

The Murders in the Rue Morgue

Murder in the Morgue is the novel of legendary author Edgar Allan Poe, which marked the beginning of the detective genre as such. What techniques he used, the literary significance of the story and its influence on the genre's followers, and how in the story the author instantly deviated from the usual template with his creation, causing both the enthusiastic cheers of his contemporaries in his direction and the criticism from readers of the present day.

The story begins with 'a treatise of a few incidental considerations', in which Allan examines the difference between an analytical and an inventive mind. In his utterances he reveals the very essence of the concept of analytical technique. As an example, he draws a parallel between chess and draughts, saying that draughts require more analytical ability. He begins the story itself as an example to elaborate on his considerations. At the beginning of the story, the author writes: «Residing in Paris during the spring and part of the summer of 18--, I there became acquainted with a Monsieur C. Auguste Dupin..» (Stories and poems of Edgar Allan Poe, 95). A kind of hint to the reader, giving him the idea that the story is autobiographical, and the story is told on behalf of the unnamed narrator, which creates the appearance that the writer himself was present and participated in the events described in this story. Whether this is true or a trick Edgar Poe decided to use is unimportant. The reader already considers it an autobiographical tale, which means that it provides even more spice and zest in the form of enjoyment from reading real events, and the analytical capacity Mr. Dupin displays is no longer seen as supernatural, but as more earthy, human, which not only gives the reader the pleasure of seeing the hero, but also the hope, inspiration and motivation for his further development, his thought process. The handwriting of the story is undoubtedly masterfully used to create the famous Sherlock Holmes by Arthur Conan Doyle. Look - we can see Doctor Watson in the person of Poe himself - the writer that decided to live with Monet for his own observation, pleasure as well as the development of his own self. He comes from a noble family and has lost his fortune without the ability or, more importantly, the will to regain it. Although he is characterized as a man who has lost any vital energy to do anything, he has spent his life studying books, developing his own analytical mind and developing his observation skills. A man with connections in the police, invited to inspect and further investigate a mysterious case that led the police to a dead end... Ring any bells?

The protagonist, Mr. Dupin, is characterized by his character traits as a man who is periodically detached and hovering in his thoughts, as if going over each one and chewing it up with all possible enthusiasm. And in these very moments of detachment he is not just uncommunicative, he does not even notice the presence of the people around him, how concentrated his stream of thoughts is. (Stories and poems of Edgar Allan Poe, 95-97).

The course as well as the construction of Mr. Monet's thoughts is shown to us in the form of Poe's remarks, obvious to the eye of anyone interested in this case, and Monet's peculiar, not offensive and perhaps even didactic reproaches, which show us his course of thought on the case, something Worth paying attention to, but which no one paid any attention to: «That was the evidence itself,»

said Dupin, «but it was not the peculiarity of the evidence. You have observed nothing distinctive. Yet there was something to be observed.» (Stories and poems of Edgar Allan Poe, 115). And we see a clear critique of the work of the police: "We must not reach that conclusion, just from what whe

have heard from the police, - Dupin with some energy. «The Parisian police are cunning,» but nothing else. They follow no plan other than the one described in their manuals.» For no reason will they change their ways to fit the nature of the but not imaginative.»(Stories and poems of Edgar Allan Poe, 110-111). Clumsy, erroneous in their conclusions, they are exposed as almost amateurish. It could have been written quite differently. The police did come to some conclusions, the police found at least a logical way in and out of the criminal, but no, following the story the police not only failed to start the investigation properly, but dropped their hands at the very beginning, blaming the first suspect they saw, who looks too obviously innocent even in the face of Paris. And as it comes out from the final part of the story, the official who allowed Mr. Monet to investigate the case was disappointed, driven by his own ego, the very ego suffered, because in front of his colleagues he was not just wrong, but was trampled by Monet, who logically described the thought process step by step, proved Lebowsky's innocence, and even took all the laurels for solving the case. And the last thing Monet said was nothing more than another rebuke to the modern methods of the police, and more specifically to the investigator of the case:

«Let them talk,» said Dupin, who had not thought it necessary to reply to G- «Let G talk about me and my methods. It will ease his conscience. For myself. I am satisfied with having defeated him in his own castle.» (Stories and poems by Edgar Allan Poe, 137)

Was the presentation of the police in such a manner a device for the greater exaltation of Dupin's analytical abilities, or was Poe determined to show the true incompetence of the state authorities of his time, for it is true that the police of that time not only missed many incidents, accused the innocent, but even allowed them to mock their own murderers in their letters. Perhaps it's all two ends of the same stick, i.e. it's both a ploy and a reflection of the incompetence of the police of his time... Either way, the phenomenon also influenced Arthur Conan Doyle's style, and thus all the classics of the detective genre.

The construction of the story itself is both similar to any other detective stories, and at the same time quite original in the presentation of the material (of course, at the time, in today's realities no one is surprised by such techniques after we have been spoiled by Sherlock Holmes and Agatha Christie). Narrated on behalf of an unnamed narrator, as I said, which Alan Poe showed himself to be with a hint – a description of the main character's eccentric, observant, analytical mind and then the case of the murder they discovered in the newspaper. All, shall we say, according to canon, however. Further, instead of the usual investigations, adventures and adventures with Monet interrogating the suspects, the emphasis and focus is on his analytical train of thought. In fact, 75% of the story is analytical and Mr. Monet's thoughts, which was the characteristic handwriting for this story and set the way forward for many authors in their works (again, Arthur Conan Doyle). As I said, nowadays we won't think of this detective story as something unusual, because we've been spoiled by the writers it has given us, but at its time it was a revolution in the world of detective literature – it gave the most avid detective-lovers the power to guess at the solution of a case by following the Dupin's lead, using the narrator and the main character's friend as his instrument, asking obvious questions that anybody would have asked.

However, even though this style is ALREADY commonplace in our time, even our modern reader may be repulsed by the appearance of an orangutan in the course of an investigation. Having studied

in detail the comments on the narrative, the only disgruntled readers were outraged at this very factor; it was the orangutan that plucked the reader from the smoothly flowing stream of analytical

thought like a hair from Madame L Espana's head, and threw him out on the bank in bewilderment and indignation: «How could I possibly have known about the orang-utan, what a nonsense, it could have been an agile, experienced acrobat, distressed by any prediction of Madame L'Espagne rather than an orang-utan, whose probability of appearance in the story is almost nil». Yes, this is a sufficient deviation from the normal flow of detective storytelling even in this genre, and yet no one has anything against The Baskerville Dog, do they?

Edgar Allan Poe's style in the story, his writing, his content and his undeniable huge influence on general world literature in the creation of the detective genre as such has made this novel not just a classic, but a guiding lighthouse for detective writers. A story that concentrates on analysis more than on actual events in the physical world creates a gently flowing stream that abruptly drops into a waterfall on top of which stands an orangutan, whose appearance in the story was impossible to predict even following the entire train of thought of Dupin. Some might be put off by this, others might find charm in the unexpected twist, as Arthur Doyle once found and used in creating Sherlock Holmes. It was this story that started the term 'detective' in the world of writing.

Works Sited

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