Manonmaniam Sundaranar University

DIRECTORATE OF DISTANCE AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

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B.A ENGLISH (SIXTH SEMESTER)

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PRESCRIBED TEXTS:

https://uh.edu/~hwagan/pnl/if.pdf

https://rpo.library.utoronto.ca/content/andrea-del-sarto

https://allpoetry.com/phenomenal-woman

https://nowcomment.com/documents/238717

https://www.ibiblio.org/ebooks/James/Turn_Screw.pdf

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http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/mansfield/bliss/psychology.html

http://pinkmonkey.com/dl/library1/julius.pdf

http://spartan.ac.brocku.ca/~dvivian/Blood_Relations/Blood_Relations_A_Primer_rev_4.pdf

https://www.planetebook.com/crime-and-punishment/

Paula Hawkins. *The Girl on the Train*. Random House, 2016.

UNIT I: POETRY

IF – RUDYARD KIPLING

About the Author:

Rudyard Kipling was born on December 30, 1865, in Bombay, India. Shortly before Rudyard's birth, his parents, John Lockwood Kipling and Alice Macdonald, left the United Kingdom due to John's appointment as a professor at Bombay's Jeejeebjoy School of Art. Rudyard was born on the university's campus, and his parents named him after Rudyard Lake in Staffordshire (where John and Alice first met). Kipling's parents referred to themselves as Anglo-Indians, and Rudyard's early years were marked by a dual influence of his country of origin and his country of residence. At the age of five, Rudyard and his younger sister, Trix, were sent to the United Kingdom to begin their formal education while their parents remained in India.

After spending his youth abroad, Rudyard returned to India at sixteen, where he began working for various local newspapers. Colleagues often commented on his passion for writing and his work ethic. After beginning his literary career in British India, Rudyard decided to relocate to London to delve further into the British literary scene. While in London, he published various short stories and a novel, entitled *The Light That Failed.* His breakthrough came with the publication of *The Jungle Book* in 1894, a collection of tales set in the Indian jungle. These stories, filled with adventure and moral lessons, quickly became classics in children's literature. In 1901, Kipling wrote *Kim,* a novel set in colonial India. Six years later, in 1907, Kipling was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature, solidifying his place as one of the most influential writers of his time.

In his later life, Kipling became deeply involved in various political and social issues. He used his platform to advocate for British patriotism during World War I, which earned him both praise and criticism. The latter part of Kipling's life was also marked by personal loss, including the death of his son John. Kipling continued to write until the early 1930s, though with less recognized success. He passed away in London, shortly after his 70th birthday. His works continue to be studied, celebrated, and debated, exploring themes of colonialism, identity, and the human spirit.

Summary:

Stanza 1

The poet tells his son to remain calm and patient when people make mistakes and put the blame on him. He ought to trust himself when people doubt him. But he ought to grant them their cynicism as well, and try to understand what caused it. In the fifth line, the poet offers advice on how to wait patiently for success and not get discouraged because those who persevere and work hard will eventually achieve. The poet then cautions his child that he will often be duped by others. But he should never lie in his life; he should always be sincere. People are going to hate him. But he should show them love instead of feeding their hate. The poet warns him in the last line not to come out as very knowing or superior to others since, if he heeds all of the foregoing advice, his child will come across as overly bright and superior to others.

Stanza 2

The poet advises him to have huge aspirations but to never let those dreams rule his life. Similarly, to this, he ought to have positive ideas (about his objectives, the future, etc.), but he shouldn't make them the focus of his life because success in life requires effort. Simply daydreaming and pondering won't get you anywhere in life. Therefore, it is important to set objectives, envision a better future, and work diligently towards achieving those goals.

The poet advises meeting Triumph and Disaster and treating those two imposters equally in the third sentence. The words "Triumph and Disaster" have their initial letters capitalised. These two extremes characterise existence. The poet refers to them as fakes or impostors. They either bring immense happiness or terrible misery. However, because they are short-lived, one should not take them seriously. The poet advises speaking just the truth and having the guts to confront it when it is being used to deceive people in the fifth line. He should also have the fortitude to rebuild things he has built that are broken using outdated tools, that is, using the energy or abilities you now possess.

Stanza 3

The poet suggests that before taking major risks, one should compile a list of all their successes. To put it another way, one shouldn't be afraid to try new things because they might either make them successful or turn out to be a complete failure (pitch and toss). If someone takes big chances and fails, he should start over without thinking back or talking to anyone about

the setback. You ought to persevere until you achieve success. In the poem's fifth line, the author offers advice on how to maintain bravery in the face of fatigue or failure: use your heart, nerve, and sinew. One should have a strong will that can motivate them to "Hold on!" when everything else in life seems hopeless.

Stanza 4

Vanity and ego are never suitable among monarchs or other powerful individuals, but one must keep their attributes among regular people (and never act like them), according to the poet. Stated differently, the poet is counselling people to hold onto their virtues throughout their poverty and to avoid being arrogant during their prosperity. The poet then goes on to say that having faith in one's objectives and convictions shields one against damage from both allies and enemies. Never should you give up on them. He should never allow others to become completely dependent on him, even if they will often need him. It's possible that the poet is suggesting that it's best to never place too much value on other people because doing so can lead to emotional attachments and negative consequences down the road.

In the stanza that follows, the poet talks about the importance of time. He thinks that time is finite and cannot be recovered. As a result, one had to begin living each and every moment to the fullest. In the last two lines, the poet tells his son that he will be able to do everything he wants and that he will be a man, or a true human, provided he (his son) heeds all the advice he offered above. The poem "If-" by Kipling tells his readers that not taking life too seriously leads to success. He advises taking chances, remaining true to oneself, and not allowing feelings dictate one's behaviour. In essence, Kipling advises his child to have enough self-assurance and trust to remain true to themselves. Additionally, it seems that because he is aware of himself, his son will have faith and confidence. The loop is self-sustaining. Cycles never end. Success, in Kipling's view, is determined by the 60-second run rather than by achievements—the trip is what matters, not the end point. Not when we pass away, but how we live our lives is what matters.

Analysis:

Many people view Kipling's sentimental and guidance writings as a set of guidelines for moral and personal integrity, self-actualization, and success in life. It was first released as a compilation of poetry and short stories in the "Brother Square-Toes" chapter of Rewards and

Fairies. The poem was inspired by Kipling's close friend Leander Starr Jameson, even though it is addressed to his son John. Is Kipling's idealised portrayal of a devoted son or daughter the best possible one?

Kipling expresses what he lost most in life—love and attention—in his lovely and endearing sentences. His early experiences of being abused by his foster mother and being thrown away by his mom made him a failure in public school. The loss of his two children had a profound impact on his emotional and psychological terrain. This life path aided in the development of a personality profile that is highly regarded for the man's lack of sensitivity to pleasure or pain and his refusal to associate it with fame, fortune, or power.

The poem's author states in the first stanza that if his son maintains his composure even when others around him can't, if he can maintain his sense of reason when others around him can't; if he can be self-assured when others don't trust him; if he can endure and be tough; if he can handle being mistrusted but being true to himself; if he can withstand being despised but not hate himself; it doesn't look handsome or have wisdom. These statements outline a strong character in the middle of society.

In the second stanza, the author defines a strong personality by advising his son that feelings shouldn't cloud his judgement, that thoughts are useful if they can be put into practice, that he should be able to handle both success and failure, that he should be wary of the ways in which evil people might use his words, and that he should have the dedication to restore life to what is rightfully his. The author discusses stoicism and endurance in the third stanza as qualities of a man that he hopes his son will possess as an adult: the ability to risk everything he has, even if it means losing it, to do it proudly and in secret, and the knowledge to cling to his physical, emotional, and psychological strengths in order to make things work because, in any situation, there is always a place for "doing" when there is "a will."

The author aims to instill in his son the values of virtue and nobility in all situations, regardless of social status or hierarchy, and to handle both friends and enemies with ease. If he can maintain balance and be dependable for his friends without abusing or taking advantage of them, then every moment of his life will have purpose. This is the final stanza. The goal of all the cascade of guidance and wisdom he gave his son—the attainment of manhood—is revealed in the final two lines: "Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,

And – which is more - you will be a man, my son!"

The poem's every line possesses the veracity and tone of a life motto, and it can be interpreted as a personal life philosophy based on the qualities of resolve, fortitude, and responsibility. The poem includes a wide range of qualities thought to be necessary for the perfect guy. A guy needs to be, above all, modest, patient, sensible, honest, trustworthy, and persistent. Despite being composed in 1895 and published in 1910, the poem continues to have a positive and uplifting influence on the reader.

ANDREA DEL SARTO – ROBERT BROWNING

About the Author:

Robert Browning was born in Camberwell, London in May of 1812. His father was able to accumulate a large library containing around 6,000 books. This would form the basis of Browning's early education and stimulate his interest in literature. From early in his life Browning's family supported his poetic aspirations and helped him financially as well as with the publishing of his first works. He lived with his family until he met and married the fellow poet Elizabeth Barrett. Elizabeth and Robert moved to live in Florence, Italy. They had a son in 1849 and Browning's rate of production dropped off significantly. Elizabeth, now known by her married name, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, died in 1861. After this, Browning and his son moved back to England.

After receiving mixed reviews from critics when he was young, Browning finally gained some critical acclaim when he was in his 50s. His greatest work, *The Ring and the Book* was published in 1868-69. Before Browning's death in 1889 in Venice, he lived to see the formation of the Browning Society and received an honorary Doctorate of Civil Law from Balliol College at Oxford University. He was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Summary:

The poet, Andrea del Sarto, asks his wife, Lucrezia, to join him for a brief moment of peaceful conversation at the start of the poem. Before diving into a reflection of his life, he wants to spend some quiet time with her. The speaker starts out by talking about how time is passing and how he feels like he has no control over his life.

The speaker then discusses how his level of expertise compares to other artists' work throughout the most of the poem. Although he is aware that he is more skilled than artists like

Michelangelo or Raphael, his work lacks the soul that these artists are able to express. They've managed to get into heaven and come out with ideas that he never gets, for some reason. This reality disappoints the artist since he believes that no one values his own art to the same extent.

He occasionally tries to blame his wife for the majority of his problems. He believes she is the one preventing him from moving on. He draws attention to the fact that the other artists are not faced with the same obstacle. He reflects on his time spent working for the monarch in France. He was greeted with cheers from the court there, but his wife, fed up with the status quo, had him return to Italy.

By the poem's end, he has come to the realisation that, despite the fact that his life has not turned out as he had hoped, he is unable to alter it. He tells his wife that he is glad they got to spend this time together. Lucrezia's cousin arrives, interrupting this pleasant time. Del Sarto is being sued by this "cousin" who is requesting money to assist pay off gambling debts. He accedes to the request and sadly and gravely tells his wife that she is free to leave.

Analysis:

Browning is a self-described poet of the spirit of man. "My stress lay on the incidents in the development of the soul, little else is worth study," he remarked. The majority of his poetry examine the speaking characters' psyches. The characters open themselves to us and share everything about themselves, including their inner thoughts, emotions, attitudes, and more.

One of the best examples of character analysis is Andrea Del Sarto. Here, Andrea's personality is disclosed and his soul is examined, while Lucrezia's character is also made clear by Andrea's comments. Andrea has a lifeless, weak-willed personality. Andrea Del Sarto begs his wife to stay with him longer in the opening lines of this poem so that he can paint better the next morning and obtain more money for her.

The poem starts with details surrounding a different form of failure, the wrecked romance between Andrea and Lucrezia, even though its primary focus is the problem of aesthetic failure. The poem's final line permits Lucrezia to see her beloved, but the opening line ends a "quarrel" and signals a little pause in the issues that plague the relationship. Lucrezia is asked by Andrea to "bear with [him] for once," suggesting that this request would be an anomaly to her usual behaviour. It's important to note that Andrea bases his capacity to work—that is, paint—on Lucrezia fulfilling his desire to spend time with him "by the window as married people use/Quietly, quietly the evening through."

This connection between romanticism and creative inspiration grows into one of the poem's main topics. Andrea regretfully muses that they "might have risen to Rafael" if Lucrezia had "but brought a mind" powerful in proportion to her beauty. According to Andrea, his role in creating masterpieces is to contribute his artistic talent; Lucrezia is responsible for giving him his "soul," or passion. As the poem comes to an end, Andrea implies that his marriage is what sets him apart from the other great Renaissance Italian artists: "They overcome/Because there's still Lucrezia."

Andrea reflects on his life and career, which appear drab and gloomy, in this poetry. His contemporary refers to him as a "flawless painter," stating that he is flawless in all artistic technical areas. However, he lacks the "elevation of mind" that imbues an artist's creations with life. Rafael lacked Andrea's technical proficiency as well. However, Andrea lacks the imaginative depth and breadth that Rafael's paintings convey, as Rafael's paintings convey a spiritual radiance and passionate depth that is easily understandable even by young children.

Andrea first holds his wife responsible for his artistic failures. He could have become as accomplished an artist as Rafael and Michael Angelo if only Lucrezia had encouraged him to paint for spiritual glory rather than financial gain. Then he places the entire burden fully on God's shoulders. Eventually, he came to the conclusion that when an individual lacks an inner drive, external stimulation is useless. He's one of those half-men with talent and not enough will to be great. One can only be inspired to spiritual exaltation by noble aspirations:

"Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,
Or what's a Heaven for?"

Through Andrea's speech, we learn of his marriage, how he handled King Francis I, how powerless he felt when his parents were dying of poverty, and how obedient he was to Lucrezia, whose debts he was willing to pay. The poem's conclusion, which is intimately related to Lucrezia's persona, signifies the pinnacle of Andrea's self-discovery. Lucrezia embodies his art in her soullessness and physical beauty, reflecting a crucial aspect of Andrea's mental and spiritual state. Andrea is aware of Lucrezia's infidelity as she frank leaves to meet her partner. Furthermore, Andrea claims that he will choose her before artistic splendour even in heaven. Andrea will not be superior to Rafael, Michael Angelo, or Leonardo Da Vinci in terms of artistic ability since Andrea will select Lucrezea. It is a tragic story of a character whose life and career have been ruined by soullessness.

PHENOMENAL WOMAN – MAYA ANGELOU

About the Author:

Poet, author, and professor Maya Angelou was born as Marguerite Johnson on April 4, 1928 in St. Louis, Missouri, to Bailey and Vivian Baxter Johnson. Angelou's older brother, Bailey Jr., nicknamed her "Maya" when they were children. When Angelou was three years old, her parents got divorced and they sent her and her brother to live with their grandmother in the harshly segregated Stamps, Arkansas. Angelou and her brother moved back and forth between Stamps and St. Louis throughout their formative years. During World War II, Angelou attended George Washington High School and San Francisco's Labor School, dropping out for a short while to work as the first Black female streetcar conductor in San Francisco, but eventually graduating at the age of seventeen. Three weeks after her graduation, she gave birth to her only son.

Around 1950, Angelou, then a calypso dancer, changed her name from Marguerite Johnson to the more theatrical Maya Angelou. From 1954 to 1955, Angelou toured Europe with a production of the opera Porgy and Bess, and three years later, she moved to New York City in order to concentrate on her writing career. Around the same time, she served as the Northern Coordinator for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) under Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. In 1961, Angelou moved to Cairo, where she wrote for the weekly newspaper, "The Arab Observer", then to Ghana, where she taught at the University of Ghana's School of Music and Drama and worked as a feature editor for "The African Review". Angelou returned to the United States in 1964 to help Malcolm X build the Organization of African American Unity. Unfortunately, when Malcolm died, so too did the organization.

In 1970, Angelou published her famed autobiography, I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings, for which she received a National Book Award nomination. This autobiography was followed by five other volumes, released in 1974, 1976, 1981, 1986, and 2002. Angelou's first volume of poetry, "Just Give Me a Cool Drink of Water 'Fore I Diiie," was published in 1971, and nominated for the Pulitzer Prize the next year. In 1981, Angelou returned to the South, where she became the Reynolds Professor of American Studies at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. In 1993, she recited her poem "On the Pulse of Morning" at the inauguration of President Bill Clinton.

The recipient of a Tony Award nomination for her role in the 1973 Broadway play Look Away, Angelou was granted three Grammy Awards for her spoken word albums and an Emmy for her supporting role in the television miniseries “Roots.” In 1998, Angelou was inducted into the National Women’s Hall of Fame. She was the recipient of the National Medal of Arts in 2000 and the Lincoln Medal in 2008. Later in life, Angelou divided her time between Winston-Salem, North Carolina, and Harlem, New York. She had one son, two grandsons, and two great-grandchildren. Maya Angelou passed away on May 28, 2014 at the age of 86.

Summary:

Stanza 1

The poet states in the first stanza, “Pretty women wonder.” The term “pretty woman” describes a woman with pale skin, most likely a White woman. The poet claims that the attractive women are always curious as to how he manages to be liked and accepted by the public despite not being cute or built like a fashion model. Fairer skin is the only thing that makes a lady beautiful, therefore when she tells her secret, they (gorgeous ladies) do not trust her. Her beauty means something completely different to them.

The poet informs them that her femininity is the key to her beauty. She tends to be lovely and attractive because of the way she smiles, stretches her arms, walks with long, deliberate movements, and has stretched hips and curled lips. To put it simply, her feminine features and figure are what make her attractive. She is a very lovely and remarkable woman, which is why she is a tremendously, phenomenal woman.

Stanza 2

The poet claims in stanza 2 that the males in the area either get up or bow down to stare at her when she enters the room (as previously said) in an ordinary manner. She becomes the centre of attention as they swarm around her like a colony of honey bees surrounding the queen bee. The poet claims that what makes her appealing and, thus, a fantastically, phenomenal lady are the fire, or passion, in her eyes, her gorgeous smiling teeth (flash of my teeth), her swinging, to-and-fro waist, and the delight in her feet (presumably from the way she dances).

Stanza 3

The poet claims in the third verse that men question the same things as attractive women do—namely, what makes her so endearing and beautiful that they are blind to. They make

numerous attempts to unlock that secret, but they are unable to penetrate her inner mystery. The poet believes that this inner mystery holds the key to her beauty. Inner mystery most likely alludes to the inner beauty that all women possess and which, regardless of skin tone, renders every woman lovely and endearing. The poet informs the guys that she is a wonderfully beautiful woman because of her curved back, her brilliant smile, the rhyming motion (riding) of her breasts, and the elegance of her style. The men are increasingly interested in finding out the key to her beauty.

Stanza 4

The poet comes to the conclusion in the final stanza that the attractive woman would now understand why her head is not bowed—that is, why she walks with complete confidence. She can make an impression on the males without making noise, hopping around, or speaking loudly. Because of the sound of her heels, the way her hair is styled, the palm of her hand, and their desire to take care of her (a guy wants to be taking care of a lady), the lovely women would truly feel proud of her whenever she passed them. She is a great woman as a result of all these attributes. Despite not having light skin, this is the secret to her appealing physique, confidence, and beauty.

Analysis:

In the first verse, the speaker doesn't specifically mention any one person. The reader may infer that Maya Angelou is recounting her own experiences because the poem is written in the first person. Angelou uses several rhymes in this particular stanza to immediately establish a rhythmic feeling for the poem, even though the entire poem lacks a clear rhyme scheme. The speaker immediately makes it apparent to the reader that she does not identify with this group when she says that the other women who are watching her with interest are just "pretty women." In the second line of the poem, she asserts that she does not meet the ideal of beauty exhibited by fashion models. In an attempt to divulge the secret to her beauty, the speaker is accused of uttering "lies" by the ladies. They call the speaker dishonest because they are jealous, and the fact that they used such a strong word to describe her betrays their jealousy as well as their disbelief.

Despite the women's shallow attitudes, the speaker comes out as positive. She describes her movements and appearance in great detail, giving the impression that she is larger than life.

The “stride” of her step, the “span” of her hips, and the “reach” of her arms all convey the notion of unrestrained space occupied by her graceful movements. The speaker has a self-assured gait and her lips’ “curl” suggests more than just a physical attribute—it might even be a happy smile.

At the end of each stanza, the speaker reiterates the refrain, which is again mentioned at the end of the next verse. The speaker plays on words with the term “phenomenal,” which also happens to rhyme. The adjective “phenomenally” changes the meaning of the verb “to be,” implying that being a woman is more than just a passive condition but an activity that calls for attention. She actively embraces her beauty, intellect, and grit—all qualities that come with being a woman—and she does it in a way that is quite remarkable. She ends with, “That’s me,” demonstrating her confidence and a strong declaration that she is, in fact, amazing.

It’s fascinating to note the many interpretations of “phenomenal” among different people. On the one hand, it could be considered astounding and fantastic. But it may just as easily be viewed as absurd as an illogical natural phenomenon. The second interpretation is comparable to the way the ladies are portrayed in poetry; they don’t trust the speaker in the same way that they might not believe in any phenomenon that seems outlandish or unlikely to occur. The speaker, however, embraces her power and disapproves of other women’s pessimism. The term “phenomenal” can also refer to something that is clear or noticeable, therefore regardless of how absurd or shocking the speaker’s amazingness may seem, people will still be drawn to it.

In the second stanza, the speaker’s tone shifts from simply confident to seductively confident. When she enters a room, she refers to her manner as “cool”. She is not in the least bit afraid of males because she is aware of her authority over them. With the words “and to a man” in the following line, she draws comparisons and contrasts with the women listed in the first stanza. Women are led to mistrust and jealously, while males are driven by desire. When guys see her, the seated ones get up. This demonstrates that the men are actually afraid of her, not the other way around. They know how to draw her attention with the right words and are prepared to serve her. Furthermore, Angelou exaggerates how powerful she is over men, claiming that some truly collapse in her presence. Compared to the males who kneel in front of her out of genuine love for her, these guys are less composed.

The speaker then used a metaphor to illustrate how these males encircle her like bees and treat her as though she were honey. They are drawn to her and want to follow her. In this line, the speaker uses verbs and words that evoke speed and light to describe her infatuation. This

time, she admits, the "fire" in her eyes and the "flash" of her teeth hypnotise men. The men surrounding her are hypnotised by her gaze; the fire within her may be confidence or sexual energy. Light flashes suggest that she is grinning with sparkling white teeth. The way her hips appear to be moving—what I call the "swing"—makes me think of dancing. The pride and contentment she feels in her identity as a woman is also symbolised by the "joy" on her feet. When she says again at the end of the stanza that she is a great lady, she is reinforcing this point. This repetition adds to the poem's melodic quality, giving the impression that the speaker is belting out a moving hymn on the virtues of being a remarkable lady.

In verse three, the speaker again alludes to the reactions she receives from other women, stating that "men themselves" have also thought about how gorgeous she is. These guys can't figure out what makes her so attractive, and they're confused by her firm hold on them. The speaker's assertion that these people frequently try to "touch her inner mystery" could signify a variety of things. The word "touch" has a sexual connotation when used by a man trying to woo a lady. Despite the fact that these males are probably willing to make love to her, the speaker seems to be implying that they are unsuccessful in enticing her.

Her body belongs to her, and she controls it. Her inner mystery also made reference to all the beautiful things that make up the human spirit, such character traits, goals, and desires, to name a few. The idea of men trying to unlock her inner mystery in this setting can seem less harmful. They might be trying to understand what makes her special, but they can't "touch" or understand these truths. Due to societal conditioning that has taught men to view women as objects of want (thus the above comment regarding "fashion models"), men "cannot see" or are unaware of the inner beauty. Even when the speaker tries to prove to them how beautiful she is by beckoning them closer or by attempting to express her feelings and interests. They can't seem to get it.

But the speaker doesn't let these men's reactions impact her; instead, she shows pride in who she is. Compared to the previous stanzas, this one shows her acting more sexually. When the speaker talks about the "arch of her back," an image of a seductive woman comes to mind. She compares her smile to the sun, once more alluding to light and the brilliance of her beauty. When she walks, her breasts "ride" or move back and forth, which is the most obvious movement she describes. She concludes by mentioning a graceful personal style, suggesting that her brilliant and soft beauty makes her almost divine in addition to sensual. The definition of

"grace" is innocence, which is the opposite of sexuality. The speaker goes on to say that, similar to how women are described as celestial and sacred in religious scriptures, she may genuinely be both sensual and holy. When these qualities are combined, they make her a remarkable lady. Once more, the answers to all of these riddles are really simple: in a nutshell, she is a lovely woman who knows how to be an amazing woman.

By addressing the listener directly in the poem's fourth and final stanza, the speaker modifies the meaning in several ways. Rather than just shouting her own praises and gloating about herself, she has been sharing her life story with a listener in an effort to win their respect and understanding. The speaker, Maya Angelou, is not named, but it seems likely that she is pleading for the world to recognise her worth as a powerful, confident woman. She claims that since she is not ashamed of who she is, the audience should now understand why she does not budge her head. The phrase also conjures up images of African slaves who were frequently subjected to humiliation or forced to submit to commands. The speaker is putting her head up and overcoming her ancestors' pain.

Another example of the speaker's humility is the fact that she doesn't try to draw attention to herself. She doesn't make a scene or raise her voice to "shout" at people to get attention for herself. Rather, each quality she lists in the poem is either expressed completely silently or in a subtle way. A look, a smile, a hip movement—these are powerful cues that are sent subtly. The audience should be proud of the speaker since she is simply living her life on her terms and isn't trying to irritate or persuade anyone else. She restates her opinion that she has authority because of her subtle qualities.

Her heels' "click" exudes elegance and a confident gait, and her hair's "bend" accentuates her beauty and represents the way it falls naturally. The "palm" of her hand could allude to the hue of her skin. It might also stand for a gentle human touch, as holding someone's hand or presenting something. The last feature is the most intriguing. The speaker says that there is a "need for my care," which suggests that the world not only needs but also wants her. Given that she is needed as a powerful and remarkable woman, this statement goes well with the line that stresses her hand in the previous sentence. She has so much to offer the world since she is a truly remarkable lady.

THE OWL AND THE CHIMPANZEE – JO CAMACHO

About the Author:

Jo Camacho, a Clinical Hypnotherapist & Psychotherapist based in Weybridge, Surrey. She specialise in people with anxiety and related disorders.

Summary:

This poem by clinical hypnotherapist and psychotherapist Jo Camacho beautifully articulates the internal battle many of us face when the more primitive part of our brain (the chimp brain) takes control. The wise owl within all of us is seen here fighting with the chimp who seems determined to make the situation worse, despite its fears of the situation worsening.

"The Owl and the Chimpanzee" is a heartwarming tale penned by Jo Camacho, depicting the unlikely friendship between an owl and a chimpanzee.

In the heart of a lush forest, an owl named Ollie resides within the confines of his hollow tree, yearning for companionship. His days seem endless and solitary until one fateful day when he encounters a lively chimpanzee named Charlie swinging through the trees.

Despite their contrasting natures, Ollie and Charlie quickly form a deep bond rooted in their shared love for exploration and adventure. Together, they embark on thrilling escapades through the forest, with Ollie guiding Charlie from the sky while Charlie navigates the terrain below.

Their friendship encounters challenges, from Charlie getting ensnared in thickets to Ollie facing off against formidable predators. Yet, through collaboration and the utilization of their individual strengths, they overcome every obstacle that comes their way.

Through their shared experiences, Ollie and Charlie learn profound lessons about the essence of friendship, acceptance, and the beauty of diversity. They discover that true camaraderie transcends disparities and flourishes in the harmony of their differences.

Ultimately, "The Owl and the Chimpanzee" serves as a poignant narrative highlighting the transformative power of empathy, companionship, and the celebration of uniqueness. It underscores the notion that genuine connections know no boundaries and are enriched by embracing the diverse tapestry of life. There's nothing wrong with experiencing Internal conflict. It is normal and human. If only we can learn to control our primitive, scared brain more often and listen to our inner owl, we'll enjoy a more peaceful and fulfilling sojourn here on earth.

Analysis:

The inner workings of a human are articulated in this poem by clinical hypnotherapist and psychotherapist Jo Camacho. Some people may have internal conflicts as a result of their brains' (chimpanzee brains') tendency to produce illogical ideas and beliefs. The crucial aspect lies in identifying such illogical ideas and applying one's intelligence and bravery to overcome them, as symbolised by the wise owl. In order to live a more peaceful and healthier life, Camacho shows how, even if conflicts are a natural part of life, it is up to us to battle them with our inner power and wisdom.

The internal conflict that many of us experience when our chimpanzee brain - a more primal version of our brain - takes over is masterfully captured in this poem by Jo Camacho. Here, the chimp, fearful of the situation getting worse, is struggling with the wise owl inside each of us, determined to make it worse.

Experiencing internal conflict is very normal. It's typical and human. We will have a more contented and tranquil time here on Earth if we can just learn to listen to our inner owl and learn to manage our terrified, primitive brain more often.

UNIT II: NOVELLA

THE TURN OF THE SCREW – HENRY JAMES (1843 –1916)

About the Author:

Henry James was a key figure in the literature of the late 19th century and early 20th century, serving as a vital bridge between literary realism, fin de siècle decadence, and 20th century modernism. A prolific writer, he wrote fiction, travel writing, essays, book reviews, and plays, and is perhaps most well-known for his novel *The Portrait of a Lady* and the wildly popular horror novella *The Turn of the Screw,* which was released serially in 1898. James's father was a religious philosopher, lecturer, and writer, and invested significant time into his children's education. Because of his father's profession, the family traveled to London, Paris, Geneva, Boulogne-sur-Mer, and Rhode Island over the course of James's childhood, and James became fluent in French under the tutelage of instructors that the family hired abroad. In 1860, the family returned to the United States and settled in New England, where Henry James would remain until 1869.

In 1869, James embarked upon a 14-month trip across Europe, where he met many contemporary British intellectuals and writers of the period, including John Ruskin, Matthew Arnold, and George Eliot. After several failed attempts to secure work in Europe, James returned to New York before going back to Europe and settling in London in 1876. In London, James was able to begin writing serialized novels. Once in Europe, James became increasingly influenced by the literary realists of the 1880s in England and France such as George Eliot, Emile Zola, and Ivan Turgenev. While much of his early work explores Americans in Europe - *The American* (1877) and *Daisy Miller* (1878) in particular - later on, James's work moved on to incorporate a variety of different themes. He was also a leading writer for Oscar Wilde's fin de siècle literary magazine *The Yellow Book*, which published some of the first "modernist" fiction in England and was hailed for its experimentalism.

James is known for straddling the transition between literary movements and for pioneering "transcontinental" literature. Both American and European, modernist and Victorian, and a master of multiple forms, James has proved to be an enduring figure in literary history. There remains a significant debate about James's personal life among biographers, historians, and critics; James never married, and recently many critics have speculated that he was gay, including literary critic Eve Sedgwick and writer Colm Tóibín.

Summary:

On Christmas Eve, at an old house, the topic of ghosts is discussed. A man named Douglas recounts of the governess of his sister who, years ago, claimed to have seen apparitions; in reality, she had documented her experience in a manuscript, which he vows to send for. Subsequent investigation reveals that the governess was employed to look after two young students whose uncle had been left in charge. The governess was employed by this man, and he implicitly instructed her to handle any issue and never to bother him.

The day the governess shows up at her new job is when the narrative begins. Miles and Flora, her charges, are adorable young children who don't seem to want to bother anyone. Despite the fact that young Miles has been let out of school, she grows to love them. After talking about what happened, the governess and the housekeeper, Mrs. Grose, conclude that Miles was simply too smart for a traditional school.

The governess secretly wants her attractive employer could see how well she is doing, even though she loves her job and her kids. Not too long afterward, she spots the outline of an unfamiliar man in the distance. She wonders if there's a secret kept in the big country house. However, after a while, she notices the identical face outside the dining room window. She learns that the face she described to Mrs. Grose belonged to an ex-servant named Peter Quint, who has been deceased for approximately a year.

The governess then comes across a second apparition, this time in the shape of a woman. It is discovered after additional discussion with Mrs. Grose that this was Miss Jessel, the children's previous governess, who passed away unexplainedly approximately a year earlier. The current governess discovers that Peter Quint and Miss Jessel had been too close to the kids and that they had also been involved with each other when she questions Mrs. Grose for more details.

The governess determines that the figures are coming back to see the kids when they make more appearances. At that point, she starts to question whether the kids are aware that the apparitions are there. She concludes that the kids had to know these characters are there based on how they act. She mentions that tiny Miles used to go for walks on the lawn in the middle of the night. Little Flora also frequently wakes up in the middle of the night to gaze out the window.

One day, after leaving church early, the governess discovers Miss Jessel in the classroom. The governess believes that the former instructor wants to hurt Flora and make the young child suffer along with her during the altercation. She has made up her mind to cancel her contract

with her employer and send him a letter requesting that he step down. That day, while strolling by the lake, she spots Miss Jessel's figure once more and calls young Flora's attention to it. However, the young girl is blind. Moreover, the housekeeper, who is accompanied, is unable to observe anything. After picking up tiny Flora, Mrs. Grose returns to the house. The governess receives a visit from the housekeeper the following day, who describes to her the horrible language that young Flora had been using and why she must have been in contact with a bad person for her to have used such language. Little Flora is carried away by the governess, and that evening, when she is conversing with little Miles, Peter Quint appears at the window. Little Miles collapses and the governess realises he is dead when she meets him with this ghost.

Analysis:

James' use of point-of-view is one of his contributions to the craft of fiction. Point-of-view refers to the perspective used to tell the story. Before James' books, for instance, a lot of fiction was written from the author's point of view, which meant that the writer was both telling the tale and guiding the reader's reaction to it. A large portion of nineteenth-century literature included the author as the storyteller; the author would construct scenarios involving specific characters, but not necessarily all of the characters would appear in every scene.

James handles point-of-view differently in his fiction. His goal was to create a protagonist who would either be the focus of the story or a central character who could watch and report on the action. Normally, the reader would have to follow this character's perspective throughout the entire narrative. Daisy herself is thus the main character in Daisy Miller, but we see her through the eyes of the "central intelligence," that is, Winterborne. As in The Turn of the Screw, there are situations when the main character doubles as the main intellect. In James' fiction humans respond to events as the "central intelligence" would respond to them. Furthermore, every scene in a James work has the central character present or else is a scene in which some aspect of the centre character is being addressed by the primary intelligence. Hence, if Daisy isn't there, the topic of conversation is one of Daisy's traits.

Character List: The governess

The governess serves as both the main storyteller and the focal point of The Turn of the Screw. She is twenty years old and the youngest of an impoverished clergyman's daughters. She was raised in Hampshire. We can infer that she had numerous siblings and a dog from the tales

she tells her little charges. When she goes to an interview in London to be considered for the job of governess to two children in an Essex country estate, she has just left home. She is clearly in love with her employer, as the prologue makes clear, and she works hard to earn his respect and devotion throughout the book. The governess may be a powerful, caring woman whose battle with bad spirits for the souls of the kids under her care suggests that she is a decent person. Alternatively, she might be insane, experiencing sexual repression and hallucinations, and holding herself accountable for the devastation of young Flora and Miles.

Mrs. Grose

Mrs. Grose works as Bly's housekeeper. She was once the lady in Harley Street's mother's maid, and ever since the previous governess, Miss Jessel, passed away, she has been in charge of little Flora. It is never indicated how old she is, but it appears to be middle age. She doesn't know how to read or write, and since she works as a servant, she is scared to trouble her boss. She appears to accept and believe the narrator's views regarding the spirits at Bly and serves as a confidante. The little information we have regarding Peter Quint and Miss Jessel comes from Mrs. Grose. She wants to involve their employer as soon as possible, unlike the narrator, but she can't confront her boss.

Flora

Flora, who is eight years old, is Bly's owner's niece. She is a lovely, blond child who can play music and recite poetry. She is also very obedient and kind. After spending several months by herself with her former governess Miss Jessel, Flora is said to be maintaining a covert correspondence with the woman's spirit. The narrator initially views her as heavenly but eventually comes to the conclusion that she is occasionally "an old, old woman." She might be hiding a deeper wickedness behind her apparent innocence and perfection.

Miles

When the governess comes at Bly, Miles, who is ten years old, is away at school. She remarks that he has a softness and finds him to be equally as lovely and heavenly as his sister. Miles's school expelled him for an undisclosed transgression. That, along with some of his other behaviour, such walking outside late at night, could indicate that he is a mischievous youngster or that he is intelligent and abnormal. Miles spent a lot of time with Peter Quint, a "base menial"

worker, and the governess believes Quint's ghost is still corrupting Miles. He is a great little "gentleman," has piano skills, and sometimes confronts Quint, either to get away from her and go to school, or to assert his dominance over him.

Peter Quint

Quint was the dapper dude with the valet on Harley Street. He was left in charge at Bly due to his illness, and on occasion he would dress like the master. His keen black eyes and wavy red hair were accompanied by red whiskers and a gorgeous yet untrustworthy appearance. Quint was a "hound" when he was living, having affairs with several ladies, one of which was Miss Jessel, a lady above his position. When intoxicated, he slipped and died on an icy path. Quint appears to the governess as a ghost or possibly as a hallucination, and he seems to want Miles's soul. Quint might also be a symbol of the nineteenth-century male sexual predator stereotype.

Miss Jessel

The kids had previously been in the care of Miss Jessel. She was youthful and attractive, just like the governess of today. It appears that she may have became pregnant after having an affair with Quint. Miss Jessel may have killed herself when she was on vacation. She appears as a ghost, dressed in black, and is frequently dejected. The governess said that Flora talks about going through the agony of hell and that she wants the child to go through it with her because she thinks that Flora is for her soul. Miss Jessel may be the governess's projection of her concerns, as she resembles her in many respects.

The gentleman in Harley Street

He is the owner of Bly and the uncle of Flora and Miles, whose parents passed away in India. He is also known as the master and the uncle. He is a young, charming man who manipulates the governess and other ladies to comply with his requests. He is preoccupied with his own problems and won't give the governess any permission to get in touch with him regarding the kids. He is therefore somewhat to blame for the things that happen to the kids at Bly.

Griffin

Another member of the party in the prologue, Griffin tells as an unsuccessful ghost story about a little boy which inspires Douglas to tell his tale.

Luke

The only one with a name is Luke, one of the servants. Miles takes the governess's letter before he does, despite his being charged with mailing it to the gentleman in Harley Street. Miles wants to visit him one last time.

Servants

There are numerous servants living in Bly, both "maids" and "men." Miss Jessel is once mistaken for a maid by the governess. She also tries to hide her suspicions from the servants, constantly fearing that they may find out about the spirits.

Douglas

The manuscript, which makes up the bulk of the book and opens the prologue with the governess's account, belongs to Douglas. Douglas knew and fell in love with the governess when he was a young man, maybe around sixty, when she worked as his sister's governess. This could skew his assessment of her. For many years, he has stored her manuscript in a locked drawer in his house.

Mrs. Griffin

After Douglas tells his story, Griffin's wife assumes he was in love with the governess.

Narrator

The narrator is one of several persons gathered at a country house recounting ghost stories on Christmas Eve, albeit not much is said about them. He tells the prologue in the first person, from his perspective. He claims that prior to his passing, Douglas provided him the governess's manuscript.

Friends

Other visitors to the rural mansion, where the ghost stories are narrated. Though several females had to depart before Douglas can start telling his story, everyone is eager to hear it.

THE METAMORPHOSIS – FRANZ KAFKA

About the Author:

Franz Kafka was a Prague-born, German-Jewish novelist and short-story writer. He is best known for his signature literary sensibility, which combines the styles of realism, absurdism,

surrealism, and humor with thematic interests in alienation, guilt, existentialism, and oppressive bureaucracy. His most widely read books are *The Trial, The Castle*, and *The Metamorphosis*, the last of which depicts a man who wakes up one morning to discover that he has transformed into a giant insect. Born to a middle-class family in the capital of the Kingdom of Bohemia (known today as the Czech Republic), Kafka pursued a legal education before working at an insurance company. Because of his full-time work at the company, Kafka composed his oeuvre largely in his spare time.

Kafka was mostly unpublished and unrecognized during his lifetime. Most of Kafka's works were published by his friend and literary executor Max Brod after Kafka's death from tuberculosis. Despite Kafka's request that Brod burn his letters, diaries, and unfinished manuscripts for novels including *The Trial, Amerika,* and *The Man Who Disappeared*, Brod compiled, edited, and published most of Kafka's writing in his possession. Kafka's posthumous publications led to widespread popularity and established his prominence as one of the most influential figures of twentieth-century literature.

Summary:

Gregor Samsa, a travelling salesman, wakes up one morning to find that he has been transformed into a giant insect. Although he briefly considers this transformation, he quickly turns his thoughts to his work and his need to provide for his parents (he lives with them and his sister) so that they can pay off their debts. He also thinks about how much he hates travelling.

He realises he is already late for work, but hesitates to call in sick because he has never had a day off sick before, and knows this might raise alarm bells. When he responds through the bedroom door after his mother calls to him, he realises that his voice has become different as a result of his metamorphosis into an insect. When his family try to enter his bedroom, they find the door locked, and he refuses to let them in.

Then there's a knock at the door and it's the chief clerk for whom Gregor works, wondering where Gregor has got to. Still Gregor refuses to open the door to his family or to his visitor. The chief clerk is affronted and tells Gregor through the door that his work has not been good enough and his position at the company may not be safe. Gregor seeks to defend himself, and assures the clerk that he will soon return to work. However, because Gregor's voice has changed so much since his transformation, nobody can understand what he's saying.

Gregor opens the door and his mother screams when she sees him. He asks the chief clerk to smooth things over at the office for him, explaining his … sudden metamorphosis into an insect. Later that evening, having swooned and dozed all day, Gregor wakes up at twilight and finds that his sister had brought him milk with some bread in it. Gregor attempts to drink the milk, but finds the taste disgusting, so he leaves it. He climbs under the couch so his family doesn't have to look at him, while his sister tries to find him food that he can eat.

Gregor overhears his family talking in the other room, and discovers that, despite their apparent debts, his parents have some money stashed away. He has been going to work to support them when he didn't have to. As well as the changes to his voice, Gregor also realises that his vision has got worse since his transformation. He also discovers that he enjoys climbing the walls and the ceiling of his bedroom. To help him, his sister gets rid of the furniture to create more space for him to climb; Gregor's mother disagrees and is reluctant to throw out all of Gregor's human possessions, because she still trusts that he will return to his former state one day.

When he comes out of the room, his mother faints and his sister locks him outside. His father arrives and throws apples at him, severely injuring him, because he believes Gregor must have attacked his own mother. After his brush with death, the family change tack and vow to be more sympathetic towards Gregor, agreeing to leave the door open so he can watch them from outside the room as they talk together. But when three lodgers move in with the family, and his room is used to store all of the family's furniture and junk, he finds that he cannot move around any more and goes off his food. He becomes shut off from his family and the lodgers.

When he hears his sister playing the violin for the lodgers, he opens the door to listen, and the lodgers, upon spotting this giant insect, are repulsed and declare they are going to move out immediately and will not pay the family any of their rent owed. Gregor's sister tells her parents that they must get rid of their brother since, whilst they have tried to take care of him, he has become a liability. She switches from talking about him as her brother and as a 'it', a foreign creature that is unrecognisable as the brother they knew.

Gregor, overhearing this conversation, wants to do the right thing for his family, so he decides that he must do the honourable thing and disappear. He crawls off back to his room and dies. Gregor's family is relieved that he has died, and the body is disposed of. Mr Samsa kicks

the lodgers out of the apartment. He, his wife, and their daughter are all happy with the jobs they have taken, and Mr and Mrs Samsa realise that their daughter is now of an age to marry.

Analysis:

The one thing people know about 'The Metamorphosis' is that it begins with Gregor Samsa waking up to find himself transformed into an insect. Many English translations use the word in the book's famous opening line. But the German word Ungeziefer does not lend itself easily to translation. It roughly denotes any unclean being or creature, and 'bug' is a more accurate rendering of the original into English – though even 'bug' doesn't quite do it, since (in English anyway) it still suggests an insect, or at least some sort of creepy-crawly.

For this reason, some translators (such as David Wyllie in the one we have linked to above) reach for the word vermin, which is probably closer to the German original. Kafka did use the word Insekt in his correspondence discussing the book, but ordered that the creature must not be explicitly illustrated as such at any cost. The point is that we are not supposed to know the precise thing into which Gregor has metamorphosed. The vagueness is part of the effect: Gregor Samsa is any and every unworthy or downtrodden creature, shunned by those closest to him. Much as those who wish to denigrate a particular group of people – immigrants, foreigners, a socio-economic underclass – often reach for words like 'cockroaches' or 'vermin', so Gregor's transformation physically enacts and literalizes such emotive propaganda.

But of course, the supernatural or even surreal setup for the story also means that 'The Metamorphosis' is less a straightforward allegory (where X = Y) than it is a more rich and ambiguous exploration of the treatment of 'the other' (where X might = Y, Z, or even A, B, or C). Gregor's subsequent treatment at the hands of his family, his family's lodgers, and their servants may well strike a chord with not just ethnic minorities living in some communities but also disabled people, people with different cultural or religious beliefs from 'the mainstream', struggling artists whose development is hindered by crass bourgeois capitalism and utilitarianism, and many other marginalised individuals.

This is one reason why 'The Metamorphosis' has become so widely discussed, analysed, and studied: its meaning is not straightforward, its fantastical scenario posing many questions. What did Kafka mean by such a story? Is it a comedy, a tragedy, or both? Gregor's social isolation from his nearest and dearest, and subsequent death (a death of despair, one suspects, as much as it is a noble sacrifice for the sake of his family), all suggest the story's tragic

undercurrents, and yet the way Kafka establishes Gregor's transformation raises some intriguing questions.

Take that opening paragraph. The opening sentence – as with the very first sentence of Kafka's novel, The Trial – is well-known, but what follows this arresting first statement is just as remarkable. For no sooner has Gregor discovered that he has been transformed, inexplicably, into a giant insect (or 'vermin'), than his thoughts have turned from this incredible revelation to more day-to-day worries about his job and his travelling.

This is a trademark feature of Kafka's writing, and one of the things the wide-ranging term 'Kafkaesque' should accommodate: the nightmarish and the everyday rubbing shoulders together. Indeed, the everyday already is a nightmare, and Samsa's metamorphosis into an alien creature is just the latest in a long line of modernity's hellish developments. So the effect of this opening paragraph is to play down, as soon as it has been introduced, the shocking revelation that a man has been turned into a beetle (or similar creature). Many subsequent details in Kafka's story are similarly downplayed, or treated in a calm and ordinary way as if a man becoming a six-feet-tall insect is the most normal occurrence in the world, and this is part of the comedy of Kafka's novella: an aspect of his work which many readers miss, partly because the comedic is so often the first thing lost in translation.

And, running contrariwise to the interpretation of 'The Metamorphosis' that sees it as 'just' a straightforward story about modern-day alienation and mistreatment of 'the other' is the plot itself, which sees Gregor Samsa freed from his life of servitude and duty, undertaking a job he doesn't enjoy in order to support a family that, it turns out, are perfectly capable of supporting themselves (first by the father's money which has been set aside, and then from the family's jobs which the mother, father, and daughter all take, and discover they actually rather enjoy).

Even Gregor's climbing of the walls and ceiling in his room, when he would have been travelling around doing his job, represents a liberation of sorts, even though he has physically become confined to one room. Perhaps, the grim humour of Kafka's story appears to suggest, modernity is so hellish that such a transformation – even though it ends in death – is really the only liberation modern man can achieve.

UNIT III: SHORT STORY

THE BET – ANTON CHEKHOV

About the Author:

On January 17, 1860, Anton Pavlovich Chekhov was born in a town called Taganrog in southern Russia. His paternal grandfather had been a serf, but he collected enough money to buy his and his family's freedom. Anton Chekov had a highly religious upbringing in the Eastern Orthodox Church; his father conducted the choir in which he enrolled his sons. He was one of six children, but after his father declared bankruptcy in 1876, Chekhov was the only member of his family still living in Taganrog. The rest of his family now lived in Moscow. He earned money tutoring to support the remainder of his education.

In 1879, Chekhov left his hometown to join his family in Moscow and study medicine. He began writing humorous stories to earn enough money to bring his family out of poverty, and recognition of his work as a writer grew as he finished his medical studies. He wrote hundreds of short stories, including *Ward No. 6*, as well as plays such as The Seagull and Uncle Vanya. He traveled to the island penal colony of Sakhalin to conduct medical research for his doctoral thesis and was horrified by the conditions there. Though his thesis was rejected for its criticism of the government, Chekhov worked to improve conditions for the prisoners there upon his return to Russia. In 1896, Chekhov was diagnosed with tuberculosis. He continued to write for the theater up until his death in July 1904.

Summary:

A banker's house hosted a party fifteen years ago, and many intellectuals, including journalists and attorneys, showed there. The gathering at the party engaged in a number of intense debates, one of which eventually focused on the death penalty.

The banker, who supports the death penalty and thinks it is more humane, and the lawyer, who thinks life in prison is a better option because it preserves life, became the two representatives of the opposing camps while the group debated. The attorney holds that any life is preferable to none and that the government cannot take someone's life because it cannot be reversed even if it learns from its mistakes.

The banker and the attorney agreed to place a bet, with the banker speculating that the attorney would not be able to withstand five years in prison. The youthful, idealistic attorney chooses to increase the stakes and extends the wager to 15 years. The lawyer would win the bet and get two million rubles if he could serve out the remainder of his term.

The banker, who claims the young lawyer is being impetuous and quick, even offers the young lawyer a way out, unable to believe his good fortune. Still, the attorney chooses to honour his word, and the wager is fulfilled.

The lawyer stays in a modest lodge on the banker's land for fifteen years without ever seeing anyone. Anything he wants is his to have. The lawyer first consoles himself by playing the piano alone, abstaining from alcohol and tobacco. But as the years go by, he gives in and becomes intoxicated or sleep deprived most of the time.

Later, when he is looking for adventures and solace that he cannot physically own, books take up much of his time. He makes full use of the banker's provision of any book, and requests that the latter verify if his translations into several languages are actually perfect by having him fire two rounds in the garden as a test of his reading. The banker concedes and supports the lawyer's hunch that he is a multilingual individual.

The lawyer reads almost every genre available as the years pass. He progresses from the simpler reading of his early years to the complex writings of Shakespeare and the Gospels. By now the banker has lost everything because of his own carelessness and gambling. He starts to fear that his finances will collapse due to the lawyer's wager.

The banker starts to lose all hope that the attorney would honour his word and forfeit the wager. He rationalises his terrible impulses by saying they serve his own interests, therefore he doesn't even feel regret for them. The banker even succeeds in convincing himself that the lawyer is receiving a better deal because, at forty, he will still be considered young and, with the two million rubles, relatively wealthy.

In light of this, the banker looks into the attorney's condition. He discovers his prisoner, who appears to be more older and more worn out than he ever thought, sleeping at his desk. The banker watches him for a short while before noticing a letter on the table.

The attorney declares in it that he will forgo material possessions in favour of spiritual blessings. Throughout his confinement, the prisoner has developed a complete resentment. He feels that there is nothing that he or they can do to ever bridge this divide and has grown to have a strong dislike for other people. In an attempt to demonstrate his seriousness, the attorney chooses to leave prison five hours ahead of schedule and gives up his two million dollar claim, which releases the banker from debt and prevents him from going bankrupt.

With relief, the banker gives the prisoner a kiss while sobbing. When watchmen inform the banker of the lawyer's escape the following day, the banker is not taken aback. Strolling over, he retrieves the letter from the lodge and places it inside a safe that is fireproof.

Analysis:

Chekov chooses to examine whether the death penalty or life in jail is worse in The Bet. He arranges a wager that most likely would never happen in real life in order to do this. This is typical of Chekov's approach to philosophical inquiry; instead of exploring philosophical topics in an abstract way, he prefers to explore them as they might arise in real life, with genuine repercussions, against the backdrop of a straightforward plot.

Chekov illustrates the folly of youth and the dangers of idealism in this tale. The lawyer would never have proceeded with this gamble so hastily if he had been older and wiser. If he had a spouse, kids, or any other dependent support system, he would not have consented. Thus, the wager also highlights youth and man's self-centeredness. The lawyer can't think of any reason not to accept the bet—not that he has anything to lose and two million to gain.

It's fascinating that Chekov chooses not to reveal to the readers the lawyer's innermost feelings while placing this wager. The lawyer's opinions are only made evident to us in a letter that is revealed later in the narrative. Unlike the banker's thoughts, which we frequently witness, we never see the lawyer's cognitive process in its purest and most filtered form. This enables the attorney to maintain his idealistic persona, giving up years of his life to uphold his moral convictions—a move that most people would find difficult to accept in real life. It gives the attorney a refined, holy air.

The narrative also illustrates the negative effects of being cut off from human society. At first, the lawyer was virtuous, abstaining from wine and tobacco, but as time goes on, he caves in to his vices and continues to smoke and drink. Despite his persistent efforts to prove himself and his beliefs correct, he has lost some of his idealism.

The reader gets the impression that the story isn't quite over because of how open-ended it is. It's possible that Chekov intended for the reader to consider the ramifications of the banker's and the lawyer's acts. What happens to the lawyer in the end? Does he spend his days in happiness? Is the banker able to live a guilt-free life, not feeling guilty about robbing a young, intelligent man of so many years? We'll never know if the elderly banker realised how empty and conceited his life was.

The reader is not given much more information in the novel than that, but the banker does harbour some self-disrespect. If the banker keeps the lawyer's final letter, it's possible that he will always regret his choice, but it's also possible that, after a few years, he forgets about the lawyer and blocks all memories of him from his memory

Themes:

The Value of Self-Knowledge

In *The Bet*, Chekhov investigates the banker's ignorance of his line of work and his investments in order to examine self-awareness. He loses the majority of his wealth due to the numerous high-risk investments he makes. He finds this position so terrible that he is reluctant to look through his documents to see if he has more debt than money. He genuinely rejects the possibility of knowing himself.

On the other hand, the attorney illustrates the extremely high cost of self-awareness. At the beginning of the novel, both men are conceited, taking sides in disputes and taking significant risks when making rash decisions. After being imprisoned, the lawyer studies the greatest works produced by the human mind, looking for wisdom in the literature of six different disciplines as well as via careful research and introspection. The lawyer uses his youth to investigate if incarceration is ethically worse than death, but the banker risks only his money. In this way, his confinement is a sort of investment in self-knowledge. He looks bony and much older than his years at the end of the chapter, which shows how much this exploration has cost him.

At the Speed of Hubris

Hubris, or an excessive sense of pride that pushes oneself too far, is a common source of tragic hero failure in classical Greek culture. The two central figures in "The Bet" exhibit conceit. The rapidity at which they place the wager that determines their entire existence demonstrates that they are not making logical decisions, but rather acting on emotion and ego. Similarly, the lawyer raises the stakes on his end of the bargain by going from five to fifteen years in prison. The banker has a profoundly egoistic idea that he could murder someone despite the fact that he has never done anything violent that readers are aware of. The lawyer's seeming wisdom, as asserted in his letter, is akin to conceit. He realises as he writes it that during his incarceration, he has experienced multiple points of view. They fluctuate a lot and alter as he

gains more knowledge. So it seems silly to believe that at forty years old, his current level of wisdom will not alter again.

Gambling

Chekhov gives only a minimal amount of exposition to establish and conclude the bet, which is the fundamental theme of “The Bet.” The bet itself and how it transpires make up the majority of the narrative. The story also includes more gambling imagery. A certain amount of danger is inherent in all banking, but the banker takes on additional risk when making investments on the Stock Exchange by treating it like a casino and wagering more than is prudent.

A more symbolic wager or risk, or several of them, occurs close to the story’s conclusion when the banker visits the lawyer in his cell in an attempt to settle the wager and win by deceit. This is risky as there’s a chance that other people on the property, like the watchman or the attorney, will catch him cheating. The lawyer is asleep as the banker walks inside the cell. The banker’s first thinking is that he could kill the lawyer with ease and not get caught red-handed. In this sense, the initial wager encourages the banker to engage in riskier or more frequent betting activities.

Confinement

Chekhov’s narrative illustrates at least two additional types of captivity, even though the lawyer is the one who is physically imprisoned for fifteen years. The banker is restricted in a number of ways. His deeds tie him to the attorney. Prior to placing the bet, he is free; nevertheless, as a result of both the bet and his poor investment choices, his destiny is now linked to the lawyer’s. The lawyer also tackles captivity on a deeper and far wider level in his extremely dramatic letter. He identifies the ways that a basic misperception of the nature of the world imprisons society and even the entire human race.

Chekhov was fascinated in incarceration for a number of reasons. Before purchasing his release, his ancestor had been a serf—a form of social imprisonment. Chekhov’s interest in prisons began when he published “The Malefactor,” a narrative in which a peasant is imprisoned for an act that appears to be innocent to him, in 1885. The year following the publication of “The Bet,” Chekhov would pay a detailed inspection of conditions at a Russian prison colony.

Chekhov was not the only one to investigate the existence and significance of prisons. The subject was also covered by other renowned authors like Dostoevsky and Tolstoy.

Dualism

Dualism is a topic that Chekhov frequently tackled in his writing. Yuri Corrigan, a professor of Russian and comparative literature at Boston University, notes that occasionally this took the form of organising stories around a conflict between two different kinds of characters rather than just two individuals. In general, Chekhov's worldview was very divided, as Australian scholar Geoffrey Borny contends in Interpreting Chekhov (2006). He thought humanity was both amazing and tragic. This split worldview is evident throughout "The Bet," with the early argument failing to consider a variety of complex viewpoints. Rather, it continuously narrows down to two choices: the death sentence or life in prison; what is right or wrong; and whether or not the state has the authority to implement these choices.

Chekhov further deepens this dualism in numerous ways as the story progresses. One man is bound and one is free at the beginning of the bet, but as the banker loses money and the lawyer pursues his education, the bet traps the banker and releases the lawyer. This complexity extends to the lawyer's letter, where he makes stark differences between most aspects of reality, even to the point of absurdity. He claims that he hates everything that the world regards as good; that he is alone but has seen devils; that he is restricted but has witnessed the beauties of nature; and—perhaps most incredibly paradoxically—that he is intelligent but despises wisdom.

WARD NO. 6 – ANTON CHEKHOV

About the Author:

Anton Chekhov was born to a large family in Taganrog, southern Russia. His parents were struggling grocers and, while his mother was kind, his father was often abusive. When the family fled to Moscow in 1876 because the father faced debtors' prison, Anton stayed behind and finished his schooling. In 1879, he moved to Moscow and completed his degree in medicine. He proceeded to work as a doctor for most of his literary career, writing short stories and plays in his free time to pay for tuition and to support his family, for whom he was now the sole breadwinner. At 28, he won the Pushkin Prize, marking a major stepping stone in his career. In later years, he lived on a farm where he treated local peasants and dedicated his dwindling

energy towards tending to his farmland. Though a longtime bachelor, he finally married Olga Knipper in 1901. He contracted tuberculosis as a young man, and it eventually claimed his life in 1904. At the time of his death, he had authored sixteen plays, a novel, five novellas, countless letters, and over 200 short stories. He is cited as one of the most respected short-story writers and history and is one of the most frequently adapted authors of all time.

Summary:

The narrative begins with a description of ward number six of a provincial hospital, which is a mad asylum. The ward is supervised by a nasty porter named Nikita and contains five pathetic prisoners, including the "imbecile" Jew Moiseika. The narrator tells the story of how Ivan Gromov, an asylum inmate with a university education, drove himself insane with paranoia. Dr. Andrei Yefimich Rabin, a "strange man" who originally intended to become a priest but ended up becoming a doctor to amuse his father, is in charge of the hospital.

At the start of his profession, Rabin is a driven doctor who gives his patients the best care possible. But he quickly loses faith in the "uselessness" of his work, stops going to the wards, and is apathetic towards the suffering of his patients. By considering the idea that all men are meant to die, Rabin assuages his conscience and comes to the conclusion that "struggle leads man to perfection."

The doctor spends his time reading and debating eternity with Mikhail Averianych, the mailman. To his companion, Rabin suggests that life is "a vexatious trap" where the only comfort for humanity is to be around other wise guys. Rabin moves away from Mikhail in search of intellectual company as he becomes increasingly consumed with death and the purpose of life. The insane person initially acts vindictively and antagonistically, making fun of Rabin's "rationalisations" and stoic outlook.

At this point, Gromov begins to exhibit "condescending irony" as he begins to realise how much the doctor respects his viewpoints. The medical staff begins to worry about Rabin's sanity, and even the doctor observes that there is "an air of mystery" surrounding him. When Rabin receives an invitation to a committee meeting that is essentially an investigation into his mental health, things really get out of hand. After being "insulted and angered" by Mikhail's condescending behaviour, Rabin makes the decision to travel with him to Moscow and Warsaw.

The trip doesn't work well because Rabin gets mad at his friend and blows all of his money on their bills. Upon his return, the physician discovers that Dr. Khobotov has removed

him from his position and sacked him without receiving a pension. While Mikhail promises to repay all of the money he owes, Rabin devolves into a fatalistic melancholy. He makes the callous decision that everything in his life is “trivial and inconsequential” and dismisses Mikhail and Dr. Khobotov’s offers of assistance with contempt. Even though Rabin later apologises for his outbursts, Khobotov tricks him into going to ward number six.

Rabin discovers he is unable to escape once he arrives and cries as he realises he is witnessing “real life” for the first time. Gromov encourages Nikita to beat Rabin for having the audacity to object to his confinement. The doctor depressingly comes to the conclusion that he is also receiving unfair treatment, just as he unintentionally mistreated the insane in the past. Rabin passes away from an apoplectic stroke the next day. Prior to entering “oblivion forever,” the physician disbelieves in the concept of immortality and sees rushing deer. At the funeral, Mikhail, the doctor’s devoted friend, and his elderly chef are the only guests.

Analysis:

Ward *No*. 6 was one of Chekhov’s longest and more politically charged pieces, and it was released in 1892 to widespread praise. It investigates the tension between philosophy and reality, namely how people interpret reality intellectually to support their own passivity. The insane Gromov and the uninterested Dr. Rabin are the embodiments of these two opposing ideologies. Gromov, a devoted realist, harshly but fundamentally correctly concludes that Rabin’s isolationism is really “laziness, fakirism and stupefaction.” Specifically, we observe that the physician withdraws into the consolation of “rationalisation” in order to appease his own conscience.

Notwithstanding his knowledge of the hospital’s status as a “immoral institution...prejudicial to the health of the townspeople,” Rabin had no sympathy for either its inmates or patients. He tells Gromov that the fact that he is a doctor and Gromov is a prisoner in an asylum is “nothing but idle chance”. Rabin therefore uses the idea that everything is up to chance to defend his lack of concern for the suffering of others. The author appears to despise Rabin’s thought, and this theory is both unconvincing and callous. We witness Rabin, a self-described stoic, being forced to face suffering and isolation. In the end, the doctor abandons his prior theory and denounces the meaningless reality of pain after being prodded by Gromov. The greatest irony of the story is that the protagonist’s conversion takes place in an asylum she had previously believed to be acceptable because it was allowed by accident.

Ward No. 6 is a microcosm of Russian society as well as the backdrop for Rabin's moral change. Gromov personifies society's activist aspect, shouting against injustice, Moiseika represents the capitalist mindset with his obsession with collecting money, and Nikita, the porter, keeps an eye on his prisoners like a jail warden. Gromov is a radical who dares to challenge what David Margarshack terms Rabin's "non- resistance to evil." To better understand Chekhov's sympathetic portrayal of Gromov and his condemnation of Ragin, it is important to remember that the author visited the infamous Sakhalin prison in 1890. This paranoid lunatic criticises the status quo.

Chekhov was deeply impacted by his observations of the prisoners and his personal encounters with the atrocities of prison life. It is therefore not surprising that the author challenges society's dehumanisation of criminals and insane in *Ward No. 6*, especially when it comes to the abuses carried out by public servants whose power is maintained by the government. Nonetheless, Chekhov refrains from imposing a political or personal ideology on his audience through his narrative. In the end, the decision about state authority and institutional corruption is ultimately up to us. The novel *Ward No. 6* poses significant questions about the interactions between the state and its residents as well as between those in positions of authority and those they debilitate.

Similarly, Chekhov never loses sight of his love of details even while this story tackles big philosophical and moral issues. The remark that Rabin's dressing gown "smelt of smoked fish" and that his asylum-issue shirt is excessively long are two examples of how the ward's atmosphere is gently evoked while also underscoring the plight of Rabin. Like Rabin, we can't help but notice the lingering smell of smoked fish, which represents the dismal reality of the doctor's new life and is therefore irrefutable.

A ROSE FOR EMILY – WILLIAM FAULKNER

About the Author:

William Cuthbert Faulkner (originally spelled Falkner) was born on September 25, 1897, in New Albany, Mississippi. Eventually known for his innovative novels about the highs and lows of life in the American South, young Faulkner began his writing career as a poet. His first collection of verses, *The Marble Faun*, was published in 1924 to little acclaim. He then tried his hand at prose with 1926's *Soldiers' Pay*, a novel about World War I and its aftermath.

Although Faulkner’s work is an integral part of the American literary canon today, initially he had difficulty finding a subject that resonated with readers. Fellow writer and acquaintance Sherwood Anderson (*Winesburg, Ohio*) suggested Faulkner write about what he knew best: Mississippi. The creative floodgates opened. Faulkner mined his experiences as a son of the South, as well as those of his family, to create a vast body of work that examines southern culture and its secrets. One of his greatest influences was his great-grandfather, Colonel William Clark Falkner. Colonel Falkner—a veteran of the Civil War—served as the inspiration for Colonel Sartoris, the mayor of Jefferson in “A Rose for Emily,” as well as a key character in *Sartoris,* the first novel Faulkner set in the fictional Yoknapatawpha County. More stories about Yoknapatawpha County followed, including Faulkner’s most famous novel, *The Sound and the Fury,* as well as *Light in August* and *As I Lay Dying*.

His novels were widely acclaimed and artistically fulfilling, but they didn’t provide a steady income. To keep his extravagant, southern-aristocratic lifestyle afloat, Faulkner turned to short stories. *A Rose for Emily*, published in 1930, was the first of Faulkner’s stories to appear in a nationally published magazine (*Forum*). Though he often complained about having to compromise his artistic ideals for a large commercial audience, he proved to be a master of the art form. These brief literary pieces also gave him the opportunity to further explore his fictional home base of Yoknapatawpha between novels.

Faulkner’s literary achievements have been recognized several times over, both during his lifetime and posthumously. In 1949 he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature for his body of work, followed by two Pulitzer Prizes for *A Fable* and *The Reivers*, as well as several National Book Awards. He died on July 6, 1962, in Byhalia, Mississippi.

Summary:

There are five pieces to the story. The narrator of part I describes the moment of Emily Grierson’s passing and how everyone in the community attended her funeral at her house, which had been closed to outsiders for over a decade. The only relic of the opulence of a bygone period is Emily’s house, situated in a formerly refined and attractive neighbourhood. After Emily’s father passed away, Colonel Sartoris, the town’s former mayor, postponed Emily’s tax obligations to the municipality, citing Mr. Grierson’s previous large loan to the community as justification. The new town officials try in vain to persuade Emily to start making payments again. Emily reiterates that she is exempt from paying taxes in Jefferson and that the officials

ought to discuss the issue with Colonel Sartoris when she is visited by members of the Board of Aldermen in the dingy, old parlour. But by then, he had been deceased for about ten years. She requests that Tobe, her servant, show the men around.

In part II, the narrator recounts an incident that occurred thirty years prior in which Emily refuses to submit to a second official investigation on the town officials' behalf after the locals notice a strong smell coming from her land. Emily's father has passed away, and the guy the villagers thought Emily would marry has left her. Judge Stevens, the mayor at the time, decides to have lime sprayed around the Grierson home's foundation in the middle of the night as the number of complaints grows. After a few weeks, the smell goes away, but the villagers start to feel sorry for Emily because of how her great aunt passed away from mental illness. Since Emily's father turned away numerous suitors who he thought were unworthy of marrying his daughter, the villagers had long held the opinion that the Griersons had unrealistic expectations of themselves. Emily is still unmarried when she reaches thirty, with no sign of a proposal for marriage.

The town's ladies call Emily the day after Mr. Grierson passes away to offer their condolences. Upon greeting them at the door, Emily pretends for three days that her father is still alive. At last, she prepares her father's remains for burial.

The narrator details Emily's protracted illness in section III, which follows this episode. The municipality hires labourers to pave the pavements the summer following her father's passing, and a construction company led by a man from up north named Homer Barron is given the task. Homer quickly gains popularity in the community and is observed giving Emily rides in a buggy on Sunday afternoons. This scandalises the community and deepens their mistrust and sympathy for Emily. They believe she is forgetting her pride in her family and is interacting with a man who is beneath her.

As the affair drags on and Emily's reputation is increasingly damaged, she visits the pharmacy to buy the potent poison arsenic. The law requires her to disclose her plan of use for the arsenic. When the delivery bearing the description "For rats" arrives at her residence, she gives no explanation.

The narrator details the worry that some residents of the village have that Emily may use the poison to end her own life in section IV. Even while they still spend Sundays together, it seems less and less likely that she and Homer will marry. The town's more indignant ladies

demand that the Baptist preacher speak with Emily. He makes a vow to never return after his stay and never talks about what transpired. Thus, when Emily's two cousins come in Alabama for a prolonged visit, the minister's wife writes to them. Talk of the couple's marriage picks back up when Emily orders a silver toilet set monogrammed with Homer's initials. Homer isn't in town, so it's assumed that he's either getting ready for Emily to move up north or staying away from her bothersome relatives.

Following the cousins' exit, one evening Homer walks into the Grierson residence and is never seen again. Emily becomes grey and chubby when cooped up in the house. She does occasionally teach lessons in china painting, but otherwise her door is locked to outsiders. Emily ignores the tax bill in what becomes into a yearly practice. At some point, she seals off the top floor. Her death at the age of seventy-four leaves little trace of her, save the sporadic glimpses through the window. The only person observed entering and leaving the house is the servant.

The narrator explains what transpires after Emily passes away in section V. The women, two cousins, and the local elders attend the service where Emily's body is laid out in the parlour. After some time, the locals break down the door of an upper room that has been shut and unopened for forty years. A man's suit and the things for an impending wedding are arranged in a room that seems to have been frozen in time. In a more advanced level of deterioration, Homer Barron's body is also stretched out on the bed. The observers then spot a long strand of Emily's grey hair on the cushion and the indentation of a head next to Homer's body.

Analysis:

A Rose for Emily is a nuanced tale that unnerves us as readers by fusing first- and third-person narrative, Gothic literature and reality, recollections from the past and the present. The entire town seems to be the story's narrator, a sort of collective "we" that discusses and objects to Emily's odd behaviour collectively until the gruesome conclusion, when Homer Barron's body is found. Because we only ever see Emily from the outside, via the perspective of the locals, Emily stays far from us as readers and we never get to know her inner existence. This makes sense given that Emily is an outsider in the community, but it also adds a sense of mystery to the events described because so little is known about Emily's feelings and motivations.

Owing to its unsettling conclusion, "A Rose for Emily" is frequently recognised as an illustration of Southern Gothic literature, a genre that is popularised by American South writers

like Faulkner and is distinguished by macabre, horrifying, or grotesque themes in their stories and novels. A realist detail accumulation is also common in such writing, and Faulkner lets the uncanny atmosphere that permeates Emily's home and her existence gradually come to light.

For example, her refusal to allow her father's death to be buried foreshadows her (presumed) murder of her boyfriend and hiding his body in the top bedroom. She killed him because she understood it was the only way to keep him close to her heart and guarantee that he would always be hers. The dilapidated Gothic castle has been transformed into a Southern US home where everything is 'tarnished,' spoilt, fading (much like Emily's iron-grey hair), and in danger of coming apart.

A common Gothic fiction trope is the dark secret that threatens to destroy a "house" or family (Poe's "The Fall of the House of Usher" is a notable example from the nineteenth century), and a common Gothic story trope is the dead body that is only discovered at the very end of the story. This new, more domestic take on the trope is presented here. But at least Poe's heroes were able to bury their bodies or hide them under the floorboards (though occasionally, as in the previously cited story, before they were truly dead). Rather, the account by Faulkner suggests something entirely more sinister and unhealthy: that Emily 'slept' with Homer even after his death (in fact, maybe it was the only way she could sleep with him at all).

The fact that Emily, a Southern woman, falls in love with a "Yankee"—a guy from the North of the United States—is another factor contributing to the significance of the Southern Gothic tag in "A Rose for Emily." Decades before Faulkner wrote, in 1865, the American Civil War ended, but the idea of North-South split in identity, class, and culture persisted (and perhaps still does). The idea that Miss Emily, an aristocratic Southern lady, would seriously consider marrying a Northerner, whom they view as inferior to her on a social scale, horrifies the townspeople, which is why noblesse oblige is used: Emily should entertain Homer and show him courtesy, but the idea that she could marry such a man offends them.

In line with the narrative style of the story, Faulkner left many particular information of Emily's connection with Homer as mere suggestions and rumours. The villagers, cut off from Emily's house and, to a large extent, from her life, can only speculate as to what transpired. Although it seems reasonable to assume that Emily fell in love with Homer—who, it is plainly implied, had no intention of settling down with her—we are in similar situations. He is perpetually single, just like Emily, but Homer is single voluntarily, serving as a stark reminder of

the gender divide that exists in Southern society at this time. Emily is single due to the controlling influence of her father, which continues to have a psychological hold on her even after his death.

While Homer Barron, who is single and whose name conjures up images of Greek heroism and nobility while also alluded to the "barren" nature of Emily's potential relationship with him, charms the locals and gains popularity despite being an outsider set apart from them, Emily's single status attracts gossip and worries. For what reason does Faulkner call his tale "A Rose for Emily"? During an interview at the University of Virginia, he made the argument that Emily should be given a rose for all the suffering she had gone through—from being mistreated by the townspeople, possibly even by Homer, and her father.

PSYCHOLOGY – KATHERINE MANSFIELD

About the Author:

Katherine Mansfield (1888–1923), a New Zealand short-story writer. Katherine Mansfield was born in Wellington, New Zealand, and educated there until she went (1903) to London to study music. Failing to settle after her return to New Zealand in 1906, she came back to London where she married George Bowden (1909). This marriage was a failure and the pair separated. In 1911 she met the writer John Middleton Murry (1889–1957), with whom she lived from 1912 until her divorce from Bowden (1918) enabled them to marry. Meanwhile she became a regular contributor to various journals and her first collection of short stories, showing her mastery of the form, appeared in 1911 under the title In a German Pension. In 1915 she, Murry, and D. H. Lawrence collaborated in producing a magazine called The Signature. The death of her only brother in France (1915), added to the general strain of the war, undermined her health. In 1917 tuberculosis was diagnosed and she spent much of the rest of her life travelling in search of a cure in Italy, Switzerland, and France. Nonetheless she published two more collections of stories: Bliss (1920), which included the stories 'Prelude' and 'Je ne parle pas français' and The Garden Party (1922). She died at the Gurdjieff Institute near Fontainebleau early in 1923. Two further collections of stories, The Dove's Nest and Something Childish (both 1924), were published posthumously, as were collected poems (1923); her journal, edited by her husband, was published in 1927, and her letters in 1928.

Summary:

A man pays a lady a tea visit. He informs her that this is the only location where he considers the furnishings and other details. ‘Little Boy’ is another one of his loves. After discussing the novel’s status as a literary genre, they conclude that the psycho-novel is of poor quality. He goes, and she is devastated that she might not have succeeded in adopting that genre. He rings the bell, at which point one of her friends appears. Normally she would be offended by this friend, but this time she puts her arm around him and begs her to return soon. She then starts writing about how much she enjoyed her friend’s psychology talk.

Analysis:

One can find the themes of friendship, connection, commitment, love, passion, fear, and control throughout Katherine Mansfield’s Psychology. The narrative, which is taken from Mansfield’s collection Bliss and Other Stories, is told in the third person by an anonymous narrator. It becomes obvious to the reader after reading the story that Mansfield may be examining the issue of friendship. It seems natural for the writer and the dramatist to be together. It seems as though they are able to communicate with one other without the difficulties that arise from needing to pay attention to one another’s words.

Additionally, there’s a feeling that the writer and the dramatist can relate to each other. They seem to be able to read each other’s minds, being aware of potential thoughts in the other person. Another possibility is that there is romantic interest between the two characters. The reader gets the impression that both characters genuinely love one another since they are so intimate with one other’s thoughts. Even still, they are both afraid of making the move to declare their love for one another. It may also be significant that Mansfield tells the reader that the playwright’s voice ‘was like his’ when the playwright notices it’s raining. It seems as though the writer and the dramatist are one. It would touch on the themes of connection as well as love. It’s as if the writer and the dramatist can put on the same glove and it will fit them both perfectly.

The emotional link between the writer and the playwright is present, but it is concealed deep within the writer, even though there is an intellectual relationship between the two. It seems that the author is hesitant to fully dedicate himself to the playwright on an emotional level. The writer excuses himself and leaves the playwright’s studio when the opportunity arises. Mansfield might also be symbolising the playwright’s love or passion for the writer with the fire in the playwright’s studio. The playwright’s love for the writer is as brilliantly burning throughout the

narrative as is the fire. Mansfield also says that the light from the fire is “leaping,” which is a metaphor for how the dramatist feels about being a writer in many respects. When the writer shows up at her studio, her heart might skip a beat. Despite the fact that it’s intriguing, the playwright distances himself from the writer after their first exchange of words. It’s plausible that Mansfield is employing this gesture to allegorically draw attention to the playwright’s anxiety about disclosing her own emotions to the author.

The story contains additional symbolism that could be significant. The playwright’s friend gives her some flowers, but they are said to be “dead.” This reflects the playwright’s feelings in numerous ways after she leaves her studio. She also feels hollow on the inside, or at the very least, she can’t figure out why her love isn’t reciprocated. Mansfield may be using the cushions to describe both how the playwright feels and how she may feel like she has a mountain in front of her when it comes to the writer expressing how he really feels for her, which is why the description that the cushions are “like furious mountains” may be significant. It’s also intriguing that the writer and the playwright feel as though their mental states have been totally given over to one another. Their hearts cannot be claimed to be the same. Even while the playwright longs for more than just a friendship with the writer, both of them hold back.

The playwright’s apparent return to composure at the story’s conclusion adds to its intrigue. She is able to control her thoughts and sentiments despite her feelings for the writer and starts composing a letter to them. It might also be significant that the writer writes the letter with the words “Good night, my friend,” implying that she is fully in charge of her emotional condition. The reader discovers that the playwright is in charge of her emotions, in contrast to the past when she had been a little upset when the writer left her studio, which could give the impression to the reader that the playwright has lost all affection for themselves. It’s possible, though, that the author has only recently momentarily regained emotional control. Her affection for the writer is just barely contained. They are still there. The reader was left with the suspicion that the playwright and writer might experience the same emotions if they cross paths again. It’s hard to judge if any of them emotionally commits to the other. The playwright’s desire to pursue a different kind of connection is evident. However, she might have to let the writer take the lead.

UNIT IV: DRAMA
JULIUS CAESAR – SHAKESPEARE

About the Author:

William Shakespeare was an English poet, playwright, and actor. He was born on 26 April 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon. His father was a successful local businessman and his mother was the daughter of a landowner. Shakespeare is widely regarded as the greatest writer in the English language and the world's pre-eminent dramatist. He is often called England's national poet and nicknamed the Bard of Avon. He wrote about 38 plays, 154 sonnets, two long narrative poems, and a few other verses, of which the authorship of some is uncertain. His plays have been translated into every major living language and are performed more often than those of any other playwright.

Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway at the age of 18. She was eight years older than him. They had three children: Susanna, and twins Hamnet and Judith. After his marriage information about his life became very rare. But he is thought to have spent most of his time in London writing and performing in his plays. Between 1585 and 1592, he began a successful career in London as an actor, writer, and part-owner of a playing company called the *Lord Chamberlain's Men*, later known as the *King's Men*.

Around 1613, at the age of 49, he retired to Stratford, where he died three years later. Few records of Shakespeare's private life survive. He died on 23 April 1616, at the age of 52. He died within a month of signing his will, a document which he begins by describing himself as being in 'perfect health'. In his will, Shakespeare left the bulk of his large estate to his elder daughter Susanna.

Shakespeare produced most of his known work between 1589 and 1613. His early plays were mainly comedies and histories and these works remain regarded as some of the best work produced in these genres. He then wrote mainly tragedies until about 1608, including *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, and *Macbeth*, considered some of the finest works in the English language. In his last phase, he wrote tragicomedies, also known as romances, and collaborated with other playwrights. Shakespeare's plays remain highly popular today and are constantly studied, performed, and reinterpreted in diverse cultural and political contexts throughout the world.

Summary:

In February 44 BC, the action starts. Following his success over the sons of Pompey in Spain, Julius Caesar has just triumphantly returned to Rome. Caesar's political rivals Flavius and Marullus had broken up and disturbed an unplanned party. Their statements soon make it clear that strong, covert forces are opposing Caesar. When a soothsayer warns Caesar to "beware the ides of March," he shows up with a train full of friends and followers. However, Caesar disregards the warning and heads off to the games and races that commemorate the feast of Lupercal.

Only two individuals remain when Caesar leaves: Cassius, a longtime political rival of Caesar's, and Marcus Brutus, a close personal friend of Caesar. Both men are of aristocratic descent, and they believe that Caesar's political reforms and victories will put an end to their long-standing privilege. A jealous of Caesar's status and authority, Cassius deftly looks for Brutus's true motivations. Despite his acquaintance with Caesar, Brutus opposes him on principle since he is a man of the highest moral character. When Cassius asks Brutus cautiously what he would think if there was a plot to remove Caesar, he discovers that Brutus is not completely opposed to the idea; that is, he shares "some aim" with Cassius but does not want "to be any further moved." The two men then part ways, agreeing to meet again to continue their conversation.

The next scene makes clear that the plot Cassius alluded to in code is already true. A group of dissatisfied and discredited aristocrats who are eager to kill Caesar have been assembled by him. Brutus accepts to lead the plot when Cassius convinces him to do so, in part to win over the honourable segment of Roman society. Plans are arranged at a covert gathering in Brutus' orchard shortly after. The date has been confirmed: March 15th, sometimes known as the "ides of March," will be the day. The conspirators will use their hidden swords and daggers to kill Caesar in the Senate chambers.

Following the meeting, Portia, Brutus's wife, questions him out of suspicion and concern for her husband's safety. Brutus is moved by her loyalty and love, and he makes a vow to tell her his secret at a later time.

The scene that follows is set in Caesar's home. The date is the fatal ides of March; the time is early dawn. It has been an odd night, filled with unusual and incomprehensible sights and happenings all throughout Rome, that has been wild and stormy. Calphurnia, Caesar's wife,

convinces Caesar not to go to the Capitol because she is afraid of terrible nightmares and believes they are omens of impending doom. Through premeditation, Brutus and the other conspirators show up to join Caesar in the hopes of thwarting any potential warnings until they have him completely under their control at the Senate. Caesar follows them, oblivious to the fact that he is surrounded by assassins and ignoring Calphurnia's warnings. On the very steps of the Capitol, a warning is put into Caesar's hand by Artemidorus, but he refuses to read it. Without wasting any more time, the conspirators start working. They approach Caesar, seeming to be pleading for a favour, knowing full well that he would refuse it. Then, with their concealed weapons drawn, they murder him in front of the stunned senators and onlookers.

Mark Antony, the closest friend of Julius Caesar, requests permission to speak at his funeral after learning of Caesar's assassination. Brutus provides this permission in spite of Cassius's protests and speaks first, believing that his words will persuade the people that Caesar must die. Antony starts talking after Brutus has left. Brutus's words have influenced the throng, and Antony addresses an insensitive audience. However, Antony transforms the audience into a wailing mob demanding the blood of Caesar's killers by employing every rhetorical trick in the book. Fearful of the ensuing chaos following Antony's speech, the conspirators and those who back them are compelled to leave Rome and eventually Italy. At this juncture, Antony assembles an army to hunt down and eliminate Caesar's assassins alongside Octavius, a wealthy banker, and his young grandnephew and adoptive son. The Second Triumvirate is a group that these three men, known as triumvirs, have created to work towards the shared objective of taking over the Roman Empire.

The conspirators and their troops are ruthlessly pursued into the distant corners of Asia Minor for months. When they do decide to halt at Sardis, Brutus and Cassius get into a heated argument about money. But once their disagreements are settled, preparations are prepared to engage the armies of Lepidus, Octavius, and Antony in a last conflict. Brutus overrules Cassius against his better judgement, ordering an attack on Antony's camp on the plains of Philippi rather than sticking to their well-prepared defensive positions. Caesar's spirit pays Brutus a visit shortly before the fight. The spirit tells him, "I shall see thee at Philippi," but Brutus's bravery is unshakable and he continues.

The fight rages fiercely. The conspirators initially seem to be in the lead, but in the chaos, Cassius kills himself after being falsely convinced that everything is lost. Without a leader, his

army is routed very fast, and Brutus is left to wage an unwinnable war. He also ends his own life, unable to bear the thought of being a prisoner and being hauled through Rome's streets while bound to Antony's chariot's wheels. The murder of Caesar has been avenged, order has been restored, and—most importantly—the Roman Empire has been saved. As the play comes to a close, Antony pays homage to Brutus' corpse, referring to him as "the noblest Roman of them all."

Analysis:

Julius Caesar, perhaps Shakespeare's most regal and potent historical drama, is actually a superb illustration of the art of persuasion. The play's main political problem is that Rome is a politically developed nation with a rich cultural heritage and illustrious past; as such, Julius Caesar should not have usurped Rome's political authority and position. Caesar's final victory celebration, in which he defeated fellow Romans rather than outsiders, opens the play. The political unrest and divergent opinions of the day are instantly explained in the play's opening exchange between Flavius and Marullus. They represent the other viewpoint that Caesar is feared and hated.

But simple people, who formerly praised Pompey, are celebrating Caesar's victory over his sons. Brutus's close friend Cassius thinks that Caesar is a dictator, who wants to steal the mature republic of Rome for his personal glory. So Cassius decides to put an end to Caesar's life with the participation of many of other men. However, Cassius thinks that Brutus, the closest of Caesar's supporters, ought to accompany them in order to rationalise their actions and win the support of the Roman populace. Even though Cassius is a minor character in the play, his initial act of persuasion sets the drama in action and makes him the second most important person. He was watching from behind when he noticed that Brutus, the second man of the republic and a close friend of Caesar, was not happy with the celebration, claiming that he was not in the proper mood to enjoy the win. Cassius began his speech by accusing Brutus of being distant and out of character, in keeping with his skill of persuasion. Brutus tells Cassius that his erratic behaviour stems from his own dissatisfaction and that he thinks Caesar would take the throne as ruler of Rome when he hears the people yelling. Rather than celebrating Caesar's victory, Cassius broods about what Brutus fears. He then starts his second phase by criticising Caesar for being unfit to lead Rome, concentrating on lessening Brutus' allegiance to Caesar and raising his sense of duty to Rome. He declared that he was prepared to serve as his own reflection, helping him to

recognise his own brilliance. Cassius made a comparison between Brutus and Caesar to reach the conclusion that Caesar's name is not greater than the name of Brutus.

> Brutus and Caesar—what should be in that "Caesar"?
> Why should that name be sounded more than yours?
> Write them together, yours is as fair a name.
> Sound them, it doth become the mouth as well.
> Weigh them, it is as heavy. Conjure with 'em,
> "Brutus" will start a spirit as soon as "Caesar".

Because Brutus would gain respect and support from them, Cassius decides to give him leadership of the action. The devoted follower of Caesar, Brutus, was eventually convinced to rebel against Caesar by Cassius. Cassius persuaded Brutus to join him in his rebellion against Julius Caesar by employing a variety of persuasive techniques and rhetorical tropes. The beginning of Cassius' speech had a tone that seemed to be appealing to Brutus's sensitive nature, reminding him of his responsibilities to the developed Roman republic. He declared:

> I heard where many of the best respect in Rome
> Except immoral Caesar
> Speaking of Brutus and groaning underneath this age's yoke
> Have wished that noble Brutus had his eyes

Cassius' awareness about Brutus' idealistic personality makes him know how to speak with him, thereby appealing Brutus to put Rome ahead himself. Cassius insists that for the future of Rome, Caesar should be killed. Cassius finally succeeds in persuading the loyal man to go against Caesar. The climax of the persuasion art is revealed clearly in Caesar's funeral. The Roman public, initially, has overwhelming feeling of rage about his murder. But, it is Brutus' ability of persuasion that ensures credibility for the action and restores peace. He asks the crowd to hear him out and begins to remind them that he is honourable. He has his reasons for his deed, asking them to be the judges. He said: Not that I loved Caesar, but I loved Rome more.

Brutus defines his capacity to capture the audience's interest and arouses their passion by posing a rhetorically conflicting question with just one logical response. He asks them if they would rather see Caesar killed and become his own slaves or alive and free. Brutus spoke to the crowd according to his idealism, thinking that they have the same of his vision about Caesar as

an ambitious man who has to be killed. Temporarily, he succeeds to convince the crowd to be with his side.

Before Brutus addressed the assembly, Antony came to find Caesar's body, which had been viciously stabbed by the conspirators. He effectively uses the savagery of the conspirators' killing of Caesar as justification for his speech, which comes after Brutus. With composed assurance, he tells the assembly that he is here just for Caesar's funeral. He accepts Brutus' assertion that ambition is a serious crime and applauds his charisma for enabling him to address the assembly. Antony defines Caesar as the man who presents himself as 'faithful and just' when he starts talking about their personal friendship. From this vantage point, he starts to change the opinions of the audience.

The crowd was led to suspect Brutus's honesty and opinions by Antony's use of language that led them to believe that the truth went against what Brutus had said. They also started questioning the conspirators' honesty. Antony spoke thus: "But Brutus says he was ambitious, And Brutus is honourable man." He made the crowd suspicious of both Brutus's honesty and his opinions. He clarified that his speech was not intended to "disprove what Brutus spoke," but rather to speak what he knew. As a result, the crowd turned against both Brutus and the conspirators. The art of persuasion could be seen nearly everywhere. There are a lot of psychological questions and answers concerning this, including how this large number of people changed their opinions so quickly in response to Brutus' and Antony's remarks and how this psychological force changed their opinions about the conspirators and Caesar.

The crowd was influenced by Brutus and Antony. When they first heard Brutus's reasons for killing Caesar, they cheered him and even suggested that he should be the Caesar "let him be Caesar." However, when they listened to Antony's emotional and rhetorical words, they easily changed their opinion and started to doubt Brutus and other conspirators. The leaders' suggestions, verbal symbols, excited gestures, and strong feelings of confidence and responsibility all contribute to the crowd's elevated emotional tone.

In Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, the art of persuasion is the backbone of the play in which all the active and main characters exploited their ability of persuasion to change or direct others' viewpoint for personal, social and political purposes, depending on their rhetorical and philosophical speeches to alter the opinion of their target. Julius Caesar indirectly persuaded the public to accept him as being their king by his studied actions and behaviours that he is not

interested with their demand. Cassius' knowledge of Brutus' idealism gives him the path to persuade him to be Caesar's slayer rather than loyal. Brutus' confidence to speak with the crowd encourages him to persuade them that Julius Caesar is a dictator and deserves his fate. Antony, with his calm personality, his rhetorical words and gestures, gives him the ability to alter the crowds' opinion. *Julius Caesar* is a lesson about the art of persuasion more than being mere a historical tragedy.

Themes: Persuasion

This drama revolves around the idea of persuasion. Everyone seems to be trying to persuade someone else of something: Brutus, whom the reader hopes will refuse to participate, takes longer than the others to respond to Cassius' manipulations, but eventually does respond and even completes the job for him by persuading himself (see his soliloquy in Act II, Scene I). Caesar attempts to create an image of his crowing (an ancient form of spin doctoring). Cassius finds the best way to manipulate each man he seeks to bring to his side. The reason this crucial scene—in which Brutus joins the conspirators—so intriguing is that his wife, Portia, acts as a conscience for him.

Leadership

Shakespeare examined a leadership theme by utilising Julius Caesar's propensity for unrest. Focusing on the duties of the ruling class, he considered the potential consequences if that class lost its cohesive vision and forgot what it meant to be Roman. The play's protagonists actually lose contact with the customs, grandeur, morality, and stoicism of their past. When you read the play, pay attention to how Cassius uses the previous glory to entice others to join the conspiracies and how the conspirators' deeds either bring Rome back to its heyday or not.

Defining Masculinity

Although the drama does not focus on gender per se, issues of masculinity and effeminacy do. Caesar is exposed due to his effeminacy, which is a weakness. Brutus and Cassius' friendship, on the other hand, paradoxically enables the men to demonstrate greater power and the audience to feel more pity for them by including the so-called feminine attributes of compassion and love.

BLOOD RELATIONS – SHARON POLLOCK

About the Author:

Sharon Pollock is a playwright, actor, and director from Canada. Her work is highly influential and widely performed in Canada, and she is part of the development of Canadian Theatre in the 20th century. Her best-known plays include *Blood Relations* and *Doc*. Pollock was born in New Brunswick to a physician and a nurse who were unhappily married. In her youth, Pollock was exposed to American musical theater, and took an early interest in drama at school. After getting married in school, Pollock became involved in Toronto theater. Her marriage was abusive, and Pollock even tried to kill her husband by poisoning him. After returning to her hometown, Pollock began making theater and writing her own plays in the late 1960s.

Pollock's plays include *A Compulsory Option, Walsh, The Komagata Maru Incident, One Tiger to a Hill, Whiskey Six Cadenza, Fair Liberty's Call, End Dream, Generations, Blood Relations*, and *Doc*. *Blood Relations,* an interpretation of the Lizzie Borden story, is her best-known play. In an interview first published in 2004, Pollock said of the play, "I believe the actual case is timeless because of our inability to accept or rationalize the contradiction between who Miss Borden seemed to be and what she must have done. It's better to deny she did it than examine why she did it for that might tell us things we don't want to know about ourselves, or so a jury of her peers, all men, decided. The use of an axe as the murder weapon has something to do with it as well. I suspect if Lizzie had poisoned papa and step-mama she would have been convicted and forgotten."

Summary:

The play begins on a late Sunday evening in Fall River, Massachusetts in 1902 when Miss Lizzie arrives with tea for the Actress, a friend who may be more than just a friend. The Actress asks Lizzie if the rumours about her having killed her parents with an axe are true, and Lizzie decides they should act out the evening, with the Actress portraying Lizzie and Lizzie playing the Irish maid, Bridget.

In a flashback set in the Borden family home, we meet Lizzie's step-uncle, Wingate, who frequently engages in inappropriate sexual behaviour with her. Mrs. Borden, Lizzie's stepmother, is plotting with Mr. Borden to obtain additional money and land from the patriarch, leaving Lizzie and her submissive sister, Emma, as their dependents.

They enact the flashback in which we find out that although Lizzie loves her father, she believes he is cruel to her and succumbs to the schemes of Mrs. Borden, her stepmother. Mr. Borden wants Lizzie to get married, but she has no interest in getting married and has always felt that she will never measure up to the expectations of her family, who want her to be a society lady. All she wants is independence and to look after the pigeons she keeps in the shed out back.

In an attempt to quell Lizzie's rebelliousness, Mr. Borden hits her and kills all of her pigeons, chopping their heads off in front of her. He also plans to sign away the farm and the mill house to Wingate, Mrs. Borden's brother, taking away Lizzie's inheritance. Additionally, it is revealed that Lizzie is friends with Dr. Patrick, a married Irish doctor in town, though this has led to a lot of speculation about the nature of their relationship. In addition, Lizzie insists that they are just friends, but her father tries to talk her into marrying someone more available.

Driven nearly insane by this injustice, Lizzie sets out to exact her own revenge on her stepmother, whom she perceives to be the source of her misery. One day, on her own at home with Mrs. Borden, Lizzie murders her with a hatchet while attempting to concoct a scheme to cover it up with the maid, Bridget. Mr. Borden arrives home without warning, and Lizzie kills him as well.

In the present, the Actress feels that Lizzie killed her parents. Emma, Lizzie's sister, comes downstairs to complain about the noise made by Lizzie's reenactment. She asks Lizzie if she killed their parents once more, to which Lizzie responds that if she did, Emma bears some of the blame because she reared Lizzie. The Actress tries to step in and remind Lizzie that she killed the Bordens, but Lizzie tells the Actress that she, the Actress, is the one who killed them.

Analysis:

Based on historical events, Sharon Pollock's *Blood Relations* is a chilling tale of unsolved murder. Pollock stages the events surrounding the deaths of Andrew Borden and Abby Borden, believed to have been perpetrated by Lizzie Borden, their daughter. The play theatricalizes Lizzie's retrospective relationship to her alleged crime, and stages the event as a game played between her and her alleged lover, the Actress. *Blood Relations* premiered in 1980 in Alberta, Canada, and has been performed widely. A previous version of the play called *My Name is Lisabeth* was staged in 1976 at Douglas College, with Pollock playing Lizzie Borden.

The play has been interpreted as having a feminist message, but some felt that it did not look at feminist issues directly enough. Pollock won the Governor General's Literary Award,

and *Blood Relations* was the first play to earn the award. Blood relation is an epic play that revolves around the life of Lizzy Borden. Lizzy is perceived to have killed her parents in an unpredictable maze of circumstances that Pollock (the playwright) explains were beyond her (Canadian Theatre Encyclopedia 2). This paper analyzes blood relations by responding to its plot. Concisely, this paper explains that the theme of parenthood is dominant in Blood Relation's plot. Evidence to suggest that blood relation's plot centered on the theme of parenting will, therefore, be shown as a possible justification for Lizzy's actions.

Character List: Lizzie Borden

The play's main character, Lizzie Borden, lives alone with her sister and has an affair with The Actress, who visits from Boston. She is very evasive and unclear about her involvement in her parents' murders, despite the fact that everyone thinks she did it. She also plays Bridget, the Irish maid who worked for the Bordens, in the reenactment of the past that she does with the Actress.The actress portraying Lizzie is insecure, depressed, and insane from the abuse she endured at the hands of her father and stepmother. She fears that her inheritance will be taken from her, wants independence despite the fact that it is nearly impossible for a woman to have these days, does not want to get married, and has always worried that she is not ladylike enough.

Mr. Borden

Mr. Borden is Lizzie's father; he is a wealthy man with a sizable estate, but he is frequently referred to as miserly and cheap throughout the play. He is afraid of Lizzie and, despite his deep affection for her, wishes she would be more of a conformist and attempt to fit in with society. He is also an abusive man who is motivated to hit Lizzie and injure her beloved pigeons in order to establish his patriarchal dominance. Considering the contrast between his abusive behaviour and his loving attitudes towards Lizzie, Mr. Borden is a complex antagonist.

Dr. Patrick

Lizzie befriends a married Irish doctor named Dr. Patrick; he is taken by Lizzie's independent spirit and enjoys talking to her. However, Lizzie only sees Dr. Patrick as a game, someone with whom she can play around. The town thinks their friendship is an affair, and Dr. Patrick is prepared to flee with Lizzie.

Emma Borden

Though Emma shares many of Lizzie's complaints about their father and stepmother, she is not as adamant about rebelling against them as Lizzie is. Emma lives with Lizzie after their parents pass away, and she frequently questions Lizzie about whether or not she actually killed their parents.

Bridget

The play's Bridget, portrayed by the real Lizzie Borden, is about a maid who is more sympathetic to Lizzie's situation than anyone in Lizzie's family. Lizzie portrays Bridget as kind-hearted and well-intentioned, concerned about the murder's aftermath but also not wanting to sell Lizzie out.

Mrs. Borden

Lizzie's stepmother, Mrs. Borden, is someone Lizzie and Emma despise; they have a very unhealthy relationship, and Lizzie thinks Mrs. Borden is jealous of the attention Lizzie's father gives her, while Mrs. Borden criticises Lizzie for being so outspoken and not pursuing a sensible marriage.

The Actress

The Actress is a Boston-based actress who is said to be having an affair with Lizzie; Lizzie believes that the Actress's relationship with her is partly the reason the Actress even has a profession. The Actress is a little terrified of Lizzie.

Harry Wingate

Mrs. Borden's brother, Harry Wingate, is a lusty and avaricious man who schemes to get custody of Mr. Borden's possessions with Mrs. Borden, and who also desires control over Lizzie's body (he harasses her sexually on a regular basis).

Themes: Family

Lizzie Borden is portrayed as the victim of a family that does not care for or nurture her. She wants so badly to be loved and nurtured by her father, but he is distracted, inconsistent, and sometimes abusive. Her stepmother is cruel and does not understand Lizzie's more wayward, rebellious spirit, seeking instead only to compete for Mr. Borden's financial and personal

attention. Lizzie’s uncle is a lascivious and greedy man who seeks to have financial control over her. Finally, Lizzie’s sister Emma is loyal but weak-hearted, never seeking to get close with or understand her sister. In the universe of the play, the family unit is one in which Lizzie feels completely alienated and isolated. It is from this context that it becomes conceivable that Lizzie would even be capable of the horrific act at the center of the play, the murder of her parents. The play explores the taboos of the unhappy family, the fact that some families harm their members, rather than nurturing and helping members thrive.

Morality

The play’s implicit question is, “Is Lizzie’s killing of her parents justified?”Playwright Sharon Pollock aims to challenge the moral framework that we usually associate with murder, especially with Lizzie Borden’s crime, which is frequently regarded as one of the most unthinkable murders in history, even though murder is unquestionably a punishable crime in any situation. Throughout, we are made to sympathise with Lizzie’s plight—her abuse at the hands of her father, her denial of economic freedom, and her virtual excommunication from her family after she chooses not to marry.Pollock attempts to illustrate the ways in which morality is highly subjective and occasionally arbitrarily upheld by using the stage, a forum that allows audiences to empathise with complex characters. Although Lizzie’s murderous acts hardly qualify as “moral,” they do result from her parents’ disempowerment and disenfranchisement, and Pollock aims to highlight the complexity of Lizzie’s moral landscape in the moments preceding her parents’ deaths.

Truth

The play begins after Lizzie has been found not guilty by the jury that tried her, so the question of truth becomes thematically central as we attempt to piece together whether or not Lizzie is being truthful, or whether she is just leading everyone on, playing games. The actress asks Lizzie, “Did you do it?” and tries her hardest to get any truth out of Lizzie about the murder of her parents. Emma, Lizzie’s sister, is also fixated on the question of whether Lizzie actually killed their parents, and asks her numerous times.Beyond the confines of the reenactment, Lizzie loses grasp of the truth and her own sanity, which leads her to commit the violent act. Furthermore, Lizzie’s mental state prior to the murders is depicted as a state of psychic break in which she herself is somewhat alienated from reality. She struggles to maintain her grasp on the

truth of her surroundings, sent into a near-psychotic fury by her post-traumatic response to her family's mistreatment of her.

Abuse

The fact that Lizzie comes from an abusive home—her father beats her repeatedly, slams a hatchet into the table out of rage, and kills her prized pet pigeons in front of her—is another aspect of Lizzie's life that helps the audience empathise with her predicament. These acts of violence against Lizzie are what drive her to become so angry with her family and turn violent against them. Pollock, in staging Lizzie's abuse, demonstrates to the audience that Lizzie's actions, though far more violent than abuse, are partly retaliatory.

Performance

There is a play within the play itself. Lizzie's confidant, the Actress, plays her in their performance of the events leading up to Lizzie's parents' murders. While the Actress performs as Lizzie, Lizzie plays Bridget, the maid. Pollock's choice to stage the events of the murder in a performance within the play itself further alienates the audience from the objective truth of the scenario. The performance allows the audience to empathize with Lizzie, to understand her perception of how everything happened, which aligns us with her, while also making the entire event that much more mysterious. Performance is a means through which Lizzie can both sharpen and obscure her experience, turn it into something that is at once understandable and hazy, mediated by other factors and by the artifice of "the stage."

The Bell-Jar Effect

Lizzie's derangement stems from her total isolation from the outside world. She chose not to get married and has lived in the family home, which has only restricted her freedoms. By refusing to give up all of her power to a husband, Lizzie has essentially chosen to give up all of her power to her father. This has a disorienting effect on Lizzie, making her lose all sense of reality and driving her to commit the heinous murders. Pollock writes, "For Lizzie, a bell-jar effect," characterising Lizzie's estrangement from the outer world as "the bell-jar effect." Even small actions seem to have great meaning. Lizzie is attempting to live up to the expectations of others about what is "normal."" The day before the killings, Lizzie is utterly enmeshed in her

own “bell jar,” making a valiant effort to make the connection between her experienced reality and the reality of those around her.

Being a Lady

In a stage direction, Pollock writes, “She smiles at him, there is affection between them.” Lizzie and Mr. Borden share affection, but he is wary of her more androgynous traits. One of the things that set Lizzie apart from her family’s expectations of her is the fact that she is bad at being a society lady. Lizzie’s forthrightness and boldness are not considered “lady-like,” and this is part of what everyone resents about her, including her own father. She possesses the traits that he regrets seeing in a daughter but would prefer in a boy. “Lizzie suffers greatly from this inability to live up to others’ expectations of her own femininity; in multiple monologues, she talks about how, as a child, she was always outside and got scabs on her knees, which people said was a sign that she didn’t behave like a lady should. This expectation follows her into adulthood, when she doesn’t live up to the expectations of a woman of her class by staying single, wanting a career, and wanting to be financially independent.

UNIT V - FICTION

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT – FYODOR MIKHAILOVICH

About the Author:

Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoevsky was born on November 11, 1821, in Moscow, Russia. He was the second of seven children of Mikhail Andreevich and Maria Dostoevsky. His father, a doctor, was a member of the Russian nobility, owned serfs and had a considerable estate near Moscow where he lived with his family. It's believed that he was murdered by his own serfs in revenge for the violence he would commit against them while in drunken rages. As a child Fyodor was traumatized when he witnessed the rape of a young female serf and suffered from epileptic seizures. He was sent to a boarding school, where he studied sciences, languages and literature. He was devastated when his favorite writer, Alexander Pushkin, was killed in a duel in St. Petersburg in 1837. That same year Dostoevsky's mother died, and he moved to St. Petersburg. There he graduated from the Military Engineering Academy, and served in the Tsar's government for a year.

Dostoevsky was active in St. Petersburg literary life; he grew out of his early influence by Nikolay Gogol, translated "Eugenia Grande" by Honoré de Balzac in 1844 and published his own first novel, "Poor Folk", in 1845, and became friends with Ivan Turgenev and Nikolai A. Nekrasov, but it ended abruptly after they criticized his writing. At that time he became indirectly involved in a revolutionary movement, for which he was arrested in 1849, convicted of treason and sentenced to death. His execution was scheduled for a freezing winter day in St. Petersburg, and at the appointed hour he was blindfolded and ordered to stand before the firing squad, waiting to be shot. The execution was called off at the last minute, however, and his sentence was commuted to a prison term and exile in Siberia, where his health declined amid increased epileptic seizures. After serving ten years in prison and exile, he regained his title in the nobility and returned to St. Petersburg with permission from the Tsar. He abandoned his formerly liberal views and became increasingly conservative and religious. That, however, didn't stop him from developing an acute gambling problem, and he accumulated massive gambling debts.

In 1862, after returning from his first major tour of Western Europe, Dostoevsky wrote that "Russia needs to be reformed, by learning the new ideas that are developing in Europe." On his next trip to Europe, in 1863, he spent all of his money on a manipulative woman, A. Suslova,

went on a losing gambling spree, returned home flat broke and sank into a depression. At that time he wrote “Notes from Underground” (1864), preceding existentialism in literature. His first wife died in 1864, after six years of a childless marriage, and he adopted her son from her previous marriage. Painful experiences caused him to fall further into depression, but it was during this period that he wrote what many consider his finest work: “Crime and Punishment” (1866).

After completion of “The Gambler” (1867), the 47-year-old Dostoevsky married his loyal friend and literary secretary, 20-year-old Anna Snitkina, and they had four children. His first baby died at three months of age, causing him to sink further into depression and triggering more epileptic seizures. At that time Dostoevsky expressed his disillusionment with the Utopian ideas in his novels “The Idiot” (1868) and “The Devils” (aka “The Possessed”) (1871), where the “devils” are destructive people, such as revolutionaries and terrorists. Dostoevsky was the main speaker at the opening of the monument to Alexander Pushkin in 1880, calling Pushkin a “wandering Russian, searching for universal happiness”. In his final great novel, “The Brothers Karamazov” (1880), Dostoevsky revealed the components of his own split personality, depicted in four main characters; humble monk Alyosha, compulsive gambler Dmitri, rebellious intellectual Ivan, and their cynical father Fyodor Karamazov.

Dostoevsky died on February 9, 1881, of a lung hemorrhage caused by emphysema and epileptic seizures. He lived his entire life under the pall of epilepsy, much like the mythical “Sword of Damocles”, and was fearless in telling the truth. His writings are an uncanny reflection on his own life - the fate of a genius in Russia.

About the Fiction:

Russia in the 1860s was a society in transition: the cities, particularly Petersburg and Moscow, were filled with bankers, government clerks, and intellectuals of all stripes, many of whom espoused political philosophies considered “liberal” and modeled on similar movements in France and what would become Germany. The new tsar Alexander II was himself a reformer, whose most notable achievement was the freeing of the serfs in 1861, two years prior to Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation in the United States. Once freed, serfs were no longer tied legally to the estates of their landowners, but, like in the US, many remained in conditions of pseudo-bondage, unable economically to establish themselves and attain middle-class positions.

Raskolnikov, both in his published article about crime and in his own actions, was involved in determining the mental states that affect the criminal. The concepts of psychology and even some of its later terminology were used by Raskolnikov and Porfiry. Examples abound as to Dostoevsky's use of modern psychological concepts. Porfiry's entire investigative technique involves his use of psychology to trap his victim, and Raskolnikov recognizes this and refers to it as a *cat and mouse* game. In terms of world literature, Dostoevsky stands out as the greatest master of the realistic psychological novel and has yet to be equaled by any modern masters.

Summary:

The impoverished student Raskolnikov thinks of himself as an extraordinary young man and goes on to prove that extraordinary men have the right to commit any crime as long as they have something valuable to offer humanity. He goes on to murder an old, despicable pawnbroker and her half-sister who happened to come upon him suddenly. After the crime, he falls ill and lies in his room semi-conscious for several days, discovering that a friend, Razumihkin, had searched for him. During his convalescence, he receives a visit from Luzhin, who is engaged to Raskolnikov's sister, Dunya. Because of Luzhin's controlling behaviour towards Dunya, Raskolnikov insults Luzhin and sends him away.

When Raskolnikov is able to walk around again, he goes out and reads about the crime in all the newspapers from the previous few days. He meets with a police station official and almost confesses the crime; he even goes so far as to make the official suspicious. Later, he witnesses the death of Marmeladov, a minor government official, who is struck by a carriage as he staggers across the street in a drunken stupor. Raskolnikov helps the man and leaves all his money to the impoverished widow. When he goes back to his room, he finds his mother and sister arriving to prepare for Luzhin's wedding. He denounces Luzhin and refuses to let his sister marry such a nasty and mean man. Around the same time, Svidrigailov, Dunya's former employer, arrives in town.

When Raskolnikov learns that Porfiry, the police inspector, is questioning everyone who has ever done business with the old pawnbroker, he goes for an interview, believing that the police are investigating him. Having met Sonya Marmeladov, the daughter of the deceased man he had assisted, he goes to her and asks her to read to him the story of Lazarus from the Bible. He feels a great deal of sympathy for Sonya, who was forced into prostitution to support her

family while her father was a habitual drinker. Because of her suffering, Sonya becomes a universal symbol for Raskolnikov, and he vows to tell her who killed the old pawnbroker and her sister, a friend of Sonya.

When Raskolnikov returns to Sonya after another interview with Porfiry, he decides to confess to her. Svidrigailov is listening through the adjacent door during the confession, and he uses this information to try to convince Dunya to sleep with him. When she refuses, he kills himself later that night.

After speaking with Sonya, Raskolnikov openly confesses to the crime and is condemned to eight years in a Siberian jail. Sonya follows him, and with her assistance, he starts his regeneration. Porfiry tells Raskolnikov that he knows who killed the pawnbroker.

Analysis:

The story of Crime and Punishment begins in 1860s St. Petersburg with a mentally unstable former student named Rodion Romanovich Raskolnikov. He wanders the city, eats very little, and one afternoon comes up with a crazy plan he wants to “test” by going to the flat of an elderly pawnbroker who lives with her sister Lizaveta and pawns his father’s watch. Before he leaves, he tells himself again what he plans to do: he will murder the old crone and rob her.

After meeting a drunk named Marmeladov, who shares his troubles with him and his prostitute daughter Sonya, Raskolnikov receives a letter from his mother Pulcheria stating that his sister Dunya, a former governess for the Svidrigailov family, has been courted by Mr. Svidrigailov, fired by Mrs. Marfa Svidrigailov, publicly cleared by the same woman, and then proposed to by a government official named Luzhin. Pulcheria notes that Raskolnikov will soon have the opportunity to meet Luzhin in Petersb Two men come upstairs hoping to do business with the old woman; they notice the door is locked from the inside and go to fetch the caretaker. Raskolnikov runs out and ducks into an apartment being painted by two workers, Mikolai (or Nikolai) and Mitka, who have just had a fight and run outside themselves. He kills the pawnbroker, tries to rob her and kills Lizaveta when she walks into the room unexpectedly.

The remainder of the book follows Raskolnikov’s reaction to his crime, his relationships with friends, family, and a police investigator named Porfiry, who is assigned to the case. Raskolnikov rushes to hide evidence, buries some of the elderly woman’s belongings under a rock in an abandoned yard, and discovers he has been called to the police headquarters due to an unrelated dispute with his landlord. He faints in the station when the police start talking about the

murders; later, his friend Ra. When Svidrigailov arrives and speaks with Raskolnikov, he claims that his love for Dunya was real and that he now lives in the same apartment block as Sonya. Luzhin meets with Raskolnikov, Pulcheria, and Dunya in an attempt to settle his marriage to Dunya, but in the process, he insults Dunya so much that the engagement is called off. Pulcheria and Dunya arrive in Petersburg, frightened by Raskolnikov's appearance and fearing that he might be going insane.

After meeting with Sonya and asking her to read him the account of Jesus' resurrection of Lazarus, Raskolnikov goes to Porfiry's office by himself. The investigator employs a number of devious strategies to infuriate Raskolnikov, who then begs to be charged with a crime or freed. Porfiry claims to have a surprise for Raskolnikov—a witness who claims to know the true murderer. Porfiry opens the door, and Mikolai the painter enters, confessing to the murders and confusing Porfiry and Raskolnikov.

At Marmeladov's funeral banquet, Luzhin claims that Sonya has stolen 100 roubles from him. His roommate Lebezyatnikov reveals that Luzhin planted the money on Sonya so he would appear kind when he 'forgives' her. After the disturbance, Amalia, Katerina's landlady, kicks her out of the flat. Katerina then goes outside with the kids, begs on the street, becomes delirious, and eventually passes away. When Raskolnikov runs into Svidrigailov, he learns that he has heard Raskolnikov's confession through the wall that adjoins his and Sonya's apartment. He plans to use this information to blackmail Raskolnikov into allowing his marriage to Dunya. Meanwhile, Raskolnikov visits Sonya again and confesses to her that he has murdered Lizaveta and the old crone. Sonya is shocked but swears to protect him.

After a few days of being in a fog, Raskolnikov receives a visit from Porfiry, who claims to know that Raskolnikov is the murderer. Porfiry gives Raskolnikov two days to consider his options, but he pushes him to confess in order to get a lighter sentence. Raskolnikov meets Svidrigailov, who reveals his intentions to Dunya; he wants to protect his sister, but she meets with him in secret and tries to rape her. Dunya has a gun and shoots Svidrigailov, barely missing. She responds, saying she will never run away with him, and he lets her go. Svidrigailov then kills himself in despair.

Dunya convinces Raskolnikov to turn in his crime, and the two go to the police station where Raskolnikov confesses to Gunpowder, the chief of police Nikodim's assistant, but not to his mother, to whom he sends an ambivalent farewell. Raskolnikov has been sentenced to eight

years of hard labour, as the Epilogue reveals. Sonya travels to Siberia with him and keeps Petersburg informed of his whereabouts. Razumikhin marries Dunya, and Pulcheria passes away from delirium.

After opening Sonya's copy of the Gospels, Raskolnikov makes a vow to rehabilitate himself in the prison camp; the narrator suggests that he eventually succeeds in this, though the process is a challenging one and saved for another story. Raskolnikov gradually comes to terms with his guilt and realises that Sonya's love for him is absolute.

Theme:

Alienation from Society

The main theme of Crime and Punishment is alienation. Initially, Raskolnikov's pride keeps him apart from society; he believes he is better than everyone else and therefore cannot relate to anyone. In his own philosophy, he views people as tools that he uses for his own ends. After the murders, his isolation deepens due to his intense guilt and the semi-delirium that his guilt throws him into. Several times, he pushes away those who are trying to help him, including Sonya, Dunya, Pulcheria Alexandrovna, Razumikhin, and even Porfiry Petrovich, only to suffer the consequences. Ultimately, he finds the complete alienation he has brought upon himself intolerable. Only in the Epilogue, when he finally admits his love for Sonya, does Raskolnik become a man.

The Psychology of Crime and Punishment

The manner in which the novel addresses crime and punishment is not exactly what one would expect. The crime is committed in Part I and the punishment comes hundreds of pages later, in the Epilogue. The real focus of the novel is not on those two endpoints but on what lies between them—an in-depth exploration of the psychology of a criminal. The inner world of Raskolnikov, with all of its doubts, deliria, second-guessing, fear, and despair, is the heart of the story. Dostoevsky concerns himself not with the actual repercussions of the murder but with the way the murder forces Raskolnikov to deal with tormenting guilt. Indeed, by focusing so little on Raskolnikov's imprisonment, Dostoevsky seems to suggest that actual punishment is much less terrible than the stress and anxiety of trying to avoid punishment. Porfiry Petrovich emphasizes the psychological angle of the novel, as he shrewdly realizes that Raskolnikov is the killer and makes several speeches in which he details the workings of Raskolnikov's mind after the killing.

Because he understands that a guilt-ridden criminal must necessarily experience mental torture, he is certain that Raskolnikov will eventually confess or go mad. The expert mind games that he plays with Raskolnikov strengthen the sense that the novel's outcome is inevitable because of the nature of the human psyche.

The Idea of the Superman

At the beginning of the novel, Raskolnikov sees himself as a "superman," a person who is extraordinary and thus above the moral rules that govern the rest of humanity. His vaunted estimation of himself compels him to separate himself from society. His murder of the pawnbroker is, in part, a consequence of his belief that he is above the law and an attempt to establish the truth of his superiority. Raskolnikov's inability to quell his subsequent feelings of guilt, however, proves to him that he is not a "superman." Although he realizes his failure to live up to what he has envisioned for himself, he is nevertheless unwilling to accept the total deconstruction of this identity. He continues to resist the idea that he is as mediocre as the rest of humanity by maintaining to himself that the murder was justified. It is only in his final surrender to his love for Sonya, and his realization of the joys in such surrender, that he can finally escape his conception of himself as a superman and the terrible isolation such a belief brought upon him.

Nihilism

Nihilism was a philosophical position developed in Russia in the 1850s and 1860s, known for "negating more," in the words of Lebezyatnikov. It rejected family and societal bonds and emotional and aesthetic concerns in favor of a strict materialism, or the idea that there is no "mind" or "soul" outside of the physical world. Linked to nihilism is utilitarianism, or the idea that moral decisions should be based on the rule of the greatest happiness for the largest number of people. Raskolnikov originally justifies the murder of Alyona on utilitarian grounds, claiming that a "louse" has been removed from society. Whether or not the murder is actually a utilitarian act, Raskolnikov is certainly a nihilist; completely unsentimental for most of the novel, he cares nothing about the emotions of others. Similarly, he utterly disregards social conventions that run counter to the austere interactions that he desires with the world. However, at the end of the novel, as Raskolnikov discovers love, he throws off his nihilism. Through this action, the novel condemns nihilism as empty.

THE GIRL ON THE TRAIN – PAULA HAWKINS

About the Author:

Born in Zimbabwe, where her father worked as a professor and financial journalist, Paula Hawkins moved to London, England at the age of 17. After obtaining a degree from the University of Oxford, Hawkins began working as a business reporter for The Times, later publishing a business advice book for women based on her background in politics, philosophy, and economics. After dabbling in freelance journalism and romance-novel-writing, Hawkins turned to crime fiction in the mid-2000s.

Her novel The Girl on the Train was published in 2015 to widespread acclaim; it debuted in the number-one slot on The New York Times Best Seller list and remained there for 13 consecutive weeks. The Girl on the Train has sold nearly 20 million copies worldwide, has been translated into over 30 languages, and in 2016 was adapted into a major motion picture starring Emily Blunt and Justin Theroux. Hawkins's second crime novel, Into the Water, was released in 2017 to mixed reviews. Hawkins lives and writes in South London.

About the Fiction:

The Girl on the Train is Paula Hawkins's fifth novel, but her first popular success. Unlike her previous four works, romantic comedies written under a pen name, *The Girl on the Train* takes on the darker themes of domestic violence and drug abuse. The novel debuted at #1 on the *New York Times* Fiction Best Sellers of 2015, remaining there for thirteen weeks (February - April 2015) and returning to the top of the list again for two weeks in January.

In the UK, *The Girl on the Train* occupied the #1 spot on the Hardback Book Chart for twenty weeks, the longest of any book to date. The novel has been translated into at least thirteen languages. The film rights to the novel were acquired by DreamWorks Pictures in 2014, though the setting of the film will be moved from the UK to the US.

Summary:

After splitting up with her husband, Rachel moved in with her university friend Cathy; she doesn't have a job, but she keeps it a secret from her friend. Rachel rides the same morning and evening trains, seeing the same suburban houses by the tracks every day, but she looks forward to seeing the same house every day—she names the occupants Jess and Jason—because it makes her nostalgic for her former, ideal life before she and Tom got divorced.

When Rachel happens to see Jess kissing a man one day, she knows it's not Jason because the man is taller and has a different body type. The following day, she finds out about Megan Hipwell's disappearance. Based on the newspaper's address, she recognises Megan as Jess and remembers the moment she saw her kissing the man. Unable to keep it to herself, Rachel tries to contact Jason or Scott to report what she saw. She also goes to the police station and reports what she saw, but they reject her evidence because she was intoxicated on the night Megan vanished.

Upon receiving her email, Scott asks her to call him. When they meet, she tells him what she saw, and he asks if she can identify the man based on a picture. She says she can, and when she sees a picture of Megan's therapist, Kamal, it turns out he is the man she saw with Megan. Later, Kamal is detained as a suspect but is later released due to insufficient evidence; however, Scott and Rachel still suspect Kamal and feel he has a sexual motive.

Rachel remembers that she was near where they live on the day Megan disappeared, but she doesn't remember anything about what happened because she was very drunk. Over time, she recalls small details, like falling on the stairs and a red-haired man helping her out; she remembers being in the subway near the train station, with her hands and head bleeding. Rachel decides to see Kamal, her therapist, to see if he can help her remember, and to try to find any information that may lead to her bei

When the police announce that Megan has passed away and that she was pregnant a few days later, Scott and Rachel become even more confused and irate. Scott finds out that Rachel has been lying to him all along—that is, that she was never Megan's friend and that she had never visited her gallery—and he doesn't believe her when she tells him that she is trying to help. Scott drags Rachel down the stairs, where she begins to bleed, and then locks her in a room where she finds a framed picture of Megan and Scott broken. Thinking that Scott killed Megan, Rachel reports the following day to the police.

After a while, Rachel regains her full memory of Saturday night in the subway. She recalls Tom hitting her, breaking her head, and driving Megan away. Rachel feels that she needs to talk to Anna about this, even though they are dating. Meanwhile, Anna finds a hidden cell phone and learns that Tom is cheating on her; she believes Rachel when she tells her about Tom, but right before they go to the police, Tom shows up and locks them in the house.

Rachel tells him about what she saw, and he at first denies it but then admits that he was having an affair with Megan. He says he was trying to end it; on Saturday night, she kept calling and threatening him. She said that if he didn't meet her somewhere she would come to his house and tell Anna everything. Tom blames Rachel for being so drunk that day and coming to their house because that upset Anna and she decided to not meet with her friends. Tom says that Megan kept shouting and cursing and he had no choice but to kill her. He buried her in the forest and ran away. The reader sees this scene from Megan's point of view; she says she was just trying to be honest with everyone and take care of her baby.

Now that Tom is attempting to kill or seriously hurt Rachel, Rachel kills him by putting the corkscrew in his throat out of self-defense. Anna then calls the ambulance, reports everything to the police, clearing Rachel's name. Rachel also witnesses Anna talking to Tom prior to the ambulance arriving and twisting the corkscrew even further into his throat. As the book comes to an end, Rachel makes the decision to temporarily leave that area in order to regain her life and her sobriety.

Analysis:

The complex thriller "The Girl on the Train," written by Paula Hawkins, explores issues such as abuse, deception, reliance, women's roles, perception, and memory. The book was Hawkins' debut thriller and was turned into a successful film. The novel explores emotional and mental states and creates an exciting plot. Readers and critics disagreed about the author's assessment of memory, addiction, and perception; some found the unpredictable narrators' literary style to be "disorienting." Nevertheless, themes like mental health, violence, and alcoholism explain the characters' roles in the book.

Abuse and Dependency

Rachel draws sympathy and frustration from the reader at different points in "The Girl on the Train." Her infertility issues, her husband's death, and her work all elicit sympathy, yet her overly obsessive qualities and relentlessness are upsetting. After marrying Tom, she develops an alcohol addiction and experiences blackouts while abusing the drug. Her alcoholism serves as a temporary coping mechanism for her inability to conceive and a way to avoid her husband's critical assessment of her. However, as her condition worsens, Tom uses her alcoholism as an excuse to cheat on her and eventually get a divorce.

When this occurs, Rachel increases her drinking to cope with her losses; she refuses to refer to Tom and his new family as an ex; she watches him closely and is even charged with attempting to harm his daughter; her alcoholism and memory problems lead to her being implicated in Megan's death; additionally, she lies on purpose to preserve the remainder of her damaged reputation.

While Rachel's alcohol abuse takes centre stage in the book, Megan and Anna also exhibit strange dependencies that are the result of past trauma. Megan is unhappy and unstable due to abuse from a previous relationship; her lover abandoned her after they lost their child, and years later, she finds it difficult to commit to a relationship and is always looking for validation from men.

The most subdued of the women is Anna, who becomes too protective of her spouse out of love and turns to her child as an escape from reality when she starts to feel uneasy. While infertility and her divorce are the main causes of Rachel's mental health issues, Hawkins gradually reveals that years spent with her dishonest and verbally abusive husband also play a role. Throughout the entire book, Hawkins demonstrates how the main characters develop habits and addictions from upsetting events.

Perception and Memory

One of the most significant themes in the book is perception, which Hawkins illustrates through a straightforward narrative style that suggests appearances can be deceiving and that things are not always as they seem. In order to keep the reader guessing and advance the plot, Hawkins employs assumptions such as Rachel's conclusion that Megan and Kamal are having a sexual relationship after she witnesses them kissing through the train window. She maintains control by giving cryptic clues about events and by using a variety of accounts to draw attention away from one suspect and towards another.

At first, Rachel thinks Megan and Scott are wonderful. She feels passionately about their marriage, but in truth, Megan is dealing with grief and loss. Meanwhile, Anna starts to feel uneasy because she thinks Rachel is a threat to her family. As the narrative reaches its climax, it becomes clear that the characters' assessments of themselves, other people, and events are not totally accurate, as Hawkins illustrates through the concept of perception.

The topic of memory is another important theme in "The Girl on the Train." Rachel loses consciousness when intoxicated, rendering her an unreliable witness in a criminal case. Her poor

memory and Tom's accusations impale her self-confidence and self-worth, and she cruelly judges herself and descends further into psychological disorder. While she is married to Tom, he uses her incapacity to recall events to abuse her and gaslights her into believing she is the abuser.

Hawkins uses the character of Megan to illustrate the destructive nature of having the incorrect self-perception. Megan pushes herself to forget her past and her experiences in an attempt to conform to her husband's and Tom's ideas of what a wife and a lover should be.

The recollections of Anna's past before she married Tom scare her tranquilly. She witnessed him deceive his wife with ease while she was his mistress, and she fears that she will suffer the same fate. Lastly, Hawkins describes how Rachel becomes empowered to take control of her destiny when she eventually remembers Megan's abduction and her life with Tom as her spouse.

Deception and Lies

Intentional lies and restrained truths are another theme that Hawkins delves into; her characters deceive one another and themselves; Rachel, for example, keeps going to work despite having lost her job, deceiving her flatmate Cathy; she lies to the police when they are investigating Megan's murder; and she lies to Scott about her friendship with Megan in order to win his trust.

She thinks the worst of herself since Tom blames her for their marriage's breakdown, but the most hurtful falsehood is that she lost a good man due to abuse.

While Megan is also dishonest, she makes her friend lie on her behalf while she hangs out with Tom without her husband knowing. She also refuses to document her thoughts as her therapist suggests because she wants her past hidden. Tom is an infidelity husband at first, but the extent of his deception is revealed chapters into the book. When his schemes are revealed, he holds Anna responsible for his actions. Hawkins shows how men and women's relationships are based on twisted facts and lies by crafting a story around these people. She also illustrates how keeping secrets can have disastrous results.

The Role of Women in the Society

The women in this book identify themselves in terms of conforming to conventional femininity, and their worth is determined by their capacity to carry out traditional gender roles. The detrimental effects of society's expectations on women are well-illustrated by Hawkins through the story of Rachel, who becomes depressed, blames herself for being infertile, and turns

to alcohol after losing her job due to a divorce. Rachel also experiences other people's judgement because they fail to recognise the dire consequences of betrayal and infertility.

Tom belittles her while they are married because she doesn't live up to expectations set by society; Hawkins illustrates this with the character of Anna, showing how women are forced into needless competition with one another and prioritise male validation over female friendships; Megan's trauma also leaves her reliant on male approval; both women give up on their careers when they get married.

Hawkins illustrates the dissatisfaction with complete domestication by depicting the loss they experience. When Megan drowns her infant by accident, she doesn't realise Mac is partially to blame for her child's negligence; instead, she holds herself responsible for Mac's abandonment and Libby's death. Rachel discovers Tom was involved in Megan's death and tries to save Anna, but she won't accept the truth in order to save their marriage. Ultimately, though, Rachel and Anna kill their manipulator and reclaim their lives. In "The Girl on the Train," Hawkins illustrates how women are abandoned by an overburdened society at their most vulnerable, and that women are the only ones who can save themselves.

Style, Tone, and Figurative Language

Hawkins uses short, segmented phrases, repetition, and a first-person narrative style to create an informal, suspenseful tone in "The Girl on the Train. "The tone of "The Girl on the Train" is melancholic, emphasising the emotions and problems of the characters through the use of metaphors and similes in the depiction of the places and characters.

The Train

Megan and Anna dream of leaving domesticity as they watch a train pass by, symbolising Rachel's journey through life and her imprisonment and inability to move on from her past existence.

Alcohol

Alcohol represents Rachel's desire to destroy herself. She utilises alcohol to momentarily escape from reality and indulges in the habit despite knowing the terrible consequences of being intoxicated.

Character List: Rachel Watson

The story's main character, the title character on the train, rides the same morning and evening trains every day and watches the same suburban houses next to the tracks, naming the residents as Jess and Jason. She loves this house because it reminds her of her perfect past life before her divorce from Tom, but after seeing "Jess" having an affair, she becomes involved in a crime scene connected to the residents of this house.

Megan Hipwell

Rachel's "Jess," who experiences conflict in her marriage and finds her husband Scott to be both overprotective and a source of comfort, has affairs with both Tom and her therapist. She disappears one Saturday night in July and is discovered dead a few days later. Megan's trauma primarily stems from the deaths of her brother Ben and her child, Libby, whom she had while living with a boyfriend named Craig.

Scott Hipwell

In the end, he is shown to be innocent. As Rachel's "Jason," he is suspected of killing Megan because they had an argument before her departure and death. After she tells him what she knows about Megan's affair, he and Rachel become friends and have a brief sexual connection.

Kamal Abdic

The man Rachel sees kissing Megan on the train is Kamal, Megan's therapist. He and Megan were having an affair, but he suspects it was based on transference, which happens frequently between patients and their therapists. Nevertheless, he indulged. He is suspected of killing Megan because of this romantic link, but he denies this and is released because there is not enough evidence to support his claims.

Tom Watson

Tom is Rachel's ex-husband; the two got divorced after he cheated on her with Anna while she was depressed over their infertility. Two years later, Rachel finds out that he was killing Megan and that he was having an affair with Megan while he was married to Anna. Tom

is a compulsive liar, which he tries to hide with charm and by blaming others, especially the women in his life.

Anna Watson

As Tom's new wife, Anna despises Rachel and becomes irritated whenever Tom speaks to or mentions her. She enjoys being in charge and is content with her life with Tom and their daughter, relishing in being the "other woman" when they were still married. However, after learning that Tom had lied to her just as much as Rachel had, Anna assists Rachel in killing Tom, putting her own needs and safety ahead of Tom's.

Ben

Although readers only learn about Ben through her memories, he is Megan's brother and was a fascinating and adventurous man who passed away at an early age.

Mac (Craig McKenzie)

Megan met Mac when she ran away after her brother's death, and the two of them were very much in love for a while until Megan got pregnant and their relationship did not grow with the changing circumstances, and when the baby died, Craig left her. Later in life, Megan searches the internet for Mac but is unable to find him.

Cathy

Rachel moved in with Cathy after her divorce from Tom, thinking it would only be a temporary arrangement, but by the time the story begins, Rachel had been living with Cathy for more than two years, and Cathy is not happy about Rachel being her flatmate because she frequently consumes large amounts of alcohol and causes mess.

Damien

Damien is Cathy's boyfriend. He agrees with Cathy that Rachel has a problem with drinking and is not currently fit for a romantic relationship.

Detective Inspector Gaskill

He is one of the detectives working Megan's case. Rachel has a hot and cold relationship with this detective, who sometimes is kind to her and sometimes is more rough in his questioning.

Detective Inspector Riley

He is the second detective working on Megan's case. Riley is generally antagonistic to Rachel, believing she is an unreliable source of information due to her alcoholism and obsession both with her husband and with Megan's case.

Andy (The Red-Haired Man)

Rachel sees the red-haired man often on the train she rides to and from London. He is with her on the night that Megan disappears and later fills her in on some of what she cannot remember. He seems to also have a drinking problem.