

## Book Review

### ***Tini Nataka: Three different genres of humour***

**Kalpana Mishra**

Book: *Tini Nataka* (Three Plays)

Language: Odia

Author: Mrunal (Dr. Mrinal Chatterjee)

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“Tini Nataka” contains three plays namely *Ghataka* (The Executioner), *Jabardakhal* (Encroachment) and *Yamaraj Chuttire* (Yamraj on leave). The three plays show three different kinds of laughter with some overlapping. The first play is pure laughter. *Hasya*. It is fun. The second play is satire. *Byanga*. Humour with ridicule. The third play is serio-comedy a blend of serious existential questions being engaged in a humorous way. In this anthology Mrunal, well known for his fiction shows his mastery over different genres of humour. All the plays are eminently watchable on stage and also a great read.

*Ghataka* is a short play, which depicts the story of a middle aged person named Shyam Babu, an aspiring actor. The play shows his ambition to act in a play on stage; how he gets the role of an executioner in a play and how he messes up the entire play. *Ghataka* is a comic play with both situational and character-based comedy. It has eight acts mainly focusing on Shambabu's performance and preparation for the play Siraj ud-daulah. The plot and Shyam Babu's characterisation makes it a hilarious play. The plot is fairly simple. Shyam Babu wants to act in a stage play badly. But he is a very bad actor. He is given the role of the executioner precisely because the character has nothing much to do on the stage, not even utter a dialogue. How Shyam Babu behaves on the stage and messes up the play- remains the climax. The build-up of Shyam Babu's character, the funny dialogues and the queer climax- make the play a laughter-riot.

The second play *Jabardakhal* is a spin-off of the horror genre. It tells the story of Sanatan, a simple man duped by a police inspector and a lawyer, who encroach on his land. The play shows how Sanatan (or his ghost) punishes them. It is a humorous play laced with strong social satire. The build-up of the play makes it a gripping watch. The flirting of the lawyer with the Police Inspector's wife with tongue-in-cheek dialogues makes the play entertaining. However, it is a metaphor for the present state of the society.

The third play *Jamaraj Chuttire* is a serio-comedy, which deals with a very serious subject in a comic way. The central theme of the play is death- or to be more precise the importance of death. As a character of the play says towards the end, "...without death- life actually has no meaning". The plot of the play goes like this: Yamraj, the God of Death wants to go on leave for a month, which Lord Vishnu grants reluctantly. As Yamraj goes on leave nobody dies on earth. And that creates huge problems as hospitals are crammed with patients, relatives are stuck. One hilarious scene after the other- it underlines the importance of death to continue the life cycle.

Mrunal is well known in Odisha as a fiction writer. Many of his novels have been translated into several languages. He has written a number of radio plays and television serials too. This anthology will definitely place him in the rank of leading playwrights of Odisha.

*Author profile:*

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