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The Contrast between Environment and The Effect on Nuttel's Perspective in "The Open Window" by Saki (1914)

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ABSTRAK

Artikel ini merupakan analisis mendalam mengenai latar dalam cerita pendek "The Open Window" (1914) karya Saki. Cerpen ini menyoroti pentingnya narasi seseorang dalam memengaruhi persepsi dan kondisi psikologis karakter lain di lingkungan pedesaan yang identik dengan ketenangan. Persepsi yang muncul ini dipengaruhi oleh manipulasi yang dilakukan oleh karakter seorang gadis bernama Vera terhadap karakter utama, Tuan Framton Nuttel. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan Lukens yang menyatakan bahwa latar dapat diklasifikasikan dalam salah satu dari dua cara: sebagai latar atau sebagai bagian integral dari cerita. Latar sebagai latar menyiratkan bahwa latar memiliki pengaruh yang kecil terhadap karakter, plot, atau tema. Sejalan dengan analisis latar ini, hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Saki tidak hanya menggunakan latar sebagai latar tetapi juga sebagai kekuatan yang mendorong plot dan meningkatkan konflik dalam cerita. "The Open Window" merupakan elemen literal dan metafora yang berperan dalam membangun kepercayaan, manipulasi, dan ironi. Melalui narasi Vera, hasil analisis ini menegaskan bahwa latar menjadi alat untuk mengeksplorasi persepsi dan realitas. Tulisan ini menekankan bahwa latar yang kuat dari Saki memperkuat tensi psikologis cerita dan menggarisbawahi betapa kompleksnya hubungan antara manusia dengan lingkungannya, sehingga memengaruhi komentar yang berbeda mengenai persepsi dan manipulasi.

Kata kunci: latar, kondisi psikologis, manipulasi, narasi

ABSTRACT

This paper contains an in-depth analysis of the setting in Saki's short story "The Open Window" (1914). The short story highlights the importance of one's narrative in influencing the perception and psychological state of the other character in a rural environment synonymous with serenity. This emerging perception is influenced by the manipulation that the character of a girl named Vera performs on the protagonist, Mr. Framton Nuttel. The study employs Lukens' approach in which he argues that the setting of a story may be classified in one of two ways: as a backdrop or as an integral part of the story. Setting as backdrop implies that the setting has little influence on characters, plot, or theme. In line with this setting analysis, the results of the study indicate that Saki not only uses the setting as a backdrop but also as a driving force for the plot and as a means to heighten the conflict in the story. "The Open Window" serves as both a literal and metaphorical element that contributes to building trust, manipulation, and irony. Through Vera's narrative, the results of this analysis confirm that the setting becomes a tool to explore perception and reality. This paper emphasizes that Saki's strong setting intensifies the psychological tension in the story and highlights the complexity of the relationship between humans and their environment, thereby influencing diverse comments on perception and manipulation.

Keywords: setting, psychological state, manipulation, narrative.

INTRODUCTION

Trust is a vital relationship concept that needs further conceptual analysis, not just empirical testing (McKnight and Chervany, 2000). According to R. Hardin, trust is an attitude we have towards people whom we hope will be trustworthy, where trustworthiness is a property, not an attitude. Therefore, trust and trustworthiness are distinct, with the ideal outcome being that those we trust will also be trustworthy, and those who are trustworthy will also receive trust. For trust to be plausible in a relationship, the parties to the relationship must have attitudes toward one another that permit trust. A simple example of trust in everyday life is when one member of a family advances money to another and asks the second member to hold it or invest it. A more complicated example of implied trust would be a situation in which one party provides money to another for the purchase of property. This could be due to the two parties' close relationship, which has most likely existed for a while. However, this does not rule out the possibility of gaining trust from people that have only known each other for a very short period of time, as happened to the main character in the short story that will be analyzed.

Literary works encompass a unique setting that can significantly impact the story's development and the reader's experience. The background environment established through a skillfully constructed setting adds to the story's plausibility and draws readers into the world the author has created. It helps establish what is happening in the specific environment. The setting itself is often referred to as the fulcrum, suggesting an understanding of place, time relationships, and the social environment in which the events being told occur (Nurgiyantoro, 2010:216). Also, setting can reflect on the internal states of the characters, mirror the themes of the story, and even act as a character who influences the actions and emotions of those within it (Safitri et al., 2023). Therefore, setting is so important in a short story because the function is more than just a backdrop; it may additionally improve the reader's understanding of the story, communicate symbolic and metaphorical significance, as well as contribute to the establishment of the story's mood and atmosphere.

Discussing the concept of setting brings to mind a story that will be discussed in this setting analysis. "The Open Window" by Saki is a short story that takes place in the English countryside, most likely during the early 20th century, with the main setting of the rural home

of Mrs. Sappleton. The storyline follows Mr. Framton Nuttel, who is trying to escape from his nerves at Mr. Sappleton's house, away from the hustle and bustle of the city. At the same time, he meets Vera, who alters his perception of the house, especially the open window, which should be a place for him to run but instead becomes a nightmare for him, creating an irony and contrast between how the environment is portrayed and his personal thoughts. The aim of this short story analysis is to demonstrate how Mr. Nuttel's trust towards Vera can change his perspective and how the environmental conditions have a significant impact on Mr. Nuttel's perception of the house, which was once a place of escape but turned out to become a place for him to have a tense experience due to the influence of the story behind an open window. This short story puts us in the shoes of one of the characters, Mr. Nuttel, who accidentally put a sense of trust in someone he had just met, causing him to believe in the truth behind the open window and begin to feel disturbed and doubt whether the house could be the best place for him to release his nerves. This analysis will discuss how Saki skillfully explores issues of perception, reality, and the manipulation of truth, urging readers to contemplate the complexity of trust and deception within the narrative.

METHOD

In this paper, we apply a qualitative method with a textual analysis approach to explore the role of setting in the story "The Open Window" by Saki. The main objective of this research is to understand how various elements of setting—physical, social, and temporal settings—contribute to the development of the narrative, characters, and central themes in the story.

This research begins with the identification of setting elements that are important in building the atmosphere and narrative of the story. The English country house, which is the main setting of the story, not only functions as a physical setting but also plays an important role in creating a calm and peaceful atmosphere. This atmosphere, ironically, becomes the setting for the mysterious and enigmatic events. Additionally, the open French window, initially an ordinary architectural feature, becomes a powerful symbol of openness and vulnerability. This window evolves into a key element through which Vera manipulates Mr. Framton Nuttel, reinforcing the story's irony and highlighting how even seemingly mundane details can be central to a dramatic plot twist.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Mr. Framton Nuttel, the main character, came to Mrs. Hefelton's rural house for the purpose of treating his nerve condition. The doctors who treated Mr. Nuttel advised him to rest completely, avoid mental stimulation, and avoid all forms of strenuous physical activity so that he came to the countryside because it is a quiet and calm place where his illness would be cured quickly, despite the fact that he knew nothing about Mrs. Sappleton, the owner of the house. The problem of trust is related to one of the characters, Vera, who successfully gained Mr. Nuttel's trust about the tragic fate that happened to Mrs. Sappleton's husband and her two brothers three years ago. According to Vera, they crossed the moor to their favorite snipe-shooting spot, became engulfed in a patch of wet and treacherous ground, and their bodies were never discovered. Vera's influence on Mr. Nuttel, who knows nothing and is a newcomer there, creates fear and generates a contrast about the possibility of a peaceful village in the countryside having a dark incident that unfortunately befalls the woman who owns the house. Thus, this setting analysis will explain more about the setting of place and find out how Nuttel's belief in Vera can change his perception of the environment into a frightening trauma.

The open window, which is the main object of the story, plays an important role in creating the atmosphere and tension of the plot. The window is described as a French window; it consists of two hinged panels that swing open to provide access to outdoor spaces like gardens, patios, or balconies. The open window appears ordinary and unassuming at first glance but becomes symbolic and thematic as the events unfold. Furthermore, it indirectly assists Vera in conveying her narrative concerning the case that befell Mrs. Sappleton's husband and her two brothers. The serene rural setting, initially perceived by Mr. Nuttel as a place of peace and recovery, ironically transformed into a source of dread and anxiety. This irony underscores the story's central theme of trust, highlighting how the environment, which should be calming, becomes a stage for psychological manipulation. There will be two distinct sub-discussions in this setting analysis, centered on the narrator's perspective towards the characters, which are fascinating to discuss and require in-depth explanation. This in-depth examination will offer a better grasp of the

correlation between the setting of place, its environment, and the issue of trust.

Setting of Place and Environment: The Role of the Rural Landscape

"The Open Window" takes place on an autumn afternoon in the living room of the rural house of Mrs. Sappleton located in the countryside of England. The story begins with Vera interacting with Mr. Nuttel while they wait for Mrs. Sappleton to show up. The girl appeared completely at ease while speaking with Nuttel. Meanwhile, he remained silent, debating whether going to the Sappleton house, as recommended by his sister, was a good idea to calm his nerves, given that he only knew Mrs. Sappleton's name and address. According to the Britannica Dictionary, countryside is land that is away from big towns and cities. In the early 20s, which is the setting of the short story, the English countryside was a picturesque landscape dominated by agriculture, with fields of wheat, barley, and pastures for livestock framed by hedgerows and stone walls. Villages were characterized by thatched cottages, stone houses, and historic churches, reflecting Tudor, Georgian, and Victorian architectural styles. Those statements strengthen Mr. Nuttel's sister's reasons for recommending The Rural Retreat in an attempt for him to escape from his nerves; it is also proven in the line, "I know how it will be," his sister had said when he was preparing to migrate to this rural retreat (Saki, 1914, p. 1).

A rural retreat is a place where someone can escape from the hustle and bustle of the city and immerse oneself in the tranquility and beauty of the countryside. This place is surrounded by nature, so the atmosphere will definitely be very quiet, without any disturbances, offering a chance to relax, unwind, and reconnect with the natural environment. This place would be very suitable for Mr. Nuttel, as mentioned in the story, since he has nerves and wants to quickly recover from his illness. Even though it is suitable, his sister is concerned about the environment of the place; she's worried that Nuttel will get more isolated and become more anxious. To counteract this, she provides him with letters of introduction to people she knows in the area with hopes that by meeting new people and engaging with them socially, Nuttel will be able to overcome his anxiety and find some relief from his condition. She also adds that people there are quite nice to convince him to go there because usually in a rural area, there are fewer people, and their homes and businesses are

located far away from one another. As supported by the environment around, most of the people work on farms or ranches, with small settlements, villages, towns, and other residences located in or surrounded by rural areas.

The "Letter of Introduction," told by Nuttel's sister, is an explanation of the social setting that includes norms, expectations, and interactions between characters in the story. Mr. Nuttel's visit to Mrs. Sappleton's house reflects social mores emphasizing respect and politeness in making new acquaintances, which was also part of Victorian social etiquette that persisted into the early 20th century. Martine, in *Martine's Hand-Book of Etiquette and Guide to True Politeness* (1866), stated that politeness is a sort of social benevolence that avoids wounding the pride or shocking the prejudice of those around you. Men in Victorian times were expected to adhere to a strict code of behavior during social interactions. This includes things that involve formalities such as making introductions, greeting individuals with appropriate positions, and observing differences in hierarchy.

Victorian social etiquette was a set of rules and expectations designed to maintain social order and reflect the values of honor, politeness, and propriety. This etiquette influences every aspect of daily life, from dress and manners to interactions in both public and private spaces, ensuring that each individual adheres to the social norms of the time. During this period, such letters are important for making new friends. They serve as a means of vouching for a person's character and ensuring that his or her visit will be welcomed. Nuttel's adherence to these customs underscore the importance of civility and social respect. The Victorian social etiquette seen in "The Open Window" shapes the interactions between the characters and is crucial to the unfolding of the story. The formality of introductions, guest-host relationships, politeness, and respect for women and teens create a framework within which Vera's manipulation can occur and Framton's reactions can be understood. These social norms not only ground the story in its historical context but also add irony to its conclusion.

As mentioned before, Mr. Nuttel and Vera were waiting for Mrs. Sappleton to show up. The room where Nuttel waits is comfortably furnished, and the large French windows open out onto a serene lawn, enhancing the sense of tranquility. The sitting room stole Nuttel's attention because it screams "masculine habitation," where it is very identical to a man

and inhabited by a man. Saki, as the author, didn't address a specific portrayal of the room, but from Nuttel's description, it can be said that the one that seems masculine is the way the room is decorated, the arrangement of furniture, and the overall atmosphere of the space, all of which create an impression of masculinity and indicate that Mrs. Sappleton could be said to be a rich woman. Apart from looking at the decoration of her house, there are several other things that can prove that Mrs. Sappleton was a rich woman, which is the French window she owns. At that time, or rather at the beginning of the 20th century, French windows were considered very stylish and luxurious to have in a house; not everyone could afford them, indicating a certain level of prosperity. This detail, coupled with the fact that she lived in a rural area with extensive hunting grounds, suggests that Mrs. Sappleton is rich.

While listening to Vera's story about a tragedy that happened to Mrs. Sappleton's husband and her two brothers three years ago, Nuttel was hesitant, proven with the quote, "Her tragedy?" asked Framton; somehow in this restful country spot tragedies seemed out of place (Saki, 1914, p. 2). He believed that in that peaceful place, the level of tragedy would be lower than in a big city. It expresses his initial disbelief or skepticism regarding Mrs. Sappleton's family tragedy. Nuttel, a visitor from the city seeking respite from his anxieties in the peaceful countryside, finds it difficult to accept such a tragic event occurring in such idyllic surroundings. His words reflect his belief that the countryside is a haven from the complexities and stresses of city life, where he would never expect to witness such tragic events. This emphasizes the irony of Vera's storytelling, as she tells a tragic story in a setting that seems out of place with the misfortune. According to this quote, "My sister was staying here, at the rectory" (Saki, 1914, p. 2).

Four years ago, before the tragedy happened, Mr. Nuttel's sister was staying at the rectory. A rectory is the housing that a church organization provides for a minister or priest to live in. Most rectories are conveniently close to the church. Saki didn't address what his sister's job was in the rectory, but probably she was doing general duties such as housekeeping and gardening. As a place that is usually associated with calm and order, it would be a stark contrast to the tragedy Vera narrates. Even if it's just a small detail, this kind of thing contributes greatly to the authenticity of the setting and enriches the narrative of the story by creating a

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believable backdrop for the interactions between characters and the subsequent plot.

Based on Vera's narration, the tragedy of Mrs. Sappleton's husband and her two brothers happened during a wet summer period. According to the Weathershop, the three worst summers recorded as a whole were probably 1907, 1954, and 1956 in the last century. These were rated as the worst in Manchester in that period, using a specially constructed 'summer index.' There are two conclusions to be drawn from this case. The first is that the setting of the story and the location of the tragedy are most likely in and around Manchester since the Wet Summer occurred in 1907, and Vera is thought to have told it in 1914, which is supposed to be when the story is set. Even though there is a discrepancy between when Wet Summer occurred and when this story was published, on the other hand, it helps strengthen the irony of Vera's story about the tragedy. Moreover, around the towns of Bury, Bolton, Wigan, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, and Tameside in Manchester, there are more than 500 square miles of inspiring countryside, crisscrossed by historical waterways and dotted with picturesque towns and fascinating attractions that make for great days out of the city, which strengthens the argument about where the story is actually set.

The second conclusion is that we can just assume that the use of the wet summer in the narrative is inspired by the actual wet summer that happened in Manchester a few years before Saki released this story, which is in 1914, because Vera's mention of the wet summer and the month of October doesn't match at all. The summer season typically includes the months of June, July, and August. When referring to the wet summer of 1907 in Manchester, it is within these months that the rainfall would have been most notable. Since October falls outside of the summer period, the unusually wet conditions described for the summer of 1907 would not include October. In short, the details she provides are intended to be part of her elaborate deception since the reference to a wet summer and the tragic event occurring in October are part of the story's constructed narrative to unsettle Mr. Nuttel. "They were all three engulfed in a treacherous piece of bog" (Saki, 1914, p. 2).

Vera mentions a "bog" as a place where the husband and brothers sank. A bog is a freshwater wetland of soft, spongy ground consisting mainly of partially decayed plant matter known as peat. Bogs are generally found

in cool, northern climates. They often develop in poorly draining lake basins created by glaciers during the most recent ice age. Since bog remains of dead plant material, often moss, and in the majority of cases, sphagnum moss. The reason why Mrs. Sappleton's husband and her brother could sink, as Vera explained, is quite plausible. Moss usually has a slippery nature, and if one is not careful, it can cause a serious accident. Additionally, bogs are notorious for their unstable and treacherous terrain, which can easily trap and engulf those who venture into them unawares.

Vera's Manipulation: Exploring Trust and Deception

In "The Open Window," Vera is portrayed as a fifteen-year-old girl who acts as the opener of the story and, at the same time, accompanies Mr. Nuttel, who was visiting Mrs. Sappleton's house, who at that time took a long time to come down from her room. The way she acted was very relaxed and confident when talking with Mr. Nuttel; there was no awkwardness at all, as if she had known him for a long time, giving a self-possessed impression. Even though Mrs. Sappleton's arrival was delayed, Vera remained calm and tried to entertain Mr. Nuttel with topics that filled her mind. Throughout their interactions, Vera displays her keen observation and strategy in manipulating situations to her advantage. Her youthful innocence lends authority to clever ability as she weaves an intricate narrative about Mrs. Sappleton's tragic tragedy, which both disturbs and captivates Mr. Nuttel. Vera's double role as narrator and event orchestrator sets the stage for a more in-depth exploration of manipulation and trust in the narrative within the story.

Vera's first step in attracting Mr. Nuttel's attention was to stay by his side, giving the image that she was a kind and innocent girl, by inviting him to get along with her, as evidenced by the sentence, "In the meantime you must try and put up with me" (Saki, 1914, p. 1). Mr. Nuttel's response was hesitant at first; he was confused about how to respond to the girl until the conversation suddenly entered a topic that he thought was quite interesting, and unconsciously he began to be in the direction of Vera's conversation regarding the bad incident that happened to the owner of the house. Since Mr. Nuttel doesn't know anything, he indirectly wants to hear the woman's life background. She started the story with a statement, "Her great tragedy happened just three years ago," said the child; "that would be since your sister's time (Saki, 1914, p. 2).

"You may wonder why we keep that window wide open on an October afternoon," said the niece, indicating a large French window that opened onto a lawn (Saki, 1914, p. 2). Vera uses setting elements very effectively to create the atmosphere and convey a theme. The open French window is one of the most significant elements, which not only serves as a physical backdrop but also as a symbol rich with multiple meanings. French windows are supposed to be a beautiful and functional addition to any home. They provide natural light, enhance the visual appeal of the house, and improve ventilation. It also adds value, improves energy efficiency, and provides easy access to the outdoor living space. As a result, the owner or guest of the house can feel a large open space that offers uninterrupted vistas and improved airflow, which is ideal for the autumn months, bringing the great outdoors into the house. Mr. Nuttel himself didn't react strangely when he saw the window, as he should have. He only assumed the large French window was open because the weather had been unusually warm and the lawn outside was beautiful, as he said in a dialogue, "It is quite warm for the time of the year," said Framton" (Saki, 1914, p. 2). Looking at the lawn when having nerves is actually very good medicine for Mr. Nuttel, plus when it is autumn, the wind will blow warm and will definitely make his tense body relax again. However, this is the part that indicates the contrast of what Mr. Nuttel saw and the tragedy that Vera told. Instead of being a regular window, the window plays a key role in creating an atmosphere of mystery and suspense rather than becoming an eye-catching object of the house, making it a contrast between the actual function and the output to the character.

"Out through that window, three years ago to the day, her husband and her two young brothers went off for their day's shooting. They never came back. In crossing the moor to their favorite snipe-shooting ground, they were all three engulfed in a treacherous piece of bog. Their bodies were never recovered. That was the dreadful part of it." (Saki, 1914, p. 2).

The open window plays a role as a starting point for Vera to build a fictional story about the disappearance of Mrs. Sappleton's husband and brothers in a hunting accident three years earlier. "Here the child's voice lost its self-possessed note and became falteringly human." (Saki, 1914, p. 2). Vera's tone is different than previously, showing the sadness that seemed as if it had really happened and befell her aunt, which is her strategy to attract Mr. Nuttel's sense of empathy to believe in her. "Falteringly" implies a lack of confidence or

hesitation, implying that Vera, who had previously spoken in a composed and self-possessed tone, now appears more uncertain and emotionally affected. This change makes Vera appear more relatable and human, revealing genuine emotions and flaws. Essentially, her voice shifts from confident and detached to one that reflects genuine human emotion and fragility. "Poor aunt always thinks that they will come back some day; they and the little brown spaniel that was lost with them walk in at that window just as they used to do" (Saki, 1914, p. 2).

According to Vera, Mrs. Sappleton keeps the window open every day, hoping they will return. With this statement, "That is why the window is kept open every evening till it is quite dusk" (Saki, 1914, p. 2). The window becomes a symbol of unquenchable hope and futile waiting. This creates an atmosphere of melancholy and emotional tension because Mr. Nuttel is indirectly invited to sympathize with Mrs. Sappleton. Since Mr. Nuttel already has trust in Vera, this definitely can change his perception of Mrs. Sappleton. He could think of her as a woman with trauma or could even call her a woman with pity because she has not been able to forget the incident that happened quite a long time ago.

To pique Mr. Nuttel's interest, Vera connects the imaginary story to her own experience. As shown by the question, "Do you know, sometimes on still, quiet evenings like this, I almost get a creepy feeling that they will all walk in through that window—" (Saki, 1914, p. 2) Vera indirectly made Mr. Nuttel feel the horror she had witnessed. Vera's influence in this case has the potential to alter Mr. Nuttel's mood and perspective because scary stories tend to stay with people, especially those that take place in a setting that is familiar to the listener.

Mrs. Sappleton finally appears and talks about her husband and brothers, whom she expects to soon return through the window, which corresponds to the fabricated story Vera told. Mrs. Sappleton unknowingly affirms the details of Vera's story, reinforcing Mr. Nuttel's faith and making the fictional tragedy appear more plausible. As Mrs. Sappleton speaks about her husband and brothers, Mr. Nuttel's trust in the reality of the situation is manipulated. Vera's narrative about the tragedy involving the open window sets the stage for Mr. Nuttel's heightened anxiety and disbelief. It contributes to the tension by playing on his fragile trust in what is real versus what is fabricated.

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Mrs. Sappleton's explanation of the men coming back from shooting and making a mess over her carpets is mundane: "They've been out for snipe in the marshes today, so they'll make a fine mess over my poor carpets" (Saki, 1914, p. 3), contrasting sharply with the horror and tragedy of the story Vera told. This contrast emphasizes the normalcy and routine of rural life against the backdrop of a supposedly supernatural event, making the final revelation more striking. "She rattled on cheerfully about the shooting and the scarcity of birds and the prospects for duck in the winter," "her eyes were constantly straying past him to the open window and the lawn beyond" (Saki, 1914, p. 3). Mrs. Sappleton's attitude here reinforces Mr. Nuttel's faith in Vera and her imaginary story. Her attitude of only focusing on stories about her husband and his hobbies, as well as the fact that she paid little attention to the person she was speaking with and kept looking out the window, convinced Mr. Nuttel of the authenticity of Vera's story, to the point where he regretted his decision to visit the house on the anniversary of the tragedy.

The time when Mrs. Sappleton said, "Here they are at last!" she cried. "Just in time for tea, and don't they look as if they were muddied up to the eyes!" (Saki, 1914, p. 3) considered by Mr. Nuttel as a part of her trauma and hallucinations, as Vera said previously. This awakens his sense of empathy. "Framton shivered slightly and turned towards the niece with a look intended to convey sympathetic comprehension" (Saki, 1914, p. 4). Nuttel displays of "sympathetic comprehension" are an attempt to be polite and empathetic towards Vera, even though he feels uncomfortable and disturbed by the tragedy. By demonstrating sympathetic understanding, Nuttel attempts to avoid further tension or discomfort in his interactions with Vera. Despite his discomfort, Nuttel has been slightly affected by the tragic story Vera told. He may feel a need to show his sadness or concern about Vera's shared experience. "The child was staring out through the open window with dazed horror in her eyes" (Saki, 1914, p. 4).

In the preceding sentence, Vera clearly expands her role in deceiving Mr. Nuttel. She uses her manipulative and deceptive abilities to scare Mr. Nuttel by claiming that Mrs. Sappleton's husband and two brothers have returned from the dead. Mr. Nuttel had the impression that what he saw was a ghost rather than a living person. The "dazed horror eyes" in the context of the story are a part of the

scenario she devised to make Mrs. Sappleton's husband and brothers, who appear to have returned from the dead, more convincing and frightening to Mr. Nuttel. "In a chill shock of nameless fear, Framton swung round in his seat and looked in the same direction" (Saki, 1914, p. 4).

The tension reached its peak when Mr. Nuttel swung round his seat and saw three male figures approaching the house through the open window. This makes Mr. Nuttel convinced that he saw a ghost, which adds an element of horror and fear to the story. The window, in this case, becomes a portal between the real world and the supernatural world, at least in Mr. Nuttel's perspective. "Framton grabbed wildly at his stick and hat; the hall door, the gravel drive, and the front gate were dimly noted stages in his headlong retreat" (Saki, 1914, p. 4). Mrs. Sappleton introduces numerous contradictions with Vera's given narrative, bringing in various levels of mystery and suspense to the story. Mr. Nuttel, who immediately leaves the house, shows how strong the effect of the symbolism of an open window is in creating tension and a tense atmosphere.

Saki comes to an end of the story by bringing out Vera's natural talent for producing extraordinary narratives. This emphasizes that an open window is greater than just a sign of hope or mystery; it is also a tool that Vera uses to play with her imagination and have an impact on the perceptions of others. The window becomes a metaphor for the story, which is open to interpretation and manipulation. Saki's decision to utilize an open window as a sign of mystery demonstrates his ability to create an enigmatic atmosphere. This setting not exclusively provides a physical setting, but it also contributes to manipulating the reader's emotional response and turning out a plot twist at the end of the story. In this way, the open window becomes a powerful narrative component, providing several layers of suspense and mystery that keep the reader genuinely interested until the end of the story. With every aspect thought about, the open window in "The Open Window" by Saki serves as a multi-dimensional symbol that combines all of the elements of the narrative into a single cohesive entity. Saki conveys ideas of deception and the creative power while establishing a strong sense of mystery and suspense through the use of the symbolism of the setting. In consequence of this, the story is

highly impactful and leaves a deep impression on the reader.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Saki's "The Open Window" highlights the complexities of trust, perception, and manipulation in a seemingly tranquil rural setting. The setting not only plays as a physical backdrop but also as an important dynamic element of character experiences and the overall atmosphere. Mrs. Sappleton's countryside home becomes the stage for Vera's deceptive narrative, revealing the true nature of the irony and discord that the setting provides. Behind the visible, tranquil, enveloping nature, the setting of the story functions as a setting of psychological manipulation, contrasting reality and appearance. The experience of visiting the countryside that Mr. Nuttel hoped for as a relieving and calming escape ultimately becomes a source of confusion and anxiety, highlighting the power of suggestion and the impact of environmental conditions on a person's mental condition.

The symbolism of the open window serves as a central motif in the story, representing both hope and deception. Initially perceived as a symbol of tranquility and openness. Through Vera's manipulation, the open window transforms into a portal between reality and fiction, blurring the lines between truth and deception. The story shows the subtle interplay between setting, suggestion, and psychological response, revealing how our surroundings and the narratives encountered can profoundly influence the character perceptions and emotional well-being.

Ultimately, "The Open Window" by Saki explores the power of storytelling to shape perception and the fragility of trust in the face of manipulation. Saki's skillful use of setting not only enhances the plot but also provides a richer understanding of the characters' psychological landscapes. The story serves as a poignant reminder of the complexities of human relationships and the delicate balance between trust and deception. Through the lens of Mr. Nuttel's experience, Saki illustrates how trust in others can shape one's perception of reality and how it can easily be manipulated.

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