

Chapter-I
THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

CHAPTER I

Theoretical Perspective

I. i. Generic Features of the Short Story

The word genre is a French term derived from the Latin *genus*, *generis*, means 'type'. The basic genres in literature are poetry, drama, novels, and short story. All categories of books or stories can be called either fiction or non-fiction. Fiction is made up of story while non-fiction is a real one. Essay, Biography, Autobiography, and Speech are types of nonfiction and Drama, Poetry, Legend, Short story, Fables, Fantasy, etc. are types of fiction. Short story is established itself as a popular form of written literature. It is distinct form of literature and it is the "coming form" of fiction (Hudson 336).

Origin and Development of the Short Story:

It is very difficult to find out origin of the short story because telling a story is an old art. It is said that short story was invented as soon as human beings could talk. The early short story can be found in oral story-telling traditions and the prose anecdotes. Its origin can be traced in the *Puranas*, the *Panchtantras*, the *Jataka* tales, the *Mahabharata*, etc. In the *Bible*, the *Old Testament* is full of wonderful short stories (Rees, 203). The oral story-telling originally produced epics like Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. As soon as civilization invented writing, stories began to be recorded on paper. In the 6th century BCE an ancient fables such as Aesop's fables, by a Greek slave named Aesop, were popular. Short stories also become popular under the Roman Empire.

The well-known short stories are *Gesta Romanorum*, a Roman anecdotes collection in the 13th or 14th century; Chaucer's *Canterbury*

Tales in 14th century; Giovanni Boccaccio's *Decameron*; Gothic tales such as Richard Cumberland's *Remarkable Narrative, The Poisoner of Montremos* (1791); in the 1805 Charles Brockden Brown's *Somnambulism* was one of the short stories in the United States; *The Philosophy of Composition* (1846) by Edgar Allan Poe, a father of the modern, detective short story and a widely known one of the writers of mystery and imaginative tales; *The Blizzard* (1831) and *The Queen of Spades* (1834) by a Russian romantic and mysterious tale writer Alexander Pushkin. Sir Walter Scott and Charles Dickens, great novelists, also wrote short stories. There was a strong demand for short story as soon as the print magazines and journals increased in the latter 19th century. The famous short stories are Thomas Hardy's *The Three Strangers* (1883), *A Mere Interlude* (1885); Rudyard Kipling's *Plain Tales from the Hill* (1888), *The Jungle Book* (1894). The first American professor of dramatic literature, Brander Matthews, who was the first one to name the emerging genre short story, published *The Philosophy of the Short Story*. Guy de Maupassant was the prolific French writer whose *Boule de Suit* (1880) and *L'Inutile Beaute* (1890) are examples of French realism. Leo Tolstoy's *Ivan the Fool* (1885), *Alyosha the Pot* (1905) are popular short stories. Anton Chekhov, a prolific Russian short story writer noted for crafting psychological short stories, contributed more than 1000 stories in his life time such as, *The Bet* (1889), *Ward No. 6* (1892) etc. Munshi Premchand, a prolific Indian novelist and short story writer, also handled over 200 stories. Agatha Christie, Virginia Woolf, Graham Greene, James Joyce, D. H. Lawrence, William Faulkner, Katherine Mansfield, Franz Kafka, Daphne du Maurier etc. contributed to short stories.

Short story is a product of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century. In the second half of the 19th century, due to industrialization, there was growth of science as well as cities. The world became too fast and education flourished everywhere. The educated class demanded something to read for entertainment. They demanded such thing to be read in single sitting or in a short time. From 19th century, the short story emerged as a distinct literary genre in literary works of writers like E. T. A. Hoffmann, Heinrich Kleist, Edgar Allan Poe, Prosper Merimee, Guy De Maupassant, and Anton Chekhov. It emerged in 19th century with publication of magazine *Blitzkrieg*. It reached its highest point with Chekhov and became one of the greatest art forms of the 20th century.

Definitions of the Short Story:

According to Edgar Allan Poe, 'A short story is a prose narrative requiring from half an hour to one or two hours in its pursual'(Hudson 337). H. E. Bates says, 'The short story can be anything that the author decides it shall be.' According to Somerset Maugham, 'Short story is a piece of fiction. It is a made - up story - unlike history and reports - which are narrative, but not fictional'(Sattigiri 166).

Characteristics of the Short Story:

The name 'short story' is in itself a complete definition. It can be easily read at a single sitting. The reader ought to feel that it is short. It is a form or genre having rules of its own. -It is a narrative of interrelated events, involving a conflict and a resolution. It is a story in which something has to happen. One of the important aspects of the short story is that it focuses on a creation of a mood rather than narration of a story. It needs good beginning, which draws attention, middle and end. It aims

at producing one single effect. It has to seize the attention, which never relaxes, and gather it together until the climax is reached (Rees 203). It should create a single impression. It should stick to one plot which should be relevant to the idea. The goal of a short story is to leave the reader with a single message, emotion or idea. According to Carissa, a short story tells a story which is less complex and shorter than novel.

A short story is a work of fictional prose. It should be neat, dramatic and full of atmosphere. It is meant for pleasure and delight. It is writing about imaginative events and characters. A good short story is a matter of individual taste. Sattigiri points out about the taste of short story,

“The moral pill is coated with sugar with the story: so that when the reader swallows it, he does not become conscious of it”(173).

The subject of the short story can be adequate and effective and should develop within the prescribed limits (Hudson 338). Most of the short stories are about human beings and their characters may be based on real-life peoples and its plot may be inspired by a real-life event. So it is made up story than real. It is a matter of common experiences and we have to live it in for few minutes. We also have to see men and women in a few relationships and circumstances.

Moral is another desired feature of the short story. The short story writer leaves behind principle, knowledge, etc. At the end, writer states something extra-ordinary with the help of climax i.e. moral. Moral plays important role in the short story. It is a duty of the writer to teach a reader or give knowledge through the short story. Sattigiri says, the short story is a distinct form of art. The short story writer must be impressionistic. He must be swift, choosing one or two incidents, and

must merely hint at the other incidents, to produce a convincing impression of the truth of his theme (180).

The short story is shorter than novel while long stories are called *novellas* which mostly found in the form of collections containing unpublished stories. As it is a form of fiction it has the some elements. In the novel there are many elements which are woven so it may be difficult to find out any central idea, but the short story contains one and only one informing idea which is clear and uncomplicated.

The difficult task for the short story writer is to describe scenes and settings in the fewest possible words (Rees 224). It has greatest economy of means. Every word, all characters, dialogue and description are designed to develop single predesigned effect. The maximum length of a short story varies from publisher to publisher. It has no set length. Its length falls between 2000 to 10,000 words. It is no longer than 20,000 words and no shorter than 1000 or 5 to 20 pages.

Elements of the Short Story:

The elements of short story are plot, character, conflict, setting, theme, point of view, etc. Plot is a series of events. Character is a person who takes part in the action. There are minimum two characters: a protagonist and an antagonist. The theme is the central idea in the short story which is essential thing in the short story. There must be single theme. The struggle between two people or things in the short story is the conflict. The setting of the short story is the time and place in which it happens. A writer has point of view to state a story.

Thus, the short story is a work of fiction about imagined events and characters in which every detail is economically used to produce the desired effect.

I. ii. The Concept of Family Relationship:

According to Matthews, Family has only one common idea: caring, whether a particular family is a nuclear family, a stepfamily, a single-parent family or an empty-nest family. Family consists of related people who care each other. Arora says, family is a human reproductive unit in which the members of the tribe are members of one or more interrelated families. Our family members manage as well as control our learning experiences. They teach us as well as guide us for the world outside the home. We learn various skills, stress management, understand our own emotions and behaviour, values, etc. from family. Family is a shelter in which love plays dominant part for family relations. It expresses a great deal of gratitude for one another. Our family and our relationship with it present us with both joys and challenges at every stage of life. Families teach us effective communication not only to strengthen our own emotional health but also to connect ourselves to the important people in our lives. Families help us to nurture as well as strengthens from time to time and family members support one another and promote healthful behaviour and safety skills. Healthy family freely expresses mutual love and respect. Every family has its own rules, regulation and guidelines and each member has to follow them. Strong families stick together and have sense of devotion and loyalty. Laughing together builds family but laughing at each other divides it. Wandera remarks, it is possible to help and teach children as well as to do right things without be corrupted by bad moral.

Relationships are the most important things in our life. It plays a pivotal role in a person's success. Friendship can come and go; however family remains lifelong which maintains close relations. Relationship means connections. We establish positive relationship by positive

behaviour. To strengthen relations we express our affectionate feelings towards one another. People in a relationship tend to influence each other by sharing their thoughts and feelings. Attitudes and behaviours make healthy and positive relationships which include being authentic, patient, showing that you care and being someone who can be trusted and related upon.

Relationships are unique but there are few traits which define each type. A good relationship is when someone accepts your past, supports your present and encourages your future. Not all relationships we experience in our life may be pleasant experiences. It can be sacrificial, co-dependent, frustrated, uncommunicative, insecure, self-absorbed, controlling, imperfect, distracted, toxic, negotiation, emotional, unhappy, complicated, abusive, faithless, hypocritical, selfish, unfaithful, perfect, everlasting, love-hate, etc.

Family relationships play important role to interact with the wider social world. A person can be influenced by the quality of their family relationships. Our family time is a fundamental building block to strengthen family bonds. The bond, which we share with our family, plays a major role in our overall being. We share a strong bond with our mother, father, and siblings. Further we are linked to our uncles, aunts, cousins, grandparents, and other distant family relations. A character building starts from infancy and it evolves through childhood, adolescence and becomes more sophisticated and complex. Like character building, development is also a long process, no one become honest and responsible suddenly and family relationship acts as a foundation for character building.

Family relationships must be healthy as well as strong. It is the duty of family members. To develop strong family relationships regular interaction with the family is very important thing. Family also helps its members to develop communication skills and the ability to get along with others. It takes a lot of good time to nurture family relationships. Family relationship ranges from the specific “interaction/ process to general association”. It serves as a useful concept within several frameworks of family theory. This total relationship provides a perspective for diagnosing and solving problems in various areas of family life.

Having healthy relationship with our family member is both important and difficult. It is possible to create happier, more stable relationships. Family relationships affect a person in numerous ways. In family relationships, some people are closely attached to their relations, others prefer to maintain distance from the same members. Family relationships can be challenging because of the give and take of these relationships. It can be so stressful, we feel unsafe and scared. Domestic violence, money worries, etc. make relations tense and negative. Families become blocked in their relationships by hurt, anger, mistrust and confusion.

To avoid family conflicts, families need flexibility. Flexibility is another strategy in family relationships. Strong families are such families which can bend, change, and adapt. They reunite when the storm is over. We perform various activities to maintain family relationships such as supporting, loving, caring, sharing, compromising, belonging, and knowing right from the wrong, etc. and through it build healthy, fruitful and sometimes frustrated family relationships.

Thus, family relationships involve all people in family and all the members are related in some way or the other. There are variety of relationships within a family such as, husband-wife, parent-children, grandparents-grandchildren, and other relationships. The collective body of persons who live in a house or under a roof have blood relation. The relationship involved in these works usually consist of bonds between family members, such as, husband-wife, mother–daughter, mother-son, father-daughter, father-son, brother-sister, step-parent-step-children, uncle-nephew, aunt-nephew, mother-in-law, daughter-in-law, father-in-law, son-in-law, grandparents-grandchildren, etc. and these relationships are continuously portrayed in *Wicked Women*.

BOOKS BY THE AUTHOR
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