

# Un-Known in Bram Stoker's *The Judge's House* And Indira Soundarajan's *Pai... Pisasu... Bootham*

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**Abstract:** Modern horror literature finds its roots in the gothic novels that exploded into popularity in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It brings that evil has existed in numerous forms throughout horror literature. The modern horror writers tried their level best to bring the powerful horror characters in the literary works. The unknown characters get different names in horror novels, fiction and short stories. The chosen authors also used this technique to bring the effect of unknown roll in the selected works. These two writers belong to two different centuries but their idea merge together; when they were used the unknown character. This paper deeply touches the character and it proves the unknown value at the end of the conclusion.

## I. INTRODUCTION

*I want you too believe...*

*Believe in things that you cannot*

- Bram stoker

Horror tales are the common features of the nineteenth century fiction. Many myths are legends are archetypes are explored by the later horror writers. Gothic fiction is an important genre of literature that combines elements of both horror and romance. Horror as genre has only been present since the eighteenth century. These are the tales consisting of gothic imagery of dark castles, medieval ruins, graveyards and tombs. An attraction to darkness and melancholy would eventually inspire gothic literature.

The main concept of evil has existed in numerous forms throughout horror literature. In the early nineteenth century, supernatural suspense stories involving fantastical creatures such as *Vampires, Ghosts, Demons, Zombies and Supernatural elements* were used to emphasize a particular human weakness or fear in a sort of morality play. The main concept of evil has existed in numerous forms throughout horror literature. In the past twenty years enough horror novels have been published in the sizable history of the printed world.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Modern horror fiction finds its roots in the gothic novels that exploded into popularity in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The most eminent text form of the gothic horror genre is Mary Shelley's novel *Frankenstein*, 1818. It has also been considered as science fiction, a philosophical novel or a novel of purpose by some literary historians. At the same time, John William Polidori identified this kind of vampire story that has since become familiar with his short story *The Vampire*. This kind of supernatural character, combining evil with sinister charm, has been much used and elaborated by horror writers. The first published American horror story was Washington Irving's *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*.

Later Gothic horror descendants included seminal late nineteenth century works such as Bram Stoker's *Dracula* and Henry James's *The Turn of the Screw*. The early horror works

used mood and subtlety to deliver an eerie and otherworldly flavor, but usually eschewed extensive explicit violence. Edger Allan Poe, H. P. Love Craft and M.R. James and so on. Some other writers have written many ghost stories. Horror fiction reached a wider audience in the 1920's and 1930's with the rise of The American Pulp Magazine. Nevertheless, popular contemporary writers such as Dean Koontz, Clive Barker, and Stephen King sometimes bring off the horror effect without exhibiting the extreme violence that characterizes much of the current mainstream of this genre. When we look at the Tamil horror literature the concept of horror is found in great Epics. Most of the horror characters were present in *The Puranas*. In the Tamil literature since the nineteenth century many horror fictions were written and vary kinds of methods were used to attract the readers. But in the present century so many horror writers write different kinds of horror stories. Pioneers in the field are Indira Soundarajan, Rajesh Kumar, Jayakanthan and so on.

The purpose of this paper is to study the 'un-known' of a character in the English Horror writer Bram Stoker's *The Judge's House* and Tamil writer Indira Soundarajan's *Pai... Pisasu...Bootham*. Both these writes are renowned in the field of horror fiction and ghost stories. Bram Stoker is an Irish horror fiction writer of nineteenth century. Indira Soundarajan is the Tamil horror writer of the contemporary century. The famous novels of Bram Stoker are *The Snake's Pass (1890), Dracula (1897), The Jewel of Seven Stars (1903) and Lair of the White Worm (1908)*, so for Indira Soundarajan has more than twenty novels in his credit. These include his most famous novels such as *Vikrama...Vikrama... Vituvidu Karupa, Marma Dasam, Genma Genmamoi and Maya Vizhigal*. Most of the fictions of these two writers have been adopted into films which gained good appreciation. One who reads the fiction of these two writers would understand that they shift from present to past and modernity to tradition. As Indira Soundarajan belongs to this era of the advent of technology, he manipulates and utilizes the technology to a greater extent. *Judge's House and Pai... Pisasu... Bootham* 'un-known' is very clearly represented.

In *The Judges House* after committing suicide, the Judge transforms into a rat where as in *Pai... Pisasu... Bootham* after being murdered Saratha the wife of the professor Vaitheeswaran takes the form of her sister and does all house hold works. In both the short stories the readers as well as the characters have a fear that there is something mysterious but they are unable to figure out what that mystery is. Only in the end the confusion regarding the mystery gets resolved. In both the stories, it is not the ghosts that confuse the characters but their constant 'unknown' would also confuse them equally.

In *The Judges House* the Judge in the portrait, was a person of cruelty; one who gives very harsh punishment to wrong doers. The Judge commits suicide at his home when he becomes mentally imbalanced. A maiden Mrs. Dempster, in

the neighboring house states that the Judge's house is left unused for so many years and also she says that there is some mystery that haunts the house. Hence, no one prefers to stay there but, she herself is not sure of what the mystery is. All that she knows is at night; a rat loiters in the house making terrific sound and appearance. Amidst this a young man by name Malcolmson is in search for a lonely place where he could spend three months to study. He is guided by an agent Mr. Carnford to the hunted house of the judge. Irrespective of the caution by the maiden and agent he decides to stay there. Every night a strange rat appears and terrifies him by its strange noise and appearance. He is unable to resist it in any way. Out of fear he becomes very sick. He understands there is something mysterious with the particular rat. Being unable to identify the mystery (unknown) he continues to stay there irrespective of his ill health. Mrs. Dempster really gets horrified because of the Mr. Carnford's plan to stay in Judge's house. To bring this Sammi Cox said that "The first Malcolmson hears of the strange reputation of the house is when he is speaking to the agent; he says that the locals are not used to seeing the house occupied. If they were, perhaps it would change their opinion of it. Afterwards, when he informs the landlady at the inn that he will need provisions for where he is moving to, she realises with horror, he is speaking of *the Judge's House*. (Cox:33). To prove this the following lines verify with the proper information.

"Not in the Judge's House!" she said, and grew pale as she spoke. He explained the locality of the house, saying that he did not know its name. When he had finished she answered: "Aye, sure enough - sure enough the very place!

It is the Judge's House sure enough." He asked her to tell him about the place, why so called, and what there was against it. She told him that it was so called locally because it had been many years before..."(JH: 4)

One night he sees the rat taking the form of ghost and approaching him with ferocity of motivate him to commit suicide. All of a sudden he feels a cold hand coming near his neck and trying to strangle him. At last he identifies that the ghost is none other than the Judge who committed suicide in that house years ago. It is the ghost of the judge that has taken the form of the rat and haunted the house and those who come to stay there. Again we find in this story that the Big Rat which bothers the protagonist is just a rat but at the same time it can also be the ghost of the demised Judge. The presence of the Rat in a way takes care of the absent Judge and haunts the mind of the innocent intellectual time and again; that the rat resembling like the cruel Judge is a mother of contradiction. Bram Stoker proves the presence of unknown with the Malcolmson. Because the absent Judge is more terrorizing than the ill-looking rat which is visibly present.

"With a feeling of something like horror, Malcolmson recognized the scene of the room as it stood, and gazed around him in an awestruck manner as though he expected to find some strange presence behind him. Then he looked over to the corner of the fireplace - and with a loud cry he let the lamp fall from his hand." (JH:15).

Malcolmson himself don't know what happen to him and the unknown character reviles in different form. Regarding this Bertly said that "every ghost story has a victim and *The Judge's House* isn't an exception. Usually the skeptic ended up being the victim in the 19<sup>th</sup> century ghost stories and this is the case in *The Judge's house*. The protagonist sees his death in front of him ..." (Bertly:25)

The isolated situation brings the unknown presence in the form of certain incidents for example the maiden and Malcolmson often hear the alarm bell sound in the Judge's house at midnight. They don't know how the bell sounds come every day night regarding this Richard Dalby said that "Stoker's mastery in this treasury of fourteen spine-tingling stories. Not all the selections deal with the ghostly and supernatural, but they are always bizarre, and some—like *The Judge's House* etc" (Dalby: 23). Regarding this Stoker's lines prove that the unknown situation or character brings the real horror for example the following lines mention it.

"with the I mean this, that possibly -- no, more probably -- we will hear the great alarm-bell from the Judge's House tonight." (JH: 22)

In *Pai... Pisasu... Bootham* Saratha the wife of the Professor Vaitheeswaran has been murdered by a gang of thief. After murdering the Thieves chop off her head. But, the police authorities inform the print and electronic media to report that Saratha is still alive carrying all her routine house hold works. Regarding this Indira Soundarajan proved with the characters such as Ravi Chandaran and Swaminatha. Ravi Chandaran has been known that his professor's wife had been murdered. But Swaminathan is assuring that she has been arrived our house and given your ATM card, because of this incident Ravi Chanderran confused the unknown character. Here the unknown character identified in the name of Vaitheeswaran's wife. The incident follows.

"What Ravi... aren't you feeling well?" He accepts it.

"Do you have missed anything?"

"Yes, I have missed my ATM card somewhere Uncle..."

"Then he immediately taken it from his pocket and asked him. Is this?"

"His eyes excited and said exactly... oh! Thank you uncle... ok... how do you have it?"

"You have left it in our professor's house it seems..."

"Yes"

"Unnecessarily Vaitheeswaran sir's wife came here and given this"

"What...? He suddenly wakeup and stand with enough fear?"

"....."

"Don't you know...his wife has been murdered by a gang of thief"(JJ:115)

The Thiefs are totally confused by this news. Hence they keep a watch on that house. Regarding this one of the article mentioned about Indira Soundarajan's works "He is something of an expert on South Indian Hindu traditions and mythological lore. His stories typically deal with cases of supernatural occurrence, divine intervention, reincarnation, and ghosts, and are often based on or inspired by true stories reported from various locales around the state of Tamil Nadu." (Pustak: 3). In the story the Director General of Police Ruthera has fixed minute secret cameras around the house to monitor the movement of the Thieves. She also arrests them. On the other hand a lady with the same appearance of Vaitheeswaran's wife serves the professor in his daily activity. Everyone including him is of the opinion that it is Saratha's sister who does all these things. In reality Saratha sister is severely affected by paralyze attack in Bombay. This is known to the Professor when he receives a letter from her. This leads

to the serious confusion about their identity in the sense the 'unknown'. Regarding this the incident follows.

"Professor Vaitheeswaran's house"

"in the professor's house filled with enough police on the other hand Varsheni and Ravichanderan reached professor's house at the midnight"

"In front of them they have seen the dead body of the professor."

"Sir.... What happen?"

"...very mysterious... Mr. Ravichanderan. It's highly mysterious.... Who wandered here in the name of Chandrika is not the real sister of Saratha because she is unable to walk "

"Then... who is she?" (JJ:175)

Amidst this development a research scholar Varsheni who works on ghost meets the Professor asking for his help. Though initially the Professor refuses to help her, later he is requested by the woman in the appearance of his wife serving him in all his needs to help the researcher Varsheni. It is Varsheni who identifies that the one, who serves the Professor, is the ghost of Saratha who was murdered by the Thieves. Towards the end confusion regarding the mystery gets resolved. Similarly there were many incident happen in both *The Judges House* and Indira Soundarajan's *Jenma Jenmamai*.

### CONCLUSION

Thus in both the short stories 'the absent presence' of ghost could be clearly understood. In *Judge's House*, the Judge after committing suicide takes the form of a mouse as well as the ghost. Whereas in *Pai.... Pisasu... Bootham* Saratha after being murdered takes the form of her sister and the ghost as well. In the short story *Pai.... Pisasu... Bootham*, confusion arises between the ghost and the Saratha's sister only when the Professor receives a letter from Saratha's sister. But in the Judge's house, there is every possibility for the reader to sense the presence of the ghost from the beginning. Thus, the ghosts sometimes by their invisible presence and mostly by their total absence tease the minds of individuals who fall a prey to them. If the presence of the ghost are shocking, their absent presences are even more shocking, especially for the chicken-hearted. The stories move in such a way that the presences of the ghosts are always felt, though they are mostly absent. From the beginning to the end the unknown character wandered in the name of known but the research oriented mind only identified that the unknown (Ghost form) created enough trouble and lead to the reads to identify the unknown. But the writers adopt the same methodology to create the desire effect, and they achieve their goals successfully.

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