

UNCOVERING THE HIDDEN MAGIC AND GOTHIC THROUGH UNCANNY AND UNHOMELY IN ANTHONY HOROWITZ'S RAVEN'S GATE

Abstract

This paper packs its bags for a journey to a place which is not down on maps but in children's fictional worlds. This journey will be through weary roads abutted by gothic on one side and magic on the other. The road this paper takes leads to the destination of Sigmund Freud's uncanny from where the study will chart the route to Homi Bhabha's Unhomely. The journey will overcome its obstacles of dark and formidable magical worlds, on looking back to which, the research will trace the uncanny and the unhomely. This paper studies the genre of gothic and magic in Anthony Horowitz's *Raven's Gate* (2007) through the penetrating lens of "The Uncanny" (1919) by Sigmund Freud, translated by David McLintock, and the concept of unhomely from Homi K. Bhabha's 1992 essay "The World and the Home". By charting this journey, this paper explores how the selected novel has incorporated and defied the traditional gothic tropes. With this exploration, the paper establishes the correlation between the real world and the magical world which establishes a connection with the uncanny and unhomely by extensively studying the selected novel and its protagonists' experiences.

Keywords: Magic, Gothic, Children's Literature, Uncanny, Unhomely.

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I. INTRODUCTION

This chapter delves into the captivating world of Anthony Horowitz's *Raven's Gate* by employing a thematic analysis and navigating the intricacies by uncovering the multifaceted nature of its good and bad magic. As the research peels back the layers of *Raven's Gate*, it unravels the threads that connect the uncanny, the unhomely, and the forces of magic interwoven with gothic within its pages. This chapter is structured into subsections dedicated to exploring the themes of magic, the gothic, the uncanny, and the unhomely, as outlined in this dissertation. The first subsection delves into the theme of magic in *Raven's Gate*, explicitly examining the presence of both the good and bad sides of magic within the novel. The subsequent subsection delves into the gothic theme, infused with dark humour, as manifested in *Raven's Gate*. Additionally, this chapter incorporates Freud's concept of the uncanny and Homi Bhabha's concept of the unhomely to provide a deep analysis of *Raven's Gate*. In the subsection dedicated to the uncanny, the exploration centres around the relevance of themes of crime and gore within the novel, evaluating their significance in children's literature within the framework of the uncanny. Furthermore, within the subsection on the unhomely, the chapter examines whether *Raven's Gate* satisfies Bhabha's conditions for successfully evoking the unhomely by closely scrutinising the novel's depiction of displacement, otherness, and the destabilisation of familiar environments. Incorporating Freud's and Bhabha's concepts enriches our understanding of the novel's more profound implications and enhances our appreciation of its thematic complexity.

II. THE BRIGHT SIDE OF MAGIC: ILLUMINATING ITS POSITIVE INFLUENCE

Magic, with its intricate nature and multifaceted manifestations, serves as a pivotal element in the exploration of the uncanny within the text. To truly grasp the uncanny and its presence in the narrative, it becomes essential to delve into the complexities of magic and its various sides. Magic is extraordinary to and for the human eye. It is marvellous, wonderful, amazing, stupendous, and beautiful. Online Cambridge Dictionary defines magic as: "the use of special powers to make things happen that would usually be impossible, such as in stories for children" ("Magic"). Manuel García Teijeiro's 1993 article "Religion and Magic" opines that: "Magic is any action which tries to achieve an effect which cannot be explained by the normal law of causality. It must be borne in mind that this lack of an explanation is subjective and depends on the point of view adopted: it may be that of the magician, that of the client, that which dominates an epoch or corresponds to present knowledge." (124). To understand magic by eyes is quite simple because one just has to witness it. The amazing fact here is that, one can never be the doer of magic because he or she is witnessing it, whereas one can create magic by using our mind.

Fred Botting notes that magic is eminent even in gothic fiction as he remarks, "Transgressing the bounds of reality and possibility, they also challenged reason through their overindulgence in fanciful ideas and imaginative flights" (Botting 4). There was a massive difference between science, magic and Christian beliefs in the medieval era and they were used as a cover sheet for the supernatural. This overlap of the world of science and magic incorporates supernaturalistic science fiction as the genre of *Raven's Gate* which from smashing a water jug to fighting skeletal dinosaurs at the museum, leaves no room for error in the magical sphere.

The powers of magic are introduced to the readers in chapter 2 entitled “Broken Glass” as Matt uses his telekinetic powers or, in layman’s terms, magical powers to smash the jug (Horowitz 21). Another character, Tom Burgess gives Matt a magical talisman, “dangling from it, and on the stone was a symbol engraved in gold. The outline of a key.” for Matt to survive in the weirdo-supernatural world (Horowitz 95). In order to escape the weird sorcery, Tom Burgess gave him the magical talisman; with the help of which, he explored the world outside Hive Hall as Matt observes: “it was the first reminder he’d had that there was an actual world outside Hive Hall and he had no idea how he’d managed to miss it when he made the journey two nights before.” (Horowitz 99). It was magic that entrapped him and it was magic that released him. That is what we, as readers, must keep in mind, that magic can be both good and evil. It is up to us how one sees it.

III. THE DARK SIDE OF MAGIC: EXPLORING ITS NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES

The presence of the dark or evil side of magic is inevitable in *Raven’s Gate*. Witchcraft is often associated with the use of supernatural or mystical powers to achieve a desired outcome or to influence the natural world. In modern times, the term witch may also be used in a broader sense to refer to a person who practises various forms of paganism or earth-based spirituality. Stereotypically, a witch is someone who would cast a deadly spell, ride on brooms with a devilish laughter, hurt people especially children, because they are the easiest to tempt and convince, and would have a lair deep in the dark forests. This description describes the most clichéd witch but Anthony Horowitz redefined this definition and gave birth to a new witch. This new witch is aided by science.

Science and witchcraft portray opposites but this new witch is an amalgamation of it. Although, this witch still uses the stereotypical bonfires, powders made using animals, casting spells; but using special chemical compounds, splitting atoms, utilising nuclear energy and moreover, using a nuclear power plant, Omega One, as a lair for witchcraft. This new outlook changes the definition of a witch.

In the narrative, her witchcraft emanates hallucinations resulting in trembling and the wooden planks on the floor “cracked open, splinters exploding all around” (Horowitz 55). A bright light explodes through the room and he sees a “giant, inhuman hand” (Horowitz 55). Further, Mrs. Deverill performs witchcraft on Matt during which he observes that the witches have set up a metallic tripod filled with inflammable material next to the bed and “the two women were speaking in a language that he didn’t understand...as they fed the flames with black and green-coloured crystals. Matt saw the crystals melt and bubble, and at once the room was filled with yellow smoke. The smell of Sulphur crept into his nostrils.” (Horowitz 57). This smell infers the use of a chemical compound in order to perform witchcraft. Further, Mrs. Deverill drew a mark on Matt’s chest and forehead with snake’s blood immobilising him; and later making him drink the cup of blood which “tasted bitter, more horrible than anything in the world...and slithered into his stomach like the ghost of the snake it had come from” (Horowitz 58). This sensation made him feel like he was buried alive into the bed evoking the sensation of uncanny adding to the gothic lore of the novel.

In the narrative, Detective Superintendent Mallory, gets attacked by the witches as the atmosphere in his car turned cold, the road ahead flickered due to the windscreen wipers, the radio was uttering strange ominous sounds

“EMANY...NEVAEH...NITRA...OH...WREHTAF...” (Horowitz 149). This uninviting sound was the Lord’s prayer Our Father said backwards. These sounds grew louder with time and the coldness was almost unbearable due to which the car hit an “invisible ramp...rocketed into the air” and “summersaulted over the crash barrier” resulting in Mallory’s death (Horowitz 150).

In fictional narratives, witches possess magical powers or knowledge that allows them to bring forth or create monstrous beings. It also highlights the supernatural abilities and mystical nature of the witches themselves. This creation of monsters is evident in J.K. Rowling’s Harry Potter series as the antagonist Voldemort creates Inferi, and the character Bellatrix Lestrange keeps a monstrous pet snake named Nagini. Also, Andrzej Sapkowski’s *The Witcher* series portrays witches that create golems, summon demonic entities, or manipulate beasts to do their bidding. Similarly in *Raven’s Gate*, Jayne Deverill, in chapter 12, draws out otherworldly dogs through witchcraft as she uses a white chemical powder and throws it into the flames and “she shouted a brief sentence in a strange language and took something out of her pocket. Then she waved her hand over the flames. It was trailing a cloud of white powder, which hung for a moment in the air before falling.” (Horowitz 160). This sorcery created two other-worldly huge dogs. Further in the narrative, Deverill, gave life to all the extinct dinosaurs “that couldn’t fly, that couldn’t even exist. It was a creature that hadn’t been seen on the planet for millions of years...it was the fossilised skeleton...it had been brought to life” (Horowitz 224). The creatures were described as other-worldly because “the creature was neither living nor dead...it had eye sockets but no eyes, wings but no feathers, a bulging ribcage with nothing inside.” (Horowitz 223). This irrational phenomenon adds weight to the magical lore and since the characters are petrified, the language becomes gothic and in turn evoking uncanny in the reader’s mind. This invasion of the magical world in the real world evokes a sense of unhomely in the protagonist. The blurring of lines between the real world and the magical world takes place in this episode, hence leading Matt into an unhomely feeling.

In the final stages *Raven’s Gate*, the witches perform a black sabbath on Roodmasday with three ingredients: ritual, fire and blood. They inherited the rituals, created the fire and Matthew’s sacrifice provided the blood. This ritual took place in Omega One which marks a contrast in the novel, here the contrast of ancient and modern are juxtaposed setting the ground for the unhomely feeling. A nuclear power station splits the atom in a metal called uranium which causes an explosion, but using the nuclear reactor it can reach a critical mass to explode like a nuclear bomb. When the last control rods will be lifted, the reactor heated up to extremity melting the gates to split open and break the barrier between the two worlds. Evidently, the witch in the novel used scientific technology in order to succumb to the rituals of witchcraft. This amalgamation of science and witchcraft, a contrast, leads the reader perplexed and in a state of in-betweenness. This in-betweenness causes the reader and the protagonist to feel unhomely and estranged of their own world.

In the final stages of the novel, Mrs. Deverill, the witch, was burned, but this was not ordinary burning of witches, instead, she was burned with acid. This horrendous episode is described as:

- The acid was eating into her. Richard peered down and saw that already much of her face had gone...

- Mrs Deverill was no longer recognizable. Her flesh was peeling away and her hair had come out...witches had been burned in the Middle Ages, he knew, but it could never have been as ghastly as this. (Horowitz 267).

This modern burning of a witch is episodic as well as ground breaking; as it changes the definition of a witch. Although it is fiction, it can redefine the burning of witches and add a new course in the history of witchcraft. Looking back on the supernatural elements from the novel, one recalls the twisting roads that ran in impossible circles, a dead cat came out alive, a dead farmer's phone call to Matthew, flying cars through invisible ramps, giant monstrous hands, skeletal dinosaurs and a magical talisman. This supernatural phenomena in the novel adds weight to the gothic which in turn evokes uncanny as the reader is spooked with these supernatural entities and is perplexed due to their existence as it breaks the barrier between the real world and the magical world. With this study, the research develops a firm ground for the successful evocation of uncanny and unhomely.

IV. GOTHIC HAUNTINGS: SPECTRAL ENCOUNTERS AND SUPERNATURAL MANIFESTATIONS

Gothic is a genre of literature that originated in the late 18th century, characterised by elements of mystery, horror, death, decay, and the supernatural, often set in atmospheric, mediaeval, or eerie locations. Gothic tends to explore themes of madness, the supernatural, ancestral curses, and the power of the subconscious. The genre creates a dark and foreboding atmosphere, often using settings such as crumbling castles, haunted houses, or isolated mansions to enhance the sense of mystery and terror. It involves portraying vast, overpowering natural landscapes or supernatural occurrences that evoke both fear and a sense of wonder. It often delves into the darker aspects of human psychology and the subconscious. Characters may experience intense fear, paranoia, and madness.

Raven's Gate follows the traditional norms of gothic but nevertheless breaks the traditional norms of gothic. In the novel, chapter 6 entitled "Whispers" invokes the feeling of terror in the readers as Matt hears some whispers from the woods at midnight (Horowitz 71). Michel Foucault in his article "Language to Infinity" observes: "The language of terror is dedicated to an endless expense, even though it only seeks to achieve a single effect" (65). These sounds create a sense of terror because of its unknown source due to which the fear of the unknown kicks in in the protagonist, and in turn, in the reader; and a successful evocation of terror is achieved. This fear of the unknown is successfully captured in H.P. Lovecraft's 1927 essay on "Supernatural Horror in Literature", first published in *The Recluse* as he says, "THE OLDEST and strongest emotion of mankind is fear, and the oldest and strongest kind of fear is fear of the unknown." (Lovecraft). This language of terror is one of the key components of gothic as Fred Botting notes: "Gothic terrors activate a sense of the unknown and project an uncontrollable and overwhelming power" (Botting 5).

Unknown things are more terrifying than what is known. Interestingly, we, humans, are not afraid of the dark, but of what lurks in the dark. The protagonist Matthew was horrified by the woods itself due to its unnaturalness as the woods were laid out in straight lines, it seemed more artificial than natural and are represented as "pitch black. An owl cried out. There was a scurry of leaves as some night creature battled its way up towards the sky."

(Horowitz 157). Scurry of leaves mark the presence of an unnamed creature. Pitch black represents lurking darkness; and the owl just adds to the spookiness in this scene.

Not only in language, but also in architecture, Raven's Gate remarks gothic architecture as, "Matt examined the grand Victorian building. It looked like something out of a fairy tale with its terracotta and blue bricks, its Gothic towers and its menagerie of carved stone animals poking out of every nook and corner." (Horowitz 204). Gothic architecture, according to M.H. Abrams, "denotes the mediaeval type of architecture, characterised by the use of the high pointed arch and vault, flying buttresses, and intricate recesses, which spread through western Europe between the twelfth and sixteenth centuries" (Abrams 112). The language, architecture, woods, fear of the unknown adds weight to the novel's gothic elements and grounds the research for further dive into the realm of uncanny.

In the gothic genre, prophecies add a sense of impending doom as noted by Robert Harris that "an ancient prophecy is connected with the castle or its inhabitants (either former or present). The prophecy is usually obscure, partial, or confusing. "What could it mean?" In more watered down modern examples, this may amount to merely a legend" (Harris). The prophecy in Raven's Gate is stated before chapter 1 starts, it states: "Before the beginning...was the gate...And five gatekeepers...children Four boys...One girl...it has been written...the night of everlasting darkness is drawing in...the gate is about to open. The gatekeepers must return." (Horowitz 7). The prophecy prophesies about raven's gate; the darkness which will lead the gate to burst open; lastly, it demands the return of gatekeepers. It talks about five gatekeepers; and those gatekeepers frequently feature in Matt's dreams. All of this conforms to the truth in the prophecy and how every part of the puzzle is being put in place for it. This partial completion of the prophecy adds to the novel's capacity to terrorise and adds another layer to the primitive belief of humankind. This return of primitiveness marks another milestone on the road to uncanny sensation.

Furthermore, the novel challenges traditional Gothic norms by incorporating elements of the modern world, such as the LEAF Project, which initially appears to be a positive initiative but is revealed to be a scam against children. This subversion highlights the corruption and hidden horrors within contemporary institutions. The manipulation of the protagonist, Matt, and the revelation that his involvement in the LEAF Project was pre-planned adds a layer of complexity to the narrative. As noticed in this chapter, the new witch in the novel breaks the traditional notions of a witch. In a nutshell, Raven's Gate combines traditional gothic elements with contemporary themes and settings, creating a compelling and nuanced narrative that both adheres to and challenges the conventions of the gothic genre.

V. INVESTIGATING THE UNCANNY: UNRAVELING ITS PECULIARITIES

Sigmund Freud's "The Uncanny" was written in the year 1919 as a response to Earnest Jentsch's "On the Psychology of the Uncanny" (1906). This study uses the translated version of "The Uncanny" by David McLintock. In his essay, Freud defines the uncanny as "nothing new or alien, but something which is familiar and old-established in mind and which has become alienated from it only through the process of repression" (Freud 148). Sigmund Freud highlights that the uncanny that we find in fiction is "above all much richer than what we know from experience" (Freud 155). The world of fiction opens up several portals from which the uncanny can be aroused as compared to real life. Elizabeth

Bronfen in her 2017 book *Over Her Dead Body* observes that the “most important boundary blurring inhabited by the uncanny is that between the real and fantasy” (113). If the work is more realistic and follows the norms of realism, uncanny arousal will be like its arousal in real life. Here, as Freud says, the writer makes the reader believe that the novel is real. But this belief is shattered when a robust supernaturalistic event occurs in fiction. In a way, the writer “betrays us to a superstition we thought we had ‘surmounted’; he tricks us by promising us everyday reality and then going beyond it. We react to his fiction as if they had been our own experiences. By the time we become aware of the trickery, it is too late: the writer has already done what he set out to do.” (Freud 157). The writer would hide uncanny possibilities in the novel only to spook the reader.

Freud suggests that the uncanny arises due to “castration,” “the double or the doppelganger,” unintended “repetition,” and animistic conceptions of the universe (Freud 149). The animistic conceptions of the universe are associated with the primitive beliefs of human beings. Primitive beliefs are associated with the “omnipotence of thoughts, instantaneous wish fulfilment, secret harmful forces and the return of the dead.” (Freud 154). The presence of magic and gothic elements, a primitive belief, evokes a sense of uncanny. *Raven's gate* fulfils this condition by dipping the novel into the pond of realism and grounds the novel in the language of uncanny. The setting of *Raven's Gate* is ordinary or the real world of crime, police, government, trains, buildings, monuments and fostering programmes which is crucial for the uncanny. The fantastical or the fairy tale's world denies the existence of uncanny. It is only when the writer roots his work into reality and takes “all appearances...on the ground of common reality” that uncanny is successfully evoked (Freud 156).

Moving further, the condition of something inanimate being animate is satisfied in *Raven's Gate* when the cat, Asmodeus, and Tom Burgess come back to life after being murdered in the narrative. The portrait of Mrs Deverill's ancestor in her house is yet another example of uncanny. The portrait changes according to Matt's behaviour i.e. it will seem happy and lively if Matt is showcasing good manners and ethics whereas the portrait will seem eerie and ghastly if Matt misbehaves with Mrs Deverill. The portraits root the terror and work in a way to bring back the dead back to life as Fred Botting notes, “While the present excises the superstitions of the past and domesticates Gothic terrors, daguerrotype representations have uncanny effects in bringing the dead to life, until, that is, the picture is revealed to be of a living rather than dead relative” (Botting 77). The portrait is like a detective's eye to be kept on the protagonist Matt as he observes, “he could have sworn she had been looking towards the frame, over to the left. Now her eyes were fixed on him.” (Horowitz 53). Eerily, the portrait and the cat convey Matt's whereabouts to Mrs Deverill. They act as modern CCTV surveillance systems but only through witchcraft. This is yet another contrast in the novel which sets the protagonist in a perplexing situation building the ground for unhomeliness. This animism conforms to the evocation of uncanny in the reader's mind.

Endless repetition is another condition for the uncanny. In the narrative, the roads ran in impossible circles outwitting Matt. He would peddle his bicycle on the road but would end up being at the same spot where he was before. This repetition creates uncanniness and exhausts the protagonist. Matt's powers can be associated with telepathic dreams. Nandor Fodor's 1942 article “Telepathic Dreams” gives a definition of telepathy as the author says,

“The word telepathy was originally coined by F. W. H. Myers in 1882 and he defined it as “transmission of thought independently of the recognized channels of sense”” (61). Using this definition, the research associates dreams with telepathy which will suffice the conditions for uncanny. It is through these powers that he is informed about the other five prophesied children. Using telepathic powers, Matt smashed a water jug and later in the novel called out to Richard for help. In the climax of the novel where the ritual is performed on Matt, he uses his telepathic powers to stop Marsh from stabbing him in the chest. By setting the novel in a real world, Horowitz satisfies the fundamentals for a potential uncanny evocation. The return of primitive beliefs of animism, constant recurrence of things, telepathic dreams, motif of death, vivid description of dead bodies, severed limbs and being burned alive—all these conditions are fulfilled by Raven’s Gate which, in turn, successfully invoke the feelings of uncanny in the protagonists and the readers and achieves one of the objectives of this research.

VI. STRANGERS IN A FAMILIAR WORLD: UNRAVELING THE UNHOMELY ENCOUNTER

Homi K. Bhabha gave the concept of unhomely in his 1992 essay “The World and the Home”. This concept was inspired by Sigmund Freud’s “The Uncanny” (1919), as stated by Clare Bradford in her 2003 essay “There is No Place Like Home: Unhomely moments in three postcolonial picture books” and by Ali Akbar Moghaddasi Rostami in his 2016 essay “The Notion of Unhomeliness in the Pickup: Homi Bhabha Revisited”. In Bhabha’s essay, to be unhomed does not mean to be homeless. The unhomely tries to maintain cohesion between the personal, psychic history and the broad political existence. The home becomes a site for unfamiliar or alien invasions. It states that whatever was meant to be hidden and forbidden came out in the open.

Annette Russell, in her 2017 article “Journeys through the Unheimlich and the Unhomely” says: “In disrupting the safety and intimacy of home, this magical world intrusion can act as a call to adventure: the familiar is rendered unfamiliar, home becomes unhomely, and at that moment, the hero’s journey begins” (3). In this context Matthew Freeman, undertook his call to adventure and crossed the boundary of the familiar into the unfamiliar. This displacement causes the unhomely moment. In the gothic setting, when a character experiences dark, eerie, mysterious, supernatural instances, it causes the arousal of the uncanny, which suffices the definition of unhomely, which states: “the border between home and world becomes confused, and uncannily, the private and the public become part of each other...” (Bhabha, *The World and the Home* 141). The character and its house are private, whereas the dark, eerie, mysterious, and supernatural represent the outside world. This invasion blurs the line between the home and the foreign as he states: “the unhomely is the shock of recognition of the world-in-the-home, the home-in-the-world” (Bhabha, *The World and the Home* 141). This invasion assists the concept of unhomely, satisfied by the gothic, magic, and uncanny feeling.

Unhomeliness represents a form of psychological and existential tension where individuals grapple with questions of identity, representation, and belonging. As it is a theoretical concept rather than a specific occurrence or event, it is not tied to specific instances or examples but instead serves as a lens to understand the complexities of cultural identity, displacement, and hybridity in various contexts. Hence, this study tries to apply this

theory outside the postcolonial context and into the world of fiction, specifically into children's fiction. Instead of countries, this dissertation uses worlds, the real and the magical, to observe the feeling of unhomely being evoked in children's fiction.

By exploring the feeling of unhomely in fictional worlds, this dissertation delves into the psychological and existential tension experienced by characters who navigate questions of identity, representation, and belonging. This dissertation uses the fictional worlds as a lens to shed light on the complexities of cultural identity, displacement, and hybridity in children's literature. It examines how young protagonists grapple with the inherent tensions of not fully belonging to either the familiar or the fantastical world. This dissertation recognizes that young readers are not immune to the complexities of identity and belonging. It acknowledges that children's literature has the potential to navigate these nuanced experiences, providing young readers with the opportunity to engage with themes of displacement, hybridity, and the negotiation of identity in a safe and imaginative space.

Matthew, the protagonist, is the prey of unhomeliness since chapter 1 in the novel. Matt doesn't fit in with the society and his isolation is evident as the narrator remarks that, "the crowd meant nothing to him. He wasn't part of it. He never had been—and he sometimes thought he would never be." (Horowitz 9). His unhomeliness in Ipswich town is evident as he "hadn't been born in Ipswich. He had been brought here and he hated everything about the place." (Horowitz 10). This disgust and hatred were taken over by Mrs Deverill, his new foster parent assigned by the LEAF project whose first words were, "You have to remember that nobody cares about you. You have no parents. No family. You have little education and no prospects." (Horowitz 47).

Matthew's journey began as an outcast in the real or ordinary world. His adventure is replaced by misadventure when he is sent to Hive Hall. In the initial stages, he is reluctant to this call but later he conjures up courage for it. Overpowering his oppressors—Jayne Deverill, Sir Michael Marsh, Claire Deverill, Asmodeus, Noah, the villagers and, the Old Ones—Matt rejuvenated himself and came out stronger, braver, and intelligent from the magical world and triumphed over his oppressors in the real world.

Matthew's safety and intimacy of the real world is invaded by the devilish powers of Mrs Deverill. The Old Ones, humongous monsters from the magical world, break in the real world which results in crossing of the thresholds between two worlds. Homi Bhabha in *The World and the Home* notes that there are secrets attached to the home which represent unhomely (147). The secrets of the home, in the case of *Raven's Gate*, are attached with the magical world. This magical world is kept hidden or in disguise and hence creates an "unhomely stirring" (Bhabha, *The World and the Home* 147). Moreover, the binaries or contraries create unhomeliness; as the spheres of private and public, psyche and social, past and present, are considered opposites but are linked through an "in-betweenness" of these spheres, which, in turn, develops an unhomely stirring in those spheres (Bhabha, *The World and the Home* 148). These binaries or contraries hence evoke unhomeliness in the protagonist.

Dreams are amalgamated with reality throughout this novel. Whatever is unbelievable is recounted as a dream. This dismissal of truth, or so-called reality, leads to an unexplained supernaturalism, which, in turn, conforms to supernaturalism of the novel. The dreams

visions in the novel are the sign of the revelation of the truth. These dreams are associated with telepathic dreams as discussed under the previous section in this chapter. The dreams disclose the truth about Matthew; although, the dream is portrayed as opposite of the real world where “the lightning was black not white—and now he realised that the entire world had been turned inside out, like the negative of a photograph” (Horowitz 71). This inverted dream metaphorically sketches a boundary between the truth and illusion. This forms a contrary of falsity and truth. These contraries run the course of the novel.

William Blake's *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1790) lays out an interesting observation about contraries that “without contraries there is no progression...From these contraries spring what the religious call Good and Evil” (7). Contraries not only depict good and evil but also adds another piece to the conundrum of comprehension. These contraries confuse the reader to question what is real and what is not. The reader tries to solve the puzzle of contraries and, in turn, suspends their disbelief for the fantastic and supernatural. In the novel, the description of the nuclear plant is described as “out of date and yet futuristic” (Horowitz 89). Further, the nuclear plant is described as, “a strange mixture: the building, with its electric lights, was modern, industrial; the bonfire, with the shadowy figures of people grouped around, reminded him of a scene from primitive times.” (Horowitz 158). Not only incidents but chapter 14 is antithetical as it is named “Science and Magic” (Horowitz 185). One is rational and reason whereas the other is irrational and fantastic.

The episodic ending of the novel in the nuclear power plant, Omega One, is yet another contradiction as witchcraft and ritual of the sabbath takes place in a nuclear plant. The modernised machinery and mediaeval trapping, nuclear ground for a witch's sabbath and an upside down cross placed on a black marble, these contraries confused the reader and the border between the home and the world become confused. This episode, as the narrator describes, was like “the twenty-first century forced into an unholy marriage with the dark ages” (Horowitz 247). The revival of the monstrous beasts, called the Old Ones, took an unexpected mixture of science and magic. Sir Michael Marsh, the scientist, and Mrs Deverill, enciphered Mrs Deverill, the witch, cohere to unify the power of atoms and witchcraft to release the Old Ones. This mediaeval-witch-nuclear-technological union changes how the readers view witches and scientific technology and what detriments these hold as Marsh remarks, “The mediaeval witch splits throats. The twenty-first century witch splits atoms.” (Horowitz 254). This contrast is also observed by Peter Bramwell in his 2009 book *Pagan Themes in Modern Children's Fiction*, “Advanced science is like magic, in accordance with Arthur C. Clarke's Third Law...while witchcraft is pejoratively primitive, as when Matt's first glimpse of ‘shadowy figures’ round a bonfire reminds him of ‘a scene from primitive times’.” (Qtd. in Bramwell 167).

Anthony Horowitz further creates binaries between worldly and other-worldly. The settings, characters, animals, creatures create the binaries between the two worlds. The gloomy world is paralleled with the bright side of the world. The woods in the novel are metaphorically represented as the magical world. The woods are dark, with no sounds and animals. The trees were abnormally lined straight and seemed unnatural. These woods were peculiarly weird because nature can't grow in straight uncompromising lines. Nature is wild, unromantic and lacks symmetry. The so-called woods are a product of magic. Further, the contrast between Hive Hall and Glendale Farm draw parallels between their respective atmospheres and ambience, as the narrator points out: “He thought how much more

welcoming it was than Hive Hall. The barn and the stables were clean and ordered, standing next to a pretty pond. A swan glided on the water...a family of ducks waddled across the lawn." (Horowitz 100). On the other hand, the narrator describes Hive Hall as: "it was a miserable place...the bad weather...large chimney...wooden planks that were so old and sodden...rotting...dark green moss spreading across them like a disease. Chickens limped to and fro...six pigs stood in the mud, shivering." (Horowitz 52). This contrasting display of ambience adds to the parallel world phenomena in the novel. The novel's chapter 12 describes the other-worldly dogs whose style of running was also different and this is compared to the running style of a panther or leopard as narrator depicts: "a panther or a leopard closing in for the kill has a certain majesty. But the dog was deformed, lopsided and ghastly." (Horowitz 162). This description draws a parallel between those abnormal dogs and majestic panthers.

Bhabha lays down the condition of being stuck in in-betweenness as proper for the evocation of unhomely. This in-betweenness is sufficed by the contraries and contrasts displayed by Horowitz in his novel. Matt is showcased as stuck in an in-betweenness as he "almost without knowing it he found himself drifting away, neither awake nor asleep but somewhere in between." (Horowitz 47). Another instance where Matt describes the setting with in-betweenness is the Natural History Museum which "looked like a cross between a cathedral and a railway station." (Horowitz 204). This undecidability between what is what and what is not, is what is defined by Homi Bhabha's hybridity. Bhabha defines it in his 1994 book *The Location of Culture* as, "new, neither the one nor the other." (Bhabha 28). This definition of hybridity is followed by the idea of unhomely as defined by Lois Tyson, a critic, "to be unhomed is to feel not at home even in your own home because you are not at home in yourself: your cultural identity crisis has made you a psychological refugee." (Tyson 421). Therefore, these psychological refugees jumble their cultures. This jumbling, in turn, produces undecidability and unhomeliness.

In conclusion, this chapter has comprehensively explored the themes of magic, the gothic, the uncanny, and the unhomely within Anthony Horowitz's novel, *Raven's Gate*. Through an analysis of each theme, the narrative's underlying complexities and symbolic significance have been elucidated. The examination of magic revealed its dual nature, with a clear emphasis on the triumph of good over evil, contributing to the moral framework of the story. The incorporation of gothic elements, infused with dark humour, effectively engaged younger readers by balancing the macabre and the amusing. By drawing upon Freud's uncanny concept, the presence of crime and gore within the novel was explored, underscoring their contribution to the unsettling atmosphere. Homi Bhabha's concept of the unhomely also shed light on the protagonist's experience of displacement, otherness, and the destabilisation of familiar environments. Through these thematic analyses, this chapter has deepened our understanding of the multi-layered nature of *Raven's Gate*. By incorporating theoretical frameworks and conducting an analysis, valuable insights into the novel's psychological, moral, and socio-cultural implications have been gained.

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