CHAPTER - V
SYMBOLIC PERSONIFICATION OF TAGORE'S SHORT STORIES

A literary symbol may signify an object, a person, a situation, an action, or may be some other thing that has a literal meaning in the theme of a story, a novel, a drama or a poem but corresponds to other meanings as well. A symbol takes a concrete shape when it assumes an abstract and emotive significance of the object. Symbols are used by writers to evoke emotional responses. A symbol may carry different meanings in different contexts.

The symbol occupies a central place in Coleridge's thinking. He wrote constantly on symbol. He speculated upon poetry as a way of meditating between the subject and the object. In a letter to William Godwin (22 September 1800) he wrote:

I wish you to write a book on the power of the words. ... is Thinking impossible without arbitrary signs? And how far is the word "arbitrary"a misnomer? Are not words, etc., parts and germinations of the plant? And what is the law of their growth? In something of this sort I would endeavour to destroy the old antithesis of Words and Things; elevating, as it were, Words into Things and living things too.¹

Coleridge always differentiates Symbols and Allegories as he differentiates Imagination and Fancy. The deepest meaning of Coleridge's idea of symbol can be found in his own words:

It is among the miseries of the present age that it recognizes no medium between Literal and Metaphorical. Faith is either to be
buried in the dead letter, or its name and honors usurped by a counterfeit product of the mechanical understanding, which in the blindness of self-complacency confounds Symbols with Allegories. Now an Allegory is but a translation of abstract notions into a picture-language which is itself nothing but an abstraction from objects of the senses; the principal being more worthless even than its phantom proxy, both alike unsubstantial, and the former shapeless to boot. On the other hand a Symbol ... is characterized by a translucence of the Special in the Individual or of the General in the Especial or of the Eternal through and in the Temporal. It always partakes of the Reality which it renders intelligible; and while it enunciates the whole, abides itself as a living part in that Unity, of which it is the representative.²

Present day theorists of symbols possibly have gone far enough to problematize the old antithesis between words and things. Even a famous theorist like I. A. Richards, modifies his thesis later saying that reality itself, as far man's knowledge is concerned, is a symbolic construction.³ French and American theorists tried to develop this particular approach. American followers of Coleridge like Ralph Waldo Emerson, H. D. Thoreau and Herman Melville too addressed the problem of symbolic form. Emerson, one of the pioneers of the conception of literature as symbolic form, boldly says in his essay entitled The Poet (1844) :

... the poet names the thing because he sees it, or comes one step nearer to it than any other. This expression or naming is not art, but a second nature, grown out of the first, as a leaf out of a tree.⁴
So, it is observed that the critics of different countries have worked on symbols and they have expressed their views accordingly. The name of this chapter has been taken from the book *The Wheel of fire* written by G. Wilson Knight. So, taking the idea of Wilson Knight into account symbolic personification of Tagore's short stories can be traced out.

The theme of *Chuti* (*Holiday*) and *Subha* is closely related to each other. In both these stories we have a wonderful portraiture of the yearning which the human heart feels for union with Nature. Man takes his birth from mother Nature's womb. He learns everything from Nature. The relationship of man and nature is a primeval one. The separation from Nature is just like the separation of the body from soul.

The comparison of both these stories is interesting and important. In both the stories, we have a protagonist compact of innocence, timidity, dependency, and nobility. In both the stories, the narrator presents the suffering of the children of Nature. Phatik and Subha are compelled to settle in the suffocating atmosphere of city life. Living in the suffocating atmosphere, both of them feel lonely at heart. This happens because both of them feel more comfortable in the midst of Nature than of human beings. Both the protagonists can communicate with mother Nature, while they do not understand the complex human language and human behaviour.

In *Chuti* (*Holiday*), the protagonist Phatik is sent from his village to Calcutta with his maternal uncle in order to improve his education as well as his attitude. Reaching there, he feels helpless. This helpless condition later acts as a catalyst to his death. He comes to Calcutta with an eagerness to settle there but does not get the love in the household mainly from his maternal aunt. Living in the suffocating atmosphere, he thinks about his native village:
He so lacked love in this household, and it seemed he could breathe freely nowhere. Stuck behind its walls, he thought constantly of his home village. The fields where he would let his 'monster-kite' fly and flap in the wind; the river-bank where he wandered aimlessly, singing a raga of his own invention at the top of his voice; the small stream in which he would jump and swim now and then in the heat of the day; his gang of followers; the mischief they would get up to; the freedom; above all his harsh, impetuous mother; all this tugged continually at his helpless heart. A kind of instinctive love, like an animal's; a blind longing to be near; an unspoken distress at being far; a heartfelt, anguished cry of 'Ma, Ma' like a motherless calf at dusk; such feelings perpetually afflicted this gawky, nervous, thin, lanky, ungainly boy.)
Both the 'walls' and 'home village' serve a symbolic purpose here. The
'walls' symbolize the cruel nature of human beings resulted in lack of love,
while 'home village' symbolizes the universal motherly affection. The
'monster-kite' has been personified here as the intended freedom of human
beings. The comparison of Phatik with 'a motherless calf at dusk' projects
the suffering of man far away from his mother.

At the end when he has lost his school-books, he is ill treated both
by the teacher and the aunt. So in a state of mental tension, Phatik leaves
his maternal uncle's house with fever and a pain in his head. The neighbours
look for Phatik in all the houses of the locality but to no avail. The search
for Phatik continues in the torrential rain which begins in the evening but
he is not found anywhere. So his maternal uncle, Bishvambar Babu, informs
the police. 'Next day evening, Phatik is brought by two policemen in a carriage
in a critical condition plastered with mud from head to foot and trembling
violently. Phatik's aunt bullies her husband for taking the responsibility of
someone else's child. She also advises her husband to send him home. On
hearing her cruel remark, Phatik feels more miserable:

...“আমি মার কাছে যাচ্ছিলাম, আমাকে ফিরিয়ে এলেনে ক্যা?”

(...'I was going to go to my mother,' said Phatik, weeping, 'but
they brought me back.')

This is an outburst of his self-reproach. He is both physically and
mentally sick now. His condition becomes critical as his fever is alarmingly
high. A doctor is called in. Next day, realising his condition, Bishvambar Babu
has sent for his mother. In this way another day has also passed. Without
finding any sign of improvement, the doctor declares the boy's condition to
be critical. Bishvambar Babu has no way out but to wait for Phatik's mother
in a pathetic condition:
Bishvambar sat at the bedside in the dim lamplight, waiting minute by minute for Phatik's mother's arrival. Phatik started to shout out, like a boatman, 'More than one fathom deep, more than two fathoms deep!' To come to Calcutta they had had to travel some of the way by steamer. The boatman had lowered the hawser into the stream and bellowed out its depth. In his delirium, Phatik was imitating them, calling out the depth in pathetic tones; except that the endless sea he was about to cross had no bottom that his measuring-rope could touch."

The 'dim-lamplight' has been personified here. The 'dim-lamplight' symbolizes the grim and pathetic condition of Phatik's life as his days are numbered. The comparison of Phatik with a boatman is a symbolic one. The comparison suggests that the protagonist wants to cross the endless sea of life but he is unable to touch the bottom with his 'measuring-rope'. 'The sea' has been used as an archetypal image indicating death.

Finally when his mother arrives bursting into loud wails and grief, Phatik says in a relaxed mood:

'...Mother, my holiday has come now. I'm going home...'}
He utters the word 'holiday' as his maternal uncle told him earlier that he could go home during school holiday. But here 'holiday' carries a deeper meaning. It symbolizes the holiday from life. The meaning has been changed through his premonitions of an impending death. Another word 'home' has been personified here. It symbolizes the ultimate goal of a human being, the universal home for mankind.

Ultimately, in so far as Chuti (Holiday) expresses a universal truth, it suggests the lack of love's spirit and flavour to weather the conditions of this world. Raising the three protagonists to a high pitch of transcendental meaning, we see Phatik as a symbol of innocent mankind, Bishvambar Babu as a symbol of noble mankind, and Bishvambar's wife as a symbol of cruel and self-centred human being.

In Subha, the story-teller expresses the human abnormality through the presentation of a dumb girl named Subha alias Subhashini. She may not understand the complicated human language but she can communicate with mother Nature. This communication is possible because she has two long-lashed large black eyes. The language of her eyes is more effective than the language of a human being:
What we express in language has largely to be constructed by our own efforts, somewhat like a translation; it is not always adequate, and through lack of skill may often be wrong. But dark eyes do not have to translate anything. The mind casts its own shadow upon them; feeling is of itself sometimes dilated in them, sometimes shut up; sometimes it flares up brilliantly, sometimes it fades into dimness; sometimes it looks out steadily like the setting moon, sometimes it darts in all directions like the swift inconstant lightning. The language of her eyes who has had no other language since birth than the expression of her face, is limitless, generous, of unplumbed depths. It is like the clear sky, from sunrise to sunset a silent arena for the play of light and darkness. In a speechless human being, there is a solitary greatness like that of immense Nature. For this reason, ordinary boys and girls had a certain fear of her, and would not play with her. She was like the lonely noontide, wordless and friendless.

The dominant image of light can be noticed in her eyes with some form of manifestation of it like the sun, the moon, dimness, darkness, lightning associated with her anger, generosity and loneliness.

Nature plays a vital role in her life. In nature, she has got her friend, philosopher and guide. She sits beside the river flowing through the village in her leisure time. Sitting there, she feels refreshed as the various sounds and motions of nature break upon her 'like the waves of the sea on the
eversilent shore of the girl's heart. She has only one companion from the human family, Pratap, the youngest son of the Gosain family of the village. Like Subha he has no abnormality but he is an idle being without having any interest to do any work in this world to improve his lot. His interest only centres round fishing. Subha loves and admires his activities and he too while fishing likes his silent partner. Apart from Pratap, Subha also likes the two dumb friends, the two cows of the household. She enjoys their friendship very much. In this way, Subha grows older with her companions:

Subha was growing in years. Little by little, she began to be conscious of herself. It was as if, on some full-moon night, a tide had come in from an unknown sea, filling her soul with a new inexpressible awareness. She was beginning to look at herself, to think, to ask herself questions, and yet she could not understand herself.

Sometimes, in the depths of a full-moon night, Subha would slowly unlatch the door of her bedroom and look out
fearfully to see moonlit nature, like her, waking alone over the sleeping world. Nature, in the mystery, thrill, melancholy of youth, among the utmost reaches of immense loneliness or even beyond them, was filled with awesome stillness, but could not speak a word. At the edge of this silent, yearning natural world there stood a silent, yearning girl.)

The emotion of the matured girl has been expressed through the image of light again. The full-moon night symbolizes her maturity associated with 'mystery', 'thrill', 'melancholy of youth'. She is conscious of her maturity. Her soul is filled up with 'new inexpressible awareness'. She is aware of her change of body and soul but she cannot express her emotions. Like lonely nature at night, she feels lonely at heart.

She reaches her marriageable age. A marriage is arranged in Calcutta without informing the groom's party that Subha is dumb by birth. Accordingly, Subha is brought to Calcutta and the marriage is performed ignoring the girl's secret thoughts, feelings and intentions. The result of the marriage is everlasting misery for her because within a week everyone in the groom's family gets to know that the bride is dumb. The fault is not hers. She was unwilling to part with mother Nature. She did not want to deceive anybody. She tried her best to express everything through her black eyes but nobody understood her language. Next time Subha's husband brings home a bride who can speak. She establishes the fact that she is really a 'Subhashini' which means 'one who can speak quite nicely.' She is indeed a nice speaker ironically. She cannot quarrel with anybody for bringing such a misery in her life. In 'Holiday' the protagonist Phatik dies at the end. But here in 'Subha' the readers can notice Subha's mental death.
In *Subha*, the destructive force of cynicism\textsuperscript{24} can be noticed. The story's central theme moves around the destructive force of cynicism and un-faith directed against that love to which man aspires and attempts to build his happiness.\textsuperscript{25} Finally, the story *Subha* again expresses a universal truth — a truth which suggests the inability of love's faith to weather the conditions of this world\textsuperscript{26}. We have four main characters in this story. The characters are raised to a high pitch of transcendental meaning\textsuperscript{27}, the parents symbolizing selfishness, Subha innocence and divinity and the groom the attributes of a devil.

*Chuti* (Holiday) and *Subha* are thus both concerned with the recurrent motif of human sufferings. The story of *Denapaona* (*Profit and Loss*) is very different in its theme, scope and technique from *Chuti* (Holiday) and *Subha*. Extraction of dowry from the bride's father leads to the suffering of the bride, Nirupama, and her father, Ramsundar Mitra. The groom is unaware of this but his parents torture Nirupama and try to humiliate her father every now and then for not paying up the full amount of the dowry in the absence of their son. They torture Nirupama and don't allow her to meet her father. Ramsundar wants to take his daughter home during *Durga-puja* but they don't allow him to do so. Out of shame he decides to sell his house to pay the full amount of dowry. Accordingly, he does his job and comes to his daughter's house with the money. However, Nirupama gets the information and makes a protest:

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নিরুপমা সমন্ত ব্যাপার বুঝিতে পারিয়া কহিল, “বাবা, তুমি যদি আমের এক খলাক আমার শুভ্রকে দাও তা হলে আমি তোমার মেয়েকে দেখতে পাবে না, এই তোমার গা ছুইয়ে বললুম।”

রামসুদর বলিলেন, “হি মা, অমন কথা লক্ষেন নেই। আর, এ টাকাটা যদি আমি না দিতে পারি তা হলে তোর সঙ্গে অপরাম আর তোরও অপরাম।”
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'Father,' she said, 'if you give a single paisa more to my father-in-law, I swear solemnly you will never see me again.'

'What are you saying, child?' said Ramsundar. 'If I don't pay the money, the shame will be forever on my head, — and it will be your shame too.'

'The shame will be greater if you pay the money,' said Nirupama. 'Do you think I have no honour? Do you think I am just a money-bag, the more money in it the higher my value? No, father, don't shame me by paying this money. My husband doesn't want it anyway.'

What is projected here is the universal fatherly affection. Nirupama's self-respect and power of tolerance have also been personified through her use of language.

At the end Nirupama becomes ill. Nobody in the household takes care of her and she even neglects her health:
She now fell seriously ill. But this was not wholly her mother-in-law's fault. She herself had neglected her health dreadfully. On chilly autumn nights she lay with her head near the open door, and she wore no extra clothes during the winter. She ate irregularly. The servants would sometimes forget to bring her any food: she would not then say anything to remind them. She was forming a fixed belief that was herself a servant in the household, dependant on the favours of her master and mistress. But her mother-in-law could not stand even this attitude. If Nirupama showed lack of interest in food, she would say, 'What a princess she is! A poor household's fare is not to her liking!' Or else she would say, 'Look at her. What a beauty! She's more and more like a piece of burnt wood.')

The decay and destruction of Nirupama have been presented here symbolically which powerfully affects us pictorially and emotionally. The pictorial vision has been created by 'chilly autumn nights' and 'the winter'. The decay and destruction have been brought about by ignorance and carelessness on the part of Nirupama herself and especially her in-laws. The simile used in the last line significantly projects the impending death of Nirupama.

Her condition gets worse and she dies at last. Her funeral rites have been performed with 'appropriate pomp':
The eldest daughter-in-law in the household had died, and the funeral rites were performed with appropriate pomp. The Raychaudhuris were renowned in the district for the lavishness with which they performed the immersion of the deity at the end of Durga-puja, but the Raybahadur’s family became famous for the way Nirupama was cremated: such a huge sandalwood pyre had never been seen. Only they could have managed such elaborate rites, and it was rumoured that they got rather into debt as a result.

The image of Durga-puja has been used in this story recurrently. The Bengali parents consider Durga as their daughter. During autumn she comes to her parental home every year. So, the recurrent image of Durga Puja reminds us of the universal fatherly affection.

Nirupama’s husband has not been ‘informed about her death. Meanwhile making all necessary arrangement he writes to send his wife quickly. His mother in her letter requests him to take leave to come home for his second marriage for which they will get 20,000 rupees in cash as dowry.

In Denapaona (Profit and Loss), too, the destructive force of cynicism can be noticed. The characters are raised to a high pitch of transcendental meaning, the in-laws symbolizing the attributes of devils, Nirupama, her father and the groom noble mankind.

The theme of the story Apad (The Castaway) centres round human liability to make mistake resulting from the characters’ impulsive generosity
and thereby unthinking cruelty done towards an orphan boy. The story has characters, (Sharat, Kiran, Sharat's mother, Satish, the younger brother of Sharat, and the orphan boy Nilkanta) who interact with one another to create events.

In the story, we have a protagonist full of innocence, dependency and nobility. The story-teller presents the joys and sorrows of Nilkanta, the orphan boy, through imagery.

Kiran has been suffering from a disease for a long time. For the recovery from her illness a change of air has been needed. So Sharat, the husband of Kiran, takes a farm-house at Chandemagore and they have come there to live in for some time. On the day Nilkanta appears in the house there has been a stormy weather outside. He has been shipwrecked and has reached their garden swimming ashore. Before his arrival the storm has risen to such a height that one may think that a battle between gods and demons has started in the sky:

As evening drew on the storm rose to its height. From the terrific downpour of rain, the crash of thunder, and the repeated flashes of lightning, you might think that a battle of gods and demons was raging in the skies. Black clouds waved like the flags of Doom. The Ganges was lashed into fury, and the trees in the gardens on either bank swayed from side to side sighing and groaning.)
What we find here is the presence of auditory imagination. The weather here is a clear indicator of the impending battle between good and evil. Both husband and wife are talking between themselves inside the room. The topic of their discussion is their stay at Chandernagore. Sharat thinks that they should stay a few days longer for Kiran's recovery, while Kiran wants to go home. Suddenly, they hear about the shipwreck and the Brahmin boy, Nilkanta. Kiran at once brings some dry clothes for the boy. After that Kiran warms some milk and asks the boy to come to her room. The boy is good looking — having long hair and big eyes. On his face there is no sign of hair yet. Kiran then comes to know from him that he had been working in a theatre company. The company had been invited to perform in the house of Singha babu. They were going there when the accident occurred. He has no idea about others but somehow manages to reach the bank.

Kiran has the likings for association and amusement. So Nilkanta's arrival gives her a scope to satisfy her likings. Her husband, too, thinks that for the boy she may stay there for some time longer. Her mother-in-law is also pleased with the arrival of the Brahmin boy. The boy also is happy to find a home like this escaping from the master of the theatre company.

There was confusion about Nilkanta's age. If his age is about fourteen or fifteen, then his face seems to look too old. If it is about seventeen or eighteen, then his face looks so young. It is a dangerous period for a boy. Many faults can be forgiven in a child or a young man, but at this age even the slightest mistake is felt to be unbearable. This has happened in Nilkanta's life too. Sharat and his mother are displeased with him and think of his departure. But Kiran's affection for him is too much to spoil the boy. Sharat often warns her for that. The battle has started in the family and it reaches its height when Sharat's younger brother Satish comes to Chandernagore to spend his college vacation.
Kiran is pleased with the new company. Both of them have enjoyed a happy time there. She is so busy with her brother-in-law that she has less spare time to look after Nilkanta. Nilkanta is upset. He thinks that Satish has been poisoning Kiran's mind against him. He considers Satish as his enemy but he does not have the courage to show his enmity to Satish. Days have passed by. Finally, the family decides to return home. Kiran proposes to take Nilkanta with them but nobody supports her. Two days before their journey, Kiran with kind words advises Nilkanta to go back to his home. On hearing such kind words after a long time, he can not control himself:

(He had felt neglected for so long that this touch of kindness was too much for him; he burst into tears. Kiran's eyes were also brimming over. She was filled with remorse at the thought that she had created a tie of affection, which had to be broken.)

The emotive function of the language clearly shows Kiran's attitude towards the orphan boy Nilkanta. She is successful in producing a kind of emotion in Nilkanta's mind and so he 'burst into tears'.

On the other hand, Satish's attitude is different:

"Satish kahe upashipt hili; se aat baaro chele saran na dekhiya tari virakta hiiya balita usthil, "Aare moolo. Kotha nai, vaarta nai, ekhebar kaashiyai ahiya!"

Kirpon eki kalthe usthil jana satishake shaskan karile. Satish kahil, "Tumi bodo na busidho, Tumi salkolchei baaro beshi bishas koro; Kothakar ke tara thik nai, Ekehe aashiya dibya rajbar hule ahe. Abar puromoshik hiiyaar"
(But Satish was greatly annoyed at the blubbering of this overgrown boy. 'Why does the fool stand there howling instead of speaking?' Said he. When Kiran scolded him for an unfeeling creature, he replied: 'My dear sister, you do not understand. You are too good and trustful. This fellow turns up from the Lord knows where, and is treated like a king. Naturally the tiger has no wish to become a mouse again. And he has evidently discovered that there is nothing like a tear or two to soften your heart.')

These harsh words of Satish hurt Nilkanta very much. He gets angry and has left the place at once:

(Nilkanta hurriedly left them. He felt that he would like to be a knife to cut Satish to pieces; a needle to pierce him through and through; a fire to burn him to ashes. But Satish was not even scared. It was only his own heart that bled and bled.)

What is involved here is the kinesthetic image. Nilkanta's muscles are tense and so he thinks to become 'a knife to cut Satish to pieces', 'a needle to pierce him through and through' and 'a fire to burn him to ashes'. His agitated mind thinks of taking revenge on Satish. He gets the opportunity. The day before their journey, he has stolen the favourite inkstand of Satish which
he brought from Calcutta. Satish is sure that Nilkanta has stolen the inkstand. He even calls Nilkanta a thief in the presence of Kiran. Nilkanta is acquainted with punishment which had been given to him by Sharat many more times. But Satish's comment is unbearable for him specially in Kiran's presence:

...কিন্তু ফিরিয়ায় যখন তাহার নামে দোয়াত-বুরির অপবাদ আসিল, তখন তাহার বড়ো বড়ো দুই চোখ আগের মতো ঘ্যাপিতে লাগিল, তাহার কুকুরের কাষ্ঠী ফিরিয়ায় কঠোর কাঁচে ঠেলিয়া উঠিল...৪২

(... But when he was called a thief before Kiran, his eyes blazed with fierce anger, his breast swelled and his throat choked. ...)

The kinesthetic image is present here again. Nilkanta's tension has reached such a height that another word of Satish could have created a dangerous battle there.

Kiran has a soft corner for Nilkanta and so she tells him separately:

তখন ফিরিয়া তাহারে পাশের ঘরে ফাঁকিয়া লইয়া মুখাশিক্ষার বলিলেন, “নিলু যদি সেই দোয়াতটা নিয়ে ফাঁকিস আমাকে আজ্ঞা আছে আজ্ঞা দিয়ে যা, তোকে কেউ কিছু বলবে না।”

নিলকান্তেরে চোখ ফাঁকিয়া টস্টস ফাঁকিয়া জল পড়িতে লাগিল, অবশেষে সে মুখ ফাঁকিয়া কাদিতে লাগিল।

ফিরিয়া ফাঁকিয়া আলিয়া বলিলেন, “নীলকান্ত কখনোই চুরি করেনি।”

শরৎ এবং সতীশ উভয়েই বলিতে লাগিলেন, “নিশ্চয় নীলকান্ত ছড়া আর কেহই চুরি করেনি।”

(Kiran was greatly distressed at the scene, and taking the boy into another room said in her sweet, kind way: 'Nilu, if you really have taken that inkstand give it to me quickly, and I shall see that no one says another word to you about it.' Big tears
coursed down the boy's cheeks, till at last he hid his face in his hands, and wept bitterly. Kiran came back from the room and said: 'I am sure Nilkanta has not taken the inkstand.' Sharat and Satish were equally positive that no other than Nilkanta could have done it.)

The addressee's kind, sweet words towards the addressee have created a special, emotional effect in the addressee's mind and that's why 'big tears coursed down the boy's cheeks'. Kiran's emotion is still there and, therefore, she does not believe that Nilkanta has stolen the inkstand. She brings two new suits and a pair of shoes for Nilkanta and enters into his room. She thinks to keep everything in Nilkanta's box secretly:

(From her bunch of keys she selected one that fitted and noiselessly opened the box. It was so jumbled up with odds and ends that the new clothes would not go in. So she thought she had better take everything out and pack the box for him. At first knives, tops, kite-flying reels, bamboo twigs, polished shells for
peeling green mangoes, bottoms of broken tumblers and such things as appeal to a boy's heart were discovered. Then there came a layer of linen, clean and otherwise. And from under the linen there emerged the missing inkstand, goose and all.

Kiran, with flushed face, sat down helplessly with the inkstand in her hand, puzzled and wondering."

The kinesthetic image is present here again. It has been created by the phrase 'flushed face'. The image has been used here to evoke Kiran's sense of shock. She is so nervous that she 'sat down helplessly with the inkstand in her hand, puzzled and wondering'.

Meanwhile, Nilkanta has entered into the room from behind. Kiran does not see him but he has seen everything:

In the meantime, unknown to Kiran, Nilkanta had come into the room from behind. He had seen the whole thing and thought that Kiran had come like a thief to catch him in his thieving, — and that his crime was discovered. How could his ever hope
to convince her that he was not a thief, and that only revenge had prompted him to take the inkstand, which he meant to throw into the river at the first opportunity? In a weak moment he had put it in his box instead. 'I am not a thief,' his heart cried out, 'not a thief!' Then he had stolen, and that he was still not a thief? He could never explain to Kiran how grievously wrong she was. And then, how could he bear the thought that she had tried to spy on him?

Nilkanta's innocence has been depicted here. He has been a victim of circumstances. He is shocked and next day the boy cannot be found anywhere in the village. Even the police has failed to trace him out. Kiran herself has thrown the inkstand into the river secretly. The battle between good and evil thus ends in a tragedy.

Apad (The Castaway) is thus concerned with the theme of recurrent battle between good and evil. The story has been concretely projected into human symbols. Raising the characters to a high pitch of transcendental meaning, we see Sharat and his mother as a symbol of self-centred human beings, Satish as a symbol of cruel mankind, Kiran as the noble mankind and Nilkanta as a symbol of innocent mankind.

All total four stories have been analysed in this chapter. The symbolic personification of Tagore's short stories have been traced out under the light of the method shown by G. Wilson Knight in his book The Wheel of Fire. In the above mentioned book, the symbolic personification of some of Shakespearean tragedies like Timon of Athens, Othello, King Lear, Hamlet, Macbeth, Measure for Measure, Troilus and Cressida etc. has been traced out by G. Wilson Knight. The views of oriental critics have not been discussed in this chapter because we have not found any observation of the oriental critics regarding symbolic
personification of Rabindranath Tagore's short stories. Even, we have not found any observation of the Bengali critics either regarding symbolic personification of Rabindranath Tagore's short stories.
NOTES AND REFERENCES


6. Idea has been taken from G. Wilson Knight : *The Wheel of Fire*, p. 249.


15. William Radice (Tr.) : *Rabindranath Tagore Selected Short Stories*, p. 112.
16. The phrase has been taken from G. Wilson Knight: *The Wheel of Fire*, p. 249.
17. Ibid., p. 249.
20. The phrase has been taken from Caroline F.E. Spurgeon: *Shakespeare's Imagery and What It Tells us*, p. 310.
24. The phrase has been taken from the book of G. Wilson Knight: *The Wheel of Fire*, p. 249.
27. Ibid, p. 249.
29. William Radice (Tr.): *Rabindranath Tagore Selected Short Stories*, p. 52.
33. William Radice (Tr.): *Rabindranath Tagore Selected Short Stories*, p. 53.
42. Rabindranath Tagore: *Galpaguccha Akhanda*, p. 279.
43. Rabindranath Tagore: *Collected Stories*, p. 130.
44. Rabindranath Tagore: *Galpaguccha Akhanda*, p. 280.
45. Rabindranath Tagore: *Collected Stories*, p. 130.