



Sredni Vashtar and Other Stories

Saki

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Born in Burma in 1870, Scottish writer H.H. Munro (his pseudonym is from FitzGerald's *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*) satirized the social conventions, cruelty and foolishness of the Edwardian era with a highly readable blend of flippant humor and outrageous inventiveness, often overlaid with a mood of horror.

Sredni Vashtar and Other Stories Details

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From Reader Review Sredni Vashtar and Other Stories for online ebook

Maryam says

Such sweet stories. I love it. Love it.

Sadie says

Short quirky stories and some are quite disturbing - just how I them!

Angela Randall says

Interest was piqued by this article which asks authors which stories scare the hell out of them. The short story in question, Sredni Vashtar, is free to read [here](#).

The story of Sredni Vashtar is oddly creepy and well worth the 5-minute read. I'll have to get hold of the rest later.

Hayat says

The British writer, Hector Hugh Munro (Saki), is a short story master who displays exceptional intellectual ability in writing lively stories with a combination of sarcasm, unique characters, vigorously descriptive language, horror, and all types of irony. His innovative, sharply carved words reflects his witty and clever satire that hallmarks his style. Saki's short stories, especially Srendi Vashtar, The Open Window, the Lull, Tobermory, and The Storyteller, are - in my opinion - ones of the very few mischievously whimsical short stories for all ages. And although I have read some of them repeatedly, I still can feel the shocking ironies and enjoy the wryly amusing endings of his stories each time.

In Srendi Vashtar, you will reading about a very sick child, Conradin, who is raised by his cousin and guardian, Mrs De Ropp. The cousin thought that her duty is to take care of his health. She does this in a very choking way that makes the little boy hates her. He decided to rebel against his cousin and her authority. He invents a religion and prays to his "god" asking him to do only one thing for him. It is indeed a readable masterpiece about an interesting little boy, his cousin, and Srendi Vashtar!

J.G. Keely says

Hector Hugh Monroe was an author of British extraction born in Burma. He lived a life shared by many authors of the imperial period, traveling widely, and finding work as a journalist in the wild world of the empire's influence. Like Kipling before him, he was a foreign-born man whose varied experiences lent depth and breadth to his tales.

He began writing short stories under the moniker 'Saki'--taken either from a character in the Rubiyat or a type of monkey--and became an acknowledged master of the form, tightening up the quirky, sometimes eerie style of Kipling and adding a deep wellspring of absurd humor which would in turn inspire the high farces of Wodehouse. He lived a suppressed man in an age when the 'unspeakable vice of the Greeks' was a criminal offense, and died a middle-aged soldier trying to make a difference in the trenches of The Great War.

What can a reviewer say about a perfect short story? That it must be brief enough not to be bogged down in superfluity, and it must be long enough to show a complete story arc: the set up, the conflict, and the reveal. A perfect short story quickly introduces characters who are at once recognizable yet puzzling--that strange gift which so shines in Chekhov. It revolves around a climax which is almost a punchline, but with a tinge of bittersweet pathos.

The master carver pulls from his pocket what seems a plain walnut, but in a moment, has popped it open, so that we can see inside a scene has been carved in complete detail. We bend down, our eyes devouring details, drawing us in, and just as we have been given a glimpse of this dear, miniature world, it snaps shut again, leaving us with the vivid impression of a work of utter precision, where any stroke out of place could have marred the whole thing in an instant.

Each story is an example of self-sufficiency, with everything in its place, so that a reviewer feels almost impious at the notion that he could add anything to a work so self-contained. Instead I must make something to hold it--a setting for the well-cut stone, a baize-lined box for the brass-hinged walnut--and having made a box to hold the box which holds the story, all that remains is for me to give it to you.

There's simply nothing more to add.

Andy Nieradko says

Sredni Vashtar is probably my favorite short story ever. I can't wait until my sons are old enough to not be freaked out by it.

Rebecca says

Sredni Vashtar--a little bit crazy. A little bit disturbing. But great to analyse for English class. Enjoy.

Helen (Helena/Nell) says

Do one thing for me, Sredni Vashtar . . .

I love this story. I've been reading and returning to it over thirty years.

Recently I discovered how many short films have been inspired by this very short story -- see YouTube search. Of course, the author was quite a strange man. But he was justifiably regarded as a short fiction master.

Not all the stories are as good as Sredni Vashtar, but they all have something.

Elizabeth Bingham says

Saki is terrifying and gratifying - he is the master of the short story and what make him so good is often lost on modern writers. It's sort of sad sometimes...

Laura says

From BBC Radio 4:

Edwardian short stories by Saki (HH Munro) restaged in a modern-day gated community. Adapted by Sean Grundy.
