

Elizabeth gaskell
short story the old
nurse's story, which is
taken from the vira...



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The Old Nurse's Story' & 'The Weir' The of the short story d 'The Old Nurse's Story'; Elizabeth Gaskell, has been one of the most profound story tellers of the Victorian period. The write-ups of Elizabeth Gaskell, more popular with the name of Mrs. Gaskell, had put forward various genres with different strata of the society. 'The Old Nurse's Story', first published in 1852, falls under the category of ghost stories. On the other hand, Conor McPherson has been the contemporary playwright from Ireland. The play 'The Weir' was written by him in the year of 1997 and was produced in the same year at London.

'The Virago Book of Ghost Stories' has series of ghost stories which are edited chronologically so that the reader can feel the change in the pattern of the ghost stories over the ages. In the short story 'The Old Nurse's Story', the author Mrs. Gaskell pitches in various factors that make the plot of the story truly supernatural. She inculcates the series of untimely deaths, the secrets of the family, the sibling rivalries along with more common features like love and jealousy. The most important attribute that makes the story so popular in the genre of the supernatural stories is the addition of certain Gothic features like that of the old manor house, stormy evenings, extreme emotions, super natural ambience and above all the child ghost. The excerpts from the story, "I was all in a hot, trembling passion; and I said it was very well for her to talk, that knew what these sights and noises betokened, and that had, perhaps, had something to do with the spectre - child while it was alive. And I taunted her so, that she told me all she knew, at last; and then I wished I had never been told, for it only made me afraid more than ever" (Gaskell, "The Old Nurses Story") provides for the superb

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case of spectre - child.

The play 'The Weir' captures the scene of a regular rural Irish Bar where three 'regulars' are busy in having drink with the bar owner. The four of them are old time friends. While sipping in to their drinks, they are busy narrating and swapping stories with each other. All of a sudden, a lady, in her late thirties, arrives at the bar and asks for wine. She joins the four friends with her drink. The chemistry of the group changes as all of them tries to impress the lady with their stories which in due course of time turns to Irish folklores with supernatural events. After all the male counterparts are done with their respective stories, the lady commences her narration of the melancholy scheme of things that were also the reason of her leaving the city of Dublin and settling in the rural Ireland. The story has certain supernatural course of actions and at the end, it is found, that the lady is escorted to her house by Brendon, the bar owner and Jack, the senior - most of the three regulars (McPherson, "The Weir").

Both of the stories have certain super natural scheme of things involved in it which helps one to identify the stories with in the ghost genre. Both of them also have similarities in terms of child-spectre. The analysis of both the stories reveals that much of the stories turn towards the attribute of 'child - spectre'. It was more in the case of 'The Old Nurse's Story' which was evident from the excerpts drawn earlier in the discussion. The narrator regrets later that if she would not have been informed about the child-spectre earlier, she might not have been so afraid. Both the pieces, the short story and the play, are landmark creation in the arena and have won the taste of time.

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