CHAPTER II

THE SHORT STORY

2.1 The Short Story as a literary genre: A Survey

One of the most familiar of literary genres is the short story, yet it is the most difficult to define. This difficulty is experienced not just by the layman or student of literature but also by the practitioners of the art. The problem arises because the short-story has its roots in many forms: the tale, the fable, the fairy-tale, and journalistic writing. Perhaps the first short story is the story of Abraham or Ruth in the Bible. Or its origins are perhaps to be found in folk tales which survive only in the oral tradition of primitive societies. Or one could say that the short story has its origin in the first report a traveller made of his journey. Because of the various sources from which the short story has developed, both writers and critics have found it difficult to define it satisfactorily. Bates (1972:16) sums up the problem succinctly.
The basis of almost every argument or conclusion I can make is the axiom that the short story can be anything the author decides it shall be; it can be anything from the death of a horse to a young girl's first love affair, from the static sketch without plot to the swiftly moving machine of bold action and climax, from the prose poem, painted rather than written, to the piece of straight reportage in which style, colour, and elaboration have no place. In that infinite flexibility, indeed, lies the reason why the short story has never been adequately defined.

This opinion has been echoed by many historians and critics of the short story, notable among them being Allen (1981) and Shaw (1983).

Allen says: "In other words, any definition of the short story must be tentative, allowing for many apparent contradictions and some genuine ones." (p.8)

According to Shaw: "There are so many different kinds of short story that the genre as a whole seems constantly to resist universal definition, a situation which.....I have taken to be a strength rather than a weakness." (p.vi)

This elusive quality of the short story has been both an advantage and a disadvantage. The advantage has been that when a short story is considered, it is considered on its own merits,
without much reference to the author. For if there are as many types of short stories as authors, it becomes difficult to fit it into any one clearly defined category and judge it with reference to the criteria laid down for that category. So, each short story is read and judged individually.

Bates (p.15), while reviewing the history of the short story says:

Constantly throughout the survey of the modern story one is struck by the fact that the reputation is often of less importance than the art; the unknown, the unprofessional writer appears with a fine, even a great, story; the voice speaks once and is silent; but by this isolated achievement the frontiers of the short story may be pushed forward a significant fraction, and the flexibility of the art shown, once again, to be infinite.

The individual reader is not bothered by the non-definability of the short story, but the critic is. And this is where the disadvantage of this genre comes up.

For years, the short story was not recognized as a literary genre. It was, in the Victorian era, considered a sort of short novel, a sketch, a tale. But it was not taken seriously as a
literary genre. This attitude, which was perhaps understandable in England where the atmosphere was not conducive to the growth of the short story, was surprisingly echoed by some European literateurs too. Hence Zola wanted Maupassant to write a novel to fulfil the promise shown in his first collection of stories.

Surprisingly enough, many short story writers, especially those who were novelists too, saw the short story as something lesser than a novel. Virginia Woolf, writing to David Garnett about one of her short stories could say: "I'm very glad you liked the story. In a way, it's easier to do a short thing, all in one flight than a novel...... Anyhow, it's very amusing to try with these short things" (1917:167).

Thus the difficulty in defining a short story combined with the attitudes of many writers themselves did not accord the short story the distinction of a genre till quite recently. Even when it was accorded the status of a genre, it was treated with caution. This is perhaps due to the fact that "it is not readily associated with a developing tradition represented by literary
figures about whose major status there is wide agreement." (Shaw:18) . This is what Bates too says: "reputation is often of less importance than the art." (see quote above). Even a good short story writer, who produces a quantity of work is associated with the 'art' of the story and not with an identifiable 'view of life'. Mansfield, Maugham or even Poe are referred to in terms of the devices they use or the subject matter or the technique. One talks of Maugham's irony, or Poe's 'typical subject matter'. but one does not discuss Mansfield's or Maugham's 'view of life' as one would do with Dickens or Tolstoy.

But a short story does have features which are prominent, features which belong typically to it. These features are described rather than defined by critics.

The description/definition of the short story is done from two perspectives; the reader's and the writer's. When discussing the short story from the reader's point of view, what the reader should get out of it or how much time he should spend on it are described. Therefore we have such statements that the short story should be long
enough to be read at one sitting; or that only one point of view should be presented to the reader; or that the writer should aim at sharing a moment of perception with the reader. In fact, the discussion of the short story from the reader's perspective has a valid basis. Short stories first became popular in magazines and periodicals and sometimes newspapers. Since all these publications catered to popular tastes, the reader was very important. Some authors feared that the need to be conciliating to the man in the street would lower the standards of the short story. But that problem has to an extent been solved, with magazines and periodicals setting up their own criteria about which section of the public they want to cater to.

The fact that there is much discussion of the short story from the writer's point of view is very natural, for the short story, more than any other genre is associated with technique. Poe's dictum on the short story, which served as a guide and inspiration to many authors, both in America and in Europe is an example of how critically and prescriptively this craft was viewed.
The ordinary novel is objectionable, from its length. As it cannot be read at one sitting, it deprives itself, of course, of the immense force derivable from totality. Worldly interests intervening during the pauses of perusal, modify, annul, or counteract, in a greater or less degree, the impressions of the book. But simple cessation in reading would, of itself, be sufficient to destroy the true unity. In the brief tale, however, the author is enabled to carry out the fullness of his intention, be it what it may. During the hour of perusal the soul of the reader is at the writer's control. There are no external extrinsic influences — resulting from weariness or interruption.

A skilful literary artist has constructed a tale. If wise, he has not fashioned his thoughts to accommodate his incidents; but having conceived, with deliberate care, a certain unique or single effect to be wrought out, he then invents such incidents — he then combines such events as may best aid him in establishing the preconceived effect. If his very initial sentence tend not to the outbringing of this effect, then he has failed in his first step. In the whole composition there should be no word written, of which the tendency, direct or indirect, is not to the one pre-established design. And by such means, with such care and skill, a picture is at length painted which leaves in the mind of him who contemplates it with a kindred art, a sense of the fullest satisfaction. The idea of the tale has been presented unblemished, because undisturbed: and this is an end unattainable by the novel. Undue brevity is just as exceptionable here as in the poem; but undue length is yet more to be avoided.

(Poe : 1842 : 12)
In this masterly account Poe has clearly spelt out the craft involved in the production of a short story. Things have to be wrought, conscious effort has to go in before a deliberate single effect is achieved. In other words, a short story is a finely crafted piece of literature. Other genres of literature are also crafted, but none with the deliberateness of the short story. Authors who have followed Poe have, to a greater or lesser degree, taken points from his prescription.

The other way a short story is discussed is through comparison with other genres. A short story has often been implicitly and explicitly compared to a poem. Allen (1981) discusses the notion of epiphany and says, as the discussion proceeds:

I seem to be trembling on the verge of saying that the modern short-story writer is a lyric poet in prose; and indeed, the effect on the reader of many modern short stories, those of Chekov conspicuously, is nearer to that of lyric poetry than to that of the novel or of older stories. (p.8)

Discussing Virginia Woolf, Shaw (1983:16) talks about the lyric quality of her prose: "Dissatisfaction with the medium in which stories
were told, made Virginia Woolf cultivate a lyric style in an attempt to bring words closer to the effects of line and colour.

The lyric quality is seen as the result of what the modern short story is trying to capture; modern life which is restless and transient and which is seen as fragmented existence. The lyric tries to capture the fleeting and the fragile in itself, as does the short story. Hence the tendency to compare the modern short story to the lyric poem.

The other reason for comparing the short story with poetry is the fact that like a poet the short story writer too has to labour to produce an effect within certain limits. He does not have either the time or space available to a three-decker novelist. In this respect, the short story is often compared to a sonnet, where there are some fixed rules and the author has to operate creatively within the set parameters. These constraints can perhaps be expected to kill creativity but it kills no more than the sonnet form killed the creativity of a Shakespeare or a Milton.
A third reason for comparing the short story to a poem, especially the lyric is the fact of the subjectivity of the narration. Kipling's short story, *Mrs Bathurst* is quoted as an example:

...... the narration has a quality of extreme subjectivity which puts us in touch with the reflective side of the speaker's mind rather than his outward appearance or behaviour. The principle at work here is amenable to a variety of uses by the short-story writer, who may choose to take subjectivity to the point where it dominates the narrative completely, making the telling be the story comparable to that of a single dramatic monologue. The closest literary ancestor of this type of the story is the lyric form perfected by Browning ............... (Shaw : 1983 : 105)

The comparison of a short story to a poem occurs in almost all the works dealing with the short story as a literary genre. Further, the short story is compared to the visual arts, especially photography and the cinema. A.E. Coppard, V.S. Pritchett, H.E. Bates and Elizabeth Bowen have talked specifically about the link

1. Bowen was advised by John Strachey to go to the cinema regularly, as she could learn a lot from this medium. (Glendinning : 1977 : 51 ; quoted by Shaw)
between these two art forms. Bowen (1937) has this to say:

The short story.......in its use of action is nearer to the drama than to the novel. The cinema itself busy with a technique, is of the same generation: in the last thirty years the two arts have been accelerating together. They have affinities - neither is sponsored by a tradition; both are, accordingly, free; both, still, are self-conscious, show a self-imposed discipline and regard for form; both have, to work on, immense matter - the disoriented romanticism of the age. (p.7)

The short story writer has himself/herself been influenced by the visual arts: Virginia Woolf, influenced by Sickert's paintings wished she could recreate the effect through the 'impure medium' of words, Mansfield was influenced by the 'Jugendstil' illustrations as well as naval photographs. And whatever effect these had on the writers was reproduced to some degree in their work.

The comparison to the visual arts, and especially photography and cinema is logical. A short story writer, like the cameraman picks out his subject with care, then puts it within a frame. He, like the artist, chooses his subject
and composes it. Focus is important, as also the setting, for the effect comes through only there. The cinema too operates in a similar way. The director thinks in terms of frames – the point of focus, the setting etc. for the effect to be maximised. He composes shots within frames.

Added to both these things is the ability of the photographers to be opportunistic and see the relevance of a composition, or a face in a crowd, in a second. A short story writer too has to be the same.

One unifying strand which underlies the conviction of almost all short story writers is the acceptance of the fact that a short story does not just happen – it has to be made to happen.

In fact, writers like Coppard, Porter and Mansfield asseverated that they never began the story till they had the end written out or at least thought out following very much Poe's suggestion for the successful writing of a short story.

To conclude, the short story, as Allen says, is made up of several strands – the anecdote, the joke, the myth, the fable, the travelogue.
journalism, etc. and therefore: " ........... any
definition of the short story must be tentative,
allowing for many apparent contradictions and some
genuine ones" (Allen : 1981 : 8).

Because of this, the descriptions or
definitions of short stories have been varied; but
they recognize one common aim of short stories -
to achieve an effect. To achieve this effect,
authors are required to work and work hard under
some sort of self-imposed discipline. The very
flexibility of the short story which makes it
fascinating, frustrates the critic, for no cut and
dried slot can be found for this unique genre.
One could argue and discuss the short story for
ever, but as Strong (1932 : 712) says " We not
only do not know what a short story ought to be,
but we do not want to know. The only safe thing
is to allow each writer to call his work what he
likes and to judge it severely, and without
favour, by its own standards."

2.2 Stylistics and the Short Story

Traditionally, the short story has been
analysed using categories applicable to the novel:
plot/story, character, setting and language. The discussion of the short stories using these categories has been based on literary approaches to criticism. For example, when Hardy's short stories are discussed, the evocative description of the Wessex countrywide is talked about in the same way as when his novels are discussed. The Three Strangers is treated in almost the same way as Jude the Obscure or The Mayor of Casterbridge. When Hemingway's short stories are discussed, again it is his philosophy of life which is brought into prominence - man against odds and the relentlessness of tragedy.

The stylistic approach to the short story has, however, not been explored in a sustained manner. Ohmann, in "Generative Grammars and the Concept of Literary Style" (1970: 258 - 277) and "Literature as Sentences" (1972: 353 - 361) takes excerpts from short stories (sometimes a single sentence from a short story) to illustrate the point he is making about literary style viz. that style is primarily a question of exercising linguistic choices, and these choices, when exercised by the author have a particular effect.
on the reader. He chooses a passage from Faulkner's *The Bear* and reduces the complexity of the passage by reversing the effects of the transformations used:

(a) The relative clause transformation
(b) The conjunction transformation
(c) The comparative transformation

By doing this he shows how the 'style' of the sentence changes, how the original passage 'leans heavily upon a very small amount of grammatical apparatus' and how the choice of these three transformations demonstrate a certain conceptual orientation of the author.

The other passage he considers is Hemingway's *Soldier's Home*. The transformations here do not seem to affect Hemingway's style to the same extent or in the same way. He shows that "The peculiar double vision of the style, the sense of the narrator peering into the character's mind and scrupulously reporting its contents, the possibility of distance and gentle irony - all these are gone with the transformational wind." (p.273)

In "Literature as Sentences" he examines just one sentence from Conrad's *The Secret Sharer* and
through an analysis of its deep structure shows that the last sentence is about Leggatt himself, though the surface structure indicates something else.

Widdowson in his book *Stylistics and the Teaching of Literature* (1975) discusses a passage from Somerset Maugham's *Mackintosh* in the chapter "Exercises in Literary Understanding" (p. 86-115). This chapter, as the title indicates, deals with practical suggestions about the use of stylistic analysis which can be applied in the classroom. The passage is used to illustrate how these exercises can be constructed. He discusses how this passage, describing a character, can be contrasted with another similar passage and how exercises can be constructed to bring out the special effects of style.

In his article "Linguistic Models, Language and Literariness; Study Strategies in the teaching of Literature to Foreign Students", Carter (1986: 110 - 132) proposes a six point narrative structure based on Labov's model:

1. Abstract..............What was this about?
2. Orientation...........Who, When, What, Where?
3. Complicating action...Then what happened?
4. Evaluation..........So what?
5. Result or resolution..What finally happened?
6. Coda

He discusses how this model can be applied stylistically to a piece of literature, but he sounds a caution, saying "However, we should also be alert to the dangers of relying too heavily on a model", adding that "Teachers will, of course, decide for themselves the extent to which such a model needs to develop according to the aims of a particular lesson or syllabus." (p.122). Somerset Maugham's short story, The Man with the Scar is used to illustrate the application of his model.

In "Style and Interpretation in Hemingway's 'Cat in the Rain'" Carter (1982: 65-80) has again taken a short story, Hemingway's Cat in the Rain to show how a close analysis of language features can lead to literary meanings. Carter demonstrates how the subtle shifts in the emotional attitudes of the characters are reflected in the changes in the structure of the nominal group, changes in the kinds of verbs used and the use of free indirect speech. He shows too how the simplicity of style does not point to simplicity of interpretation, but rather adds to
the ambiguity and the sense of expectations being frustrated. The most interesting point in this article is the fact that he begins with his intuitions about the story and then applies methods of language analysis to confirm these intuitions.

As in the case of other genres, here too one perceives that the short story, wherever it has been mentioned, is more as an illustration of a mode, a theory or premise. Except in the case of Carter, only extracts have been dealt with. Carter proposes interesting models and frameworks for the teaching of the short story, and his evidence is based on actual classroom teaching. Many of his ideas can perhaps work in our classrooms too, but it might perhaps be difficult to take his model in toto. For one thing, he has chosen a tightly structured, short short story which can be put within a framework. What will happen one wonders, if a rambling ten page short story has to be put within a framework. Secondly the short story, The Man with the Scar was tried out with advanced students in Singapore, students who could be introduced to the Labovian narrative model. In comparison with the L2 situation in
India, the Singaporean class seems almost ideal. But it has to be iterated that Carter's ideas are both innovative and practical and that his theoretical framework is viable in terms of actual classroom situations.

2.3 Discoursal Approaches to the short story

Since stylistics does not provide all the answers to the question: 'How is a short story analysed?' and since it is concerned more with lexis and syntax rather than the special nature of narrative discourse it becomes necessary to move to another field, namely narratology, where a lot of work has been done on narratives. Again, this work does not really focus only on the short story, but the theories and the ideas behind the approach may hold a key to the formulating of a methodology for teaching the short story to L2 students in the colleges of South India.

Narratology deals with the whole body of narration and tries to provide universal categories within the framework of which narratives can be analysed and described. The basic framework of narratological analysis can be shown as follows:
(based on Rimmon-Kenan's classification)
(Rimmon-Kenan : 1983)
A. Story

Story is 'narrated events and participants in abstraction from the text ............ a part of a larger construct ...... Story is one axis within the larger construct: the axis of temporal organization.' (Rimmon-Keenan : 1983 : 6)

The Story emerges as an abstraction from,

a) the specific style of the text in question
b) the language in which the text is written

c) the medium or sign system of the text.

Modes of analysis

The realization of a story in a concrete form is necessary before it can be analysed. For the story, though 'transverbal' is often claimed to be homologous (i.e parallel in structure) to natural language "and hence amenable to the type of analysis practised in linguistics" (p.9).

1. Paraphrase

The story itself is intangible but it must be presented in a tangible form, which can be a paraphrase. A reader often does this automatically when reading and the paraphrase need not necessarily be identical with the language used in the text. The paraphrases can be in the
form of labels or simple sentences. These simple sentences have been called 'narrative propositions' (p.14) An important characteristic of a story paraphrase is that it arranges itself in chronological order.

2. Grammar of Narratives

Another more elaborate method of realizing the story in concrete terms is the use of narrative grammar. Taking a clue from linguistics, many models of analysis have been proposed.

a. Vladimir Propp looks at stories in terms of functions. "The functions are the essential elements of a story, while the various circumstances of their performance, such as the agents, the means, the intentions, play only a secondary role" (Pavel:1985:87).

Some examples of functions are: Absence, Interdiction, Chase, Rescue, Unrecognized Arrival etc. Incidentally, this work was done in relation to Russian Fairy Tales. Propp's analysis is comparable to syntactic frameworks, where abstract categories like Article, Noun, Verb, Adverb etc may be combined to form the actual sentence.
('The boy slept soundly') Just as in syntactic analysis where categories can be combined to form sentences, in the analysis of stories functions can be combined to form texts.

b. Levi-Strauss proposed a model which takes into consideration the story at two levels, the narrative level and the story level. He deals mainly with myths and suggests that the meaning of a myth is independent of its overt narrative content. Therefore, to understand a myth, it must be taken apart and rearranged.

Levi-Strauss' analysis of the Oedipus myth is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overrating of blood relations</th>
<th>Underrating of blood relations</th>
<th>Slaying of monsters</th>
<th>Difficulties in walking straight and standing upright</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cadmos seeks his sister Europa, ravished by Jove</td>
<td>Cadmos kills the dragon</td>
<td>The Spartoi kill one another</td>
<td>Lentacos (Laos' father) = lame (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Leitos (Oedipus' father) = left-sided (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oedipus kills his father, Laos</td>
<td>Oedipus kills the Sphinx</td>
<td>Oedipus marries his mother, Jocasta</td>
<td>Oedipus = Swollen-foot (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eteocles kills his brother Polynices</td>
<td>Antigone buries her brother, Polynices, despite prohibition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
"One tells the myth by reading the rows from left to right, one understands the myth by considering the columns as units and by reading them one after another from left to right" (Pavel:89).

c. Greimas (Pavel:90) says explicitly that there is a relationship between his model and that of Generative Grammar, viz. the notions of deep structure and surface structure. He compares these notions to surface narrative structure and deep narrative structure. His model is organized as a semiotic square, which contains two semantic features or semes, $S_1, S_2$ organized along the semantic axis 'S' and three types of relations: contrariety, contradiction and complementarity.

![Diagram of semiotic square]

This square, at the abstract level, presents the semio-narrative structures. He uses two opposed semes (minimal unit of sense): contradictories and contraries. Contradictories
are created when one seme negates the other (A vs not-A) so both cannot be true, or both cannot be false. Contraries are mutually exclusive (white vs black); they are not exhaustive unlike contradictories which are.

The semiotic square is a pure form, which, when invested with concrete semes becomes a semantic micro-universe. For example, the universe of the French novelist, Bernanos, is represented as follows:

![Semiotic Square Diagram]

Greimas juxtaposes the 'life/death' opposition in Bernanos to the same opposition in Maupassant:

```
life
Maupassant: sun(fire)
Bernanos: fire

Maupassant: Mount Valerien (earth)
Bernanos: water

non-death
Maupassant: water
Bernanos: air

Maupassant: sky (air)
Bernanos: earth

death
Maupassant: Mount Valerien (earth)
Bernanos: water
```
d. Pavel (Pavel:96) uses for his model the recursive base of grammar, the axiom of which is the Narrative Structure. The NS is made up of a Troubled Universe (Initial Situation plus \{Violations\}) and a reestablished universe (Lack ) (Mediation plus Denouement).

e. Van Dijk's (Pavel:96) narrative grammar is based on the T.G. mechanism, where he puts purely narrative units with higher order units of the story such as Moral or Evaluation. For example, a typical tree would be:

```
  Narrative
   Story
       entails
          Moral
       Introduction and episodes
           Happening
               followed by
                  Evaluation
                     followed by
                        Resolution
                           Complications
```

f. Genette: Some of the most important and relevant observations on the theories of narrative
modes were made by Gerard Genette, who also proposed a model. His model goes back to Plato and he begins with the dichotomy between logos (histoire) or 'that which is said' and lexis (recit) or 'manner of speaking'. His model is as follows:-

logos

that which is said

and

lexis

manner of speaking

diegesis

description

and

mimesis

narration

narrative

(report)

and

discourse

(comment)

(Bonheim : 1986 : 7)

B. Text

As opposed to the story, the text is concrete; it is written or spoken discourse. The main components of a text, some of which coincide with traditional categories are:-

(1) Time:

Time in narrative fiction has been defined as "relations of chronology between story and text", for in a verbal narrative "time is a constitutive
both of the means of representation (language) and the object represented (incidents in the story)" (Rimmon-Kenan : 44).

Genette views time in three respects: (i) Order which answers the question 'when?'. The relations between succession of events in the story and their linear disposition in the text are discussed under this head. (ii) Duration, which answers the question 'how long?' Genette discusses the relations between the span of time across which the events are supposed to have occurred and the amount of text devoted to their narration. (iii) Frequency, which answers the question 'how often?' Under this he looks at the number of times an event appears in the story and the number of times it is narrated in the text.

(2) Characterization:

Rimmon-Kenan (1983) makes a distinction between characters of a story and characterization in texts.

The more abstract qualities of a character are discussed under story: is a character a verbal construct or a real person, and is a character put together through his/her being or doing?
Under text, characterization, which is retrievable through the text, is discussed. This can be done in two ways: by direct definition or indirect representation. Direct definitions are generally adjectival and several categories of nouns too are used: for example, 'a clever lawyer' or 'she was a real bitch'. In indirect representation, instead of mentioning a trait, it is displayed and exemplified. Various techniques are used for this. The reader is allowed to infer the quality of the character through these indirect representations.

(3) Focalization:

Genette makes a distinction between 'who sees' and 'who speaks'. This distinction is the basis on which the concept of focalization is developed and it concerns the medium through which the story is presented.

Focalization is considered under the following heads:

(i). (a) Position relative to story: This can be internal or external, in relation to the story. The focalization can be through the characters/character in the story, or it can be
through the external, omniscient author. But the
lines of demarcation are nowhere very rigid — for
a first person narrator-focalizer can become the
external focalizer too when he distances himself
to become more the narrating self rather than the
experiencing self.

(b) Persistence: Focalization may remain
constant throughout the story or it can change.

(ii). Perceptual factor: This is determined by
two main co-ordinates — space and time.

(a) Space: The position the focalizer takes,
whether inside a room or outside, a bird's eye
view or the limited vision of a protagonist,
determines what is presented in the narrative.

(b) Time: The external focalizer has at his
disposal all time past, present and future,
whereas the internal focalizer is limited to the
'present' of fictional reality. Withholding
information by using the internal focalizer often
makes the information given later very effective.

(iii). Psychological factor: This has three
components, viz., the cognitive, the emotive and
the ideological.

(a) The cognitive consists of things like
knowledge, memory, belief and conjecture. Hence the difference between the internal and external focalizer becomes one between restricted and unrestricted knowledge.

(b) The emotive aspect throws up the difference between objective and subjective focalization, which is comparable to the distinction between the external and internal focalizer.

Whatever is viewed through an internal focalizer is 'coloured', whereas the external focalizer presents things in an 'objective' or 'neutral' manner. In case the focalization is from without, all observations are restricted to external manifestations, and the reader is left to infer the emotions from these.

(c) The ideological factor: This determines how the world is viewed, or the concepts which influence the viewing of the world. The ideological factor can be discussed explicitly by the narrator or character, or can be implicitly formulated.

Rimmon-Kenan (p.83) discusses some verbal indicators which show the shift in focus from the internal to the external focalizer and vice versa.
C. Narration

Rimmon-Kenan(1983) defines narration in the following way: "Since the text is a spoken or written discourse, it implies someone who speaks or writes it. The act or process of production is the third aspect - 'narration'. Narration can be considered as both real and fictional" (p.3).

1. Narration can be viewed through two important perspectives: the temporal and the relational (narrative levels).

(i) Genette has classified the temporal aspect into four types of narrations:

a. Ulterior Narration, which, in a normal way, takes place after the event. Most narrations are of this sort.

b. Anterior Narration, like prophecies and dreams, which take place before the event and are used to describe the event before it happens.

c. Instantaneous Narration, where the telling and the acting are simultaneous.

d. Intercalated Narration in which the telling and acting are not simultaneous but follow each other in alternation.

(ii) Narrative Levels: The embedding of narrative within narratives creates stratification, and this leads to levels. These have been classified as follows:
a. Extradiegetic level: the highest level and immediately superior to the first narrative and concerned with the narration.

b. Hypodiegetic level: second degree narration (a level below the diegesis) The hypodiegetic narratives have many functions, which sometimes occur singly and at other times in combination with other functions.

   i. Actional function: Here the action of the first narrative is advanced through the fact of these being narrated.

   ii. Explicative function: Here questions like 'what led to the present situation ?' are answered and an explanation is offered.

   iii. Thematic function: Relations are established through similarity and contrast.

2. Speech representation:

   Speech representation is based on the two aspects of diegesis (where the poet himself speaks) and mimesis (the poet tries to create the illusion that it is not he who is speaking). The speech representations are generally classified into direct and indirect speech and different stages between them.

   Authors make use of these modes in their narration to represent distances.

   Rimmon-Kenan reproduces McHale's schema of different modes of speech representation (p.109)

1. Diegetic summary: the bare report of a speech
act, without any indication of what was said or how it was said.

2. Summary, less purely diegetic: Summary with some indication of the topics of conversation.

3. Indirect content paraphrase (Indirect Discourse): paraphrase of the content of speech event with no indication of the style.

4. Indirect discourse, mimetic to some degree: which retains some aspects of the style of discourse.

5. Free indirect discourse: Grammatically and mimetically intermediate between indirect and direct discourse.

6. Direct discourse: creates an illusion of pure mimesis, but is stylised to some degree.

7. Free indirect discourse: generally first person interior monologue. No orthographic indicators used.

(Rimmon-Kenan: 109 - 110)

Bonheim (1982: 55) formulates the following chart which incorporates various stages of perception as well as those of speech and thought.
### Direct Speech and its Substitutes ("substitutionary narration")

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance</th>
<th>Submode</th>
<th>little</th>
<th>great</th>
<th>Authorial or narratorial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>none</td>
<td>1. Speech</td>
<td>a: direct speech, free direct speech (page)</td>
<td>b: parallel indirect speech (Page), substituted direct discourse (Voloshinov)</td>
<td>c: free indirect speech idiosyncratic ↔ neutral coloured ↔ submerged transposed speech (Genette)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Thought</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>direct thought, interior monologue (Dujardin)</td>
<td>free indirect speech erlebte Rede, style indirect libre (Bally), substitutionary speech (Fehr)</td>
<td>reported thought coloured ↔ neutral substitutionary thought (Hernadi), psychonarration (Cohn)</td>
<td>narrated speech (Genette)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>inner speech (Goldstien, Vygotsky, Page)</td>
<td>represented speech (Jespersen), dual voice (Pascal), narrated speech (Vickery), narrated monologue (Cohn), immediate speech (Genette)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>subvocal speech (J. Watson)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>endosphy (Vygotsky, Cohn)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>private speech (Hernadi)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Perception</td>
<td>description by fictive character</td>
<td>narrated perception erlebte Wahrnehmung</td>
<td>reported perception substitutionary perception (Fehr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>description in interior monologue</td>
<td>vision avec (Pouillon)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A study of narratology reveals the fact that research in this area has been concerned with stories and the telling of them in general terms. None of this work relates to the short story as such, though examples and illustrations are drawn from this genre.

There are two major articles which have applied the narratological framework to the short story. Chatman (1969) discusses narrative structure with special reference to Barthes and Todorov, and uses Joyce's *Eveline* to illustrate a model of narratological analysis. He uses Barthes' formulation of 'functions' to discuss and analyse the story at the level of 'narrative meanings' (he calls these 'morphemes of narratology' (p.4)). Narrative meanings further the plot by raising questions and answering them. Functions are divided into 'kernels' (the genuine nodes or hinges of the story) and 'catalysts' which do not entail a choice as kernels do, but simply fulfill a completive function. Kernels are further divided into Explicit Kernels and Implicit Kernels. The narrative questions which arise in relation to a Kernel and which can be couched in
its own terms are Explicit Kernels. When questions are inferred in relation to a kernel, then it is called an Implicit Kernel.

Functions are seen as being of two sorts: Integrative and Distributional. Distributional functions are cardinal to the plot, they are related to 'action'. Integrative functions, on the other hand, refer more to characters, moods and atmosphere. They are paradigmatic, unlike distributional functions which are syntagmatic in nature.

The major integrative functions, corresponding to kernels, are indices. Indices are always inferred and need to be deciphered. The minor integrative functions corresponding to catalysts are informants, which are explicit and immediately comprehensible. They function chiefly to provide versimilitude to the narration. Integrative functions, Chatman says, are generally governed by the copula.

Barthes' analysis, according to Chatman, is useful for formulating the structure of the story. It is at the lowest level. At the next level, one has to deal with characters. Here, he bases his
analysis on Todorov's formulation that a character is a construct arrived at by analysing what she/he does. Chatman shows that in Eveline, the actions which Eveline performs are conveyed by verbs, not one of which is a verb of real action. Except the last refusal, all verbs act as the grammatical counterpoint of the theme of moral entrapment, which is also the theme of the story.

At the highest level, Discourse or Narration, Chatman uses the distinction based on pronominal grammar as suggested by Barthes. He says the narrator can speak in only one of two voices: 'personal' or 'apersonal'. In many narrative passages, the 'he' can be changed to the 'I' without any loss to the narrative content. So, the distinction is not simply a grammatical one but something at a deeper level. The shift from the personal to the apersonal can occur many times within the same sentence in a narrative. Using these categories, Chatman analyses Eveline. The focus is on narratological aspects in general, and Eveline is just an illustration of the results of the application of a narratological framework. No special distinction is made between the plot of
the short story *Eveline* and Ian Fleming's *Goldfinger*. This is perhaps understandable in the context of Chatman's work, but it does not help in interpreting this or any other short story.

Another important paper which uses narratology to analyse a short story is Dolezel's 'Towards a Structural Theory of Content in Prose Fiction' (1971: 95-110). Using a framework of motif classes, he constructs a framework for the analysis of content structure in prose fiction. He says that structuring the content in prose fiction is important as no amount of linguistic analysis is going to adequately describe a prose work without an analysis of content. He takes up Hemingway's *The Killers*, and under the heading 'Example of Motif Analysis' discusses the story. He divides the story into the following motifs:

**NICK'S WALK**

Nick's meeting with Mrs. Bell

Nick's entry

**Nick's meeting with Ole Anderson**

Nick's departure

Nick's meeting with Mrs. Bell

**NICK'S WALK**
There is such symmetry of motifs that he says it can almost be called 'a poem of motifs'.

It is again evident that this article is concerned with a general framework and not with the short story as such. The short story is an 'example' of motif analysis only.

Bonheim (1982) in his treatment of the short story traces the development of different schools of narratology and then considers the short story in terms of: Short Story Beginnings, How Short Stories End (Static Modes and Dynamic Modes), Novel and Short Story.

Most of the chapters dealing with the short story examine the methods and techniques used by well-known writers of this genre. Some interesting insights are gained. for example, most short stories (87% of the 600 short stories examined) use either the technique of habituality or anteriority or both at the beginning as opposed to the novel (51% of the 300 novels examined by Bonheim). But this information still does not describe or define the special features of a short story satisfactorily, and Bonheim is the first to admit this. He concludes saying:
Short stories and novels, then, overlap. In most of the sections of this study it was unnecessary to differentiate between them: the chief uses of the modes and submodes have proven to be identical. For both story and novel the categories offered by the narrative modes are tools which help us discover more exactly the forms and techniques of narrative. (p. 169)

2.4 Short Story Anthologies for Colleges

While critics and narratologists debate over the question of what a short story exactly is, a number of course books, on the short story mainly for the college students, have been published. These deal with the short story in terms of traditional categories. The focus is on how to read and understand and how to write about short stories. Two books which cover this area quite comprehensively are Reading, Understanding and Writing About Short Stories by Fenson and Kritzer (1966) and The Short Story and the Reader: Discovering Narrative Techniques by Kane and Peters (1975). The first of these books approaches the short story through Plot, Character, Setting, Point of View, Tone, Symbolism and Thematic Development. This is followed by a selection of short stories and suggestions for writing. The book is well illustrated with actual
examples of students' writings. In short, it is a thorough guide for the preparation of writing tasks on the short story.

The second book, by Kane and Peters, also consists of a selection of short stories, but it does not treat short stories separately under different categories. Instead, each short story is followed by a number of comprehension questions which cover the categories of theme, plot, character and language. A few writing tasks too are suggested at the end of each short story.

The two books mentioned above exemplify the way short stories are handled by course books on short stories.

Basically, these books, concentrate on the task of training students to tackle the writing part of a curriculum efficiently, and therefore give them guidelines as to how to do this intelligently. (unlike 'notes' given in some colleges, which students are expected to memorize).

Richard Walker's *Language for Literature* (1983) is a course book which deals with language use, style and criticism. In this book, he has two
chapters on the short story: he deals with Joyce's *Eveline* and Hemingway's *Soldier's Home*. After a series of language exercises he introduces literary exercises which deal with some aspects of stylistics and narratology. For example, in *Eveline* he gets the text paraphrase, paragraph by paragraph, in single sentences, while in *Soldier's Home* he has an exercise on story summary. Areas of syntax and lexis are also covered.

This book is concerned with all genres and attempts to use language for literary studies; yet keeps language and literary studies distinct.

2.5 Teaching the Short Story

A study of narratology shows that there is virtually no difference in the categories used from those in traditional literary approaches. What is different is the way of looking at the categories. Classification has become rather more clear, so that descriptions are more valid. It is, of course, obvious that the short story cannot really be contained in any one definition, or different types of short stories classified systematically. Bonheim makes a valid point about
a narratological approach to the short story:

The narrative modes are fundamental categories of narration...... categories are glasses through which not only the general law but also the particular phenomenon can be discovered. For the critical process, like most attempts at definitions, works by going alternatively in two directions: first to reduce, to simplify, to see the phenomenon as the example of a category; second, to look at different manifestations of that category, paying homage to the particular.

(Bonheim : 165)

Whereas earlier, these categories under which a short story or a novel was studied had a more literary orientation, it is now being approached more objectively, and if the phrase can be used, more scientifically. For example, earlier, when characters were discussed, they were described as if they were real people, and their being was more important than their doing. Characters now are analysed more on the basis of what they do, and what they say provides linguistic clues to their action. It either supports or goes against what they do. The categories of focalization too aid the understanding of the message the writer is trying to convey -- knowing the point of view helps one accept as valid or reject as invalid, what is
being described. This furthers comprehension of the writer's message.

If a systematic framework for the study of a short story has to be designed, it is mainly narratological studies which would provide useful guidelines. The question which would arise would be: How much of what has been researched can be taken into the classroom for purposes of teaching? Obviously, not a lot, and not the more subtle classifications. For the students who would have to use the narratological framework would not be linguistically sophisticated enough to handle the concepts and techniques required. So it would have to be the basic aspects of narratology without the finer distinctions and subtle differences.

The basic aspects related to Story, Text and Narration can be listed as follows:

I. Under Story the use of Paraphrase. This would mean the reading of the story and at some point arranging events in a chronological order in the form of a paraphrase. This type of exercise is done by the students after the reading of texts in general classes too, and is one of the devices
used by paper setters to test comprehension. The grammars of narratives proposed by persons like Propp or Genette would be difficult for the students to handle.

II. Under Text all three categories viz Time, Characterization and Focalization with modifications, can be used.

i) Time: Genette's three way division, Order, Duration and Frequency can be used while reading a short story.

ii) Characterization: Both direct definition and indirect representation can be used as categories when the text is dealt with.

iii) Focalization: This can be used as a category, provided the text is really understood by the students. If a class finds a great deal of difficulty in dealing with the linguistic aspects, then it might become difficult to discuss focalization. If, on the other hand, the class does understand the stylistic aspects of the text, then this aspect can be used to further deepen the understanding of the story.

III. Under Narration, instead of just Speech Representation, the language of the author as a
whole can be considered. This would tie up with Chatman's categories of 'kernels', 'catalysts', 'indices' and 'informants'. Frequent occurrence of active verbs would mean that kernels are predominant and that the short story is an 'action' oriented one. Frequent occurrences of the copula would mean that the short story is a 'catalyst' dominated one i.e. a descriptive, character oriented one.

Some stylistic categories can be used along with narratological aspects. Foregrounding, either of syntactic features or lexical features can be used to describe the patterns in the language of the text; this in turn would lead to a better understanding of the author's intentions.

The methodology would combine features of both narratology and stylistic analysis, and would use whichever was applicable to the situation. In this way, by choosing some categories from narratology (discoursal features) and some stylistic features, the short story can be approached in a more systematic way in the classroom. Since sophisticated models cannot, at the undergraduate level, be taken per se and
applied, this exercise of choosing and adapting becomes necessary, for the models of analysis proposed by experts are aimed at explaining, not one story in particular, but the principles underlying narratology as a whole. Yet from the insights gained from this discipline, the handling of a short story in a class can become more effective and meaningful.

2.6 Proposed Methodology

The following methodology was proposed for the teaching of the short story:

Before the Reading:
A. The focus at this stage would be more on the content. Linguistic aspects would be taken into consideration, but only later.
B. Since the beginnings and endings in short stories are very important, because of the tightly knit structure, the attention of students would be drawn to aspects like the title and the first few paragraphs. Carter (1986) proposes Prediction as a strategy to "assist the preliminary or pre-literary process of understanding and appreciating the text" (p.111).
During Reading:

A. Reading a short story involves the skill of skimming. This is the skill which would be focused on during this stage of the lesson. To assist the students to do this, certain tasks would be set, or certain questions asked. They would not be encouraged to do a detailed reading at first, but would be asked to get the gist of the story.

A special technique which would be used here would be the giving of sections of the story to the students. The nature of the short story is such that very often, at different points, the text invites the reader to predict what happens next. The novel too lends itself to such reader prediction, but since the short story is much shorter, the prediction and the checking out of the prediction is more immediate and therefore very effective. The last part of the story would be withheld and students asked to supply the ending. This exercise would be an evaluation of the students' grasp of the narratological structure as well as the language of the author. It would also allow for individual responses to
the text -- the students would need to write what they, individually, think the story is going to be. Thirdly, this exercise would highlight the 'twist in the tale' device used by most short story writers and highlight the importance of endings in short stories.

B. Stylistic Analysis: Tasks would be set to identify stylistic devices or a characteristic pattern of language use in the text. They could be asked to do this in two ways: i) they could be asked about what effect the story has / what they feel about the story and then they could be guided towards identifying those features of language which go to make up this effect. Or, ii) they could be asked to identify the linguistic features prominent in the story and asked what effect this has with regard to the total structure and meaning of the story.

C. Interpretation: The stylistic features identified would be discussed and their interpretation attempted. Some of the interpretation would happen simultaneously with the identification and classification of the linguistic or stylistic characteristics.
Interpretation of other devices and language features would be done after the analysis. In all probability, interpretation and analysis would happen together, as a lot of meanings become clear when patterns are perceived.

After the Reading:

A. Personal Response: Personal response to the story could be either oral or written, but when dealing with the short story, it would, as far as possible be as part of the written work

B. Written Work: The written task would be generally at the beginning; the beginning of the story would be given and the students would be asked to continue the story. Or, the students would be asked to complete the story, the ending of which would be withheld.

If the class responded well, another story of a similar type would be given and the students asked to either show how language had been used by the author to create an effect or they would be asked to give their personal responses to the story and asked to substantiate their answers from the text. They might not be able to do the task very competently, as stylistic analysis would be a
new discipline, but such an attempt should reveal the extent to which procedures of stylistic analysis has been absorbed.

2.7 Procedural Details

2.7.1 The Text

As the short story is a genre which is taught almost universally in all English classes at the high school and under-graduate level, three texts were chosen to be tried out. The short stories were of three different types commonly found in text books: The Last Laugh by D.H. Lawrence, Salvatore by Somerset Maugham, and The Blind Dog by R.K. Narayan.

(i) Most text analysis have been of tightly structured short short stories. Most of them do not refer to anything beyond a social/economic background. The rationale for choosing the first story was more experiment oriented rather than student oriented. The Last Laugh is not a very tidily structured story, it is not very short, and Lawrence sets the story against a background of
Christian beliefs (the students' familiarity with Christian beliefs and a knowledge of the Bible can not always be taken for granted in the Indian context). The challenge was to see if such a story could be taught to students using a stylistic methodology.

(ii) Salvatore is a neat story, with the last part so unexpected that the reader will be left feeling either exasperated or amused. This story is consistent stylistically and there is not much action as such. It is mainly descriptive; a sort of biography of a simple fisherman. Maugham actually leads the reader up the garden path in this story. It is a masterly example of the story writer's craft. It had to be seen how the students would respond to the writer's art, and whether they could, through a stylistic analysis and discussion of the discoursal features respond to the denouement.

(iii) R.K. Narayan's story is typical of the writer's style, his apparent artlessness hiding a great deal of art. It is also a story in which there is action interspersed with description. He uses description as a sort of background to the
narration, a sort of backcloth on the stage where the action is taking place. A study of the structure and the language should make it possible for the students to see the interweave of narration and description. The story is set in South India, so the background would prove no problem to the students, unlike the Lawrence story. What would be important here would be the students' response to what the author is apparently saying – a discussion of opposing points of view.

These short stories of varying lengths and themes and styles were chosen to see whether the methodology proposed would work independently of the sort of text used, for the validity of a methodology can be established only if it operates with different types of materials.

2.7.2 The Class

Three classes of varying abilities, backgrounds and different educational streams were chosen for the experiment.

(i) The Kendriya Vidyalaya ASC Centre in Bangalore has been established by the Central
Government for the children of Government officials on transferable jobs. Preference is given to children of the defence personnel. This school has a very mixed group of students: they come from all over India, speak different languages, have different socio-linguistic backgrounds and are generally more aware of general issues in comparison to students from state run schools.

The schooling is for ten years, after which the students are expected to do a two year pre-University course. After their tenth standard, the students opt for either science, arts or commerce. Science is the most popular area among the students because it offers better opportunities by way of jobs and specialization. So the best students usually join the science group.

Class XI was chosen for teaching 'The Last Laugh'. Though they were not at the undergraduate level, their linguistic competence was judged to be equal to that of undergraduate students in colleges, as these students were of the science group.
(ii) The other group chosen to do the same short story with was another science group in a First Grade college. The students, all girls, had finished their pre-University course and were now doing the first year of their science graduation course, with Physics, Chemistry and Maths as the subjects. All subjects were taught in English. In addition to these subjects, they also had English classes, where some literary texts were being taught.

The students of this class belonged in the main to the city of Bangalore. There was not that mix of students from all over India which was to be found in the school. Some of them were from regional medium schools, others from English medium schools. The college, N.M.K.R.V. College is one of the better known educational institutes in the city with committed teachers and a good academic environment. It was to be seen how these science students would respond to the short story

The Last Laugh.

(iii) Salvatore was tried out in a Home Science college for girls: Smt. V.H.D. Central Institute of Home Science. The class which was
selected was the 1 yr. B.Sc. (Textile Design). Students doing these courses generally map out their careers clearly, for unlike a general degree in science, the choices here are limited. This class too had English as one of the subjects and a few literary texts were taught to the students.

It was decided to do *Salvatore* with this group of students who had not been exposed to much English Literature. It was to be seen if they could understand and respond to the writer's craft.

(iv) R.K. Narayan's *The Blind Dog* was taught at the Government Arts and Science College. The other two colleges, though under the state government rules with regard to syllabus and recruitment of teachers and admission of students, retain a degree of autonomy. The government colleges on the other hand, are run directly by the government. The students who were taught were of I year B.A. Unlike the other two colleges, the students of this college had done their schooling and very often the pre-University degree, in the regional medium (here, the majority of them were speakers of Kannada, the state language). Their
exposure to English was expected to be rather poor. Most students were not very familiar with English newspapers or magazines as most of their reading was in Kannada (or some other language of South India). As there is adequate literature in the regional languages the students did not feel the need to go to English language texts, either literary or non-literary.

These students too had English as a subject and were expected to do literary texts. The Blind Dog was chosen for this class as it would reduce the problem of background, since Narayan's stories are set in South India. This was important because only a limited number of periods were available for teaching the text. Yet within the time available, it was to be seen whether a stylistic approach would work.

2.8 TEXT I

Given below is the text of 'The Last Laugh' and the teacher's analysis.
Section 1

(NIGHT)

There was a little snow on the ground, and the church clock had just struck midnight. Hampstead in the night of winter for once was looking pretty, with clean white earth and lamps for moon, and dark sky above the lamps.

A confused little sound of voices, a gleam of hidden yellow light. And then the garden door of a tall, dark Georgian house suddenly opened, and three people confusedly emerged. A girl in a dark blue coat and fur turban, very erect: a fellow with little dispatch-case, slouching; a thin man with a red beard, bareheaded, peering out of the gateway down the hill that swung in a curve downward towards London.

Section 2

'Look at it! A new world!' cried the man in the beard, ironically, as he stood on the step and peered out.

'No, Lorenzo! It's only whitewash!' cried the young man in the overcoat. His voice was handsome, resonant, plangent, with a weary sardonic touch. As he turned back his face was dark in shadow.

The girl with the erect, alert head, like a bird, turned back to the two men.

'What was that?' she asked, in her quick, quiet voice.

'Lorenzo says it's a new world. I say it's only whitewash,' cried the man in the street.

She stood still and lifted her woolly, gloved finger. She was deaf and was taking it in.
Yes, she had got it. She gave a quick, chuckling laugh, glanced at the man in the bowler hat, then back at the man in the stucco gateway, who was grinning like a satyr and waving goodbye.

'Good-bye, Lorenzo!' came the resonant, weary cry of the man in the bowler hat.

'Goodbye!' came the sharp, night-bird call of the girl.

The green gate slammed, then the inner door. The two were alone in the street, save for the policeman at the corner. The road curved steeply downhill.

'You'd better mind how you step!' shouted the man in the bowler hat, leaning near the erect, sharp girl, and slouching in his walk. She paused a moment, to make sure what he had said.

'Don't mind me. I'm quite all right. Mind yourself!' she said quickly. At that very moment he gave a wild lurch on the slippery snow, but managed to save himself from falling. She watched him, on tiptoes of alertness. His bowler hat bounced away in the thin snow. They were under a lamp near the curve. As he ducked for his hat he showed a bald spot, just like a tonsure, among his dark, thin, rather curly hair. And when he looked up at her, with his thick black brows sardonically arched, and his rather hooked nose self-derisive, jamming his hat on again, he seemed like a satanic young priest. His face had beautiful lines, like a faun, and a doubtful martyred expression. A sort of faun on the Cross, with all the malice of the complication.

'Did you hurt yourself?' she asked in her quick, cool, unemotional way.

'No!' he shouted derisively.

'Give me your machine. won't you?' she said, holding out her woolly hand. 'I believe I'm safer.' 'Do you want it?' he shouted.

'Yes, I'm sure I'm safer.'
He handed her the little brown dispatch-case, which was really a Marconi listening machine for her deafness. She marched erect as ever. He shoved his hands deep in his overcoat pockets and slouched along beside her, as if he wouldn't make his legs firm. The road curved down in front of them, clean and pale with snow under the lamps. A motor car came churning up. A few dark figures slipped away into the dark recesses of the houses, like fishes among rocks above a sea-bed of white sand. On the left was a tuft of trees sloping upwards into the dark.

Section. 3

He kept looking around, pushing out his finely shaped chin and his hooked nose as if he were listening for something. He could still hear the motor-car climbing on to the Heath. Below was a yellow, foul-smelling glare of the Hampstead Tube station. On the right the trees.

The girl with her alert pink-and-white face, looked at him sharply, inquisitively. She had an odd nymph-like inquisitiveness, sometimes like a bird, sometimes like a squirrel, sometimes like a rabbit: never quite like a woman. At last he stood still, as if he would go no further. There was a curious baffled, grin on his, smooth cream-coloured face.

'James,' he said loudly to her, leaning towards her ear. 'Do you hear somebody laughing?'

'Laughing?' she retorted quickly. 'Who's laughing?'

'I don't know. Somebody!' he shouted, showing his teeth at her in a very odd way.

'No, I hear nobody,' she announced.

'But it's most extraordinary!' he cried, his voice slurring up and down. 'Put on your machine.'
'Put it on?' she retorted. 'What for?'
'To see if you can hear it,' he cried.
'Hear what?'
'The laughing. Somebody laughing. It's most extraordinary.'

She gave her odd little chuckle and handed him her machine. He held it while she opened the lid and attached the wires, putting the band over her head and the receivers at her ears, like a wireless operator. Crumbs of snow fell down the cold darkness. She switched on: little yellow lights in the glass tubes shone in the machine. She was connected, she was listening. He stood with his head ducked, his hands shoved down in his overcoat pockets.

Section. 4

Suddenly he lifted his face and gave the weirdest, slightly neighing laugh, uncovering his strong spaced teeth and arching his black brows, and watching her with queer, gleaming goat-like eyes.

She seemed a little dismayed.

'There!' he said. 'Didn't you hear it?'

'I heard you!' she said, in a tone which conveyed that that was enough.

'But didn't you hear it?' he cried, unfurling his lips oddly again.

'No!' she said.

He looked at her vindictively, and stood again with ducked head. She remained erect, her fur hat in her hand, her fine bobbed hair banded with the machine-band and catching crumbs of snow, her odd bright-eyed, deaf nymph's face lifted with blank listening.
'There!' he cried, suddenly jerking up his gleaming face. 'You mean to tell me you can't.....' He was looking at her almost diabolically. But something else was too strong for him. His face wreathed with a startling, peculiar smile, seeming to gleam, and suddenly the most extraordinary laugh came bursting out of him, like an animal laughing. It was a strange, neighing sound, amazing in her ears. She was startled and switched her machine quieter.

Section. 5

A large form loomed up: a tall, clean-shaven young policeman.

'A radio?' he asked laconically.

'No, it's my machine. I'm deaf!' said Miss James quickly and distinctly. She was not the daughter of a peer for nothing.

The man in the bowler hat lifted his face and glared at the fresh-faced young policeman with a peculiar white glare in his eyes.

'Look here!' he said distinctly. 'Did you hear someone laughing?'

'Laughing? I heard you, sir.'

'No, not me.' He gave an impatient jerk of his arm, and lifted his face again. His smooth, creamy face seemed to gleam, there were subtle curves of derisive triumph in all its lines. He was careful not to look directly at the young policeman. 'The most extraordinary laughter I ever heard,' he added, and the same touch of derisive exultation sounded in his tones.

The policeman looked down at him cogitatively.

'It's perfectly all right,' said Miss James coolly. 'He's not drunk. He just hears something that we don't hear.'
'Drunk!' echoed the man in the bowler hat, in profoundly amused derision. 'If I were merely drunk ........' And off he went again in the wild neighing animal laughter, while his averted face seemed to flash.

At the sound of the laughter something roused in the blood of the girl and of the policeman. They stood nearer to one another, so that their sleeves touched and they looked wonderingly across at the man in the bowler hat. He lifted his black brows at them.

'Do you mean to say you heard nothing?' he asked.

'Only you,' said Miss James.

'Only you, sir!' echoed the policeman.

'What was it like?' asked Miss James.

'Ask me to describe it!' retorted the young man in extreme contempt. 'It's the most marvellous sound in the world.'

And truly he seemed wrapped up in a new mystery.

'Where does it come from?' asked Miss James, very practical.

'Apparently,' he answered in contempt, 'from over there.' And he pointed to the trees and bushes inside the railings over the road.

'Well, let's go and see!' she said. 'I can carry my machine and go on listening.'

Section. 6

The man seemed relieved to get rid of the burden. He shoved his hands in his pockets again and sloped off across the road. The policeman, a queer look flickering on his fresh young face, put his hand around the girl's arm carefully and subtly, to help her. She did not lean at all on the support of the big hand, but she was
interested, so she did not resent it. Having held herself all her life intensely aloof from physical contact, and never having let any man touch her, she now, with a certain nymph-like voluptuousness, allowed the large hand of the young policeman to support her as they followed the quick wolf-like figure of the other man across the road uphill. And she could feel the presence of the young policeman, through all the thickness of his dark blue uniform, as something young and alert and bright.

When they came up to the man in the bowler hat, he was standing with his head ducked, his ears pricked, listening beside the iron rail inside which grew big black holly-trees tufted with snow, and old, ribbed, silent English elms.

The policeman and the girl stood waiting. She was peering into the bushes with the sharp eyes of a deaf nymph, deaf to the world's noises. The man in the bowler hat listened intensely. A lorry rolled downhill, making the earth tremble.

'There!' cried the girl, as the lorry rumbled darkly past. And she glanced round with flashing eyes at her policeman, her fresh soft face gleaming with startled life. She glanced straight into the puzzled, amused eyes of the young policeman. He was just enjoying himself.

'Don't you see?' she said, rather imperiously.

'What is it, Miss?' answered the policeman.

'I mustn't point,' she said. 'Look where I look.'

And she looked away with brilliant eyes into the dark holly bushes. She must see something, for she smiled faintly, with subtle satisfaction, and she tossed her erect head in all the pride of vindication. The policeman looked at her instead of into the bushes. There was a certain brilliance of triumph and vindication in all the poise of her slim body.
'I always knew I should see him,' she said triumphantly to herself.

'Whom do you see?' shouted the man in the bowler hat.

'Don't you see him too?' she asked turning round her soft, arch, nymph-like face anxiously. She was anxious for the little man to see.

'No, I see nothing. What do you see, James?' cried the man in the bowler hat, insisting.

'A man.'

'Where?'

'There. Among the holly bushes.'

'Is he there now?'

'No! He's gone.'

'What sort of a man?'

'I don't know.'

'What did he look like?'

'I can't tell you.'

But at that instant the man in the bowler hat turned suddenly, and the arch, triumphant look flew to his face.

'Why, he must be there!' he cried, pointing up the grove. 'Don't you hear him laughing? He must be behind those trees.'

And his voice with curious delight, broke into a laugh again, as he stood and stamped his feet on the snow, and danced to his own laughter, ducking his head. Then he turned away and ran swiftly up the avenue lined with old trees.
He slowed down as a door at the end of a garden path, white with untouched snow. A door suddenly opened, and a woman in a long fringed black shawl stood in the light. She peered out into the night. Then she came down to the low garden gate. Crumbs of snow still fell. She had dark hair and a tall dark comb.

'Did you knock at my door?' she asked of the man in the bowler hat.

'I? No!'

'Somebody knocked at my door.'

'Did they? Are you sure? They can't have done. There are no footmarks in the snow.'

'Nor are there!' she said. 'But somebody knocked and called something.'

'That's very curious,' said the man. 'Were you expecting someone?'

'No. Not exactly expecting any one. Except that one is always expecting somebody, you know.' In the dimness of the snow-lit night he could see her making big, dark eyes at him.

'Was it some one laughing?' he said.

'No. It was no one laughing, exactly. Some one knocked, and I ran to open, hoping as one always hopes, you know...' 'What?'

'Oh — that something wonderful is going to happen.'

He was standing close to the low gate. She stood on the opposite side. Her hair was dark, her face seemed dusky, as she looked up at him with her dark meaningful eyes.

'Did you wish someone would come?' he asked.

'Very much,' she replied, in her plangent
Jewish voice. She must be a Jewess.

'No matter who?' he said, laughing.

'So long as it was a man I could like,' she said in a low, meaningful, falsely shy voice.

'Really!' he said. 'Perhaps after all it was I who knocked - without knowing.'

'I think it was,' she said. 'It must have been.'

'Shall I come in?' he asked, putting his hand on the little gate.

'Don't you think you'd better?' she replied.

He bent down, unlatching the gate. As he did so the woman in the black shawl turned, and, glancing over her shoulder, hurried back to the house, walking unevenly in the snow, on her high-heeled shoes. The man hurried after her like a hound to catch up.

Meanwhile the girl and the policeman had come up. The girl stood still when she saw the man in the bowler hat going up the garden walk after the woman in the black shawl with the fringe.

'Is he going in?' she asked quickly.

'Looks like it, doesn't it?' said the policeman.

'Does he know that woman?'

'I can't say. I should say he soon will,' replied the policeman.

'But who is she?'

'I couldn't say who she is.'

The two dark confused figures entered the lighted doorway, then the door closed on them.
''He's gone,'' said the girl outside on the snow. She hastily began to pull off the band of her telephone-receiver, and switched off her machine. The tubes of secret light disappeared, she packed up the little leather case. Then, pulling on her soft fur cap, she stood once more ready.

The slightly martial look which her long, dark-blue, military-seeming coat gave her was intensified, while the slightly anxious, bewildered look of her face had gone. She seemed to stretch herself, to stretch her limbs free. And the inert look had left her full soft cheeks. Her cheeks were alive with the glimmer of pride and a new dangerous surety.

She looked quickly at the tall young policeman. He was clean-shaven, fresh-faced, smiling oddly under his helmet, waiting in subtle patience a few yards away. She saw that he was a decent young man, one of the waiting sort.

The second of ancient fear was followed at once in her by a blithe, unaccustomed sense of power.

''Well!'' she said. ''I should say it's no use waiting.''' She spoke decisively.

''You don't have to wait for him, do you?'' asked the policeman.

''Not at all. He's much better where he is.'' She laughed an odd, brief laugh. Then glancing over her shoulder, she set off down the hill, carrying her little case. Her feet felt light, her legs felt long and strong. She glanced over her shoulder again. The young policeman was following her. And she laughed to herself. Her limbs felt so lithe and strong, if she wished she could easily run faster than he. If she wished she could easily kill him, even with her hands.

So it seemed to her. But why kill him? She was a decent young fellow. She had in front of
her eyes the dark face among the holly bushes, with the brilliant, mocking eyes. Her breast felt full of power, and her legs felt long and strong and wild. She was surprised herself at the strong, bright, throbbing sensation beneath her breasts, a sensation of triumph and of rosy anger. Her hands felt keen on her wrists. She who had always declared she had not a muscle in her body! Even now, it was not muscle, it was a sort of flame.

Suddenly it began to snow heavily, with fierce frozen puffs of wind. The snow was small, in frozen grains, and hit sharp on her face. It seemed to whirl round her as if she herself were whirling in a cloud. But she did not mind. There was a flame in her, her limbs felt flamey and strong, amid the whirl.

And the whirling, snowy air seemed full of presences, full of strange unheard voices. She was used to the sensation of noises taking place which she could not hear. This sensation became very strong. She felt something was happening in the wild air.

The London air was no longer heavy and clammy, saturated with ghosts of the unwilling dead. A new, clean tempest swept down from the pole, and there were noises.

Voices were calling. In spite of her deafness, she could hear someone, several voices, calling and whistling as if many people were hallooing through the air:

He's come back! Aha! He's come back!

There was a wild, whistling, jubilant sound of voices in the storm of snow. Then obscured lightning winked through the snow in the air.

'Is that thunder and lightning?' she asked of the young policeman, as she stood still, waiting for his form to emerge through the veil of whirling snow.

'Seems like it to me,' he said.
And at that very moment the lightning blinked again; and the dark, laughing face was near her face, it almost touched her cheek.

She started back, but a flame of delight went over her.

'There!' she said. 'Did you see that?'

'It lightened,' said the policeman.

She was looking at him almost angrily. But then the clean, fresh animal look of his skin, and the tame animal look in his frightened eyes amused her, she laughed her low, triumphant laugh. He was obviously afraid, like a frightened dog that sees something uncanny.

The storm suddenly whistled louder, more violently, and, with a strange noise like castanets, she seemed to hear voices clapping and crying.

'He is here! He's come back,'

She nodded her head gravely.

The policeman and she moved on side by side. She lived alone in a little stucco house in a side street down the hill. There was a church and a grove of trees and then the little old row of houses. The wind blew fiercely, thick with snow. Now and again a taxi went by, with its lights showing weirdly. But the world seemed empty, uninhabited save by snow and voices.

As the girl and the policeman turned past the grove of trees near the church, a great whirl of wind and snow made them stand still, and in the wild confusion they heard a whirling of sharp, delighted voices, something like seagulls crying:

'He's here! He's here!'

'Well, I'm jolly glad he's back,' said the girl calmly.
'What's that?' said the nervous policeman, hovering near the girl.

The wind let them move forward. As they passed along the railing it seemed to them the doors of the church were open, and the windows were out, and the snow and the voices were blowing in a wild career all through the church.

'How extraordinary that they left the Church open!' said the girl.

The policeman stood still. He could not reply.

And as they stood they listened to the wind and the church full of whirling voices all calling confusedly.

'Now I hear the laughing,' she said suddenly.

It came from the church: a sound of low, subtle, endless laughter, a strange, naked sound.

'Now I hear it!' she said

But the policeman did not speak. He stood cowed, with his tail between his legs, listening to the strange noises in the Church.

The wind must have blown out one of the windows, for they could see the snow whirling in volleys through the black gap, and whirling inside the church like a dim light. There came a sudden crash, followed by a burst of chuckling, naked laughter. The snow seemed to make a queer light inside the building, like ghosts moving, big and tall.

There was more laughter, and a tearing sound. On the wind, pieces of paper, leaves of books, came whirling among the snow through the dark window. Then a white thing, soaring like a crazy bird, rose up on the wind as if it had wings, and lodged on a black tree outside, struggling. It was the altar-cloth.

There came a bit of gay, trilling music. The
wind was running over the organ-pipes like pan-pipes, quickly up and down. Snatches of wild, gay, trilling music and bursts of the naked low laughter.

'Really!' said the girl. 'This is most extraordinary. Do you hear the music and the people laughing?'

'Yes, I hear somebody on the organ!' said the policeman.

'And do you get the puff of warm wind smelling of spring? Almond blossom, that's what it is! A most marvellous scent of almond blossoms. Isn't it an extraordinary thing!'

She went on triumphantly past the church, and came to the row of little old houses. She entered her own gate in the little railed entrance.

'Here I am!' she said finally. 'I'm home now. Thank you very much for coming with me.'

She looked at the young policeman. His whole body was white as a wall with snow, and in the vague light of the arc-lamp from the street his face was humble and frightened.

'Can I come in and warm myself a bit?' he asked humbly. She knew it was fear rather than cold that froze him. He was in mortal fear.

'Well!' she said, 'Stay down in the sitting-room if you like. But don't come upstairs, because I am alone in the house. You can make up the fire in the sitting-room, and you can go when you are warm.'

She left him on the big, low couch before the fire, his face bluish and blank with fear. He rolled his blue eyes after her as she left the room. But she went up to her bedroom, and fastened her door.
Section. 9

(DAY)

In the morning she was in her studio upstairs in her little house, looking at her own paintings and laughing to herself. Her canaries were talking and shrilly whistling in the sunshine that followed the storm. The cold snow outside was still clean, and the white glare in the air gave the effect of much stronger sunshine that actually existed.

She was looking at her own paintings, and chuckling to herself over their comicalness. Suddenly they struck her as absolutely absurd. She quite enjoyed looking at them, they seemed to her so grotesque. Especially her self-portrait, with its nice brown hair and its slightly opened rabbit-mouth and its baffled, uncertain rabbit eyes. She looked at the painted face and laughed in a long, rippling laugh, till the yellow canaries like faced daffodils almost went mad in an effort to sing louder. The girl's long, rippling laugh sounded through the house uncannily.

The housekeeper, a rather sad-faced young woman of a superior sort—nearly all people in England are of the superior sort, superiority being an English ailment—came in with an inquiring and rather disapproving look.

'Did you call, Miss James?' she asked loudly.

'No. No, I didn't call. Don't shout, I can hear quite well,' replied the girl.

The housekeeper looked at her again.

'You knew there was a young man in the sitting-room?' she said.

'No. Really!' cried the girl. 'What, the young policeman? I'd forgotten all about him. He came in the storm to warm himself. Hasn't he gone?'
'No, Miss James'.

'How extraordinary of him! What time is it? Quarter to nine! Why didn't he go when he was warm? I must go and see him, I suppose.'

'He says he's lame,' said the housekeeper censoriously and loudly.

'Lame! That's extraordinary. He certainly wasn't last night. But don't shout. I can hear quite well.'

'Is Mr. Marchbanks coming in to breakfast, Miss James?' said the housekeeper, more and more censorious.

'I couldn't say. But I'll come down as soon as mine is ready. I'll be down in a minute, anyhow, to see the policeman. Extraordinary that he is still here.'

She sat down before her window, in the sun, to think awhile. She could see the snow outside, the bare, purplish trees. The air all seemed rare and different. Suddenly the world had become quite different: as if some skin or integument had broken, as if the old, mouldering London sky had crackled and rolled back, like an old skin, shrivelled, leaving an absolutely new blue heaven.

'It really is extraordinary!' she said to herself. 'I certainly saw that man's face. What a wonderful face it was! I shall never forget it. Such laughter! He laughs longest who laughs last. He certainly will have the last laugh. I like him for that: he will laugh last. Must be some one really extraordinary! How very nice to be the one to laugh last. He certainly will. What a wonderful being! I suppose I must call him a being. He's not a person exactly.

'But how wonderful of him to come back and alter all the world immediately! Isn't that extraordinary, I wonder if he'll have altered Marchbanks. Of course Marchbanks never saw him. But he heard him. Wouldn't that do as well, I
She went off into a muse about Marchbanks. She and he were such friends. They had been friends like that for almost two years. Never lovers. Never that at all. But friends.

And after all, she had been in love with him: in her head. This seemed now so funny to her: that she had been, in her head, so much in love with him. After all, life was too absurd.

Because now she saw herself and him as such a funny pair. He so funnily taking life terribly seriously, especially his own life. And she so ridiculously determined to save him from himself. Oh, how absurd! Determined to save him from himself, and wildly in love with him in the effort. The determination to save him from himself.

'Absurd! Absurd! Absurd! Since she had seen the man laughing among the holly-bushes—such extraordinary, wonderful laughter—she had seen her own ridiculousness. Really, what fantastic silliness, saving a man from himself! Saving anybody. What fantastic silliness! How much more amusing and lively to let a man go to perdition in his own way. Perdition was more amusing than salvation any how, and a much better place for most men to go to.

She had never been in love with any man, and only spuriously in love with Marchbanks. She saw it quite plainly now. After all, what nonsense it all was, this being-in-love business. Thank goodness she had never made the humiliating mistake.

No, the man among the holly-bushes had made her see it all so plainly: the ridiculousness of being in love, the infra dig, business of chasing a man or being chased by a man.

'Is love really so absurd and infra dig?' She said aloud to herself.

'Why, of course!' came a deep, laughing voice.
She started round, but nobody was to be seen.

'I expect it's that man again!' she said to herself. 'It really is remarkable, you know. I consider it's a remarkable thing that I never really wanted a man, any man. And there I am over thirty. It is curious. Whether it's something wrong with me, or right with me, I can't say. I don't know till I've proved it. But I believe, if that man kept on laughing something would happen to me.'

She smelt the curious smell of almond blossom in the room, and heard the distant laugh again.

'I do wonder why Marchbanks went with that woman last night—that Jewish-looking woman. Whatever could he want of her? or she him? So strange, as if they both had made up their minds to something! How extraordinarily puzzling life is! So messy, it all seems.

'Why does nobody ever laugh in life like that man? He did seem so wonderful. So scornful! And so proud! And so real! With those laughing, scornful, amazing eyes, just laughing and disappearing again. I can't imagine him chasing a Jewish-looking woman. Or chasing any woman, thank goodness. It's all so messy. My policeman would be messy if one would let him: like a dog. I do dislike dogs, really I do. And men do seem so doggy!'

But even while she mused, she began to laugh again to herself with a long, low chuckle. How wonderful of that man to come and laugh like that and make the sky crack and shrivel like an old skin! Wasn't he wonderful! Wouldn't it be wonderful if he just touched her. Even touched her. She felt, if he touched her, she herself would emerge new and tender out of an old, hard skin. She was gazing abstractedly out of the window.

'There he comes, just now,' she said abruptly. Because she meant Marchbanks, not the laughing man.
There he came, his hands still shoved down in his overcoat pockets, his head still rather furtively ducked, in the bowler hat, and his legs still rather shambling. He came hurrying across the road, not looking up, deep in thought, no doubt. Thinking profoundly, with agonies of agitation, no doubt about his last night's experience. It made her laugh.

She, watching from the window above, burst into a long laugh, and the canaries went off their heads again.

He was in the hall below. His resonant voice was calling, rather imperiously:

'James! Are you coming down?'

'No,' she called, 'You come up.'

He came up two at a time, as if his feet were a bit savage with the stairs for obstructing him.

In the doorway he stood staring at her with a vacant sardonic look, his grey eyes moving with a queer light. And she looked back at him with a curious, rather haughty carelessness.

'Don't you want your breakfast?' she asked. It was his custom to come and take breakfast with her each morning. 'No,' he answered loudly. 'I went to a tea-shop'.

'Don't shout,' she said. 'I can hear you quite well.'

He looked at her with mockery and a touch of malice.

'I believe you always could,' he said, still loudly.

'Well, anyway, I can now, so you needn't shout,' she replied.

And again his grey eyes, with the queer, grey phosphorescent gleam in them, lingered malignantly
on her face.

'Don't look at me,' she said calmly. 'I know all about everything.'

He burst into a pouf of malicious laughter.

'Who taught you— the policeman?' he cried.

'Oh, by the way, he must be downstairs! No, he was only incidental. So, I suppose, was the woman in the shawl. Did you stay all night?'

'Not entirely. I came away before dawn. What did you do?'

'Don't shout. I came home long, before dawn'. And she seemed to hear the long low laughter.

'Why, what's the matter!' he said curiously. 'What have you been doing?'

'I don't quite know. Why - are you going to call me to account?'

'Did you hear that laughing?'

'Oh, yes. And many more things. And saw things too.'

'Have you seen the paper?'

'No. Don't shout, I can hear.'

'There's been a great storm, blew out the windows and doors of the church outside here, and pretty well wrecked the place.'

'I saw it. A leaf of the church Bible blew right in my face: from the Book of Job— ' She gave a low laugh.

'But what else did you see?' he cried loudly.

'I saw him.'

'Who?'
'Ah, that I can't say'.

'But what was he like?'

'That I can't tell you. I don't really know'.

'But you must know. Did your policeman see him too?'

'No, I don't suppose he did. My policeman!' And she went off into a long ripple of laughter. 'He is by no means mine. But I must go downstairs and see him.'

'It has certainly made you very strange,' Marchbanks said. 'You've got no soul, you know.'

'Oh, thank goodness for that!' she cried. 'My policeman has one, I'm sure. My policeman!' And she went off again into a long peal of laughter, the cannaries pealing shrill accompaniment.

'What's the matter with you?' he said

'Having no soul. I never had one really. It was always fobbed off on me. Soul was the only thing there was between you and me. Thank goodness it's gone. Haven't you lost yours? The one that seemed to worry you, like a decayed tooth?'

'But what are you talking about?' he cried.

'I don't know,' she said. 'It's all so extraordinary. But look here, I must go down and see my policeman. He's downstairs in the sitting-room. You'd better come with me.'

They went down together. The policeman, in his waist coat and shirt-sleeves, was lying on the sofa, with a very long face.

'Look here!' said Miss James to him. 'Is it true you're lame?'
'It is true. That's why I'm here. I can't walk,' said the fair-haired young man as tears came to his eyes.

'But how did it happen? You weren't lame last night,' she said.

'I don't know how it happened— but when I woke up and tried to stand up. I couldn't do it.' The tears ran down his distressed face.

'How very extraordinary!' She said, 'What can we do about it?'

'Which foot is it?' asked Marchbanks. 'Let us have a look at it.'

'I don't like to,' said the poor devil.

'You'd better,' said Miss James.

He slowly pulled off his stocking, and showed his white left foot curiously clubbed, like the weird paw of some animal, when he looked at it himself, he sobbed.

And as he sobbed, the girl heard again the low, exulting laughter. But she paid no heed to it, gazing curiously at the weeping young policeman.

'Does it hurt?' she asked.

'It does if I try to walk on it,' wept the young man.

'I'll tell you what,' she said. 'We'll telephone for a doctor, and he can take you home in a taxi.'

The young fellow shamefacedly wiped his eyes.

'But have you no idea how it happened?' asked Marchbanks anxiously.

'I haven't myself,' said the young fellow.

At that moment the girl heard the low,
eternal laugh right in her ear. She started, but could see nothing.

She started round again as Marchbanks gave a strange, yelping cry, like a shot animal. His white face was drawn, distorted in a curious grin, that was chiefly agony but partly wild recognition. He was staring with fixed eyes at something. And in the rolling agony of his eyes was the horrible grin of a man who realizes he has made a final, and this time fatal fool of himself. 'Why,' he yelped in a high voice. 'I knew it was he!' And with a queer shuddering laugh he pitched forward on the carpet and lay writhing for a moment on the floor. Then he lay still, in a weird, distorted position, like a man struck by lightning.

Miss James stared with round, staring brown eyes. 'Is he dead?' she asked quickly.

The young policeman was trembling so that he could hardly speak. She could hear his teeth chattering.

'Seems like it,' he stammered.

There was a faint smell of almond blossom in the air.

2.8.1 Analysis
(i) Structure

The content of the story could be paraphrased in the following ways:

(Three characters are introduced, but only two are focussed on)

There is a man and a girl.

There is some mysterious happening (laugh)
The man is affected, but the girl is not.
The next character, a policeman is introduced.
The girl is now affected by the mysterious laugh.
The man dies.
The policeman is badly affected.
The girl seems apparently all right.

The text follows the same chronological sequence of episodes. It is basically divided into two parts: night and day.

Night: the girl walks home with the policeman as escort, the man goes to a Jewess.

Day: The Man comes to the girl's house.
The Man dies.
The Policeman becomes lame.

(ii) Linguistic and Stylistic features:
1) This story is dominated by 'integrative' functions (Chatman: 1969:5). Therefore, there is extensive use of the copula (there are five sentences with the verb 'be' in the first part of about 300 words: There was little snow on the ground; Hampstead .... was looking pretty). This use of the copula occurs throughout the story. Another characteristic is the use of the verbless sentence: e.g.
'A confused little sound of voices, a gleam of hidden yellow light'; 'A girl in a dark blue coat and fur turban, very erect: a fellow with a little dispatch-case, slouching: a thin man with a red beard, bareheaded, peering out of the gateway down the hill that swung in a curve downwards towards London'; 'Especially her self-portrait, with its nice brown hair and its slightly opened rabbit-mouth and its baffled, uncertain rabbit eyes'.

2) The number of adjectives and adjectival phrases used is large. This is understandable, as the sentences with 'be' are mainly sentences with subject complements. E.g.

'His voice was handsome, resonant, plangent...' 'His face was dark in shadow' 'She was deaf' 'On the left was a tuft of trees' 'It was a strange neighing sound'.

3) Similies abound in this story. This becomes noticeable when lexical items are considered. Vocabulary of the non-human (or -human) predominates. Only one simile is used where the man in the bowler hat is likened to a young Satanic priest.

'As he ducked for his hat he showed a bald spot, just like a tonsure...... When he looked up at her again he seemed like a satanic young priest'.

Otherwise all adjectives relate to animals and the sounds they make: e.g.
'Head like a bird', 'like fishes among rocks', 'like an animal laughing', 'hastening like a hound to catch up'.

The other category of lexical items belongs to the -human and -animal but +mythical creatures like fauns, satyrs and nymphs.

4) Most of the verbal exchanges are short, and the effect of these exchanges is almost staccato. The introductory verbs and descriptive phrases, and adverbials, however, tell us a lot about the characters.

'She said calmly', 'He asked humbly', 'She said in a low, meaningful, falsely shy voice'.

(iii) Features of characterization:

The delineation of characters is through the external focalizer for the greater part. The omniscient narrator is in charge. Except for the part where the girl muses and the apersonal 'she' is used. She becomes the internal focalizer.

She went off into a muse about Marchbanks. She and he were such friends.................

And after all, she had been in love with him; in her head. This seemed now so funny to her; that she had been, in her head, so much in love with him. ......

Absurd! Absurd! Absurd! Since she had seen the man laughing among the holly-bushes - such extraordinary, wonderful laughter - she had seen her own
ridiculousness. Really, what fantastic silliness. ...........

This 'she' could perhaps be changed to 'I' with little loss to the narrative value.

'They (we) were such friends. ' ' She (I) had been in love with him: in her (my) head'

The characters are mostly developed through direct definition, especially the use of the modifiers: 'poor devil' and 'decent young man' about the policeman, etc.

2.8.2 Interpretation:

The main aim of the writer here is to build up an atmosphere where the conflict between 'soul' vs 'non-soul' can be highlighted. It is based very much on Christian values, therefore the time of the story (winter - Christmas), the imagery (holly bushes, church and altar cloth etc.) and the specific use of animal imagery and figures of Greek myths (fauns, satyrs etc) predomin ate. There is an allusion to the worship of 'false gods' like Pan. All these contribute to a specific effect.

The question of who laughs is quite evident from the numerous clues in the story; but Lawrence
leaves the meaning of the title ambiguous 'Who has the last laugh? Satan? Forces of good? or something else?'

The students who are generally not familiar with Biblical values and ideas, may find it slightly difficult to understand the concepts implied in the short story. Explanation of Biblical allusions may be required. If the piece were in a prescribed textbook, this aspect would be taken care of in the glossary or 'notes' provided.

2.8.3 Lesson 1

Std. XI, Kendriya Vidyalaya ASC Centre, Bangalore. Three 40 minute periods.

Period 1.

Before Reading

The students were given the title of the story and asked to make guesses about what it could be about. The guesses were as follows:

T : What would you expect a piece which was titled 'The Last Laugh' to deal with? What do you think it will deal with?
S : Tragedy.
T : Tragedy? Yes. Anything else? Any answer..... Yes, what is it?
During the Reading

Only the first two paragraphs were skimmed quickly by the students. They were then asked if there were any modifications to be made in their guesses. They did not react to this. But after the protagonists were identified and the time of the day when the story takes place highlighted, they came up with guesses about how the story could develop. They guessed that it could be a murder mystery, a suspense story, even 'killer' and that something thrilling was going to happen. When asked why they felt like this, the answer was
T: Why do you say it's going to be suspenseful and....
S: Creating such atmosphere Midnight time

T: Right yes? Midnight
S: Midnight is the time people emerge from
S2: Suddenly a door and they are all confused.
T: And then Yes? No, come on. This, I mean to say
S: Writer describes the scene....and mm something strange is going to happen
T: Good. Excellent. Now could you turn.....continue reading till the end.

They were given a further section (sec 2) and most students remarked that the story was not complete. After reading the section, some guesses which they had made earlier and which were not appropriate were discarded. The only guesses they retained were: Mystery, Suspense, Murder and Revenge (with a question mark).

Stylistic Analysis

A scanning task was set, where they were asked to pick out sentences which described people and things. The teacher slipped in a bit of information about how the verb 'to be' is often used to describe. The students used this information to pick out descriptive sentences. Later they focused on adjectives. Then they were
asked to pick out other sentences which were descriptive and which used other devices like non-finite clauses. E.g. 'uncovering his strong-spaced teeth' and 'arching his black brows....' 'making big, dark eyes at him'.

These tasks helped them see why they talked about 'atmosphere' when they read the story first. They said there was 'lots of description' in the first bit of the story. They also felt it was a long story.

Written Work

The class was asked to continue the story and write about 50 - 60 words, i.e. a paragraph. Samples of the students' work are given below.

The man went to the left still slouching while the girl continued to walk straight. It started raining amidst the rain there. Came a huge sound. The sound of a girl. In the. The man ran back and reached the place where the girl had gone. The girl had hanged herself.
The car churned to a stop beside the house.

It had started snowing again. The girl drew her coat tighter around her as a coat. The door of the car opened. A fat man, dressed in a brown suit, stepped out. He handed over a piece of paper to the man with the bowler hat and got back into the car without a word.

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The bearded man continued sloo
desides the exact girl. Suddenly the little brown dispatch case falls from the girl’s hand and rolls of the slope. The bearded man offers to pick it up and walks down the slope, as he shu-bery.

shouts her name out… but all his
time… go unheard and the girl is run
down by the car… and the bearded man
sees Lorenzo’s face fading away as the
car rushes off.

Amyama

---
As the car went away darkness crept into hiding the surroundings in the room. 

The girl managed to make a few steps forward with an occasional lurch.

She with a contemptuous sneer was looking back occasionally. The man in the gun coat once again fell forward with an utterance ‘O God’ Harpenden is beautiful in winter but to walk along the road is horrible.

The car came up towards them, steadily accelerating. The driver shot the man with a Colt .45. Got out, laughing like a child. The laugh was bubbling, happy, like a baby being played with by its father. He shot the girl. The ‘dark figures’ looked on astounded.
The girl in the fur coat and the bald-headed man were walking silently in the gloom, settling over them. The surroundings presented an eerie feeling. The girl asked her dispatcher catch which in reality contained a silence filled answer. The two headed back to the house.

---

And there was silence everywhere. As both of them walked together further and aid screamed and a sudden fear ran down the man's spine, and he gave a jump. As they reached the first house they could hear something near the bush, and the girl gave off a sharp scream (screen)
Period 2

During the Reading

The story was read up to the part when the man disappears with the Jewess

Stylistic Analysis

The class had to scan the text and pick out descriptive words, i.e. adjectives. They did this competently. Since this story had many instances of compound words like 'pink-and-white face', 'nymph-like', 'goat-like', 'bright-eyed', 'long-fringed', which were also descriptive in function, the students were asked to look for such phrases with a hyphen. This task too, was done well. The class wanted to know the difference between 'vindictive' and 'vindictively'. This was explained.

Period 3

During the Reading

The reading of the short story was completed except for the last part which was withheld.

Stylistic Analysis and Interpretation

The teacher had to shift to the discoursal features of the text, i.e. the actual narration,
as the students wanted to know things about the story. They would perhaps not have had the patience to do a stylistic analysis first.

They wanted to know who laughed. Interestingly, when asked to guess who laughed, one student said that it was the author (Lawrence). They seemed to have identified the external focalizer in the story, viz the author.

The last part of the story which had not been given earlier was handed out and after the reading of this, the discussion began.

The class went about guessing how Marchbanks died. The guesses varied from murder to suicide. One student even suggested that the policeman's foot was white because cyanide had been sprinkled on it. Another suggested that a 'ghost' had killed Marchbanks.

The students were next asked to find out all the references to animals in the story, which they did competently. After this the discussion was about the difference between human beings and animals; from there, the discussion proceeded to consider the question 'who could have laughed?' Since the students were not very forthcoming, by
way of giving them a clue, the teacher asked them questions about specific lexical items like 'diabolic', 'vindictive' and 'derisive' and their connotations. One student suggested that it could be Yama (the Hindu god of Death) who was laughing.

At this point, the significance of the Church scene had to be pointed out and the reference to the Book of Job glossed. After this, the students got on to thinking about good and evil.

Personal Response

When the final question: Who had the Last laugh? was asked, part of the class felt that it was the devil, as it had taken away the girl's soul, and part of the class felt that it was the 'good' which had the last laugh, because though hurt, the policeman had not lost his soul.

The students felt the story was too long and 'slow'. They felt that there was not enough action. Many felt embarrassed at the theme of devil and god and were not very willing to discuss it further.

As a follow-up, Saki's story 'Music on the Hill' was given to the students and they were asked to read it and answer two questions:
1. How is the atmosphere of the story built up?

2. Stories are narrated from different points of view. Do you think the story is narrated from a particular point of view? Comment.

Samples from the answers received are given below:

(Not described)

(1) The story was something horrible and

(2) Savage who were the first were
dark with deep, cold, like smoke

(3) Life seemed to skitter with joy with former

(4) Some things, the buildings in

(5) The story was described as great joy,

(6) The story was full of things.

(7) The sound of old school voices for

(8) The story was described as wild anger.

(9) The sound of the boy's laughter,

(10) The story was full of horror.

(11) The story was full of despair.

(12) The story was full of his relentless passage,

(13) The story was full of coming tears.

(14) The story was full of life,

(15) The story was full of wild, lonely pathways, wireless, sounds,

(16) The story was full of the horror of the story.
It is said that "Poetry is the best word in the best order." By this definition, can be accepted with the music on the hill as a poetry in a prose poem. Here the author, through carefully chosen words, creates a rural atmosphere, depicting a typical Scottish manor house, its surroundings with a hunting ground, now extinct.

Sylvia, a city-born lady manages to bring her husband to settle down in the remote manor house at Yestrey. This sudden change from urban to rustic to her effect and the author graphically portrays the rural atmosphere.

At Yestrey, the wildness is almost savage. Through her window, she observes the sloping lawn, the neglected garden bushes, and further down, the valley. She feels immense joy to be amidst nature, but nature laps at the same ragged year of something unseen hiding behind the bushes. On one side, her city bred life on the other side the natural fear of woods and darkness.

In a casual way, the author introduces the "Pan," a pre-Christian belief, that nature is god, and the worship of nature is the worship of god. Though Sylvia's husband in
‘Saki’ undoubtedly is a master story-teller. His language is spellbinding, portraying his genius as a short story writer. This story is very typical of him.

This story is written on a British background, the picturesque counties of England being exploited by H.H. Munro to add suspense to his story.

The atmosphere of chilling suspense in this story has been built up very patiently and deliberately by the writer. In the beginning of the story the main character of the story—Mrs. Sylvia Seltoun—has been shown to be a confident lady who knows what exactly she is doing. As gradually the story progresses, her self-confidence gives way to uneasiness and ultimately horror-fying terror shatter her will power, pride and in the end herself. Mrs. Seltoun is the main character in this story around whom the plot evolves. Simple, human psychology has been used by the writer to create an unhealthy atmosphere in the story. The English county has been described very much like “There was a sombre almost savage wilderness about Yarney...” and “In its wild open sweep, there seemed a healthy linking of the joy of life with the terror of unseen things.” These lines have been added to this story purposely and carefully at the most appropriate places to create the required degree of tension on the reader’s mind. The tension in this story was further electrified by Mortimers decision of not going back to Yarney for ever which sounded very ironic as he was the one who was not interested to leave the comforts of city and live in Yarney. Within a week Mrs. Seltoun had been turned into a mental wreck from a dominant and confident housewife. What is very much striking in this story is the slow growth of confidence in Mr. Mort.
inner and his blossoming into a dominant husband from a somewhat henpecked status in which he was found at the beginning of the story. She was

benefited by some unknown force ever since she dropped the grapes in front of Paris' bronze statue and in the end she was killed while hearing a
golden laughter which is supposed to be Paris' laughter. It was somewhat foreknown that she would fall in
danger but when and how the danger would befall her was unknown to the readers. This suspense is
carried till the last word of the story.

The victorious air around her was
fragmented when she came to know that she had to spend the rest of her life in that haunting
atmosphere where she had landed herself to free her husband and barely from the clutches of her
mother-in-law.

...The story was throughout progressing
deviously and the tension was slowly building up
and it reached its height in the climax showing the
versatility of the writer unlike other thrillers where
the story reaches a dead-end somewhere in the
middle of the story and the rest of the story in
somewhat patchy. The language and the words used
have been deliberate and on purpose.
Quite a few students did not attempt the second question, and expectedly so, for focalization as a device had not been discussed in class.

2.8.3.1 Observations

In general, students hesitated at first to give their opinion, waiting for the right answer to be indicated by the teacher. Once this was not forthcoming, they became more comfortable and communicated their thoughts and feelings freely.

One thing worth noting was the fact that there was a lot of peer group activity and the answers were monitored by the students. The more outrageous answers were dealt with by the students themselves and the teacher did not have to interfere.

2.8.4 Lesson 2

BSc I year, N.M.K.R.V. College, Jayanagar, Bangalore. Three one-hour periods.

Before the Reading

The title 'The Last Laugh' was given and students were asked to make guesses about what the story could be about. Responses by the students
are given below:

T: I am going to do a short story with you. Right. A short story. If I give you a story titled ('The Last Laugh' — writes on BB)
S: The Last Laugh
T: What would, you expect the story to be about? Just guess.
S: Laughter.
S: Tragedy
S: Irony. Ironic theme.
T: Irony. Yes? If you just saw a book with a title like this 'The Last Laugh,' before even opening the pages, you'll start making some guesses—Would you not?
S: Yes.
T: This is how we choose books, sometimes the title is very catching. If it were titled 'The Last Laugh,' you said you'd expect a tragedy there. You mentioned irony. What are your other expectations? One of the Veenas?
T: Come on you should be able to guess
S: Comedy
T: There is no one correct answer. These are just-guess work. So let your imagination free. Don't get tied down wondering what the right answer is. What else?
S: Realization
T: Of what?
S: If you said something which you don't believe...you said something some person (inaudible) Then you laugh at it. And then you later on come to the realization that the person did the correct thing.
T: Yes.
S: Ignorance.
T: How do you say ignorance in 'The Last Laugh'? How would you connect this with this?
S: When you come to know about your ignorance...you laugh.
T: O.K. Any other guesses? That's all?
During the Reading

The first two paragraphs were skimmed, and the question of atmosphere was brought up. This class did not show the same felicity in connecting 'snow', 'winter', 'midnight' etc. with mystery. An analogy to the monsoon was given and only then did they make the connection.

T: And what does winter mean to you?
S: Snow. (voices talking together)
T: But to you. What does winter mean?
S: ....... (Chorus)
   Cloudy.... (Chorus) rain
T: In Bangalore, winter can mean different things. So what does winter in Bangalore mean?
S: ..... T: ..... yes. And sitting inside, cozy. Yes. And what else?
S: Eating hot things
T: Yes, eating hot things
S: Reading adventure stories.
T: And what does heavy rain mean to you? Think of it Heavy rains. A car coming in. The headlights slicing through the rain which is falling. What does that immediately remind you of?
S: Murder
   Terrible thing is going to happen
   Horror

The words which were given by the students relating to the theme were reviewed in the light of the reading and the following were retained: Mystery, Suspense, Adventure and Incident.
One student had a fresh perspective on what the story could be about:

T: ..... for a policeman. Yes, policeman standing at the street corners. Yes?
S: New world.
T: That's interesting. Why do you say that?
S: They hadn't seen a world like that ..... 

From this point onwards, the methodology for the teaching of the short story had to be slightly modified. There was, in this class, an interweave of reading, discussion of discoursal features and stylistic analysis. The steps were not as clear cut as in the other class because the students did not have the same linguistic competence. This meant that the teacher would have to give them more help in the class to do the tasks. Secondly, they were not as comfortable with the theme and content of the story as the students of KV ASC Centre. Therefore, a considerable amount of time had to be spent working out the structure of the text with the students.

Written Work & Personal Response

Without going into the stylistic analysis of the part of the story read, the teacher asked the students to continue the story as if they were the
author, using their own words. This was done because it was realised that the students would perhaps not be able to deal with the verb classes, adjectives etc. as quickly as expected. If they had to write, they would read the paragraphs with attention and then the stylistic analysis would become easier. Some samples of the students' attempts are given below:

They were very inquisitive to know more about this new world which they were experiencing for the first time and so they continued their moves to their mysterious future.

On the left were a few trees roaring due to wind. The roaring of the trees could be heard clearly because of the silence everywhere. As they moved forward, they heard the sound of the motor car again. The sound of the motor car two times made them serious and frightened.
Silence prevailed everywhere. No sound could be heard except the howling of a few stray dogs here and there. The girl entered the house with the corpse in her hand. A sort of uneasiness was felt. The policeman however kept on doing his work, walking up and down the street.

They started moving in between the tuft of trees. Suddenly, the alert girl heard a blood curdling crying, which was faint and seemed as if it was from a distance. Along with her heart beating rapidly, she moved towards that direction along with her companion. Added to this, it began to rain, and the dogs in the street started whimpering. These added to her fear, and she moved along slowly but alertly.
The man shouted “we are being followed!”

“Are you sure?” the girl asked.

The man nodded and pulled her to the side of the road, to the edge of the trees.

Suddenly the car came to a halt. It couldn’t proceed further as the snow layer was thick here and the wheels had got stuck beneath the white wash on the earth. The man inside the car stepped out and was looking for help, when he saw 2 dark figures moving behind a tree. He could hear someone struggling to breathe.
Some dark figures said the girl with a little confusing voice: "Yes," said Lorenza with a thought of question in his mind: "Whome do you think they are?" said the girl. Lorenza did not speak. They walked for some distance.

As they proceeded it started snowing. They could see some light bump at a distance. They stood under the tree & watched the snow.

They took small steps & dropped themselves towards the light.
Stylistic Analysis

The students located sentences which had the verbs 'have' and 'be', and which were basically descriptive in function. The students needed the teacher's help in the beginning. They then discussed adjectives. One student felt that the story was full of adjectives. They now saw why this was a descriptive piece.

Period 2
During the Reading

The lesson began with the reading of the story till the part where the laugh is introduced.

A scanning exercise was done next: the students were asked to pick out (or underline) words which described the laughter.

Stylistic Analysis

The next step was drawing the attention of the students to the stress on the pronoun IT in the next part of the story. The students did not display any explicit knowledge of stress patterns in English, but could see the oddness in sentences where the pronoun was stressed. Some explanation about stresses was given. Their answer to the
question: Why is IT being stressed (in the story) was: Because the laughter is extraordinary.

Narratological categories

The students read sections of the short story and a paraphrase (one line where possible) was put up on the blackboard. The teacher had to give them some help to arrive at the sentences which paraphrased sections of the text.

Next, character description, including their emotional state (the girl was scared, the policeman was happy) was done. These paraphrases were in the nature of narrative propositions. Doing this exercise helped the students give the relevant sections a second reading and also locate words and phrases which would help them construct the character through explicit definitions found in the story.

Period 3

Reading

The students read the whole story except the last bit, which was withheld. They were asked to predict the end of the story. Students expected the policeman to die because of what the
housekeeper says. They also suggested that the policeman could have become deaf, now that the girl had started hearing.

After reading the last part, they admitted that it was unexpected and that the mystery was not really solved. On being asked; How did Marchbanks die?, they guessed that he had been murdered or had committed suicide. They mentioned a supernatural agency as being the cause of death. These students, like the KV ASC Centre students, used the word 'ghost' to identify the murderer.

Stylistic Analysis

At this stage the students seemed ready to tackle the task of stylistic analysis.

They were first asked to identify similes in the text. The answers were put on the blackboard. Next the words describing the laugh were put on the blackboard along with the reaction of characters to the laugh. The final blackboard table was as follows:
like a bird  
like a satyr  
like a satanic young priest  
like a bird/rabbit/squirrel  
like an animal laughing  
like a hound  
like a frightened dog  
like saegulls  
like a dim light  
like ghosts moving  
like a crazy bird  
like a dog  
like a weird paw  
like a shot animal

man: weirdest, slightly neighing laugh; like an animal laughing; a strange neighing sound; wild neighing animal laughter.

queer shuddering laugh; (yelped in a high voice)
girl: chuckle; odd chuckle; odd brief laugh;

low rippling laughter.

baffled grin; showing his teeth in an odd way; Peculiar smile stamping his feet on the snow, danced to his laughter; Stretch her limbs free; Glimmer of pride, new dangerous surety; limbs felt flamey and strong;

The class was asked to look at the information on the blackboard and say why Lawrence had used such language. One answer was: 'animal instincts'. When asked the difference between man and animals, one student said that animals could not speak or laugh.

The notion of man having a soul and animals not having a soul had to be explained.

Personal Responses

Though the students had enjoyed the mystery part of the story, they were disappointed at the good vs evil theme. They felt that a conventional
mystery story with a ghost thrown in would have been better.

2.8.4.1 Observations

It is interesting to note that in both classes, the students shied away from the religious connotations in the story. They liked the style - the mysterious laughter, the sinister atmosphere etc., but could not reconcile it with the meaning which came through the stylistic interpretation of the story.

One wonders if this has to do with the taste of this generation of students, who do not seem to appreciate a moral or religious tone in stories, but seem to prefer something different. This raises an interesting question about the choice of stories prescribed for study, because authorities still tend to include stories with a 'moral'.

2.9 Text II

Given below is the text of 'Salvatore' and the teacher's analysis.
Section. 1

I wonder if I can do it.

I knew Salvatore first when he was a boy of fifteen with a pleasant, ugly face, a laughing mouth, and care-free eyes. He used to spend the morning lying about the beach with next to nothing on and his brown body was as thin as a rail. He was full of grace. He was in and out of the sea all the time, swimming with the clumsy, effortless stroke common to the fisher boys. Scrambling up the jagged rocks on his hard feet, for except on Sundays he never wore shoes, he would throw himself into the deep water with a cry of delight. His father was a fisherman who owned his own little vineyard and Salvatore acted as nursemaid to his two younger brothers. He shouted to them to come inshore when they ventured out too far and made them dress when it was time to climb the hot vineclad hill for the frugal midday meal.

Section. 2

But boys in those Southern parts grow apace and in a little while he was madly in love with a pretty girl who lived on the Grande Marina. She had eyes like forest pools and held herself like a daughter of the Caesars. They were affianced, but they could not marry till Salvatore had done his military service, and when he left the island which he had never left in his life before, to become a sailor in the navy of King Victor Emmanuel, he wept like a child. It was hard for one who had never been less free than the birds to be at the beck and call of others; it was harder still to live in a battleship with strangers instead of in a little white cottage among the vines; and when he was ashore, to walk in noisy, friendless cities with streets so crowded that he was frightened to cross them, when he had been used to silent paths and the mountains and the sea. I suppose it had never struck him that
Ischia, which he looked at every evening (it was like a fairy island in the sunset) to see what the weather would be like the next day, or Vesuvius, pearly in the dawn, had anything to do with him at all; but when he ceased to have them before his eyes he realized in some dim fashion that they were as much part of him as his hands and his feet. He was dreadfully homesick. But it was hardest of all to be parted from the girl he loved with all his passionate young heart. He wrote to her (in his childlike handwriting) long, ill-spelt letters in which he told her how constantly he thought of her and how much he longed to be back. He was sent here and there, to Spezzia, to Venice, to Bari, and finally to China. Here he fell ill of some mysterious ailment that kept him in hospital for months. He bore it with the mute and uncomprehending patience of a dog. When he learnt that it was a form of rheumatism that made him unfit for further service his heart exulted, for he could go home; and he did not bother, in fact he scarcely listened, when the doctors told him that he would never again be quite well. What did he care when he was going back to the little island he loved so well and the girl who was waiting for him?

Section 3

When he got into the rowing-boat that met the steamer from Naples and was rowed ashore he saw his father and mother standing on the jetty, and his two brothers, big boys now, and he waved to them. His eyes searched among the crowd that waited there, for the girl. He could not see her. There was a great deal of kissing when he jumped up the steps and they all, emotional creatures, cried a little as they exchanged greetings. He asked where the girl was. His mother told him she did not know; they had not seen her for two or three weeks; so in the evening when the moon was shining over the placid sea and the light of Naples twinkled in the distance he walked down to the Grande Marina to her house. She was sitting on the doorstep with her mother. He was a little shy because he had not seen her for so long. He asked her if she had not received the letter that he had written to her to say that he was coming
home. Yes, they had received a letter, and they had been told by another of the island boys that he would never be quite well again. The doctors talked a lot nonsense, but he knew very well that now he was home again he would recover. They were silent for a little, and then the mother nudged the girl. She did not try to soften the blow. She told him straight out, with the blunt directness of her race that she could not marry a man who would never be strong enough to work like a man. They had made up their minds, her mother and father and she, and her father would never give his consent.

Section. 4

When Salvatore went home he found that they all knew. The girl's father had been to tell them what they had decided, but they had lacked the courage to tell him themselves. He wept on his mother's bosom. He was terribly unhappy, but he did not blame the girl. A fisherman's life is hard and it needs strength and endurance. He knew very well that the girl could not afford to marry a man who might not be able to support her. His smile was very sad and his eyes had the look of a dog that has been beaten, but he did not complain, and he never said a hard word of the girl he had loved so well. Then, a few months later, when he had settled down to the common round, working in his father's vineyard and fishing, his mother told him that there was a young woman in the village who was willing to marry him. Her name was Assunta.

'She's as ugly as the devil', he said.

Section. 5

She was older than he, twenty-four or twenty-five, and had been engaged to a man who, while doing military service, had been killed in Africa. She had a little money of her own and if Salvatore married her she would buy him a boat of his own and they could take a vineyard that by a happy chance happened at that moment to be without a tenant. His mother told him that Assunta had seen him at the 'festa' and had fallen in love
with him. Salvatore smiled his sweet smile and said he would think about it. On the following Sunday, dressed in the stiff black clothes in which he looked so much less well than in the ragged shirt and trousers of everyday, he went up to High Mass at the parish church and placed himself so that he could have a good look at the young woman. When he came down again he told his mother that he was willing.

Section. 6

Well, they were married and they settled down in a tiny whitewashed house in the middle of a handsome vineyard. Salvatore was now a great big husky fellow, tall and broad, but still with that ingenuous smile and those trusting, kindly eyes that he had as a boy. He had the most beautiful manners I have ever seen in my life. Assunta was a grim-visaged female, had a good heart and she was no fool. I used to be amused by the little smile of devotion that she gave her husband when he was being very masculine and masterful; she never ceased to be touched by his gentle sweetness. But she could not bear the girl who had thrown him over, and notwithstanding Salvatore's smiling expostulations she had nothing but hard words for her. Presently children were born to them.

Section. 7

It was a hard enough life. All through the fishing season towards evening he set out in his boat with one of his brothers for the fishing ground. It was a long pull of six or seven miles, and he spent the night catching the profitable cuttle-fish. Then there was the long row back again in order to see the catch in time for it to go on the early boat to Naples. At other times he was working in his vineyard from dawn till the heat drove him to rest and then again, when it was a trifle cooler, till dusk. Often his rheumatism prevented him from doing anything at all and then he would lie about the beach, smoking cigarettes, with a pleasant word for everyone notwithstanding the pain that racked his limbs. The foreigners who came down to bathe and saw him there said that
these Italian fishermen were lazy devils.

Section. 8

Sometimes he used to bring his children down to give them a bath. They were both boys and at this time the older was three and the younger less than two. They sprawled about at the water's edge stark naked and Salvatore standing on a rock would dip them in the water. The elder one bore it with stoicism, but the baby screamed lustily. Salvatore had enormous hands, like legs of mutton, coarse and hard from constant toil, but when he bathed his children, holding them so tenderly, drying them with delicate care, upon my word they were like flowers. He would seat the naked baby on the palm of his hand and hold him up, laughing a little at his smallness, and his laugh was like the laughter of an angel. His eyes were as candid as his child's.

Section. 9

I started by saying that I wondered if I could do it and now I must tell you what it is that I have tried to do. I wanted to see whether I could hold your attention for a few pages while I drew for you the portrait of a man, just an ordinary fisherman who possessed nothing in the world except a quality which is the rarest, the most precious and the loveliest that anyone can have. Heaven only knows why he should so strangely and unexpectedly have possessed it. All I know is that it shone in him with a radiance that, if it had not been so unconscious and so humble, would have been to the common run of men hardly bearable. And in case you have not guessed what the quality was, I will tell you. Goodness, just goodness.

2.9.1 Analysis

(i) Linguistic and Stylistic features

1) The verb patterns in this story fall into two main categories:
a) description in the past: this includes both stative (of people and places) and dynamic (what they did). For example, 'his father was a fisherman', 'he was in and out of the sea', 'he was madly in love', 'she had eyes like forest pools' etc. 'His eyes searched among the crowd', 'He went up to High Mass'.

b) habits in the past: there are also many verbs describing habits in the past: 'used to' and 'would'. For example, 'He used to spend the morning lying about the beach', 'Sometimes he used to bring his children down to give them a bath', '... he would throw himself into the deep water with a cry of delight', 'He would seat the naked baby on the palm of his hand'.

There are also other past tense forms which imply habits in the past: e.g. 'Salvatore acted as nursemaid (all during the period) shouted at them when they ventured out, and made them dress.... (implies that he did this whenever they went swimming).

2) The sentence patterns are mainly N + to be + adj. or NP, which is basically descriptive. There
are also sentences with the modal 'would' and the semi-modal 'used to'. The other sentence pattern used frequently is N + V + NP, which deals basically with the active part of the narration. E.g. "He left the island" "He was dreadfully homesick" "Salvatore went home".

(ii) Discoursal features

The story is told completely from the author's point of view. There is no sentence where the characters are used to present a different point of view. It is straight reporting by the author, and from his point of view. Salvatore's change of mind regarding the marriage proposal from Assunta is reported - it is not explained. It is very much like the story of Abraham in the Bible, where the story of his taking his son Isaac to sacrifice to God is narrated, but nothing is said about his state of mind. Maugham uses the words 'happy' and 'sad', 'dreadfully' and 'madly', but in sentences/phrases which are almost clichés. 'he was madly in love', 'He was dreadfully homesick', 'He was terribly unhappy' are the types of sentences/phrases, which are often preceded by the author's comments like:
'I suppose he realized in some dim fashion .....' (when talking about his homesickness), 'But boys in those Southern parts grow apace and in a little while he was madly in love', and this gives an ironic touch to the cliches.

2.9.2 Lesson 1

I year B.Sc. students, V.H.D. Institute of Home Science, Bangalore. Two periods of 1 hour each.

Due to lack of facilities, this class could not be taped. Therefore detailed notes on the lessons were maintained by the teacher and these form the basis for the description of the response of the class to the lesson.

Period 1.

Before the Reading

On being asked what they would expect to find in a story titled 'Salvatore', which is a name, the students said that it could be the story of the character and how he overcame difficulties. It could be a crime story or even a love story.

The next point discussed was: in such
stories, are the events important or the character/s. Most students felt that the characters were important. Others felt that if the events illustrated things about the character/s, then the events too were important.

During the Reading

The first four sections were given to the students to skim. After skimming, they had to answer the following questions:

1) Where is the story set?
2) What are the main events in Salvatore's life?

This was done competently by the class.

Stylistic analysis

A scanning exercise was done by the students. They had to find the number of times the verbs 'was' and 'were' occurred in the first page. They located 11 occurrences. Next, they listed out the occurrences of verbs with 'would' and 'used to'. The third category of verbs they had to list included those like 'knew', 'climbed,
etc., which related to what happened in the past.

Students had problems with words like 'lying' and 'smiling'. The idea of participles, adjectives and adjectival functions was then discussed.

Interpretation

The lists, which had been put up on the blackboard showed the students that it was mainly a descriptive piece, with Salvatore as the hero.

They all said that it was a love story, especially after reading the way Salvatore was jilted. So far, their expectations had been realized with regard to the development of the story.

Period 2

Before the Reading

The students began by trying to answer the question: Do you think Salvatore will marry Assunta? The answers ranged from a clear 'No' and 'Yes' to the cautious 'Maybe'.

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During the Reading

The next part of the story, except the last paragraph was given to the students.

Stylistic Analysis

The students were again asked to list the different types of verbs along the lines of what was done in the previous class. They did this quickly.

Interpretation

The lists again confirmed the pattern of narration which had been discovered while doing the earlier part of the story - it was a descriptive piece, describing the life of Salvatore.

Personal Response

The reasons for Salvatore marrying Assunta were discussed: some students felt that it was his duty to marry, others felt that he was a 'weak' character, and a couple of students said that he was 'childish'. Here, the glossing of the words 'childish' and 'childlike' was done. It turned out that what
the students meant was that he was like a child, content to move with the tide and that he had very little commitment.

Written Work

Before the last part of the story was given, the students were asked to complete the story. Some sample endings are given below:

When Salvatore reached home, his wife, Assunta greeted him with a pleasant smile. When he finished up with his hearty meal, he realized the difference between the pretty girl he loved so much. She had changed so much. He told her, with a happy spirit. He was smiling a contented smile.
Conclusion: Salvatore loved his home land and his
lover too. He trusted and honored everyone's intelligence.
He was gentle and held an ingenuous smile. He was a
devoted fisherman and it suited him well. He was
actually a gentleman who had his own type of
living which would hurt none nor even had he, violent
ways. He took life as it came and did his chores (now)
without any fuss.

It seems queer to think of his nature. Someone
Salvatore loved a girl at Brandi Marina and was denied
of getting engaged to her by her (girl) parent due to his
ailment (Nefinition). This might be have been the
turning point in Salvatore's life, as he might have had
dreams which he thought would come true only if
he married the girl. But he accept this dream-shattering
incident as his own destiny and even marries a
woman older than himself for Salvatore after all comes
to know that life is not as he thought in his clear mind then.

As days passed Salvatore went on his fishing trips
and often later taking them to Naples itself. He worked in
his vineyards which yielded well and soon he prospered. His
son, his young man, helped him in maintaining the vineyards. His son
was young marina who helped him, the eldest helped him
on his fishing trips if the younger one helped his mother in the
vineyards. Soon his son, too, left the village to join the
military service to serve the king. Even though Salvatore knew
the life he would serve, service and his present disability of
the leg he wanted him to serve his country. His son visited
him during short trips.

Salvatore grew to love till his old age, loving his
peaceful little village, his boats, the sea, and his vineyards, his
lovers soon forgotten as time passed.  

-Kamala - 9
After a long time he meets his love, but says to her he must have forgotten his God and but when he sees her he remembers the old days and their memories. It is a few minutes, his children coming and coming back thinks of them and his wife, even a family needs him more. He goes off somewhere talking to her with his children and thereafter lives happily.

Amartya Maun

Conclusion: Salvatore was an honest man. When he married she deceived him with his love very much. After his marriage he was happy with his children. He married a wife and children.

Salvatore went in his boat as usual to catch fish. Amalta didn't want to send him. But Salvatore went on to catch fish. There was a storm and the boat's stem was hit by another boat and a powerful wave. The boat toppled and along with it took Salvatore. Thus Salvatore was buried in the arms of the sea good bye forever.

Richard
After the students finished this task, the last paragraph was given out. All students found the ending most unexpected.

**Personal Response**

When asked to compare their endings with that of Somerset Maugham, many students said that their ending was more logical, quoting from the text to support their argument. They also referred to the concept of 'normal' endings (or predictable). Some were quite indignant and felt that the author was having a laugh at the expense of the readers.

2.9.2.1 Observations

This short story was more amenable to the stylistic approach because it was short and clearly structured. The class was lively and the response of the students genuine. Because the students' responses were genuine, the discussions were rather more heated and the text was referred to quite often to support arguments. The theme found approval, the story of a man being jilted and then his marrying another girl was apparently quite common. Most students confessed to reading Mills and Boon romances, so they could easily
relate to the story. Hence the indignation at the ending, which upset all their expectation.

2.10 Text III

Given below is the text of 'The Blind Dog' and the teacher's analysis.

THE BLIND DOG

R.K. Narayan

Section. 1

It was not a very impressive or high-class dog; it was one of those commonplace dogs one sees everywhere - colour of white and dust, tail mutilated at a young age by God knows whom, born in the street, and bred on the leavings and garbage of the market-place. He had spotty eyes and undistinguished carriage and needless pugnacity. Before he was two years old he had earned the scars of a hundred fights on his body. When he needed rest on hot afternoons he lay curled up under the culvert at the Eastern gate of the market. In the evenings he set out on his daily rounds, loafed in the surrounding lanes and streets, engaged himself in skirmishes, picked up edibles on the roadside, and was back at the market gate by nightfall.

This life went on for three years. And then occurred a change in his life. A beggar, blind of both eyes, appeared at the market gate. An old woman led him up there early in the morning seated him at the gate, and came again at midday with some food, gathered his coins, and took him home at night.

The dog was sleeping nearby. He was stirred by the smell of food. He got up, came out of his shelter, and stood before the blind man, wagging his tail and gazing expectantly at the bowl, as he was eating his sparse meal. The blind man swept his arms about and asked: "Who is there?" At
which the dog went up and licked his hand. The blind man stroked his coat gently tail to ear and said: "What a beauty you are. Come with me - " He threw a handful of food which the dog ate gratefully. It was every day there, and the dog cut off much of its rambling to sit up beside the blind man and watch him receive alms morning to evening. In course of time observing him, the dog understood that the passers-by must give a coin, and whoever went away without dropping a coin was chased by the dog; he tugged the edge of their clothes by his teeth and pulled them back to the old man at the gate and let go only after something was dropped in his bowl. Among those who frequented this place was a village urchin, who had the mischief of a devil in him. He liked to tease the blind man by calling him names and by trying to pick up the coins in his bowl. The blind man helplessly shouted and cried and whirled his staff. On Thursdays this boy appeared at the gate, carrying on his head a basket loaded with cucumber and plantain. Every Thursday afternoon it was a crisis in the blind man's life. A seller of bright coloured but doubtful perfumes with his wares mounted on a wheeled platform, a man who spread out cheap storybooks on a gunny sack, another man who carried coloured ribbons on an elaborate frame - these were the people who usually gathered under the same arch. On a Thursday when the young man appeared at the Eastern gate one of them remarked, "Blind fellow! Here comes your scourge -"

"Oh, God, is this Thursday?" he wailed. He swept his arms about and called: "Dog, dog, come here, where are you?" He made the peculiar noise which brought the dog to his side. He stroked his head and muttered: "Don't let that rascal - " At this very moment the boy came up with a leer on his face.

"Blind man! Still pretending you have no eyes. If you are really blind, you should not know this either - " He stopped, his hand moving towards the bowl. The dog sprang on him and snapped his jaws on his wrist. The boy extricated his hand and ran for his life. The dog bounded up behind him and chased him out of the market.
"See the mongrel's affection for this old fellow," marvelled the perfume seller.

One evening at the usual time the old woman failed to turn up, and the blind man waited at the gate, worrying as the evening grew into night. As he sat fretting there, a neighbour came up and said; "Sami, don't wait for the old woman. She will not come again. She died this afternoon - "

The blind man lost the only home he had, and the only person who cared for him in this world. The ribbon-vendor suggested: "Here, take this white tape -" he held a length of the white cord which he had been selling - "I will give this to you free of cost. Tie it to the dog and let him lead you about if he is really so fond of you -"

Life for the dog took a new turn now. He came to take the place of the old woman. He lost his freedom completely. His world came to be circumscribed by the limits of the white cord which the ribbon-vendor had spared. He had to forget wholesale all his old life - all his old haunts. He simply had to stay on forever at the end of that string. When he saw other dogs, friends or foes, instinctively he sprang up, tugging the string, and this invariably earned him a kick from his master. "Rascal, want to tumble me down - have sense -" In a few days the dog learnt to discipline his instinct and impulse. He ceased to take notice of other dogs, even if they came up and growled at his side. He lost his own orbit of movement and contact with his fellow creatures.

Section. 2

To the extent of this loss his master gained. He moved about as he had never moved in his life. All day he was on his legs led by the dog. With the staff in one hand and the dog-lead in the other he moved out of his home - a corner in the choultry verandah a few yards off the market: he had moved in there after the old woman's death. He started out early in the day. He found that he could treble his income by moving about instead of
staying in one place. He moved down the choultry street, and wherever he heard people's voices he stopped and held out his hands for alms. Shops, schools, hospitals, hotels - he left nothing out. He gave a tug when he wanted the dog to stop, and shouted like a bullock-driver when he wanted him to move on. The dog protected his feet from going into pits, or stumping against steps or stones, and took him up inch by inch on safe ground and steps. For this sight people gave - coins and helped him. Children gathered round him and gave him things to eat. A dog is essentially an active creature who punctuates his hectic rounds with well-defined periods of rest. But now this dog (henceforth to be known as Tiger) had lost all rest. He had rest only when the old man sat down somewhere. At night the old man slept with the cord turned round his finger. "I can't take chances with you - " he said. A great desire to earn more money than ever before seized his master, so that he felt that resting was a waste of opportunity, and the dog had to be continually on his feet. Sometimes his legs refused to move. But if he slowed down even slightly his master goaded him on fiercely with his staff. The dog whined and groaned under this thrust. "Don't whine, you rascal. Don't I give you food? You want to loaf, do you?" swore the blind man. The dog lumbered up and down and round and round the marketplace on slow steps, tied to the blind tyrant. Long after the traffic at the market ceased, you could hear the night stabbed by the far-off wail of the tired dog. It lost its original appearance. As months rolled on, bones stuck up at his haunches and ribs were relieved through his fading coat.

The ribbon-seller, the novel-vendor, and the perfumer observed it one evening, when business was slack, and held a conference among themselves. "It rends my heart to see that poor dog slaving. Can't we do something?" The ribbon-seller remarked: "The rascal has started lending money for interest - I heard it from the fruit seller - he is earning more than he needs. He has become a very devil for money -" At this point the perfumer's eye caught the scissors dangling from the ribbon-rack. "Give it here," he said and
moved on with the scissors in hand.

The blind man was passing in front of the Eastern gate. The dog was straining the lead. There was a piece of bone lying on the way and dog was straining to pick it up. The lead became taut and hurt the blind man's hand, and he tugged the string and kicked till the dog howled. It howled, but could not pass the bone lightly; it tried to make another dash for it. The blind man was heaping curses upon it. The perfumer stepped up, applied the scissors, and snipped the cord. The dog bounced off and picked up the bone. The blind man stopped dead where he stood, with the other half of the string dangling in his hand. "Tiger! Tiger! Where are you?" he cried. The perfumer moved away quietly muttering: "You heartless devil! You will never get at him again! He has his freedom!" The dog went off at top speed. He nosed about the ditches happily, hurled himself on other dogs, and ran round and round the fountain in the market square barking, his eyes sparkling with joy. He returned to his favourite haunts and hung about the butcher's shop, tea-stall, and the bakery.

The ribbon-vendor and his two friends stood at the market gate and enjoyed the sight immensely as the blind man struggled to find his way about. He stood rooted to the spot waving his stick; he felt as if he were hanging in midair. He was wailing. "Oh, where is my dog? Where is my dog? Won't somebody give him back to me? I will murder it when I get at it again!" He groped about, tried to cross the road, came near being run over by a dozen vehicles at different points, tumbled and struggled and gasped. "He'd deserve it if he was run over, this heartless blackguard-" they said, observing him. However the old man struggled through and with the help of someone found his way back to his corner in the choultry veranda and sank down on his gunny-sack bed, half faint with the strain of his journey.

Section. 3

He was not seen for ten days, fifteen days, and twenty days. Nor was the dog seen anywhere.
They commented among themselves. "The dog must be loafing over the whole earth, free and happy. The beggar is perhaps gone forever." Hardly was this sentence uttered when they heard the familiar tap-tap of the blind man's staff. They saw him again coming up the pavement—led by the dog. "Look! Look! they cried. "He has again got it and tied it up." The ribbon-seller could not contain himself. He ran up and said: "Where have you been all these days?"

"Know what happened!" cried the blind man. "This dog ran away. I should have died in a day or two, confined to my corner, no food, not an Anna to earn—imprisoned in my corner. I should have perished if it continued for another day—but this thing returned—"

"When? When?"

"Last night. At midnight as I slept in bed, he came and licked my face. I felt like murdering him. I gave him a blow which he will never forget again," said the blind man. "I forgave him, after all a dog! He loafed as long as he could pick up some rubbish to eat on the road, but real hunger has driven him back to me, but he will not leave me again. See! I have got this" and he shook the lead: it was a steel chain this time.

Once again there was the dead, despairing look in the dog's eyes. "Go on, you fool," cried the blind man, shouting like an ox driver. He tugged the chain, poked with the stick, and the dog moved away on slow steps. They stood listening to the tap-tap going away.

"Death alone can help that dog," cried the ribbon-seller, looking after it with a sigh. "What can we do with a creature who returns to his doom with such a free heart?"
2.10.1 Analysis

(i) Structure

This is an interesting story in which 'pure description' alternates with 'pure narration', and both these overlap at times. Basically, the story can be divided as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Narration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dog's life</td>
<td>Incident in Dog's and Blind man's life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blind man's life</td>
<td>What the Vendors do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog's new life</td>
<td>What the Vendors do afterwards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blind man's new life with Dog</td>
<td>Report of what Blind man did</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog's happiness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog's return and life</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The story ends with a comment by one of the characters.

The verb patterns perform different functions in different parts of the story: copulas for description and dynamic verbs to indicate action. Eg. "It was not a very impressive or high class dog". "The dog bounded up behind him".

The story can be paraphrased in the following way:
1. The dog and beggar lead different types of lives
2. The dog enters the blind beggar's life
3. They have a symbiotic relationship which later changes to domination by the old man
4. The vendors interfere and give the dog its freedom
5. The dog seems happy
6. The dog returns to the beggar to be literally and metaphorically chained for life
7. Comment: Death can be the only release for such a dog

(ii) Linguistic and stylistic features
1) Lexis: Since this is a story by R.K. Narayan, there are some lexical items which are typically Indian (choultry, anna etc.) But the students would be familiar with these words and they would need no glossing.

Other words which the students could find difficult, like 'pugnacity', 'sparse', 'mutilated', 'leer', 'circumscribed', 'haunts' etc., would have to be glossed.

The Class

B.A. I year, Government Arts and Science
College, Bangalore. Kannada medium class. Two periods of one hour each.

2.10.2 The Lesson

Period 1

Before the Reading

The students were given to understand at the beginning of the class that they would have to do tasks in English as far as possible, but if they needed help, they could ask the teacher. They could use the mother-tongue if they found that they could not manage with English.

The title was given and they were asked to predict the type of story they could expect. The answers were varied as the excerpt from the tape script below shows:

T: Now if I told you that we were going to do a story, and gave you the title.... The Blind Dog. What would you expect? In this story. (In Kannada - the same question)
S: (In Kannada) Blind dog Blindness
T: What would the story be?
S: Blindness. And the feelings of the dog. Thinking of the blind dog.
T: O.K. Thinking of the blind dog Anything else?
T: O.K. Blind feelings
S: Comparison
T: Yes. Comparison. Who said comparison?
S: Comparing. Comparing
T: Yes perhaps comparing the blind dog - with what?
S: The man
T: Just guess because you don't know what the story is. Just....
S: About society.
T: About society. Is that all? Any more guesses?
S: Thinking about the surroundings
T: Thinking about the surroundings
T: Thinking about the surroundings.
S: How it lives ....... Because of the blindness
S: Superstition
T: Yes superstition. Its a very good one

During the Reading

The story was given and they were asked to read the first paragraph, and ask the meanings of words they did not understand. The words for which they asked the meaning were: 'skirmish', 'pugnacity' and 'undistinguished carriage'.

Next, they were asked to predict what the story could be about. The excerpt from the tape script shows interesting responses to this question.

Can you guess?
S: (Kannada saying) He sees yet he is blind.
T: Right perhaps.
S: Chorus. He has eyes, is yet blind (in Kannada.)
T: Do you think that will be the
story? Yes or no?

Next, they were asked to read some more (section 1) and asked what the story could be. A frank answer that they could not guess, was given.

Difficult words were glossed again, and further reading was done (except the last part).

Stylistic Analysis and Interpretation

The students could say that the first two paragraphs were descriptive. The teacher helped them to see that the first paragraph was a description of the dog, and the second paragraph a description of habits.

When asked what was happening in the story, the answers were: 'story changing' and 'new character'.

The teacher led the discussion round to the two types of verbs, the descriptive verbs and the action verbs.

Period 2

Unfortunately, this lesson could not be taped due to technical reasons.
Stylistic Analysis

The discussion on verbs continued and the students were able to pick out quite a few verbs which denoted action and others which were descriptive in function. At this point, one student asked (in Kannada) how description could be distinguished from narration. He felt that it was difficult to classify verbs in this way. He felt that the description of the dog's life had in it the qualities of some action. Other students joined in the discussion and some specific instances were given: 'he sprang up', 'tugging his string', 'ceased to take notice' and 'whenever he heard people's voices, he stopped'.

Here, the difference between actions which formed only a background and action which took the story forward was explained. These sentences were descriptive because they formed a background to the action which was to follow, viz. 'the cutting of the cord by the perfume vendor'. The story was seen to have strands of description interwoven with strands of narration.
Personal Response

The last part of the story (Section 3) was given to the class and they were asked to react to it. They did feel that the dog was stupid, but they were not very sympathetic. As one student put it very succinctly in Kannada: 'After all, it is only a dog. And the poor beggar is blind and helpless.'

They did not see anything very wrong in the fact that the dog was slaving for the man - for in the hierarchy of things, man is above an ordinary mongrel.

Written Work

No written work could be given to the class. The classes went slower than planned - for one thing, after the first half-hour, the students became more articulate and wanted to find out meanings and were also keen to do a through reading. They simply refused to skim.

Next, once they knew the teacher could understand Kannada and would not object to questions and comments in the language, they discussed the story enthusiastically. This was rewarding.

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2.11 General Observations

All three short stories were studied by the students in different ways, therefore, the methodology had to be changed according to the class and situation. For example, content had to precede stylistic analysis at the KV ASC Centre because of the eagerness of the students to know what happened in 'The Last Laugh'. This could be done, because the teacher had gauged the linguistic level of the students and knew that they were capable of reading and understanding the gist of the story on their own. In the other class at N.M.K.R.V. College, the story paraphrase had to precede any stylistic analysis, because the students were uncertain of the events in the story. But in both cases, whatever changes were adopted, the students could understand and respond to the text individually.

The short story, it was found, does not lend itself to neat stylistic analysis, as perhaps a poem. Some aspects of grammar, some discoursal aspects of narratology and some lexical analysis had to be used together to get at the meaning of
the text. The short story lends itself to a totally eclectic approach. Since the aim is to get the students to understand and respond to the text, the text is approached through language, and the different methods used to focus on various features does not matter.

The teaching of the short story was a rich experience in that quite a few responses were unexpected as also some of the discussions. Student participation was good, once they realized that this teacher would not expect the one correct answer, but was ready to accept any point of view provided it was logically argued with support from the text.

That they were motivated to come to the classes was evident from the fact that though it was on more or less a voluntary basis, students attended these classes and even turned in written work. Perhaps the fact that they were working out the meaning on their own helped to motivate them. On the whole, the classes were a vindication of the hypothesis that students can be made to read and respond to literary texts without the teacher coming too much in the way as a filter.