback*, and then *Sejanus*, but those plays were not successful.

At the early period of James I, Jonson joined with Inigo Jones for many years to prepare the masques that were so very famous at court. With Inigo Jones, Jonson wrote twenty of thirty-seven masques

produced at the court (1605-1614). During this time, too, he wrote his popular comedies such as:

- *Volpone* (1606)
- *Epicoene* (1609)
- *The Alchemist* (1610)
- *Bartholomew Fair* (1614)

He also wrote *Catiline, His Conspiracy* in 1611, another tragedy plays, which were not successful. In 1611 Jonson published his collected works in folio. The year of 1611 also to be the end of Jonson's period as a dramatist. In 1618 Jonson went on foot to Scotland, where he visited the poet, William Drummond of Hawthornden. In 1623 a fire destroyed his entire library; including his works, among other things, his notes for a poetical treatment of his trip to Scotland were burnt, as well as manuscript of an English Grammar; only a rough draft remained.

In 1625 James I died, and three years after the death of James I Jonson suffered a paralytic stroke. Perhaps the most important works of his last years were notes and comments on reading, preserved in timber or Discoveries. Jonson died in 1637 and was buried in Westminster Abbey. Jonson's life was a complete one: wars, duels (in which a man was killed), some three or four imprisonments, extensive study, and an amazing amount of literary production.

## 2.2 The Synopsis of the Play

Lovewit, a London gentleman leaves London and entrusts his house to his housekeeper, Jeremy or Face, a man who is so greedy cunning. He invites his friends Subtle and Dolcommon to prepare a great plan that is a cheating and they decide to use Lovewit's house as the basecamp


The plan of the operation is like this: Subtle is a skilled alchemist, an astrologer, and face readers. Face sometimes disguises as a man whose job is to recruit customers for the doctor. As needed, he wears other disguises, such as a doctor's assistant. Dolcommon is a charming woman whose profession is a prostitute. One day the clients appear. Dapper, a young man who wants a charm to make him lucky in gambling. He wants to fulfill his desire, so he needs Subtle's help. Subtle tells him about a young man with good fortune. Dapper leaves to bring more money. The next client is Drugger, a tobacconist who is seeking some helps for he wants to open a new shop. He wants his horoscope read, and he needs some advices about the right orientation for his merchandise and also lucky signs for his establishment.

An old client Sir Epicure Mammon appears with a friend Surly. Mammon is a greedy man with materialistic dreams. Mammon has required Subtle for manufacturing a philosopher's stone. Here, Face as Subtle's assistant. The cheaters promise that the philosopher's stone will be provided very shortly. To catch him further, Face promises to help Mammon woo Dolcommon but Surly is not sure, and the appearance of Dol makes him certain that the men are the cheaters, so that he makes a plan to expose them.

The next client is Ananias, representing the puritans who want also the philosopher's stone. Subtle threatens Ananias when he hears that the puritans will give no more money until they see the result. When Drugger comes, Face assures him of future success. Drugger tells them that there is a young and wealthy man who has been coming to town with his widowed sister, then Face wants Drugger bring them to meet Subtle and he encourages Drugger to believe that he may marry a wealthy young and beautiful widow.

The further clients arrive, they are Ananias and his pastor Tribulation Wholesome. Subtle convinces them about his enormous art.





He can turn the pewter into Dutch Dollar. Face reports that he has already got a new customer for Dol, he is a Spanish count who has been coming in London. Dapper, then arrives to be introduced to his aunt, the queen of fairy, which a part to be played by Dol. This time, they are interrupted by Drugger's coming with his friend Kastril. Kastril is a man who wants to be able to quarrel like a gentleman. Kastril is so sure that Subtle can teach him the art of quarreling. When the cheaters blind-fold Dapper to prepare him to meet his aunt, they are again interrupted this time by Mammon.

Mammon and Dol are in turn interrupted when Kastril and his widowed sister, Damepliant arrive, so Mammon and Dol enter another room. Subtle and Face plan to prepare a trap for Kastril and Damepliant because each of them want to marry Damepliant, therefore, they quarrel again. When the Spanish count, actually Surly in disguise, arrives, the cheaters are for a moment found unprepared, Dol is occupied with Mammon. Subtle and Face try to trick Surly by substituting Damepliant for Dol, pretending that Subtle forecasts her marriage with a Spanish count. The cheaters leave Damepliant with Surly in another room in the house. Subtle and Face quarrel again, but now both of them are worried that the other will marry her.

The affair of Surly and Damepliant, however, is not successful. Surly proposes marriage, showing gratitude for Damepliant's feeling but when he confronts Subtle, really, Subtle has the same feeling with Surly. Kastril is obviously eager enough to quarrel, Drugger knows that Surly is his debtor in his shop, Ananias sees in Surly's Spanish dress the big hatred.

Those combined activities are brought to the end of the story by the return of Lovewit, the host. The neighbors tell Lovewit about the strange people who have been coming to his house. Face now is dressed as Jeremy, the housekeeper (whom no one has seen for some months)

and tries to convince Lovewit that the neighbors are lying. Unfortunately, the cheaters forget about Dapper, who has managed himself to meet the queen of fairy. When he calls out from the house, Jeremy can only confess the whole affairs. Lovewit who dearly loves a joke, forgives his servant completely if Jeremy promises him to accumulate stolen goods and seeks Lovewit a young and beautiful woman as a wife. To save himself, Jeremy cheats his partners before they are able to cheat him.

Jeremy Abrings Damepliant to Lovewit. Lovewit feels that the widow is the right woman to be his wife. Lovewit's marriage with Damepliant is held. Now the entire group of the victims arrive. Mammon and Surly with the police, Kastril and the puritans. Lovewit will return to Mammon whatever of his left property if he procures a warrant from the police. Mammon admits his gullibility. At the end of the story, Lovewit alone has profited. Face, Subtle and Dol are left exactly where they were at the beginning of their conspiracy. Face is again Jeremy, the house keeper ( servant ), Subtle and Dol are penniless vagrants wandering somewhere around the streets of London.



## CHAPTER III

### THE MEANINGS OF THE TERMS

Before discussing and analyzing the problem of the thesis, it is necessary to understand the meanings of the terms in the title of the thesis such as cheating and effect.

#### 3.1 The Meanings of Cheating

The word cheating is the noun form of the verb to cheat. Hornby notes that to cheat is act in a dishonest way to win the advantages or profit ( 1974: 142 ). Dishonest way means the way that is full of deception or trickery. Based on the definition above, it can be concluded that cheating is the action that is full of trickery done by someone to get the advantages or profit from the other person or people. While a person who practice this job is called as a cheater.

In *the alchemist*, it is told that Face, Subtle, and Dolcommon are the poor characters who are allied to practice cheatings. They use the art of alchemy to get a lot of money from their victims by promising them everything they want such as preparing a meeting with the queen of fairy, changing several base metal into gold and creating a philosopher's stone.

Actually, the cheaters do not have any skill on the art of alchemy, but their performance is able to convince their victims to believe in their skill. They arrange and create a laboratory in the house and they dress as an alchemist. Their most victims are greedy people who want some helps to succeed their business and to fulfill their needs, such as wealth and good fortune. Finally, most of the victims lose their money without any results as the consequence of their greed and the cheaters (Subtle and DolCommon) are back into poor people and they are wanted.

### 3.2 The Meanings of Effect

Webster notes two definitions of effect (n) as follows:

1. Anything brought about a cause or agent; results
2. Influences or action on something (1986: 432).

Hornby in *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* notes two definitions of effect (n), they are:

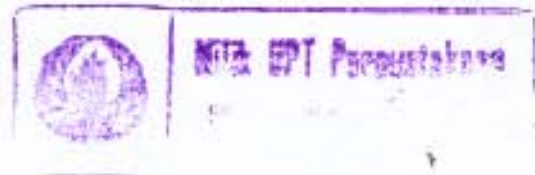
1. In phrase of degree or extent result; out come
2. Impression produced on the mind of spectators, hearers, readers (1974: 276).

*The Random House Dictionary of the English Language* also notes the meanings of effect (n) as follows:

1. Something that is produced by an agency or cause; result; consequence.
2. Power to produce results; efficacy; influence.
3. The result intended; purport; intent (1968: 421).

Based on the explanations above it can be concluded that effect is the result or the consequence produced by the agency or cause. Effect appears when there is an action of the doer or effect raises as the consequence of the accomplishment of the agency. In the end of the play, it is told that the cheaters are failed because the police and the people around (the neighbors) reveal their activities in the Lovewit's house.

Face as the creator of the group of cheaters finally admits that he and his friends Subtle and Dol Common have practiced several cheatings in the house. He is ashamed to admit his guilt. He feels sorry and he promises his master a beautiful and wealthy widow for a wife. Finally, Face has been forgiven by his master but his friends Subtle and Dol Common are back as starving vagabond and they are wanted. Regret, feeling guilty, and shame are the psychological effects on the cheaters that will be discussed in the next chapter.



## CHAPTER V CONCLUSION

The problem of money and wealth is the common case in the life of man. Poverty, sometimes causes despair to everyone, even they do not care of the law.

*The Alchemist* is one of Ben Jonson's plays, which clearly expresses Jonson's unbelief upon the art of alchemy. By the use of alchemy, Jonson adds additional satire to this play. *The Alchemist* is a play, which describes the existence of the art of alchemy at that time. The people who do not believe it supposing that these are form of nonsense and irrationality. Furthermore, this play illustrates human's strong desire upon wealth. They do an illegal activity that is a cheating. Face, the main character of the play is the bustling, busy, and opportunistic man. His job is to bring the victims for Subtle. He goes to town and brings the "fish" to the net. He and his friends, Subtle and Dolcommon have a great that is a cheating uses the art of alchemy. They use Lovewit's house (Face's master house) as their base camp when the master is not at home

One by one of the clients arrive. The first is Dapper, a clerk who wants a spirit to help him in gambling. Subtle, as a doctor promises him the queen of fairy and asks Dapper to fulfill the demands of the queen such as several ceremonies to meet the queen. The second client is Druggier. He is a tobacconist who wants to open a new shop; therefore he needs some advices and the lucky orientation of his door and his shelves from Subtle.

The third client is Mammon. He is a man with dreams of power, richness, and luxury, therefore, he is an easy game for the cheaters. He wants a philosopher's stone and believes that Subtle will soon succeed in preparing it. Mammon is not coming alone, he comes with his friend Surly

who is highly skeptical. He will believe only when he is shown, therefore, he becomes a matter for the cheaters.

The next client is Kastril. He comes with his widowed sister Damepliant. Kastril is a foolish man. He wants to learn to quarrel. His sister, Damepliant is beautiful and she is an easy game for the cheaters. The plan of the cheaters does not run smoothly because Subtle and Face are falling in love with Damepliant. They are involved in the quarrel because of a beautiful widow. It illustrates how they are so greedy.

The other victims come from the puritans. They are Ananias and Tribulation Wholesome. They want the philosopher's stone for their group's activities. This is also Jonson's critique to the puritans at that time. Lovewit's ( the house master ) return is a serious problem for the cheaters and it leads to the revealing of all activities in the house. Finally, Face (the housekeeper) admits all of he and his friends have done in the house, then he asks for his master's forgiveness. Face also promises his master a beautiful and wealthy widow for his wife.

In the end of the story, the cheaters are back like at the first they have met. Face becomes Jeremy, a housekeeper, Subtle and Dolcommon are the starving vagabonds, wandering around the streets of London and they are wanted people. Lovewit is so lucky because he is married to Damepliant.

It is true that cheating is an illegal activity because it is against the law. Cheating always brings misery upon the victims, even upon the cheaters themselves. The arrested cheaters will be sent to jail and get the punishment, besides, they will be isolated by the people around them as the effect of what they have done.



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