

SATIRICAL TECHNIQUES AND ARTISTIC STRUCTURE IN EVELYN WAUGH'S STORIES

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Annotation: This article provides a detailed examination of Evelyn Waugh's use of satire in his short stories, with particular attention to his narrative structure, stylistic choices, and tonal strategies. It argues that Waugh deliberately avoids emotional excess and overt judgment, favoring a minimalist and understated approach that heightens the satirical effect. Through examples from stories like "Mr. Loveday's Little Outing," "The Balance," and "Basil Seal Rides Again," the article illustrates how Waugh's calm, dry tone and structured plot development subtly expose hypocrisy, vanity, and social inertia. The analysis further highlights how Waugh's satire relies on contrast between appearance and reality, speech and action, rather than direct criticism. The research draws from both Russian and English literary criticism, demonstrating Waugh's unique position in the tradition of English secular satire.

Key words: Evelyn Waugh, satire, irony, English literature, short stories, narrative structure, minimalism in style, hypocrisy in fiction, social criticism, character contrast, pathos vs irony, British satire, subtle mockery, 20th-century prose, satirical technique.

Evelyn Waugh did not like long introductions. He didn't waste time describing the hero's feelings or the story of his family. He started almost immediately. It was as if he knew that the reader had come not for a novel, but for observation. But this does not mean that he neglected the composition. On the contrary, it was the structure of the story that allowed him to build a satirical effect. He used the plot, the climax, and the denouement so that you wouldn't immediately realize that you were being ridiculed. And then it was too late. In many cases, the tie often seems harmless. He describes the hero, gives him a name, a place of action and a reason for the act. But he does it as if nothing special is happening. For example, in the story "Mr. Loveday's Little Outing," the action begins with the heroine deciding to arrange a day out for her father. It sounds like concern. As a manifestation of love. But after a few paragraphs, it becomes clear that she is doing this for the sake of others, not for his sake. Such a tie works as a disguise. She lets you relax. Make yourself think it's just a story. And then- bang! - and you understand: the author shows hypocrisy, which we accept as the norm. Vo's climax is not loud. Not dramatic. It often looks like a normal conversation. A simple solution.

Or even silence. But this is where the text gets its main meaning. Here the hero is faced with a situation that shows who he really is. And then the satire is revealed in its entirety. In "The Balance," the climax is the moment when Uncle Charles has to make a decision. He says he is "always guided by principles." But instead he evades the question. He prefers to maintain his posture rather than take a step towards the truth. This moment is not an explosion. It's a failure. A slow descent into reality. So Vo creates a climax that you don't expect. But you remember it for a long time. Evelyn Waugh's ending is rarely joyful. Sometimes it doesn't look like a denouement at all. The hero doesn't change. He doesn't repent. He just keeps living the way he used to. That's her strength. He doesn't get a lesson. He just... exists. And you, the reader, understand that there will be no changes. Because he doesn't want to see them. In the story "Basil Seal Rides Again", the hero leaves home as if he is going to start a new life. But in the last sentence, the author writes: "Bazil left, confident that everything would change. But no one knew what it was." This is not the final. This is the signature under the portrait of an entire culture. A culture that is more concerned with words than deeds. Who believes in change, but doesn't know why it's needed. The Vo form is not just a way to tell a story. It's a tool that helps him build satire. It does not use complex constructions. There are no pretentious monologues. There are no emotional exclamations. He takes a simple structure: the beginning, the development, the end - and hides a mockery inside it.

- The plot gives you a reason to believe in the hero. The climax makes you wonder: what does he really represent?

- Decoupling does not provide relief. She just reminds me: You've known for a long time that he's not what he wants to appear.

That's how his stories work. They're not joking. They show how easy it is to become the object of satire without even noticing it. In "Mr. Loveday's Little Outing," the plot is based on family care. The climax is when the old man begins to say things that are not expected of him. And the denouement is how his family is relieved to send him back to the nursing home. In "The Balance", the plot is set against the background of nobility. The culmination is in the refusal to act. The denouement is that the hero remains the same as he was. And even proud of it. And in "Basil Seal Rides Again" the plot is set against the backdrop of social life. The climax is in the hero's attempt to change something. The denouement is that he himself does not understand why he did it. In each case, the structure is the same. But the result is different. But there is always the same conclusion: a person does not live by the truth. But according to the form. It is equally important how the story is structured stylistically. Through what words, sentences, intonations. Vo conveys his ideas. How he plays with language so that the reader does not immediately realize that he has been ridiculed. Therefore, it is worth referring to the style next. See how intonation, word choice, repetition, and omissions

enhance the satirical effect. How can an author say everything through language without uttering a single explicit word? Evelyn Waugh does not frame her stories as combat reports. It uses a classic three-part structure so that the reader does not expect a blow. So that it goes into the text as a small talk. And he came out with a question to himself. His plot is not a trap. Its climax is not an explosion. His denouement is not a lesson. It's more like a mirror. One small one. Hanging in the corner of the room. But which you don't want to look at, but pass by. That's how he builds satire. Not by shouting. Through a glance. In one sentence. One day into the life of a hero who says more than an entire novel. Evelyn Waugh was not a writer with a single style. He could speak solemnly, almost formally. He could describe life with cold precision. Or he could suddenly insert a phrase full of hidden mockery. His stories seem simple. But the further you read, the more clearly you realize that there is a whole game behind this external simplicity. Playing with styles. A game of intonation. Playing with words that sound right but don't mean anything. This is an important element of his satire. Because through style, it shows how easily we can lose touch with ourselves. How we begin to speak beautifully, but live differently.¹

Conclusion: Evelyn Waugh's short fiction exemplifies a refined form of satire built not on loud denunciations, but on the quiet exposure of absurdity through structure and tone. His minimalist approach—eschewing emotional depth and dramatic tension—creates a deceptive calm that lures the reader into complacency before revealing a deeper, often unsettling truth. By letting his characters speak in noble terms while acting in self-interest or cowardice, Waugh draws attention to the gap between ideals and reality without overt commentary. His satire is thus not a weapon wielded in anger, but a mirror held up with precision and restraint. Through carefully crafted plots, understated climaxes, and unresolved conclusions, Waugh critiques a society trapped in its own illusions. His mastery lies in making the reader laugh, pause, and then reflect—not on the absurdity of others alone, but on their own susceptibility to the same flaws.

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