

Analysis of Metaphor in “Alice Munro’s Lives of Girls and Women”

Ishita Sharma

Research Scholar from Career point University kota, India

Abstract

As the best author of short stories in Canada, Alice Munro has time after time created work in which accurate social inspection and penetrating psychological insight are expressed exactly with extraordinary narrative method. Though my thesis is informed by many of Munro’s published books, this study does not attempt to analyze the whole stock of her literary work. I focus on my discussion on one of her stylistic narrative methods accepting metaphor in Lives of Girls and Women, which is believed her most delegate. With the accepting metaphors in the novel, readers know well the character’s compound patterns of survival and the suppression endured by the female characters in a patriarchal society.

KEYWORDS: Alice Munro, Lives of Girls and Women, Metaphor

1. Introduction:

All of the areas of Canadian writing were inspired by a renaissance of attention in literature and culture in the 1970s, but perhaps the greatest amount of interest in the 70s was concentrated on Canadian women writers, such as achieved authors as Margaret Laurence, Margaret Atwood and Jane Rule. But among many successful women writers, Alice Munro has appeared as the most achieved one of that decade. Her stories have after been broadly anthologized in Canada, the United States, and Britain, and she is internationally known as one of the great short story writers in English. Alice Munro is known for stories focusing on the emotional lives of the inhabitants of rural Canada. Her reachable and moving stories set in small and provincial towns like the one where she spent her childhood, are mostly written from the point of view of a young or teen girl and address themes of exacting interest to women. Alice has written so many and Lives of Girls and Women.

Alice Munro’s collections of stories, Lives of Girls and Women is her most popular short story, which gives her in the top rank in short story writing. It is a set of eight first-person narratives recounting the life of Del Jordan in jubilee, a fictional small town in southwestern Ontario that bears a strong similarity to Munro’s own hometown of Wingham. Told retrospectively by an older Del, who has moved away and become a fiction writer, it traces in this paper, metaphor will be checked to show how this oratory means helps readers remarkable to understand the social environment and conservative ideas of the small town jubilee and their crashed on the townspeople.

2. Analysis:

2.1 Metaphor in “The Flats Road”

The opening section “The Flats Road” ,is famous for its suggestion of place, as Del recounts for growing up in separation with her parents and brother Owen on a fox farm that is “not part of town” but “not part of the country either”. “We were in a house as small and shut up as any boat is on the sea”(Munro ,1971,P.29).Metaphorically ,Del expresses her own unsure relationship to this place. She has a similarity for the natural world, but her sense of social disaffection is profound. At the same time, the Flats Road farm stands for primitive separation is made even clearer when the farm hand. Uncle Benny went to the city to get and bring little Diane back and found himself lost in the big metropolis. He finally gave it up disappointedly. Uncle Benny, a representative of country people, is sure to get lost among factories, dead end roads, warehouses, junkyards, and railway tracks in the city.

2.2 Metaphor in “Heirs of the Living Body”

In “Heirs of the Living Body” the proofs record of Del’s uncle Craig, who is the clerk of Fairmile Township and a local historian difference with the gossip and stories of her Auntie Grace and Aunt Elspeth, who live by themselves in Jenkin’s Bend. While mentioning Del’s cousin Ruth Mcqueen, Addie ,Del’s mother, said she is “afraid to stick her head out of her own burrow”(Munro,1971,P.42)Finally Ruth McQueen made the decision of quitting college. She is bound by the local code of social behavior which has shaped her life.

Moreover, the hide of the dead cow that Del sees and scans is a metaphor, too. It is like a map of the world ,a map which connects Del’s survival in Wawanash County with the world.” Tracing the outline of a continent again, digging the attach in, trying to make a exact line, I paid notice to its shape as I would sometimes pay to the from of the real continents or islands of real maps.”(Munro ,1971,p.49).Del examines a dead cow at the Wawanash River, she imagines that on the hide there is a map of the world which she feels compelled to understand. Futher, the death of the cow is also attached with Uncle Craig’s death. When uncle Craig dies and a cousin’s grip, Del bites her and tastes blood. Later in her musing ,Uncle Craig’s death is joined with other deaths. Such are sights of the human relationship which her mother has spoken in position to a magazine object on transplants called “Heirs of the Living Body”.

From which this chapter also gets its title. The article says that people are made up of parts. When a person dies, only one part or a couple of parts, may actually be worn out. And some of the others parts could in fact have run thirty, forty years more. In Uncle Craig’s case, his heart breaks down but he still has some good parts that a sick person may use. Thus the death of the protagonist’s Uncle Craige occurring in the second chapter “Heirs of the Living Body” is related to other deaths. He like all of Munro’s characters, shares one living body with others. Futher more, his death is envisioned as part of a natural process and himself even dead ,is still a part of nature, so that the protagonist’s mother can announce:”Uncle Craig doesn’t have to be Uncle Craig !Uncle Craig is flowers”(Munro,1971,P.53)

2.3 Metaphor in “Epilogue: The Photographer”

In "Epilogue :The Photographer" the question of delusion and actuality and role playing is focused in the question of art in relative to life. Del conceives in her mind a Gothic novel set in Jubilee concerning the members of the Sherriff family and all their tragedies. A major figure in her novel is an evil-looking photographer who takes pictures which are frightening because they somehow make people look older and disclose hidden things in their personalities. Here Alice Munro has shaped a metaphor for her own kind of art which disclose something of the secrecy of survival. As Del set off from Jubilee in search of her real life ,she dumps the Gothic "black fable" she has imagery out of her small town childhood and takes with her only the intuition of "Epilogue: The Photographer " that familiar things are both more common and more amazing than she has given them praise for. They obstinately resist being turned into fiction:"It is a shock ,when you have dealt so cunning, powerfully, with reality to come back and find it still there"(Munro,1971,P 275) Del in "Epilogue: The Photographer" is faced with the irreducible actuality of Jubilee. Del sees the world in terms of her desired novels and is distorted of her fanciful notions. But Munro can contain both the common and the strange in her story and improve inspection and practice without wrenching them out of what is true. Alice Munro has talked about her stories being basically concerned with looking at what people don't realize, what we think is happening and what we understand later on. The story is actually a subtle depiction of the lives of girls and women generated by the narrative methods which merge the insights of the older writer with the teenager experience of herself as the subject in the stories. The main metaphor gets readers a brilliant and impressive understanding of how social environment and conservative ideas power lives of people in jubilee and how the obscurity ordinariness is exposed in the development. Such method also helps throw light on the repression endure by the central female characters in a patriarchal society, guide our explanation and encourage us toward a better understanding of the story's difficulties and overall meaning.

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