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Kaleidoscope



Webzine of Department of English
Maheshtala College

Special Issue- DETECTIVE FICTION

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FOREWORD

As a sub-genre of crime and mystery fiction, DETECTIVE FICTION is one of the most popular and universally - endeared literary genres. It usually centers round a detective or investigator who engages in solving a mystery, usually a murder (sometimes, multiple murders). The features of detective stories are an almost perfect crime, apparently without any witness or clue, a wrongly accused suspect – most commonly due to circumstantial evidence, stupid / incompetent police, superior observation and analysis of the detective, and an unexpected twist through which the truth is laid bare. The most important ethical take from detective stories is that appearances are often deceptions, and that logic is far more important than thoughts.

The history of detective stories can be traced to western mythology and religious writings, such as the Old Testament story of Susanna and the Elders and *Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles, where the unsolved mystery of the King Laius' death was being investigated by Oedipus. Yet, it is possibly the story of The Three Apples, one of the most important tales in the One Thousand and One Tales of the *Arabian Nights*, narrated by Sheherazade that can be cited as the first proto-detective story in the East. In the story, a fisherman finds a locked heavy box in the Tigris River. He sells the same to the Abbasid Caliph, Harun Al Rashid. The dismembered body of a young woman is found and the Caliph instructs his minister Jafar Ibn Yahya to investigate the crime and find the killer within three days. Zafar initially fails but then resolves the matter by finding an important clue. However, since Zafar does not don the role of the detective voluntarily, and undertakes it to save himself from being beheaded and also to solve the mystery, many critics feel uneasy about tagging it as a detective story.

In English literature, the first popular detective novel was *The Murders in Rue Morgue* by Edgar Allan Poe, published in 1841. This is considered as the world's first modern detective story. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle is, however, more popular than Poe, and his first detective novel *A Study in Scarlet* published in 1887 marks the first entry of Sherlock Holmes and his friend and assistant, Dr Watson. In terms of popularity, Agatha Christie, Stanley Gardner, Frederick Forsyth follows Doyle. Many of the novels and stories of this genre have been adopted for the silver screen and made into box-office hits.

Bengali literature too has a distinguished and diverse range of detective stories. Priyanath Mukherjee who wrote *Darogar Daftar*, Panchanan Ghoshal, author of *Police Story* and Panchkari De are considered to be the pioneers of the original Bengali detective story. Roy Bahadur Priyanath Mukhopadhyay, considered as the Bengali Conan Doyle, served the Police force, Panchanan Ghoshal was a learned criminologist and Panchakari De a superb raconteur- all contributed to the great repertoire of Bengali detective fiction. Sharadindu Bandyopadhyay with his detective Byomkesh Bakshi and his assistant Ajit Banerjee left a deep impression on the readers of Bengal. Stories from the Byomkesh Bakshi corpus have been filmed often, even by world-renowned film makers such as Satyajit Ray. Other notable authors of detective fiction are Kshetra Mohan Ghosh, Dinendra Kumar Roy, Nihar Ranjan Gupta, Hemendra Kumar Roy, Premendra Mitra, Syed Mustafa Siraj, Narayan Sanyal, Satyajit Ray, Krishanu Bandyopadhyay, Adrish Bardhan, Tapan Bandyopadhyay, Prabhavati Devi and Suchitra Bhattacharya to name a few, across a few decades before and after Independence.

This edition of *Kaleidoscope* is dedicated to DETECTIVE FICTION and has been curated by the teachers of the Department of English, Maheshtala College with a lot of dedication and love. In the midst of the deadly pandemic, teachers and students of the department have come forward to contribute some very interesting writings that are sure to evoke interest and enthusiasm, and more such academic enterprise.

Happy reading, and do stay safe!

Dr Rumpa Das

Principal

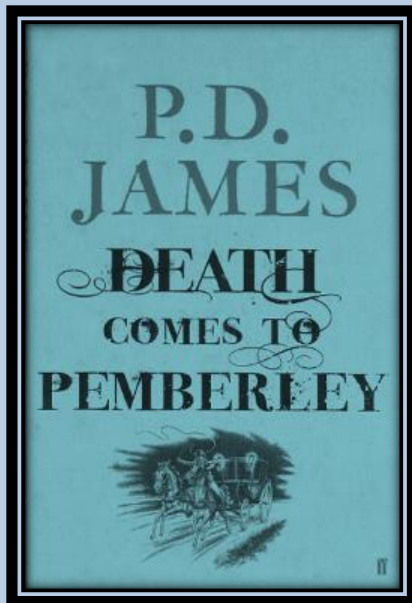
Maheshtala College.

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Pride and Prejudice Revisited: Death Comes to Pemberley

Dr. Sanghamitra Ganguly
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Pride and Prejudice has been an integral part of English Honours syllabus since long. Published in 1813, it is one of the eternal classics of English literature, arguably one of the most important works ever written in the language. It has been considered by the critics as a romance novel, as a social critique, as a character study, but what it has never been considered is as a crime novel. Noted writer of crime fiction, P.D. James, changed all that when in 2011 she wrote her crime thriller *Death Comes to Pemberley* set as a sequel to *Pride and Prejudice*. Continuing the tradition of her predecessors like Dorothy L. Sayers, Ngaio Marsh, Julian Symons or even Agatha Christie, Phyllis Dorothy James is mostly known for her detective stories featuring police commander Adam Dalgleish. Dalgleish however is also an eminent poet. He is a brooding and meditative man, which sometimes people mistake for haughtiness, reminding the reader of Darcy of *Pride and Prejudice*.

In a way *Death Comes to Pemberley* is a fan fiction by P. D. James, dedicated to her favourite author Jane Austen. In her Author's Note to the novel, James writes:

I owe an apology to the shade of Jane Austen for involving her beloved Elizabeth in the trauma of a murder investigation, especially as in the final chapter of *Mansfield Park* Miss Austen made her views plain: "Let other pens dwell on guilt and misery. I quit such odious subjects as I can, impatient to restore everybody not greatly at fault themselves to tolerable comfort, and to have done with all the rest."

Death Comes to Pemberley is not an Adam Dalgleish novel. Combining the elements of Regency British society with a classic murder mystery, the novel is set six years after the events of Jane Austen's novel unfolded. Elizabeth and Darcy are married and have two sons. Elizabeth's beloved sister Jane and her family live close by. Darcy's sister Georgina is grown up and will soon get married and two handsome suitors are vying for her attention. Elizabeth's father often visits his favourite daughter and finds a great source of pleasure in the library of Pemberley. Everything is serene and peaceful. The novel starts with Elizabeth overseeing the preparations for the annual Ball, named after Darcy's mother Lady Anne. Jane, Bingley and their children are visiting them.

However the serenity is shattered when on the eve of the ball Lydia Wickham suddenly arrives at Pemberley, the home of Darcy and Elizabeth, and announces that her husband has been murdered. It is soon discovered that Wickham is not the victim. It is his friend Captain Denny who has been murdered, and Wickham is the chief suspect. He himself claims to Darcy and others, "I have killed him, my only friend." It is learnt that Mr. and Mrs. Wickham, with their friend Capt. Denny, were going through the woods in a hired coach, Lydia says that when an agitated Denny leapt from the vehicle and ran from sight, Wickham pursued him. Then she heard shots being fired. Lydia, certain that her husband had been killed, had the coachman drive her straight to Pemberley. At this point Darcy and two other men go to the woods to search for Wickham. What follows is a typical Jamesian description of the murder site.

And now the glade was before them. Passing slowly, almost in awe, between two of the slender trunks, they stood as if physically rooted, speechless with horror. Before them, it stark colours a brutal contrast to the muted light, was a tableau of death. No one spoke. They moved slowly forward as one, all three holding their lanterns high; their strong beams, outshining the gentle radiance of the moon, intensified the bright red of the officer's tunic and the ghastly blood-smeared face and mad glaring eyes turned toward them.

They also find Wickham drunk, distraught and kneeling over the dead body of Capt. Denny. Soon there is a full-fledged murder investigation, and Darcy and Elizabeth are placed in the midst of it, though Darcy excuses himself from the investigation process due to his family connection with Wickham. The mystery is further complicated by the presence of a family curse and the rumour of a ghost in the forest adjacent to the estate, where Darcy's great-grandfather committed suicide. Another question raised is who or what the shrouded figure that haunts the woodland is. James continues building the mystery slowly by adding in elements of the haunted woodland, the curse, and the ghostly figures. The description of the mysterious elements of the novel is steeped in gothic hues reminiscent of the style of *Northanger Abbey*, as for example when Lydia arrives at Pemberley shrieking murder:

The atmosphere was not helped by the tempest outside. From time to time the wind howled in the chimney, the fire hissed and spluttered like a living thing and occasionally a burning log would break free, bursting into spectacular flames and causing a momentary red flush over the faces of the diners so that they looked as if they were in a fever.

Thus begins this delicious whodunit which at the same time preserves the flavour of Jane Austen. We have the chance to revisit some of our old favourite characters while at the same time being carried along a murder mystery. However judging by the high standards of a P. D. James murder mystery, the mystery element is somewhat diluted here. The crime is not investigated by the Metropolitan Police as in the Dalgleish novels, because there was no such police force then. Rather the local magistrates investigate the case. There is no possibility of any forensic evidence. There is in fact a clever reference to it. "I take it," a magistrate asks a doctor called in to advise on the case, "that your clever scientific colleagues have not yet found a way of distinguishing one man's blood from another?" The mystery does not take much of an effort to unravel. It almost solves itself at a

local inquest and a subsequent trial at the Old Bailey, with the help of some last-minute fortuitous revelations, including a letter dictated by one character on his deathbed.

Death Comes to Pemberley is written in a loose approximation of 19th-century prose used by Austen, but a modernized version rather than a painstaking imitation. Yet to the delight of the readers there is now and then a more approximate imitation of the typical prose style of Austen, as in the case of Lady Catherine de Bourgh's reaction: "I have never approved of protracted dying. It is an affectation in the aristocracy; in the lower classes it is merely an excuse for avoiding work." However as far as characterizations are concerned, Elizabeth appears much more subdued here than in *Pride and Prejudice*, as if she is overwhelmed by all the responsibilities as the mistress of Pemberley. Darcy, on the other hand, is much interesting. James has explored his consciousness as she does Dalglish's, and Darcy like the other man is similarly plagued by self-doubts and a sense of responsibility which are so inherent in the character of Dalglish. Ultimately it is this revisiting of an old classic along with the favourite characters in it that proves so enjoyable to the readers while reading *Death Comes to Pemberley*, as we are allowed to experience them in all their idiosyncratic glory one last time.



Beyond the Barriers: Women in the World of Crime

Rai Sarkar

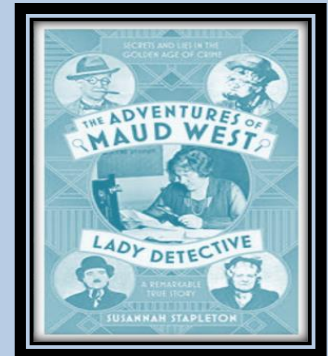
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Women in all spheres, private or professional, have remained at par with the other sex, if not better. Both are finest creations of god, yet the latter is deemed to be perfectly befitting the role of detectives for their intelligence and maturity. The term 'DETECTIVE' is generally adhered to the men-folk but women can never be considered less. When the Creator himself has never distinguished between his own creations, who are we to do so? Therefore, this article traces the emergence of women detectives through the generations.

India, the land of mystery and diversity, has given birth to numerous souls who have claimed their excellency throughout the globe. One of them was Rajani Pandit, well known as the "Indian Shylock". She hailed from Bombay and began her work as a young girl of 22. She drew inspiration from her father and started up investigating crimes to be acclaimed as "The first female detective".



An owner of a private detective agency set up in the year 1905 London, Maud West was one of the earliest female detectives of Britain. The book titled "*The Adventures of Maud West, lady detective: Secrets and lies in the golden age of crimes*", by Susannah Stapleton delves into the life of Maud West, the real detective. A middle aged, chubby



woman was brave enough to face whatever challenges came on her way.



Hired as a police matron in 1896, Isabella Goodwin was NEW YORK's first woman police detective. She was brought into the limelight with the case of "taxicab bandits" when she went undercover to help the police attack the criminals who looted two bank managers in broad daylight.

A model by profession, Rebecca Sutton caught her ex- husband cheating on her when she was expecting a child. She did it all by herself because 'she felt stupid when she consulted detective agencies run by men'. Breaking all the stereotypes, Rebecca, a plus-sized model turned into a



detective, had set up a detective agency with an army of charming female detectives. Women of various shapes and sizes, dressed elegantly, are employed to lure and finally trap unfaithful men. The series of novels entitled “*The No1 Ladies’ Detective Agency*” by Alexander McCall Smith set in Botswana is about a woman, cheated by her husband, who had set up a detective agency, reverberates the life of Rebecca.

A school teacher teaching English to a detective who solved cases, metamorphosed herself into an executive in a detective agency. Her first case with a bank in Allahabad promoted her to the post of a full-time detective. With a strong educational foundation and immense backing by her husband, Taralika Lahiri, a 53 years old detective had excelled extraordinarily in her field.



A black-suited man with a hat, typically portrayed with a cigar in hand, is no longer the limits pertaining to the role of detectives. Women, in all forms, with all virtues have transcended the barriers and have dismantled the ideals of traditional stereotypes. They have been exceptional in their craftsmanship because they believed in:

*“Leaving behind nights of terror and fear
I rise
Into a daybreak that’s wondrously clear
I rise
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.
I rise I rise I rise.”*

{QUOTED:STILL I RISE – MAYA ANGELOU}

The Philosophy of Comprehending Realities

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Jacques Lacan, in his *Seminar on the Purloined Letter*, makes a distinction between the subject of Statement' and the "subject of enunciation". Subject of statement is related to the thing which is described in a given sentence or dialogue. Subject of enunciation is related to the fact that this particular thing has been said within certain contexts. Dupin blames his assistant in Poe's story "The Purloined Letter" for focusing on the subject of statement and not on the enunciation. He explains saying that the statement part tells you 'what' has been said, while the enunciation part will tell him 'why' a certain character has said a certain thing. In different expression, Holmes accuses Watson for seeing things and not observing them. Seeing is the physio-psychological activity that tries to understand "what" is there to see. On the other hand observing lets one come into the world of the 'why'--- why are you seeing something in front of you? And it is this 'why' that leads the detective to do those deductions which finally solve the mystery.

Now this why is a question from the position of power. It tells you that you already have command over the 'what'; you already know what reality you are seeing or experiencing; and so now it's time to explore the "why"---- why the reality is what It is. What on the other hand is a much more dominated, compromised question is 'what'---where you are so much baffled by the reality, that you merely try to comprehend it well. You do not have enough agency over the reality that you are encountering. Understanding the nature of the reality is the limit of your power.

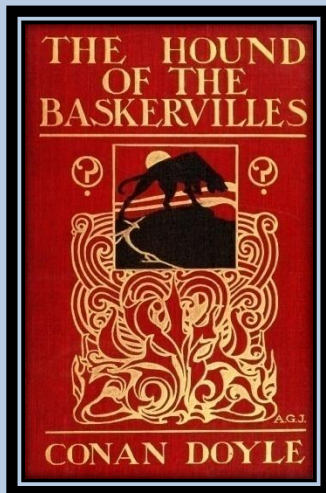
Brian McHale in his book on postmodernism clarifies how the chief question of Modernist philosophy (an epistemological why) has changed into an ontological what in its postmodern counterpart. It's definitely is a sign of loss of agency on part of the individual. It shows how opaque the mystery is for the detective that he can only grasp its nature and not the context which it belongs to. Interestingly, many detective novels by the likes of Hammett, Chandler, Auster we find the detective as one who lacks in power and is so baffled by the nature of the mystery, that he can't go beyond the question "what". Instead of a superhuman "know-it all" Holmes, he is like many protagonists of postmodern fiction is just trying to understand and comprehend the reality he is thrown into. Investigating the subject of enunciation, lies far beyond the limits of his power. That leaves us with the question:- has the changing worlds of post – World War II, brought the super powerful sleuth to its humane form?

Anthony Horowitz and the New Postmodern Whodunnit Formula

Raj Das

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Postmodern fiction prides itself at having broken all barriers of conformity. But the postmodern detective novel is a rare and oft neglected offspring of postmodern fiction. When we talk about postmodern novels, we immediately think of Italo Calvino, Gabriel Garcia Marquez and Haruki Murakami. Yes, we have Marquez's murder mystery *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*, but it relies heavily on memory as the protagonist tries to solve a murder case that takes place almost three decades ago. Then, we also have Umberto Eco's famous historical postmodern historical thriller *The Name of the Rose*, a novel that takes us to thirteenth century Italy. There are other great illustrious thriller writers too out there, and, most of them attempt to emulate in their own works the classic detective novel reminiscent of Agatha Christie or Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.



The classic detective novel has a very special place in our hearts. It reminds us of carefree childhoods reading *The Hound of the Baskervilles* or any other of Doyle's great masterpieces while eschewing from the prying eyes of our mothers, who were blissfully unaware of what we were *actually* reading disguised as textbooks. The thrill of listening to Hercule Poirot or Sherlock Holmes deducing a confusing string of events and bringing them to a logical conclusion in the last chapter is incomparable, a feat that modern thrillers have attempted and perhaps struggled to recreate.

Writers have quickly grasped the necessity of continuing the Poirot-Holmes bandwagon, and with due permission from the estates of these literary giants, many enterprising authors have sought to add further titles featuring the two popular sleuths. From Neil Gaiman to Stephen King and Andy Lane, Sherlock Holmes has now had extended twenty-first century lives. What this shows is that we are always looking for more stories and adventures featuring our favourite sleuths. Popular novelist J.K. Rowling also began her post-Harry Potter career by writing novels featuring detective Cormoran Strike, with the book *The Cuckoo's Calling*. Writing under the pseudonym Robert Galbraith, she has since added four more books to the series. In Strike, she has created an altogether new old-fashioned detective, a new breed of neo-classical detective. Perhaps Anthony Horowitz's Daniel Hawthorne is the best example of such an individual.

The New Whodunnit

There is something about a good whodunnit novel that can never compare to any other genre of crime writing. In Bengal, we have Prodosh Mitter and Byomkesh Bakshi, and here too the formula remains the same. A crime is committed and there seems to be no obvious connection

between a series of seemingly disparate events. Then up comes the classic sleuth, who with his penetrative mind and keen powers of observation, unearths the mystery and unmasks the culprit, often hidden in plain sight. Horowitz is a new breed of writer in this respect. He aimed at creating something new with the whole whodunnit formula. In his own words, Horowitz tells us:

“So, my inspiration I suppose was partly *Magpie Murders* which is where I began all this but it was also just a whole idea of trying to sort of break the envelope and do something different with the whodunnit formula”

On the art of the whodunnit novel, he says:

“A whodunnit is one of the few types of fiction that dot every i and cross every t, for all fiction is in a way a search for truth. Whodunnits give you truth. The final chapter always nails it, closes it down, and you come away with a sense of satisfaction, which I don’t think you get in any other sort of book.”

Horowitz has not only created a new detective for us, but has also improvised upon the elements found in this genre to create a new postmodern detective whodunnit fiction. One way of doing this is to write a novel within a novel, reminiscent of Italo Calvino. It reads like a guidebook on mystery-solving. Discussing his novel *Magpie Murders*, the author talks about his style:

“I wanted it to be more than a murder mystery story. I wanted it to be... a sort of treatise on the whole genre of murder mystery writing. How the writers come up with the ideas; how these books are formed. That was my interest in writing it. I didn’t just want people to have the fun and the pleasure of ‘Oh, it was the doctor’... on the final page. I wanted there to be something a little bit more.”

Horowitz belongs to a category of writers who are equally flexible with scriptwriting for the screen. In 2002, he created *Foyle’s War*, a much-loved British television drama series set in the Second World War. He began as a children’s author with the Alex Rider series of novels. Like any admirer of classic British detective fiction, Horowitz wrote two Sherlock Holmes novels: *The House of Silk* (2011) and *Moriarty* (2014), before introducing a new sleuth in Daniel Hawthorne. Let us now take a quick look at how these novels operate.

The Author is a Character in the Novel

Horowitz’s *The Word is Murder* is a postmodern novel primarily because the author himself appears as a character in the book. Parts of the novel read like the Horowitz’s diary in which he narrates his everyday life. However, the daily balance of a calm life is suddenly shifted when a disgraced former Scotland Yard detective Daniel Hawthorne requests the author to write a book about him. Putting himself into the book is an innovative technique that Horowitz has used repeatedly, as he says:

“In my books, I try to do things that nobody has done before. When I came to write the Daniel Hawthorne novels, *The Word is Murder*, *The Sentence is Death* and a third novel that is coming out in 2021, I had an idea to turn things on its head. I will make myself, Anthony Horowitz, the

narrator... Instead of being the writer, who knows everything, the beginning, the middle and the end, all the suspects, the clues and everything, I will become the one person in the book who knows nothing... These are whodunnits turned on their heads.”

In *The Word is Murder*, Horowitz the author turns himself into a ‘sidekick’, who is constantly outwitted and almost bullied by detective Daniel Hawthorne. First, he is coerced by the seedy sleuth to accept the project of writing a book featuring him, while also agreeing to share the royalty fifty-fifty. It is a disastrous arrangement for an established author such as Horowitz, a fact that is later pointed out to him by his literary agent Hilda Starke. Perhaps more funnily, Hawthorne does not agree with Horowitz’s title for the book and comes up with the suggestion, *Hawthorne Investigates*, which to the writer is an insipid and uninteresting title. It could be catastrophic for his book sales.

Book within a Book

Horowitz’s detective fiction has other unmistakable postmodern elements. He often writes a book within a book, a feat that was exquisitely achieved for the first time in *Magpie Murders*.

“What you have in *Magpie Murders* and *Moonflower Murders* is a book inside a book. In both the books you have novelist Alan Conway, hiding the solution to a modern mystery in his novel set in the 1950s. Susan, Conway’s editor, has to find the solution using clues from Conway’s novel. The reader gets two books for the price of one.”

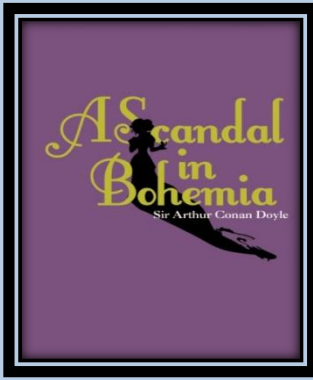
So, in Hawthorne’s novel *Moonflower Murders*, one gets to read another novel on the inside, titled *Atticus Pünd Takes the Case*. The book, or shall we say books, deal with another of Hawthorne’s detectives, Atticus Pünd, a sombre, darker character whose mind is shaped by the horrors he experienced during Hitler’s Nazi Germany. Being of Jewish Greek descent, he has gone into a labour camp, a detective who has seen evil in its purest form. This is detective metafiction at its finest. Although the trope in itself is nothing new, to see this in detective fiction is refreshing indeed.

The Protagonists are often Unlikeable

Unlike Sherlock Holmes or Hercule Poirot, who have endeared themselves to us through their nonchalant charm, Horowitz’s detective Daniel Hawthorne is an unlikeable person. He is a homophobe, who behaves provocatively, almost violently around gay people. At one point in the novel, he educates Horowitz of his disgust of gay people:

“I’m sure you’ve got lots of homosexual friends, you being a writer and working in TV. But speaking for myself, I don’t like them. I think they’re a load of pervs...”

He gets visibly angry at a suspect, Nigel Weston, because he had a habit of collecting nude art showcasing male figures. When Horowitz asks him what was wrong, detective Hawthorne



replies: “You think it’s all right, do you? That bloody queer, sitting there, surrounded by all that porn.” We can never expect such language and mindset from either Hercule Poirot or Sherlock Holmes. In fact, in the story *A Scandal in Bohemia*, Holmes is very respectful of Irene Adler, a clever nemesis whom he considers to be his equal in wit. Although Adler is a woman, and not a homosexual man, the fact that Holmes considers her to be witty shows his line of thought. Anticipating a host of angry mail from his readers, Horowitz makes it clear early in the novel that “[he] deliberately set out to create a detective who would

be as unpleasant as possible. The audience would find him menacing, borderline racist, chippy and aggressive.”

Redefining the genre

However, Horowitz’s real problem with Hawthorne is the fact that the detective is a guarded figure, who keeps his secrets close to his heart. He pleads Hawthorne to divulge some information about his private life so as to make his character interesting for the readers. Here, we see how -

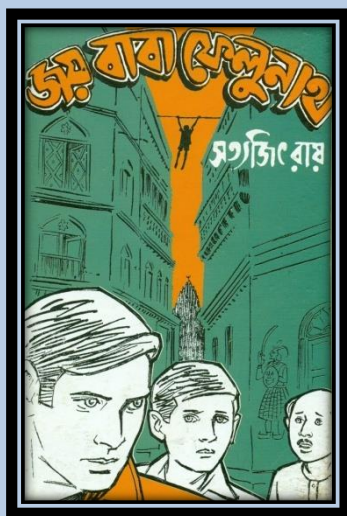
“They’re not called murder victim stories. They’re not called criminal stories. They’re called detective stories. There’s a reason for that. I’m taking a big risk here. If you solve this crime now, I won’t have anything to right about. Worse than that, if you don’t solve it at all, it’ll be a complete waste of time. So getting to know you matters...if I can find something that makes you more...human, at least that’s a start.”

The author Anthony Horowitz teaches the detective Daniel Hawthorne how to write! He tells the pragmatic sleuth that crime fiction is not about crime, but about character. The protagonist has to be striking, even at the expense of making him unlikeable, which is exactly how Hawthorne the detective-protagonist might appear to some readers – rude, ‘borderline racist’ and unlikeable. Yet, the reader cannot stop reading.

Let us hope that Anthony Horowitz and his ilk keep entertaining us with new, exciting, innovative novels. Hawthorne is especially unique in the way in which he combines the classical with the (post)modern, both in terms of theme and characterisation. This is a formula that certainly works.

Joy Baba Felunath: Text and Screen Adaptation

Soumyashri Chakraborty
6th Semester, Department of English,
Maheshtala College



Feluda or Prodosh Chandra Mitter, is a fictional Bengali private investigator starring in a series of Bengali fictional detective novels and short stories written by Bengali film director and writer Satyajit Ray. Among all his remarkable detective fictions about Feluda, Ray has adapted some of his literary works in the big screen. His directorial venture *Joy Baba Felunath* is the celluloid translation of his book by the same title. The movie is a brilliant detective thriller in which Ray has incorporated many well-thought of changes. *Joy Baba Felunath* was released in the year of 1979. In the movie, Ray as a director has incorporated a number of changes while transposing his story into the silver screen.

Literature and cinema both narrate some story to their target audiences but their concerning systems of art are widely dissimilar. With two different sign systems it is interesting to explore the various nuances of literature. A writer incorporates linguistic aspects and invests language with meaning to convey his thoughts. Whereas, cinematic language incorporates audio-visual means to suit the purpose of the director. The art of narration in conventional literature is linear. When we read a text it tends to be a comparatively linear activity, mainly based on writing (écriture) and reading (decoding). But narration in movies is a far more complex affair since cinema is a part of the visual-culture and cinematography as a discipline is an important aspect of movie making. In movies narration involves dialogues, background score, body language (kinesics), facial expression, lighting, colour, tone (voice-over), costume, mood, focus, camera placement, movement.

The main story line of *Joy Baba Felunath* deals with a precious Ganesha idol and Machchli Baba- an impostor. While holidaying in the city of Varanasi, Umanath Ghoshal approaches Feluda to solve the mystery of a precious idol which was stolen from his father's room. While investigating, Feluda's initial suspicion fell on Maganlal Meghraj, a local crook known for all kind of illegal works. In a game of hide and seek two other characters play an important role, one is Umanath babu's son Ruku, and the other is his secretary Vikas Singh. Feluda's investigation unfolds in the climax when he reveals that the idol was first safely placed inside the mouth of the lion, the bahon of Goddess Durga by Ruku and later it was stolen by Vikas babu. Maganlal Meghraj on the other hand is found associated with the racket of the fake sadhu. The story is an excellent piece of work in the realm of detective fiction as Feluda solves the twin mysteries employing his superior intellect, brilliant observation and analytical skills. As a writer, Ray

creates a brilliant detective fiction narrative by incorporating the right blend of crime, detection, mystery and puzzle. He keeps the reader involved by providing him access to various hints and clues, but at the same time the tight-gripped plot keeps the reader guessing until the final moment of denouement arrives.

In the original text Ray's description of the city of Varanasi, with its narrow lanes, bustling crowd and busy ghats aided by relevant detailing allows complete freedom in drawing our own visual pictures.. The description of the knife throwing game at Maganlal is followed by a sketch illustrating the post-event frame of the incident. The sketch describes the impact of the dangerous stunt following which Lalmohan babu collapsed and fell down in front of Meghraj while others kept gazing with their eyes wide open. With extraordinary lucidity of stories paves way for the reader to almost visualize the situations in person. And above all, the elegance of his writing style also provides an opportunity to decode the clues and solve the mystery. In the original fiction, Ray provides the reader with five major clues that occupy the sleuth cum reader with thoughts of solving the puzzle with proper analytical deduction. So for the sleuth cum reader, reading is a more alluring exercise as it makes her competent in exploring her creativity and imagination.



In the movie everything is expressed visually as the viewer gets to see every character, every action from the perspective of the director and it is hard to imagine anything beyond what is being shown. Cinema as a narrative medium does not provide much scope for imagination as the director partially spoon feeds the viewer. It is like being trapped into an audio-visual socket that triggers a certain amount of passivity. The film as a text is explicitly structured where the visual space is dominated by recurrent stereotyped images. For instance, if one considers the knife throwing incident in the movie, the scene is a visual treat for the spectator. Throughout the scene the stance of the characters especially that of Lalmohan babu who was standing still with a huge caricatured board at the backdrop draws special attention. While watching, the viewer can sense the shock or

trauma that Lalmohan babu undergoes; standing helplessly as Arjun was throwing knives towards him, right at the aim, missing his body just by inches. It not only makes the scene thrilling but it has also captured a permanent frame in viewers' mind. Both the story and the movie have been a part of Bengal's cultural heritage for several generations, enhancing the iconic stature of both Feluda and his creator in the process.

Mystery Legends

SkMirajul Hossain,
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It was a pleasant evening. Sherlock Holmes was sitting in his favourite armchair at 221B Baker Street. Suddenly, he heard the footsteps of a man coming upstairs. Then the bell rang and Sherlock said,



Sherlock: Yes, come in.

Poirot: Hello, sir. Good evening.

Sherlock: Good evening. Please sit.

Poirot: Thank you Mr. Holmes.

Sherlock: Yes. How can I help you, sir?

Poirot: Hmm. Sorry. Actually I don't know how to tell you.

Sherlock: So, shall I tell you what you want from me?

Poirot: Excuse me!

Sherlock: Okay. You are a Belgian resident. But you travelled all over the world. And now you have visited England. Something has been stolen from you and that's why you have come to me. Am I right?

Poirot: How did you know that I have visited all the world and I am a Belgian?

Sherlock: Guesswork, dear friend. 'Cause in your shoe and waistcoat there are logos of Belgian companies which are specifically used by Belgians. And I can see that most of the things have been bought from all over the world.

Poirot: Yes sir. I just want my suitcase back. In the suitcase, there is something which is more valuable than money. Oops! I forgot to introduce myself.

Sherlock: I know who you are. What did you think, that you will come to me in disguise and I won't be able to recognize you? Mr. Hercule Poirot, you can change your face, but not your attitude. Though we have not met yet, but I know your style and habits. After all I'm Sherlock Holmes.

Poirot: Yes pal. Taking disguise in front of such genius is truly very hard.

Sherlock: Yes.

Poirot: Just like Professor Moriarty? Isn't it?

Sherlock: Oh dear. Don't remind me.

Poirot: Apologize. But damn I knew it that disguise is not enough to fool you..

Sherlock.: (laughing) After all I am the best detective in the world.

Poirot: No doubt. By the way I came here to meet you.

Sherlock: NO... To test me.

Poirot: It's just a matter of amusement.

Sherlock: Actually, I think our creators had given their best to introduce us to the world of detectives. They give us our own and unique features.

Poirot: Yes, pal, you are right. They made us special in this detective world. We are just only the fictional characters but hats off to their imagination power. They made us as if we are real.

Sherlock: The future generation may forget us because of their whimsical disinterest in the books

Poirot: But there will always be some people who spend their time in reading the books for amusement.

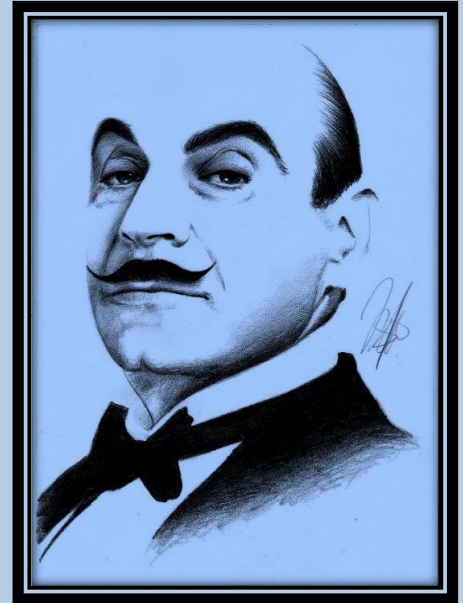
Sherlock: We are so lucky to become a part of literature. We exist because people are equally curious when we solve the mysteries.

Poirot: We're becoming famous because of their love and support. Okay, I should leave now. It's a pleasure to meet you.

Sherlock: The pleasure is mine.

Poirot: Thank you.

[Suddenly the alarm rings and I wake up from the dream. We are blessed that, though, we live in the era of phones and computers, our love for the books and the writers are still alive. We are indebted to authors like Agatha Christie and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle for creating such wonderful characters who make our life happier through their adventurous stories.]



The Hunt for the Truth

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221B Baker Street, London. Around 1:30am. (A girl is returning home alone from her friend's birthday party.)

The Girl: It is too late. There doesn't seem to be any vehicle on the road.

(Suddenly a car comes and vanishes.)The girl is kidnapped!

Sherlock has begun the investigation of the kidnapping. It is learned that girls' kidnappings and drug dealings are happening all over the world. It is also known that some girls are kidnapped for sex trafficking and some girls are kidnapped for the drug dealings.

In India....7am...

Byomkesh Bakshi and Kiriti Roy receive two letters from Sherlock Holmes. Sherlock Holmes has asked for help from them in this investigation. He has sent flight tickets and money for them.

At Sherlock's home....

Sherlock: Welcome Mr. Bakshi.Welcome Mr. Roy.

Byomkesh: Let's get to the point.

Sherlock: Sure.

Byomkesh: I want to ask you some questions.

Kiriti: Me too.

Sherlock: Please proceed.

Byomkesh: The kidnapping has occurred in your locality. It means the kidnapper has thrown you an open challenge. I think someone wants to take revenge on you. Someone whom you know very well.



Kiriti: Yes, I agree Mr. Holmes. Are you suspecting anyone?

Sherlock: I also agree with both of you. I'm suspecting someone, someone very intelligent. Actually, I had a friend when I was in school. His name was Jonathan Parker. He was too intelligent. Always he wanted to beat me. He used to challenge me every time but he couldn't defeat me. Day by day his greed and jealousy grew. Then I changed my

school. I think he has returned.

Kiriti: In that case I have a plan.

Sherlock and Byomkesh: Ok tell us, what's the plan?

Byomkesh: But I have a question, Mr. Holmes.

Sherlock: Please.

Byomkesh: How can you be so sure that Jonathan is the criminal?



Sherlock: Good question Mr. Bakshi. I remember that Jonathan used to say and write everywhere “**No one can beat me**”. I have seen this line everywhere the kidnapping took place. So I am sure.

Kiriti and Byomkesh: I see.

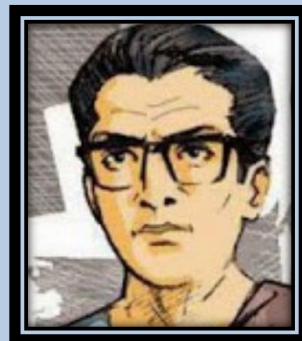
Somewhere in London....

Jonathan Parker: You guys just stay alert. I have challenged Sherlock. He has brought two other genius detectives for me. Now we have to stop kidnapping. Just stay alert. Sherlock you can't catch me! Ha! Ha! Ha!”**No one can beat me.”**

Kiriti: Ok, firstly we have to prepare a trap to catch him. There are two ways to catch him. One is the sex trafficking angle and the other is the drug dealing angle. We can't send someone as a dealer in sex-trafficking because he expects that we will send someone. We must send a genuine dealer of drugs.

Byomkesh and Sherlock: Very good plan.

Sherlock: Ok then, we will send ‘Colombian’ drug dealers; because Colombian drugs are too expensive and rare.



Byomkesh: Great! Do you know any Colombian drug dealer?

Sherlock: Oh! Sure.

Kiriti: Ok then let's go there.

Then they hired two Colombian drug dealers to trap Jonathan Parker. The two dealers spread the news that they have drugs worth 120 crores.

Jonathan Parker: Guys, there's some good news. Finally, we have got Colombian drugs. Do you know the amount? 120crore. It's a huge opportunity. As we are in danger, so I will go personally to deal with them.

That night....3am-

Sherlock: Get ready guys, he is coming.

Byomkesh and Kiriti: Yes, we're ready.

Finally, they caught the international criminal Jonathan Parker, after a great fight.

Jonathan Parker: Great job Sherlock! You defeated me one more time. Well done!

The mystery is solved. The hunt for the truth finally came to an end.

Byomkesh and Kiriti: Ok, Mr. Holmes, It was a great pleasure meeting you. If destiny wishes then we will meet again.

Sherlock: I hope so. Goodbye.

Crime-time

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It was almost 6 in the evening. I was discussing politics with my brother. Someone came into my house whose name was Nikhil Sen. He was looking so upset. He was also very worried about an incident. He was sitting beside me on the sofa. He drank a glass of water and started telling the story. He said that he is the greatest business man in the town and had a jewellery shop in the town. He was narrating an incident which had happened just a week ago. That day he had gone to his shop at 10 A.M leaving back his happy family. There were three members in his house, his wife and two children. But suddenly someone called him, and said that his family members had been murdered by someone. He said "I ran away from the shop as fast as I could and went to my house ". He suspected someone but he wanted to find the real culprit. I told him that I would help him to solve this case. I asked him, "Why are you not going to the police station?" He said that the police did not take this case only because of politics. Then I started my investigation with my brother who is also my friend and companion. I came to know that murder took place at 7.30 P. M.

After a few days, I went to his shop and came to know that he has a close friend whose name is Arun Das. According to Nikhil, his friend belongs to a well to do family, and he knew everything about Nikhil 's family But unfortunately his friend was missing from that day on which his wife and children had been murdered. I had some doubt about it. I wanted to know where he was living. Nikhil said he was living in a village. I made a plan. I went to the village and found out that nobody knew Arun Das. But I was waiting there and wanted to meet him. Suddenly a person came to meet me and told me that he was present in that house and observed Nikhil's family members. Most importantly he had video evidence about the murder. It was easy to find out that Nikhil's friend was responsible for this murder. But he was not present in the village. After three days he came home and I caught him from his house. I informed the police . I handed over the evidence to them and they arrested Nikhil's friend and he confessed in front of police he had murdered Nikhil's family only for his property and jewellery shop, because he was very greedy for Nikhil's property. At last I came to know that the person who gave the video evidence was the enemy of Arun Das. He was trying to take revenge on Arun Das.

The Ferocious Painter

Jasmine Parvin

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He was forced to leave his hometown to live in a noisy, crowded place. To ensure not being identified, all that he could do was to paint to find his next prey. As a runaway he had made his name in the media as a painter of blood. He was given the hideous name “Bloody Painter”. He wears the smell of blood and death like a mesmerizing fragrance, there

is a comfort in having fire in the eyes and ice in the veins. Burning with light of a thousand suns, he is a star with a bloody past. His presence emits a sense of sorrow, a taste of ambition and An ancient fire. His words carry desperation, determination and a numbing fear of the terror of being left alone. Again.

“I want—” He stopped. Brushed his fingers through his glossy dark brown hair. “Never mind what I want.” His voice was quieter, raspy now. “What do you want?” Another figure standing in front of him stated. He looked at the eyes of the figure; eyes accustomed to read other’s deepest thoughts. “You.”

“Romantic much?” His lips curved a slight smile now.

“Your blood to paint.”

Turning off the Television he got up from his seat, the name ‘Bloody Painter’ is everywhere in the news. “That the rotten blood sucker is still out there...hunting. Soon he will be in the cell. just wait.” The last few words came out from his mouth like a whisper.

Taking a book out of his shelf, he looked at the other co-detective sitting on the office chair.

“Sir, what do you think his next step would be?”The other officer asked with a bit of worry.

Mr. Ralph, the head of the detective said, “Never theorize before you have data. Invariably, you end up twisting facts to suit theories, instead of suiting theories to suit facts”; smiling he quipped, “So said Mr. Sherlock Holmes”. He ordered the co-officer to bring every file related to the bloody painter in his office. Collecting all the information about that infamous criminal is crucial.

The Lunch at 3:00pm

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That was a winter afternoon at 3:00 pm. The village, Mayamoti, was filled with the dim light of the setting sun. A two-storey building was situated at the edge of the village. A thick and entirely lone jungle was behind the building which ends two kilometres near a main road.

On the roof of that building, a young boy was having his lunch. He was called Vikram. He usually had his lunch on their roof at noon during winter. That day, he was quite late to lunch because he was late to return from his destination where he had to go for some personal work. He was looking too hungry that he was gobbling his meal.

When Vikram's lunch was yet to be finished, a very strange and startling incident happened. Suddenly, a piece of flying ash of a burnt leaf fell on his food plate which came flying from the jungle-side. Vikram was stunned for quite a few minutes. This type of incident had never happened before. Then he couldn't eat any more. Besides he felt a strange smell coming from somewhere near. He suspected something strange was happening inside the jungle. On that day, he couldn't sleep at night also. That erstwhile incident was interrupting his sleep again and again.

Next day, when he was brushing, he decided to go into the jungle. He crossed a culvert over a narrow water canal and then he entered into the jungle. When he reached the middle of the jungle, his heart almost stopped. He saw a very ghastly scene. He found a very badly burnt woman's dead body lying on the floor of the jungle.

The dead body could not be identified. The face was partially but very badly burned. One of the eyeballs was yet to be burnt and took a yellowish complexion, white unburnt flesh was on the dead body. Only he recognized the dead woman's garment, of which unburnt piece was lying beside the dead body. It had been seen before by him anywhere. But he could not remember where in that moment. After seeing that, while he was returning to summon the police, he saw another thing which might be a clue of that murder. He noticed a big blazer-button on the ground that was five or six meters away from that dead body. Vikram instantly captured a photo of that button in his mobile.

Having returned home he informed the police and his villagers. Then, police came and as usual they started their investigation taking the statement of Vikram. Since that day, the cops came there for four days back to back. Afterwards, Vikram got much more agonized when he knew the truth about who actually were the victims of this serious crime. On the second day, when the victim's parents came with the police, Vikram did not make any mistake to recognize them who were none but those parents of his former girlfriend, Dipti whom he once loved very much. Somehow their relationship broke up six years ago and thereafter they never met again.

Vikram was sad at this painful death. This time, some friends stretched their hands of help at Vikram to share his pain and to get a considerable justice for Dipti. Even they made a self-made team together to cooperate with police.

But, the police also failed to find out those criminals despite their tireless investigation procedure. At last they stopped their investigation. Since then, Almost eleven months had passed. One day, Vikram was recalling his past memories having opened his old Facebook profile where his and Dipti's many intimate images were uploaded.

At the time of viewing those pictures his eyes became ablaze with remorse and extreme anger while he glanced at an image with his friends. In that image, one of Vikram's friends, Sumit, had worn a blue blazer-jacket which were entirely similar to what he saw near Dipti's dead body.

Anyhow he could not even make up his mind that such a serious crime could have been committed by Sumit. Likewise he was also confused about the button, whether that was indeed of Sumit himself or not. To justify his suspicion he secretly started to follow Sumit. Sumit worked in a grocery shop where Vikram went almost once or twice in a day with an excuse of purchasing some grocery items.

One day Vikram's suspicion became true. He saw Sumit wearing that blue blazer on which a button was missing. Indeed, Vikram became sure about Sumit being the murderer. But he had nothing to prove that Sumit was involved in this crime. Sumit had also avoided this matter with roundabout replies while he was asked by Vikram about the button.

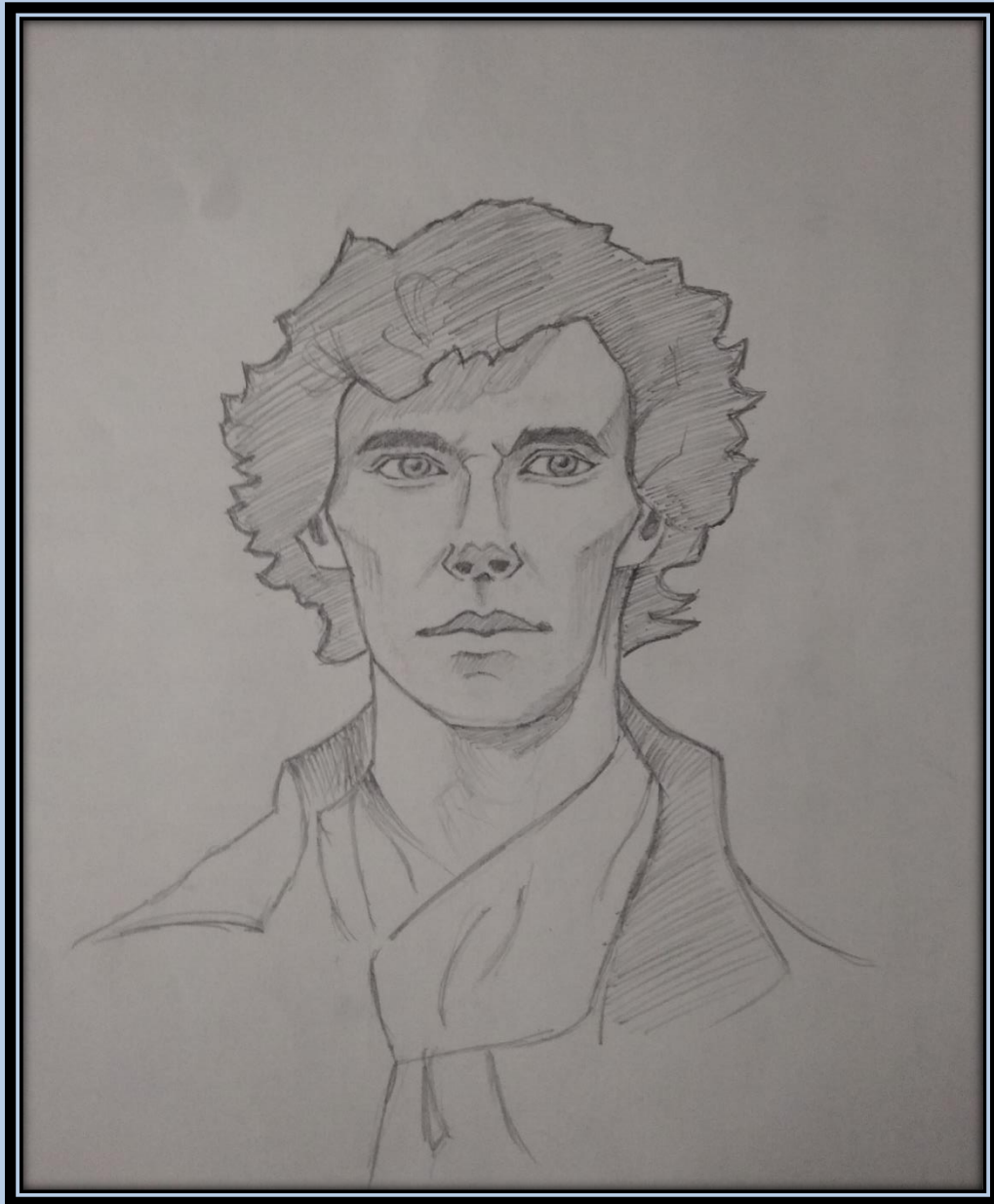
Therefore, Vikram determined to prove Sumit's crime. He informed his other friends about it. One day, one of the members of that team, Poltu unveiled a plan linked with Sumit's sole weakness. Poltu knew that Sumit was mostly fond of wine and he could forget everything if he was offered wine by somebody else.

As soon as Vikram's whole team heard this new plan from Poltu, they made a very keen and crafty plan to drag out the truth from Sumit. They decided to make Sumit as as they could.

According to their plan, they fixed a particular date to accomplish their work. On that day some of them organized a little party of wine with boiled chicken. Sumit was accordingly invited in that party. While the party was running on a full flow of wine, Sumit became fully intoxicated. Then someone started to make a video clip of Sumit's statement., Sumit had to answer many roundabout cross-examinations. At last he confessed everything, that he and his other three friends including Gogon, Shakhar and Vijoy attacked Dipti and asphyxiated her after dragging her into Mayamoti's jungle. Getting the full confession of the whole incident, Vikram sunk down to mourn for Dipti.

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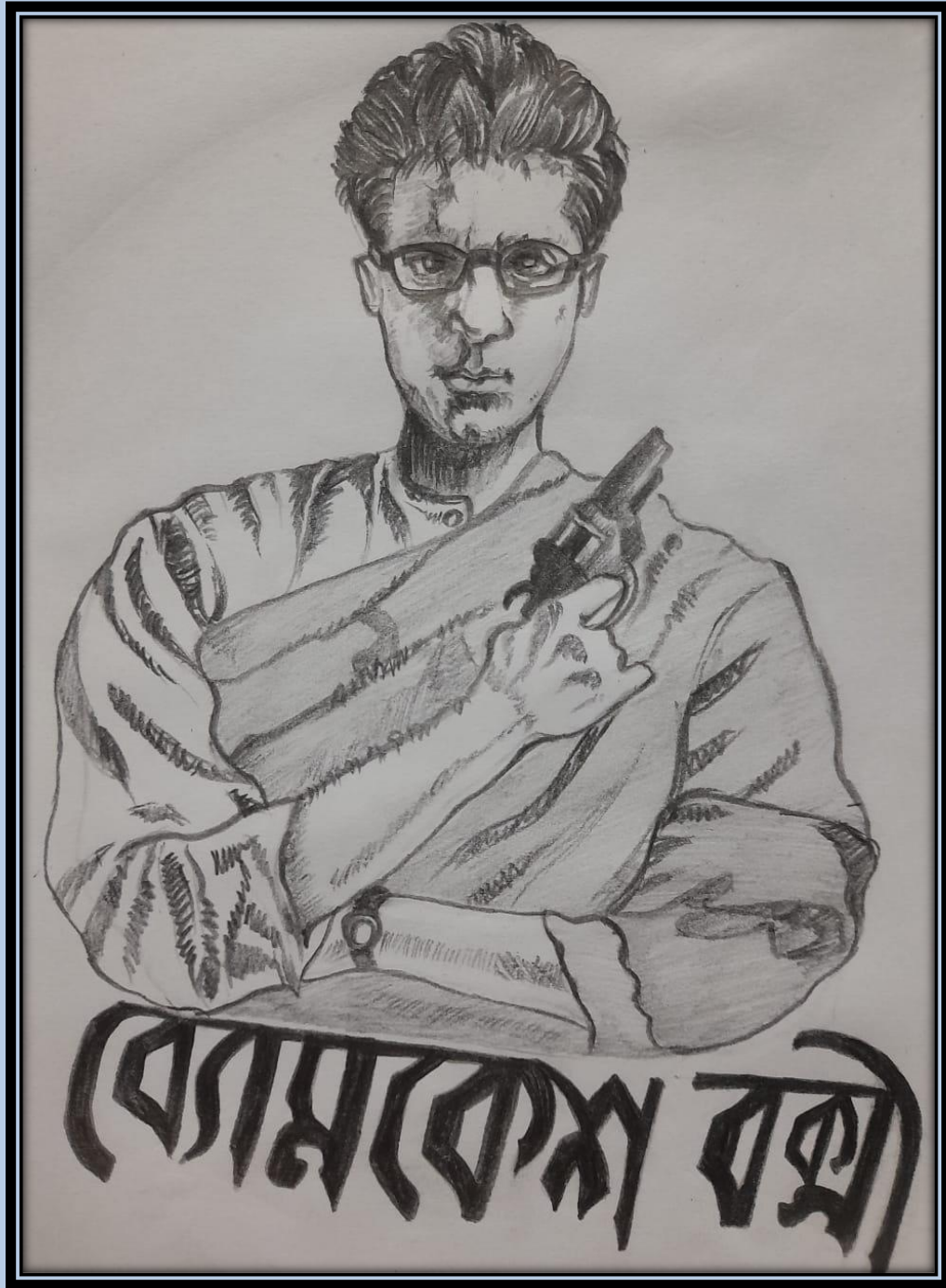
Sketchbook



1. Sherlock Holmes

By Swarnendu Mondal

**2nd Semester, Department of English,
Maheshtala College.**



2. Bomkyesesh Bakshi

By Annesha Dey,

2nd Semester, Department of English,
Maheshtala College.

What's Next?

CALL FOR PAPERS

Literature serves as a reflection of reality, a product of art and a window to an ideology. Everything that happens in a society can be written, recorded in, and learned from a piece of literature. Diary, memoir and autobiographical writings have always been an integral part of literature and are, in fact, a combined process of creating 'real fictions'. Often considered as a quasi-literary genre of literature, diary and autobiographical writing is a process of crystallizing anecdotes on very personal experiences, secret desires, thoughts, memories, emotions and feelings. They generate a transnational space through which the authors as well as the readers understand their own self and the world they live in.

Remembering those celebrated autobiographical works and somewhat less talked memoirs and diary writers, *Kaleidoscope*, the webzine of Department of English, Maheshtala College, invites articles and original write-ups for its 3rd issue which is to be on **Memoirs, Diary and Autobiographical Writings**.

THEME: Memoirs, Diary and Autobiographical Writings.

SUB-THEMES: (not restrictive to given ones only)

- Autobiographical writings in Indian literature.
- Women diary writers.
- Journals and diaries of 16th and 17th century voyagers.
- Diary writing as a part of literature.
- 17th century diary writers: Pepys and Evelyn.
- Diary writing in times of pandemic.
- War and diaries.
- Cultural/ Ethnic memoirs.
- Confessional memoirs.
- Political memoirs.

DETAILS:

1. The last date for submission of the write ups is 31/07/2021.
2. The write ups have to be in English.
3. Font Style: Times New Roman; Font Size: 12
4. Word Limit: 300-500 (for students), 1500-2000 (for faculty members and research scholars)
5. The Word files containing the articles, a 2-line declaration of authenticity and your designations are to be mailed at english.maheshtalacollege@gmail.com.
6. For any query, contact english.maheshtalacollege@gmail.com, Department of English, Maheshtala College.



Thank You