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ALICE MUNRO'S SELECT SHORT STORIES: A NARRATIVE TECHNIQUES ANALYSIS

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Abstract

The storytelling style employed by Nobel Prize winner Alice Munro is examined in the current research. She is known for recreating personal issues in her novels, displaying a connection between her real life and her fiction. The most recent autobiography published by Alice Munro is titled Dear Life. The Paper talks about the last four pieces in the "Dear Life" series, "The Eye," "Night," "Voice," and "Dear Life." The power of skilled author Munro lies in her capacity to compassionately and exactly capture the surface of ordinary life. Plot, place, character, and style are the primary components of narrative approaches that were employed by the author. With the release of Dear Life (DL), Munro's perspective appears to have altered. The first-person narrative is used by Alice Munro in these four pieces, and as they come together, they create a brilliant, immovable portrayal of her everyday existence.

Keywords: Dear Life, a first-person narrative, and storytelling approaches.

Introduction

A literary work of fiction with a shorter length than a novel is called a short story. According to Edgar Allan Poe, a short story should be read in one sitting, taking anywhere between a half-hour and two hours (Poe), according to his article In "The Philosophy of Composition." Typically, short stories have fewer characters and settings, and it usually has a beginning, middle, and memorable ending. Unlike novels, these stories are meant to be simple, appropriate works of literature that may be easily read.

Specific mechanisms of short stories that contribute to a great narrative include plot, character, and place. An account of fictitious events that adhere to a design construction that consists of an overview or explanation, increasing action, culmination, dwindling act, and determination or end can also be considered as a description. This

framework is also referred to as the "plot pyramid" or "story arc." As a result, description - which is just a description of related events - plays a precarious part. The word "storyline" is occasionally used interchangeably with short stories, which are useful for stating our feelings.

We've all read or heard a lot of stories. They may be a tragicomedy, a comedy, or both. The plot, characterization, storytelling style, subject, tone, dialect, setting up, and mood are the basic elements of a short tale. The short story was really created in Canada in the late nineteenth century. It had a humble beginning in the 1830s but gained popularity when daily newspapers and magazines supported its production in the middle of the nineteenth century. Authors like Ken Mitchell, Alice Munro, Margaret Lawrence, Margaret Eleanor Atwood, and others are notable modern short story authors. Therefore, there is no end to the variety and range of Canadian short stories.

A well-known Canadian author, Alice Munro uses the craft of story effectively in her short stories. Her stories explore human complexity in a straightforward literary manner. The main movement of Munro's fictional characters is the story itself. Although her memoirs are the greatest, her main topics are sadness and humiliation, sexual perversion, terminal disease, and deadly accidents. She is sometimes referred to be a territorial author because her writing focuses on the way of life of rural Ontario, Canada, which she dubbed Jubilee or Han ratty in her works.

Narrative Technique Concept

Human nature is fundamentally rooted in storytelling. Only men have the ability to tell stories. Oral traditions like myths, legends, stories, accounts as well, and so forth were where it all began. Tzvetan Todorov coined the term "narratology" in 1969. Narratology also is a study of how stories make sense and what the fundamental principles and practices are that underlie all acts of storytelling, according to Barry (Barry). It aims to understand the essence of the tale on its own, in addition to interpreting each specific story. It is an art form to tell a tale. It benefits us to express our ideas, emotions, and observations. The storyteller uses art to tell the tale. The word "story" can be used to refer to the series of occurrences that make up a narrative instead of the word "narrative." The "Iliad and Odyssey," "Canterbury Tales," and "Faerie Queene" by Spencer are well-known works that make considerable use of storytelling. A narrative is a method by itself that ties together the people, the setting, and the time. An author uses narrative methods on purpose to create a story quickly. Essays, short stories, novels, and poems are all examples of narratives. Even though literature takes on different forms, storytelling still serves the same purpose. Gerald Prince (Prince) defines it as "the study of form functioning of narrative". The term "narratology" may be new, but the science behind it is not, he says. It acts as the force that unites all people. Barry asserts that "narrative, then, is not the reading and interpretation of individual stories but rather an effort to study the nature of "story" itself as a concept and cultural practice" (Barry).

Study of Dear Life

Alice Munro's most recent book, *Dear Life*, which was released in 2012, is an ensemble of fourteen short stories. The analysis focuses on the last four tales, notably *The Eye*, *Night*, *Voices*, and *Dear Life*. The strength of Munro's writing resides in her ability to depict the surface of everyday life with care and unflinching accuracy. Plot, place, character, and style are the essential components of literary techniques, all of which the author used in her novels. With the release of *Dear Life*, Munro's perspective appears to have altered. The author revisits her wounds in the 'finale' or autobiographical passages of what is supposed to be the final work of her career. The final four works in this collection are not exactly stories, as she writes in the note that comes before. They come together to produce a distinct entity that, while occasionally not totally personal, has an autobiographical feel to it. They are, in my opinion, the opening and closing statements I can make about my life (DL 255). The first-person narrative in these last four stories spans five years, ending when the character is around thirteen years old. The scene is her native Ontario, where she describes her brick-covered home as facing back towards the community and facing west across slightly sloping fields to the river's concealed curve, which she refers to as the "Big Bend" (DL 307–308). Munro discusses her upbringing in Wing Ham's lower town and her tumultuous connection with her parents. It also has roots in some of her earlier works, such as "Dance of Happy Shades" and "Lives of Girls and Women." The Eyes tell the story of a five-year-old girl who has to deal with the unexpected arrival of younger siblings, a baby boy, and a baby girl a year later. At home, aggressive socialization occurs in response to their presence. The arrival of the baby causes a sudden change in Alice's life. Munro claims, "When I was five years old, my parents suddenly gave birth to a baby boy, which my mother said was what I had always desired. I had no idea where she got this notion. She went into great detail about it, all fiction but difficult to refute. A newborn girl then appeared a year later" (DL 257). Her relationship with her mother alters when her siblings arrive. For instance, when Saddy, the housemaid, passed away, she could not

comprehend how people might change: "I accepted it easily, the way you could think and in fact remember that you once had another set of teeth, now vanished" (DL 270). The night takes place in a time of war. It explains Alice's insomnia, nightmares, and restless nights spent at home. The sister, whom Munro strangely refers to as Catherine in *Dear Life*, briefly reappears in *Night*. The author acknowledges that she and her younger sister did not have a lot of interests because of their large age gap. Although the girls shared a room, they most likely had few common interests. I don't mean to claim that I was completely in charge of her, and or even that our personal lives were continuously entwined, Alice insists as she lists some of the pleasures she shared with Catherine, like dressing up or telling stories. She played her own games and had her own companions (DL 274). Therefore, it is clear that Alice in the story adored her younger sibling. She is really afraid as she begins to experience violent nighttime thoughts: "The thought was there and lingering in my mind. My younger sister, whom I loved more than anybody else in the world and who was sleeping in the bunk below me, crossed my mind that I could choke her (DL 277). The narrator learns about the many awareness states. Voices explain Alice's experience at a neighborhood celebration and also discuss the ritualistic delight of dances. Alice was frequently humiliated by her mother's refined behavior, which the little girl at the time thought was wrong. She had already learned from the rural lifestyle that sticking out is never liked, especially if you are a woman. According to her, "Whatever she said, it did not sound quite right" (DL 290). Munro, who can't recall the episode because she was too young, speculates about her mother's thoughts and deeds, assuming that they would give life a narrative twist since she wasn't around to witness it. Later, a local whore whom Alice could not stand spoils the celebration by showing up. I might have realized that she was a well-known prostitute, she believes. She would have definitely crossed my path at some point, but not in that orange clothing. Moreover, I wouldn't have referred to a prostitute. More likely are bad ladies" (DL 292). She remembers her former childhood recollections in these tales. She connects with other people's lives and feels their emotions in the

constrained area. The last section of the "finale" is titled *Dear Life*, much as the entire book. It gives a rambling narrative of numerous occasions, locations, expectations, and letdowns. She describes how she got to school, how she met the prostitute's daughter, and the background of the house they had lived in. "My mother and I occasionally talked, mainly about her younger years" (DL 310). Last but not least, *Dear Life* is a memoir of growing up on a farm near Wing Ham and the relationship she had with her parents, particularly after learning that her mother had Parkinson's illness. She mourns her mother's passing. But my mother was no longer available, and she was the one I really wanted to talk to at the time (DL 318). All four of the stories move the reader to tears because the author opens up about long-hidden emotions. Additionally, it paints a brilliant, permanent portrait of everyday life by representing Alice Munro's past as well as her future. In trying to determine what, if anything, will be sufficient for a more abundant life, Munro blurs the lines between the objective and subjective, as well as between the little and the huge, according to Bloom (Bloom 2009).

Conclusion

The main characters in all of Alice Munro's works are contemporary, intelligent, and independent women in their mid-to-late 30s. Ultimately, they become substantially more helpful, self-assured, and in charge. Her story is rather straightforward, delivered in a straightforward manner. Small-town settings are her preference because they give even unimportant happenings and unimportant persons greater weight. Her female protagonists are the majority of the time in her stories. The novel's supporting character suffers quietly and accepts the situation without offering any commentary. Her articles are mostly concerned with the issues that women face in their daily lives. In her stories, realism has a profound impact. Each story's narrative perspective is focused on an image that helps the reader comprehend the story thanks to the author's usage of a single word as the title.

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