

Lottery ticket'

[Law](#), [Justice](#)



Nothing is more cold and neutral in the allotment of fates among a group of equals than with a random game of chance. No one is favored neither is anyone discriminated against. Everyone enjoys the same chances of winning the pot viz. ' the LotteryTicket' by Anton Chekov, just as much as everyone shares the same degree of nervous apprehension from being chosen among the lot as part of a dark ritual viz. ' the Lottery', Shirley Jackson. Many men have squandered their lives and property to follow the fickle goddess of circumstances.

Likewise, societies throughout history from across different cultures have oftentimes done away with the long process of rational thought and quiet contemplation for a decisively quick way to decide on issues: through an impartial lottery draw of lives across the board. When chance is allowed to determine the fates of men, the results are irrevocable and are not open to discussion or compromise. Once mathematical statistics have chosen the roll, the consequences have the effect of law. Its concomitant mandate is as good as the universe itself has already firmly spoken on the matter.

Both the short stories dwell on the central idea of lottery but the angles by which the scheme of it is scrutinized are in the opposite extremes. In brief, Anton Chekov's ' the Lottery Ticket' tells of the sharp, positive change in the outlook of Ivan Dmitritch and his wife who both led an otherwise enervated and disillusioned life (Chekov 88). They were both thrilled with the prospect of being able to afford a few luxuries in life by winning a hefty sum of money from the lottery (ibid.).

Ivan begins to imagine the myriad ways to spend the prize money just as his wife was likewise animated at the thought of traveling to places and improving her lot in life (ibid.). It does not take long before Ivan realizes that it was his wife's ticket and the entire money belonged to her. He foresees the hypothetical situation where she would have him on a leash. Thus, to dispel the unsavory possibility of being subrogated to the wife, Ivan reveals that the ticket was spurious and the combination did not match the winning number. All at once, bliss was replaced with ill-humor. The resentment for their lives has never been more sharply felt. They had a brief taste of bliss although temporarily. From then on nothing will be the same for them again (Chekov 89).

On the other hand, Shirley Jackson's 'the Lottery' takes away the ecstatic pleasure one feels in winning the lottery and replaces it with abject dread and horror. Without going much into details, a group of people in a certain remote village adopted the brand of lottery which was designed to indiscriminately pick the name of a person, on a fixed time and location, to be subjected to public lynching (Jackson 12). The lottery draw is not something that everyone looks forward to every time it was being held. Instead, it is largely anticipated with fear and terror (Jackson 13).

Although the tradition is highly unusual and cruel, people in this community continue to practice the ritual even after its neighboring villages stopped doing it altogether (ibid.). Their talismanic attachment to the lottery is left unexplained although one can draw the connection between symbolic barbarism of backward societies and unquestioned belief in tradition.

Nevertheless, the people do not take alarm at the punishment because everyone is statistically equal with the other.

Only Tessie Hutchinson seems to be complaining precisely because she was on the fore about to suffer the injury and the unjust penalty of death (Jackson 14). In the same vein, the tradition is perpetuated to the younger generation who were at the frontlines eagerly casting out stones from a pile they have previously prepared.

Lottery has been around in human recorded history since time immemorial. Abraham who took charge of large plots of land settled disputes on ownership and patrimony through a simple and efficient method of drawing lots (King James Bible, Gen. 1. 18-25). The principle of deciding by lottery is practiced up to the present time. It is generally adopted to resolve issues because of its appeal to fair justice (From Grandpa with Love, 2).

The flipside to this argument is that everyone shares both justice and injustice equally. Shirley Jackson's ' the Lottery' is an exposition of this principle in the negative end, whereas, Anton Chekov's ' the Lottery' takes off from the notion that fair play sometimes breed resentment and jealousy by the one who is un-favored against those who are favored. The short stories are cries against injustice, either asking " why not me?" or " why me?" in the end.

Works Cited

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