Analysis Of “The Lovely Bones” And “The Babadook”

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People experience different forms of fearful events in their lives, which can be explained by the facet of the paranormal. People have a fear of paranormal things due to certain fearful incidents in their lives that ultimately haunt them. It is evident that different individuals feel haunted for different reasons. For example, some individuals experience a fear of supernatural things such as ghosts, while some have a fear of death. Different authors have selected this particular topic of fear of the supernatural in their stories to connect this feature to the reality of life. The particular notion of being haunted is effectively discussed in the novel, “The Lovely Bones” by Alice Sebold. Undoubtedly, the tragic reality of life and death is successfully depicted by the author with the haunted aspects used in the novel. The particular aspect of death in the form of fear is also effectively indicated in “The Babadook.” Here, the focus is to explain how the characters in both stories deal with the fear of death.

Trauma and Loss in the Two Narratives

“The Lovely Bones” is a famous novel written by American author Alice Sebold, which was published in 2002. The story of “The Lovely Bones” reveals the story of a teenage girl who was raped and murdered by her neighbor. This particular story has an immense level of importance as it reveals the life and death of a young girl in an extremely tragic manner. All events are narrated by the character Susie Salmon, who was raped and murdered by her neighbor, Mr. Harvey. On the other hand, “The Babadook” is characterized as a horror movie that was released in 2014 and written and directed by Jennifer Kent. This particular movie impressively addresses the horror that appears in the form of the psychological perception of characters about the existence of demons in their lives. “The Babadook” is the story of Amelia Vanek, who is a widow and brings up her six-year-old son Samuel alone. The character of Amelia suffers immensely from her husband’s death in a car accident. This particular event negatively impacts the psychological and emotional stability of Amelia as she is portrayed as a character who is immensely troubled and shattered. The character of Sam also indicates inconsistent behavioral patterns. He becomes sleepless and immensely affected by the fantasized monster, Mister Babadook.

Death as a Source of Supernatural Fear

It is notable to mention that both “The Lovely Bones” and “The Babadook” successfully apprehend the concept of death as a scary element. It involves different elements that can haunt people with the consideration of death. The death of Susie in “The Lovely Bones” and Amelia’s husband’s death in “The Babadook” indicate the feature of horror associated with the concept of death. The scary concept of demons or ghosts can also be successfully explored in the content of both works. Both stories successfully convey the idea of fear of supernatural things, which can appear in the form of death or imaginary monsters. Supernatural aspects associated with death become the reason for the immense level of fear for the characters of both works. The scariness associated with the feature of death ultimately becomes the reason why people are haunted. It becomes immensely difficult for the characters to overcome the aspect of fear, which appears in the form of death. The aftereffects of death are successfully indicated by the scary features of the ghosts in both works. In other words, it can be said that the stories of both works successfully show the connection between life and death with the aspect of imaginary ghosts or monsters.

Mortality and the Afterlife in The Lovely Bones

Mortality, or the feature of death, is one of the major themes of the story of “The Lovely Bones.” The author successfully explores the idea of the agony of life and death by portraying the facet of death as something scary and unavoidable for the characters of the story. The pain and torture of rape and murder are described by the victim, Susie. The story reveals that the character of Susie continuously connects herself with her family in the form of a ghost after death. She witnesses the psychological and emotional struggle of her family and loved ones due to her tragic death. It takes many years for Susie’s family to overcome the pain and fear of her death and move on with their lives. The aspects of life after death are effectively explained by Susie as:

“These were the lovely bones that had grown around my absence: the connections – sometimes tenuous, sometimes made at great cost, but often magnificent – that happened after I was gone.”(Sebold, 127). The story of “The Lovely Bones” successfully connects the feature of death with the factor of the afterlife through the narration of Susie. She describes her pain and violent death at the hands of her rapist. She successfully connects the idea of this world to the afterlife as she explains that the specific needs and desires one has at the moment of death ultimately influence the paradigm of the afterworld. The story particularly evolves from Susie’s experiences in the afterworld and the facet of supernatural power, which appears in the shape of Susie’s ghost for her family. The overall feature of the novel can also be witnessed as the contrast between the bitter reality of life and the beauty of the afterlife.

Grief as the Monster in The Babadook

The other work, “The Babadook,” explains the scary features associated with the aspect of death. It explains the pain and struggle of the characters who face the challenge of the loss of their loved ones in the form of death. The overall feature of “The Babadook” gives the feeling of horror, which ultimately haunts people. It explains the form of the ghost as the scariest thing to deal with. It also apprehends the specific idea about human psychology against the different forms of grief and sorrow. The overall setting of the story and the lives of the main characters reveal how much they were traumatized because of the death of their loved one. Amelia lost her husband in a car accident and never remained the same as before (Ormandy). Her character prominently shows the aspect of grief associated with the paradigm of death. The imaginary monster, Babadook, explains the aspect of horror associated with the ghost. The character of Sam deeply connects himself with the imaginary world of the monsters.

His words indicate his approach toward the supernatural elements. These words are as follows: “You can’t get rid of the Babadook.” (Jennifer Kent and Shroff). Another haunted aspect associated with the monster of the Babadook is that it can be considered a symbolic figure of the dead father imagined by Sam. The feature of horror in “The Babadook” is closely related to the immense level of pain and suffering of Amelia, which she faces due to the death of her husband. The overall story portrays her effort to deal with the feature of horror associated with her husband’s departure from the world. It apprehends the theme that the grief of death is the biggest monster for people who are alive. It immensely challenges people to make themselves strong enough to deal with the loss of their loved ones due to death.

Shared Images of Death, Pain, and Horror

It is notable to mention that both stories, “The Lovely Bones” and “The Babadook,” successfully apprehend the element of death as one of the main themes. The feature of death is explained with the help of the supernatural element. There is a clear indication of the transition from the life of this world to the afterlife with the help of the facet of the supernatural element. Pain and grief are the major aspects associated with the concept of death. The disturbing elements associated with the paradigm of death ultimately affect people by creating an immense level of horror closely connected to the feature of death. Both stories explain that the loss of loved ones due to death can be the biggest loss for someone, appearing in their lives as a big monster.

Accepting Death and Confronting Human Monsters

It is immensely crucial for people to truly accept the reality of death and overcome the prospect of fear associated with the unseen and somewhat supernatural features of death. It is crucial to mention that the story of “The Lovely Bones” describes the cruel reality of life as Susie explains that people

can be characterized as real monsters. The facet of death also addresses the compelling beauty of life in the afterworld. On the other hand, the approach to death is explained somewhat differently in the story of “The Babadook.” It explains the feature of the death of Amelia’s husband as the biggest pain that seems impossible to overcome. The appearance of monsters is more likely the depiction of the scariness and horror associated with the supernatural factors that exist in the world.

Work Cited

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