



‘Konkal’ As Finest Spectral Story Of Rabindranath Tagore

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Abstract: Rabindranath Tagore has a long and illustrious history. The fact that his father was influential in promoting a Hindi sect that helped influence the way religion was practiced in modern India is frequently mentioned. Another well-known fact is that Tagore was the first non-English writer to win the Nobel Prize in Literature. Tagore's difficult relationship with the emergence of a contemporary Indian identity is possibly the most historically relevant component of his biography. Tagore was an eccentric figure who lived at a historically pivotal time when the British monarchy was losing control of its empire due to two world wars. Tagore was critical of the occupation, but he was wary of any politics based on ethnic ties. Take a look at Tagore's egalitarian style of short stories if you're having trouble figuring out what to make of this. He writes about a wide range of characters, regardless of their socioeconomic status, gender, or ethnicity, and his pen treats them all equally as complex creatures living terrible lives. Tagore's characters are rarely identified by their caste. He plainly did not consider people as naturally split into any form of category, but rather as bound together by the fact that they were human.

Keywords: skeleton, ghost, spirit, fear, poison.

Thematic journey:

The narrator recalls a skeleton hanging on the wall in the room next to where he and his brothers slept when he was a small child. It was used by the boys to learn anatomy. This skeleton had been missing for years, but the narrator was forced to sleep in the chamber where the skeleton had been placed one night due to a lack of space in the room. That night, he is awoken by a ghost searching for its skeleton. Even though the narrator is terrified, he pretends unconcerned and tells the spirit to find its skeleton as soon as possible so he may return to sleep.

However, the ghost approaches the narrator and asks if he wants to hear the narrative, and the narrator refuses. The ghost claims that she had a husband that she feared as much as death while she was alive. He died only two months after they married, which was fortunate for her. She was thought to be a poisoned bride, yet she believes she was one of the most beautiful ladies living. Despite the fact that she had no female relatives and her brother refused to marry, she often sat alone outside beneath the tree, thinking about how lovely she was. Her family's doctor was a family acquaintance who graduated from medical school. When the doctor was monitoring her pulse during one of their visits, she could also feel his. She quickly fell in love with the doctor and spent her days daydreaming about herself through his eyes. She was firmly in love with him after four more meetings. She would frequently visit his office and inquire about medical issues, including, on rare occasions, what poison you'd have to feed a man to kill him. The ghost asks the narrator what he would think of the story if it ended there, and the narrator responds it would be fine if it did.

The ghost continues by describing a time when she saw the doctor dressed up. She prodded her brother for more information and discovered that the doctor was, in fact, getting married. Given their closeness, she feels misled and seeks out the doctor to question him. The doctor stands to profit handsomely from the marriage, but he appears dissatisfied with the arrangement. The doctor consumes wine with his brother on the roof just before his wedding.

However, she poisoned the doctor's drink in accordance with the doctor's advice on how to murder a man. She, too, takes the poison and lies down beneath a tree, resolving to die there with a tranquil smile that will be the talk of the hamlet. However, the ghost claims she was surprised to see that instead of a calm smile, she was merely a skeleton used by boys to learn anatomy. When she asks the narrator what he thinks of the narrative, he responds that he finds it hilarious—but no one is around to hear him.

Birds eye view on Konkak:

Tagore's take on the ghost story is unusual, and "Skeleton" is meant to be more of an investigation of love and marriage in Indian society than a horror narrative. The ghost here, like Chandara in "Punishment," is depicted as a fiercely independent lady who finds her way out of an unsatisfactory matrimonial circumstance. Society labels the ghost as a "poisoned woman," which is hilarious given the fact that she poisons the doctor. We're wondering if she poisoned her first husband as well.

Much of the story's drama is based on Tagore's prodding at the limits of traditional domestic arrangements. He plays a lady with a lot of agency who is single and flirting with a man she likes, and she murders the doctor to ruin his opportunity for a happy household life. However, the woman's activities are presented as a plain matter of fact, rather than as scandalous or out of line.

The ghost eventually plays a comedic role in the plot, as she tells of a murder that was definitely motivated by some feeling like love, yet the only person she seemed to actually love was herself. She adored the way she appeared to be looking at her through the eyes of someone who was interested in her. So, just as this isn't a typical ghost story, it's also not what we've come to anticipate from a love story.

Irony in The Skeleton's Flesh:

In "Skeleton," the ghost describes the narrator's dark eyes, red lips, and curves, as she was fascinated with how others regarded her beauty in life. She is attempting to entice the narrator to appreciate this imagined previous beauty by explaining these features to him. Tagore also appears to be aware that when we think of a skeleton, we rarely think of flesh, and such a creative, evocative image drags us right into a story delivered by such a vain ghost.

Supernaturalism in Tagore's stories:

In his short story, Tagore investigates the supernatural in a number of ways. On the one hand, he writes ghost stories that are mostly about supernatural phenomena. "Skeleton," in which a woman's spirit returns to recount a story of unrequited love and a murder-suicide, and "The Hungry Stones," which relates the story of a man enticed by the sexual pleasures of a haunted palace that attempts to trap his soul, are both included in this grouping. The supernatural, on the other hand, comes in Tagore's stories as little aspects, as part of his characters' daily lives.

The supernatural, on the other hand, comes in Tagore's stories as little aspects, as part of his characters' daily lives. Consider the film "Tarapasanna's Fame," in which the husband and wife rely on amulets and other charms to keep them safe from harm. In "Thoughtlessness," the doctor feels he is being punished by a supernatural force for defrauding his companion. The supernatural in these stories serves as an ironic counterpoint to distressing real-life issues.

Title of the story:

The story's title hints at what's to come. The writer tells the story of the girl's life. The 'skeleton,' which is a boned structure with no life, was similar to the girl's life in that it had no life. She was a child widow who became known as the "poison bride" after her husband died, triggering the deaths of the men she married, and she was reduced to a lifeless skeleton with feelings and dreams but no means to realise them. Her

existence as a widow was skeletal at first: she was a beautiful woman with dreams and a throbbing life, but she was forced to live without love, fulfilment, or the ability to unite with others.

It's heartbreaking to watch the girl's fate in relation to her mentality. The author leaves room for readers to offer a psychological reason for her actions. She had a lot of energy. She adored all things tangible, including flowers, objects, and people, but she had no right to interact with them. She was so enslaved by social conventions that she felt as if her life did not belong to her. She'd become enslaved by her family and society. She wished to fly on the wings of her passions and live life to the fullest, but she was helpless and confined to her parents' home. She reacts neurotically and experiences a period of sorrow and soul-searching. The story provokes thought among the audience.

Protest against social convention:

The story serves as a voice of defiance against societal norms. The issue of the gap between emotional need and societal boundaries is explored. The girl's neurotic struggle with the difficulties imposed on her by adversity is reflected in her artwork. She is so miserable that she believes that if she cannot find love in this physical world, she can at least make it eternal by dying. The sense of isolation is conveyed with tremendous dramatic impact. Examining the story's description is really interesting. The story begins with a situational opening: a student encounters a woman in his dream who tells him about her life. With his narration, the author fully reveals a girl's psyche.

The spirit appears to be a live being, as if it has been brought back to life. It's a rewind narrative. This pattern is repeated twice: the lady as a poison bride causes her husband's death and then transforms into a skeletal widow. The girl is first dressed as a real bride who is accused of poisoning her husband because of her character as a poison bride, and then she is costumed as a bride who does, in fact, deliver poison to a fleeing spouse. She turns into a skeleton at the end of each sequence after killing her groom. The story is told in the form of a fairy tale. The story's storytelling method makes it incredibly engaging. Coleridge's thesis of "Willing Suspension of Disbelief" is the basis for the story.

Her relationship with a young man is depicted in the story. She transforms into a ghost after death, but her desire for love fulfilment remains. The narrative is a satire on early-nineteenth-century society's social customs and restricted thinking. It also implies that human rights are being denied. The author weaves a circumstance into the story's knitting subject, but at some point, the writer brings up a current societal issue. As a sensitive human being, a writer always raises his or her voice in protest against inhumane obstacles posed by family and society. The story is a reflection on the erosion and degeneration of human values, as well as human rights violations.

The dramatic circumstance is imbued with human feelings of love for life and hatred for society, which are communicated through supernaturalism. The terrible story comes to a close abruptly when the morning light reaches the narrator's room for the first time. Postmodernism can be applied to the story. Tagore's focus as a postmodernist is in "mini-narratives," or stories that explain little practises or local happenings rather than large-scale universal or global conceptions. He tackles a variety of controversial topics, including conflict in traditional and modern society, internal and external conflict, and male-female conflict. To create the character of the girl in the story, he uses the personality fragmentation approach. Her affection for the doctor was one-sided, and her actions appear to be insane.

Conclusion:

Despite the fact that the character's portrayal and behaviour appear to be insane, the story seems to express that each human being, regardless of physical growth, longs to be understood. There is a hidden message in the story. The author criticises widowhood's societal taboos, as well as social constraints and norms of behaviour for widow women. In the thematic depiction, he presents the theme of the feminine lot, but inwardly, he displays a strong yearning for a change in society's attitude toward widows' lives, seeing them as equals and not excluding them from life's pleasures.

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