

## The Stories

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**Abstract:** *The stories are everywhere in the world. The characters are scattered all around us. We as narrators need to pick up such stories and connect them to real life situations. Fiction can be a technique to place stories in real contexts and derive meanings out of them. There are instances where the storytellers, the writers have symbolized messages through a storyline that is genuine and realistic. Stories are ample, in profusion. They have substance, carrying weight. Writers simply need the sincerity of purpose to get such narratives out in public domain.*

**Keywords:** *Characters, Narrative, Real-life, Storytelling, Writers*

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### I. Introduction

Every individual is a walking story. From bedtime stories for kids to grandma tales, our life begins with a story and ends with a story. Nothing has replaced the import of story in one's life, even in this world of technology. Story makes one to understand the purpose of existence. Story makes us feel the joy and the pain. Story makes us to perceive the delight and the despair. From true stories included in religious scriptures to fiction and non-fiction stories by great writers, stories usually inspire, but never expire. Everyone's life is a true story but everyone's story is not a true life. Everything here has to perish, but what remains behind is the story--recorded in any case for here and for eternity.

So, we all like stories. We listen to them. We read them. With interest. With curiosity. They engage us. They hold us for a moment. And, they leave a message behind. The meanings of which usually get subjective, depending on the perception of individual listeners or readers and even writers per se. Interpretations vary endlessly.

### II. Distinctive Characteristics

What, however, makes any story atypical and shoots it up as the best among the lot? Is it the intriguing plot, the unique storyline, or the uncommon setting? Or is it the characters, the main narrator, and the anti-climax of the story that hooks up the audience? So many other creative elements are equally responsible for making of the story.

While studying folk tales, Soviet folklorist and scholar Vladimir Propp classified a range of stock characters common in most stories. These may be individualized by being given distinguishing character traits or attributes, but they are essentially functionalities enabling the story to unfold. Vladimir identified certain archetypal story features—the Hero/Subject whose function is to seek; the Object that is sought; the Donor of the object; the Receiver, where it is sent; the Helper who aids the action; and the Villain who blocks the action. [1]

The world's best-known folk tale, *Little Red Riding Hood*, is an interesting example to grasp the Vladimir's findings. Little Hood (heroine) is sent by her mother (donor) with a basket of provisions (object) to her sick granny (receiver) who lives in the forest. Little Hood encounters the wolf (villain) and is rescued from his clutches by the woodman (helper).

For that reason, in every story there are fundamentally certain characters who play a central role, even as the nature of story may vary, or its parallels may be discerned in different contexts and forms in the world around us.

Drawing analogy to many such stories, many of Vladimir's standard characters might varyingly symbolize many a feature. At connotative level, there may possibly be many oblique meanings to decipher.

Of course, stories are framed. Stories get complex and unpredictable. Few stories get narrated, and many of them remain untold. Similarly, the characters in these stories show intricacy and inconsistency.

### III. Famous Analogies

Remember Santiago, the old man of Hemingway's famous novella who braved the stormy billows of life and emerged victorious in a different style. He gives a message—"Man is not made for defeat . . . (a) man can be destroyed but not defeated." [2] Again, defeat for him is not just the failure to capture fish but to suffer the loss of endurance during an arduous struggle.

The orphan child Heathcliff of Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* is a character who is apparently full of vengeance and sinister designs, but deep inside harbors heroic virtues as well.[3] The duality of his persona and transformation from clumsy poor to a rich gentleman leaves the readers baffled. He is an embodiment of paradox, like many of us in this world whose repulsive layers of contradictions are wrapped by the wonderful façade.

Take those deep-seated childhood characters we would almost never forget. The Aunt Polly in Mark Twain's *Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. The disciplinarian Aunt Polly who wanted to groom her nephew Tom in a way that was quite annoying for a brat like him. Moreover, her lasting failure in this endeavor is an unbroken story held between strings of affection and control.[4]

Coming to world of media, there are some remarkable storylines where characters have been build upon real-life situations and it appears as a life-to-literature adaptation, depicted in different media formats. The award-winning *Slumdog Millionaire* is about Jamal Malik, a Mumbai teen who has grown up in slums and rises to glamour and controversy, passing through the various stages of his life dotted with poverty, suffering, injustice, and resistance.[5]

At times, truth is really stranger than fiction. Among several narrative strands, we have so many stories around that stir, stimulate and shake. They have a meaningful impact and bring home a 'representation' of reality rather than a 'construction' of imaginings. Unlike dystopian stories 'Fahrenheit 451' or 'Brave New World', which speculate the future that is nowhere but induce the dehumanized ideas/concepts?

#### IV. Conclusion

Arundhati Roy writes -"Writers imagine that they cull stories from the world. I'm beginning to believe that vanity makes them think so. That it's actually the other way around. Stories cull writers from the world. Stories reveal themselves to us. The public narrative, the private narrative -- they colonize us. They commission us. They insist on being told. Fiction and non-fiction are only different techniques of storytelling..."[6]

Therefore, its stories that make writers. Such is the power of stories. The stories with substance and carrying weight. The genuine, honest and thoughtful narratives of the world and its happenings around us. These stories cannot be overlooked. They make not only readers but also even their own writers to ponder and act. They address the real issues and envisage the sincerity of purpose in doing so.

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