



Short stories by Anton Chekhov raise social issues: An overview

Manav Dahiya

Independent Scholar, M. A., Department of English, MDU Rohtak, Haryana, India

Abstract

Every narrative begins in a specific location. The author can alter the story's chronological order. He may deliver the story in chronological order or from the conclusion. He may use flashbacks and flashforwards throughout the period. Equally important to the setting of a narrative is its location. The noteworthy aspect of this passage is how the author attempts to enhance the effect of a story through the use of the setting. In horror tales, for instance, the location is often a gloomy or destroyed site, a castle, or a desolate cemetery. However, it is more beneficial to use the term widely to refer to the whole idea, staging, and direction of a theatrical performance by the director. Given that this research paper is about Anton Chekhov's short tales providing a brief overview of the short story's context is vital.

Keywords: noteworthy, masterpieces, lyrical, brevity and economy

Introduction

Anton Pavlovich Chekhov was born on "January 17, 1860, in Taganrog, South Russia, near the Azov Sea" ^[1]. In 1841, Chekhov's grandfather purchased his family's freedom as a serf (a peasant who lives and works on property held by another). Young Chekhov and his siblings worked in the family shop and attended the neighbourhood school ^[1]. Their highly pious father beats them often. In 1876, after his father's company failed, the family relocated to Moscow, Russia, to start again. At sixteen years old, Chekhov was left behind to complete his education ^[1].

Chekhov was a beautiful, self-reliant, witty, and lively young guy with brown eyes and blond hair. In August 1879, he joined his parents in Moscow, where his father worked as a labourer, and his mother sewed on the side. Chekhov promptly enrolled at Moscow University's medical school. He quickly assumed his father's position as household leader, a role he held for the remainder of his life ^[2]. Anton Pavlovich Chekhov was a Russian playwright and short-story writer regarded as one of the world's finest authors. His work as a playwright resulted in the creation of four masterpieces, and his most accomplished short stories are held in high esteem by writers and critics. It is common to practise to name Chekhov, with Henrik Ibsen and August Strindberg, as one of the three most significant figures in the development of early modernism in theatrical performance. Chekhov practised medicine as his profession. "Medicine is my rightful wife, and literature is my mistress," he once stated ^[2].

There may or may not be exposition in a short tale, which introduces the environment, context, and primary characters. Due to space limitations, they often begin during the action and do not explain everything. However, they consist of the climax, the crisis, and other events. Several short stories end abruptly and do not provide a conclusion. The brief narrative focuses on a single event and presents a singular plot, central theme, and geographical setting ^[3]. The author begins the story at or on the verge of the climax, minimises both prior exposition and setting information, keeps challenges to a minimum, and concludes the story with the denouement in a few sentences or fewer. It was not until the latter half of the 19th century that people started using the term "short story" ^[3]. The short story is not very long, but it has much in common with the larger narrative regarding significance and scope. It may be quickly seen and recognised as opposed to being defined.

In this phase of literary history, the short tale has established itself as an effective method of narrative expression. It has a straightforward and condensed story structure, holding the reader's attention. Tolstoy was not a fan of his play, but he enjoyed writing the short tales he published. The first pieces of Chekhov's writing, consisting of sketches and anecdotes, were published in comic journals. He often signed them anonymously, using aliases such as "Antosha Chekhonte" and "Man without a Spleen." Chekhov's ambitions rose with time, and he introduced several formal changes that significantly impacted the development of contemporary short tales. They provide a one-of-a-kind ambience focused on seemingly little details and are often described as eerie or poetic. He is a master at constructing a unique environment, which is most common in Russia and dealing with fundamental challenges that society faces via the medium of his fiction. Yevgeniya, Chekhov's mother, was a talented storyteller who used to regale her children with stories of her adventures around Russia with her textile trader father. Chekhov was honest when he said, "The skill we acquired from our father, but our mother gave us our soul." His scientific materialism is closely tied to Chekhov's outlook on life and his artistic practice. That is, the literary themes he led to Naturalism virtually unavoidable were practically inevitable. The fundamental tenet

of the Naturalism school of thought was that creative writers should compose their works using the scientific approach and "observe and report as dispassionately and impersonally as the scientist" does.

The scientific breakthroughs of the nineteenth century and the implementation of the scientific approach into artistic practice were essential components in the formation of the naturalist movement. Chekhov was a materialist, and he wanted to use his plays and short stories to investigate human behaviour in an entirely scientific way. He worked hard to incorporate scientific principles and practises into the works of art he produced. In particular, he made it a point to include the idea of scientific objectivity in every one of his written works. For Chekhov, the need to accurately portray reality as it is was an essential component of both his creative and personal credo. Chekhov's scientific approach to writing drove him in the same way that it inspired other realistic authors to incorporate the seedy side of life in his descriptions of actual life. When he was criticised for inserting objectionable aspects in his short novel "Mire," he defended his method by appealing to scientific ideas, saying that in the eyes of chemists, there is nothing in this world that can be considered dirty. A writer should be as impartial as a chemist; he must give up ordinary subjectivity and recognise that dunghills perform a respectable function in the landscape and that wicked impulses belong to life as good ones do. The artist must first observe, choose, speculate, and last synthesise. In his classic short tale, "Bet," Chekhov debates whether the death sentence or life in prison is the more appropriate punishment for a criminal. There is no doubt that life is preferable to death in any situation. In addition, knowledge is what gives life its purpose; for this reason, the young lawyer, upon realising the power of knowledge, renounced the two million and wrote to the Banker, saying, "To demonstrate to you how much I despise all that you live by, I renounce the two millions of which I once dreamed as of paradise and which now I despise." In order to deprive me of the right to the money, I will leave this place five hours before the period that was agreed upon, and by doing so, I will breach the contract...^[5].

In the short tale "An Incident," the author brilliantly illustrates how the same occurrence may be significant for one person while having no bearing on another's life. Even though the loss of the kitten is causing tremendous suffering, Their mother is concerned about Vanya and Nina's unkempt appearance and nightgowns. In the eyes of the children, the loss of the kitten is on par with the passing of a natural person, but in their mother's eyes, it is just another thing to be dealt with daily. In the short tale "Lady with the Lapdog," the main focus is common issues such as boredom in one's life and cheating on one's spouse. The narrative opens with an affair that begins in a typical manner but concludes unexpectedly. "Husband" tells the tale of an envious husband who observes his wife dancing joyfully with a soldier while he stewes in his feelings of jealousy and envy. The film 'Fat and Thin' demonstrates the dualism of human connections via the interaction of two adult men who were once schoolboys. This duality is freshly explored in the film. That individual exudes an air of mystique in any circumstances, which is exquisitely portrayed in the short tale "An Enigmatic Nature." In the course of the narrative, a burgeoning young writer has a chance encounter with a lovely woman while riding on a train carriage. Raymond Carver, the author of the short story "Errand," which is about the passing of Anton Chekhov, was convinced that Chekhov was the best short story writer of all time and included his remark in the story "The short stories written by Chekhov are just as wonderful and important today as they were when they were first published. It is not only the enormous number of stories he wrote – for few if any; writers have ever done more – but also the incredible frequency with which he produced masterpiece stories that thrive (sic) us as well as delight and move us, that lay bare our emotions in ways that only true art can accomplish. This makes him one of the most influential authors of all time." ^[6].

In most cases, it is a brief, non-extended piece of fiction. It is neither too brief nor pervasive, but instead of a length that falls somewhere in the middle. Because there are several possible meanings for each word, the art of creating short tales needs a higher level of knowledge and inventiveness. A short tale may accomplish the same things that a more extended narrative might express and disclose over several pages by condensing the information into a few phrases and using megawords that connect many different themes; it is analogous to other dominant genres. There is no question about whether being a storey writer or a narrative is superior or inferior. As with a lemon squeezer, a writer of short tales must first condense whole novels into individual pages, then individual sentences, and finally individual words ^[4]. The brief account abides by the principles of brevity and economy, avoiding extensive and detailed explanations of both persons and events being discussed. Because there is not enough space for a comprehensive cast of people, the emphasis is often narrowed to only one episode at a time. In a concise story, the occurrences are not meant to serve as the primary focus but rather to highlight the characters and the setting. They choose to take the quickest route to their destination. In terms of narrative similarity, it resembles a tale. A short narrative in prose excludes those composed in 20 verses ^[4]. To expose and explain the primary links that exist and have existed historically between the main narrative literary styles. Oral tradition is the source of all written traditions across the globe. It often takes the shape of a heroic lyrical story called epic ^[5]. Aside from this, a short story is distinct from a fable or a tale in that it is not only a narrative but also a well-developed and complicated literary form that can be traced back to the early nineteenth century ^[6]. The origin of the short story can be found in the early nineteenth century. A story is fundamentally an oral form, and the custom of telling stories orally still lives on in rural India, where people still gather around a fire to listen to stories about fairies ^[7].

Conclusion

When compared to theatre, which is just a story told without a narrator, a narrative piece must have not only the story but also the storyteller. In a drama, the characters carry out their activities right in front of the audience, but in fiction, the narrator explains the characters' actions in his own words, based on what he has seen and understood. Like every other literary style or genre, the tale has its conventions and procedures. Every artist owes significant gratitude to those who came before them for teaching them the foundations of their craft. The epic is the result of a lengthy and gradual process of combining numerous narrative forms, such as religious myth, quasi-historical legend, and fictitious folk stories, into a conventional narrative that is a mixture of myth, history, and fiction. This process was carried out to produce the epic as a finished product. The most important aspect of early storytelling is tradition, reflected in the epic storyteller's presentation of a classic narrative. His central dedication is not to the actual world or the entertainment industry, but to mythology, and his virtual drive is neither historical nor creative; instead, it is re-creative.

References

1. Arkin Steve. "Mary Lavin and Chekhov. Something Autumnal in the Air." *Studies. An Irish Quarterly Review*, 1999;88:351. (Autumn). 278-83. Print.
2. Anggit Prima Chandra. "Conflict of love in Anton Chekhov's the seagull (1895): An individual psychological approach", 2015.
3. Chekhov, Anton. *Anton Chekhov's Short Stories*. Ed. Ralph E. Matlaw. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1979. Print.
4. ---. *Anton Chekhov: Collected Works in*. Trans. Alex Miller and Ivy Litvinov. Moscow: Raduga Publishers, 1987, 5(1). Print.
5. Jubair Uddin KM. "An approach to reevaluating and understanding chekhov in the perspective of theme, motif, symbol and writing style", 2019;7(2):42-54.
6. Mitchell, Ken; Chase, Thomas; Trussler, Michael Lloyd. *The Wascana Anthology of Short Fiction*. Ken Mitchell, Thomas Chase and Michael Lloyd Trussler (eds). Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center, 1999. Print.
7. Md. Ibrahim Khalil, "Anton Chekhov's "The Darling": An Exposition of Freudian Unconscious and Jungian Collective Unconscious" ISSN 1930-2940. November 2020: 20(11).
8. Petievich, Carla. "Review: *Widows, Wives and Other Heroines: Twelve Stories by Premchand*." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 58.2. 1999, 555-56. JSTOR. Web. March 24. 2010. Print.