

# PSYCHOPATH OF ANNIE IN MISERY BY STEPHEN KING

<sup>1</sup> K.Menaha

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor

<sup>1</sup>Department of English,

<sup>1</sup>Dhirajlal Gandhi College of Technology

**Abstract :** The loneliness of the antagonist Annie Wilkes in the novel Misery played the major role in making her a psychopath. Annie staying in her lonely form got attached to the famous author Paul Sheldon's novel series "Misery". She helped Sheldon and nursed him when he struck in an accident. She was so happy to help her favorite writer only till she came across his last novel script. In the script she found her favorite character murdered by the author. This ultimately made her angry, yet she calmly asked him to change the script. When her request denied by him she became mad and went to the extent to kill her favorite author. The pain of losing something she loved the most made her a psychopath. Aggression was caused by the loneliness and the attachment towards the character in her favorite series.

**Index Terms – Loneliness, psychopath, aggression, murder**

American literature is the literary works written or produced in the area of United States of America and its preceding colonies. The New England colonies were the center of early American literature and hence the literary tradition of America linked the border tradition of English literature. But later on American literature has developed its own unique characteristics and produced a new path and tradition in literature. It bears the stamp of the American nationality, ethos and sensibility. Language is also changed accordingly to express their typical sentiments and environment.

Americans were fertile in gothic fiction. The nightmarish realm of uncanny terror, violence and cruelty were opened in the gothic novel. From the novels of Charles Brockden brown and terror tales of Poe to William Faulkner stories came under the gothic fiction. Authors of horror fiction like Lovecraft H.P and Stephen King also exploited this gothic genre. In gothic novels the writers employed the psychiatric disorder like hallucination, depression, psyche power, schizophrenia to enhance the horror.

Psychological horror is a sub-division of horror and psychological fiction. It generally relies on the mental, psychological and emotional status of the readers. Psychological horror novels exploit many mystery and thriller elements such as ghosts, supernatural elements to enhance the horror effect. These factors are used in the novel to get along the suspense and thrill to the readers. The main aims of these psychological horror novels are to create discomfort and universal psychological problem in a person to bring out the darker side of a person.

Stephen King is another contemporary horror fiction writer. He is considered to be the real king of horror fiction. He has written many horror novels. He also writes in his pen names like Richard Bachman and John Swithen. He was born on September 21, 1947 in Portland Maine, U.S. He is a famous American author of contemporary horror, supernatural, suspense, science fiction and fantasy works. More than 350 million copies of his books were sold and many of his works were adopted for movies, miniseries and television programs. He had published fifty four novels out of which seven were published in his pen name Richard Bachman. He had also published six non-fiction works. He had written nearly 200 short stories which were collected in book collection.

King often uses authors as his main characters in many of his novels, novellas and short stories or includes some names of fictional books. In his novels, King presents his real life experience collaborating it with his imagination. The Overlook hotel in the novel The Shining was again the reflection of King's experience in Stanley's Hotel in Colorado. Paul Sheldon's sufferings in the novel Misery is also based on one of his life experience.

Notable works of King were Carrie (1974), The Shining (1977), The Stand (1978), It (1986), Misery (1987), The Girl Who Loved Tom Gordon (1999) The Dark Tower series, Under the Dome (2009), Rita Hayworth and Shawshank Redemption (1982). Among these novels Carrie, The Shining, Misery, The Girl Who Loved Tom Gordon and Under the Dome are psychological horror novels. In these novels King has projected either the protagonist or the antagonist as suffer of mental instability. In some novels he has projected both protagonist and antagonist as a single character.

In King's novels many twists are often used to confuse the readers. The characters in the novels face many internal battles with subconscious desires. Delusions, perceptions, and hallucinations are part of these novels. Sometimes the narrator may be mentally stable but placed in a situation with a character involving mental instability. In some novels the protagonist may be disturbed mentally and psychologically. In both the cases the psychological horror elements are used to make the readers get more horrified.

The novel Misery strongly exemplifies King's three great strengths like compelling storytelling, including horror and suspense; unique and emotionally effective characterization; and insight into both human nature and the mystery of creative writing. While the scenes of murder and amputation may be too strong for some readers, King's craft, thematic, and imagery in the novel make the novel worth reading and studying.

Annie Wilkes is a middle class middle-aged woman who came from a large family, but now lives alone on a farm in Colorado. Unlike Sheldon, Annie Wilkes is not well tempered at all, she experiences strange blackouts and occasionally has intense tantrums during which she does horrible things to whoever happens to be near her.

Annie Wilkes in Misery also suffers the same psychological problem. She led a life in an isolated environment detached from the society. She does not want anyone to be with her. She was an adamant woman. Her adamant nature was seen even from her childhood days. She had anxiety and that led her hallucinate things. She thought that the people around her were trying to hurt her. She began to move away from others. In her childhood, she had murdered her father, some of her neighbours and one of her hostel roommate in temper.

Being a number one fan of Paul Sheldon, the famous writer Annie was shocked to she him struck in the accident nearby Sidewinder. She urged to help him and safely rescued him and found that he had a major injury in his leg. She carried him to her house and started to

take care of him. She nursed him very well as she was a former nurse. She felt much happy for her favourite writer to be in her house. When Paul Sheldon came to conscious she introduced herself.

After a few days she accidentally came across script of the last part of her favorite series "Misery". She was shocked to find her favorite character to be murdered in the script. She could not bear it. Immediately she requested Paul to change the script. When her request was rejected by Paul she unconsciously bet him. She then came out warning him to change the script and continue the series. Paul tried to escape from there and with lots of try he made a call to the cop.

'Hello, Sidewinder Police Station, Officer Humbuggy speaking.' 'Listen to me, Officer Humbuggy. Listen very carefully and don't interrupt, because I don't know how much time I have. My name is Paul Sheldon. I'm calling you from Annie Wilkes's house. I've been her prisoner here for at least two weeks, maybe as long as a month. I — ' 'Annie Wilkes!' 'Get out here tight away. Send an ambulance. And for Christ's sake get here before she gets back . 'Before she gets back,' Paul moaned. (M 98-99).

A cop came in search of Paul Sheldon. Annie became furious and tensed. She doesn't want to lose her company in that isolated place. She murdered the cop when he went in search of Paul inside her house. Paul had no idea about how to escape from there. He was tortured by Annie when did not obey her. He struggled a lot in her arrest. After a long try he found the way to escape from that place. When he was about to escape she arrived and started to hurt him furiously. Annie's furiousness went to the extent of killing her favorite author. As a result of this battle Annie was killed. Paul came out of her place and was rescued by the passersby.

Brought up in an isolated environment Annie refused to mingle with other children. She had hurt some children who tried to play with her. The possessiveness was with her even from her childhood days. When the children around her try to touch her things she became aggressive and harms them. This habit and nature in Annie was developed instead of fading. She also refused to live a life in the society with other people. So she decided to take a place far away from the town among the woods. Though she had hatred towards people, she liked to grow livestock.

The pain of losing her father due to her aggressiveness made her to be in depressed mood. The books of Paul Sheldon were the medicine to her depression. She became more possessive to the chief character in the novel. The fear of losing her favourite character made her aggressive. She totally forgot the reality. She thought that the character in the novel was in real and Sheldon had murdered her. The duality in her made her to get confused from the fiction and reality.

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