

**THE USE OF HUMOR AND CHARACTER IN PORTRAYING THE ILLUSION OF
CONTROL IN BETTING: A STUDY OF KINYANJUI KOMBANI'S *OF PAWNS AND
PLAYERS***

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DECLARATION

This project is my original work and has not been presented for any degree in any other university:



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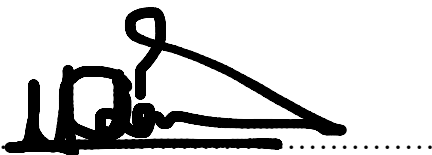
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ABSTRACT

According to this scholarly review, Kombani's book *Of Pawns and Players* uses humor and character development to look at the theme of greed for power, money and the false sense of control. This study looked at how humor has been used to call to attention the problems in the gambling sector. The literary depiction of greed, hypocrisy, and the manipulation of power for financial gain by social media influencers, government agencies, and politicians was also analyzed in this study. Marx's theory enabled the text to be investigated as an illustration of class struggle, showing the enlightenment of the poor against oppression. Narratology theory supported the assessment of Kombani's storytelling and literary techniques that efficiently disclosed the core issues; and the concept of postmodernism enabled the exploration of the text. The major goal was to analyze how Kombani makes use of humor and character to reveal the dishonesty of the gambling industry. As the characters struggled to resist the allure of apparent authority in the betting scenario, a deeper understanding of their weaknesses and psychological conflicts emerged. Through a qualitative analysis of this novel's themes, characters that are used and literary techniques, our knowledge of gambling and its representation in African literature has been expanded. The results shed light on the complexities of social behavior, the appeal of a deceptive illusion of control, and the repercussions of gambling. This study contextualized the function gambling has in Kenyan society as well as how it is depicted in African literature. By highlighting the significance of humor and character eccentricities, the study enriched readers regarding the novel's themes and demonstrated the ludicrousness of relying on control while gambling. Ultimately, the research was valuable since it shed light on the complexity of human nature while also emphasizing the broader ramifications of gambling and its depiction in literature.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Author, businessman, and respected public figure Kinyanjui Kombani was born on August 24th, 1971 in Nyeri, Kenya. After graduating from Nairobi School, he pursued a degree in law at the University of Nairobi, but he ultimately decided to follow his true calling and produce a string of successful novels instead. His career as a writer took off with the publication of his critically acclaimed debut novel, *The Last Villains of Molo*, which depicts ordinary Kenyan families dealing with the fallout from the country's post-election crises in 2007 and 2008. It demonstrates his fascination with tackling difficult social and political issues. Subsequently, corruption, education, identity, and the hardships of daily living were only some of the topics that Kombani's works tackled in depth as they continued to probe current Kenyan culture. In addition to his writing Kombani is an accomplished businessman advising other entrepreneurs. He uses his platform to push for social change and promote literacy in Kenya by taking part in writing and literature workshops, seminars, and discussions. In addition to receiving international praise, Kombani's works have found widespread incorporation into school curricula, furthering the spread of Kenyan literature and culture. Thomas Karamu in Kombani's *Of Pawns and Players* is a *mutura* merchant just trying to make ends meet. He becomes entangled in a betting ring after falling for the daughter of a powerful man. The proper thing to do and the thing that will keep him out of trouble are at odds, and he must decide. The question is what path he takes. In *Of Pawns and Players*, Kombani uses humorous narrative style to explore the seedy underbelly of the gambling industry.

Betting

Betting is a multimillion-dollar venture taking the world by storm in the last one decade as the rich and the poor seek to benefit from the industry. In Kenya, the growth of gambling and betting has been fueled by recreation and the promise it offers, especially to the poor. This growth especially in Kenya can be attributed to the fact that in Kenya, betting attracts revenues of more than 200 billion shillings a year (BCLB, 2018); Kenya has therefore attracted various forms of betting such as sports betting, virtual games and lotteries. Our major focus will be on sports

betting and lotteries. Based on a 2019 Geopoll survey conducted by Roxana Elliot (2019), it was found that football emerges as the predominant form of betting, comprising 83% of the overall betting activities in Kenya. The introduction of smart phones can also be said to be a main contributor to the increase in the number of people betting as it has become easy since it is just a click away. All the bettor has to do is download the app and they can bet anytime and easily transfer money from the mobile money to the betting app at their own convenience. According to the Geopoll, mobile applications are by far the most popular medium for betting with 88% of bettors having used their mobile device to place bets with 55% betting on their phones once a week or more, this demonstrates how the ease of access to mobile betting has changed the betting industry (Roxana, 2019.)

Betting involves jeopardizing valuables such as money on a doubtful event in the hopes of winning something of higher value; however the risk of losing the money is equally high leading to wastage of resources, wealth and property. Betting has also come to be associated with corruption and other negative aspects such as diminution of the work ethics.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In *Of Pawns and Players* by Kombani presents a social issue, and uses humor and character development to shed light on the illusion of control present in the gambling industry.

This study attempts to break down Kombani's storytelling techniques, in order to reveal the ways in which the writer purposefully uses humour and character development to highlight the appearance of control in gambling. The research aims to uncover the subtle ways in which humour conceals the seriousness of the character's interactions with chance through a close reading of the text. The main goal of this study is to provide an understanding of the social issue that *Of Pawns and Players* captures. This illuminates the ways in which literature may provide valuable perspectives on the intricate relationship among humour, character and the illusion of control. By means of this investigation, the study seeks to make a contribution to the current debates on prudent risk-taking and decision-making.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study sought to achieve the following three research questions:

1. What literary strategies has the author employed to expose the evils in the betting industry?
2. To what extent does the author's portrayal of important participants in the betting sector highlight the fallacy of believing they can effect outcomes over which they have no control?
3. How does the betting industry use deception and treachery to manipulate its consumers?

1.4 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

This study sought to achieve the following three objectives:

1. To investigate how humour and language used to reveal the evils that are perpetrated in gambling.
2. To examine the illusion of control in gambling and investigate through characters whether they is anyone who actually has power over the other.
3. To investigate manipulation through betrayal, greed for power and money among key players in the gambling field.

1.5 HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

These were the tentative assumptions made during the research process:

1. The author has used language to bring out humour, and through them, he has addressed the ills in the gambling industry.
2. The author has discussed how characters in the gambling industry can fool themselves into thinking they have a measure of control over the outcomes.
3. The author has addressed greed for power, money and betrayal through manipulation among major stakeholders in the gambling industry.

1.6 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

The novel *Of Pawns and Players* by Kombani has substantial social and cultural consequences. In illuminating the pervasiveness of gambling and the effects it has on individuals in Kenyan culture, this novel offers a fresh and intriguing account of the complexity of the betting industry.

To begin with, the novel's investigation of humor as a literary weapon to expose the betting industry's malevolence is a significant field of research. When used well, humor can connect with readers on several levels, widening the novel's potential readership. Examining how humor has been used to satirize the gambling business, can help the public become more aware of the industry's manipulative practices and prompt individuals to reflect on the repercussions of their own gaming habits.

Secondly, the human mind and the attractiveness of apparent control within the setting of betting can be better comprehended by an examination of character features within the novel. The study sheds light on the psychological dynamics that make individuals prone to the misleading promises of gambling. This has been achieved by investigating the ways in which the characters in *Of Pawns and Players* are seduced into the illusion of control. A better understanding of human nature can help us find solutions to the societal problem of people, especially young adults, falling into the trap of betting in search of fast money.

The novel adds to the creative depiction of the gambling and the illusion of control it presents. A sophisticated analysis of the broader ramifications of gambling in the Kenyan setting is made possible by investigating how Kombani adeptly weaves this issue into the story. Extensive research on the repercussions of gambling can spark discussions about the problem's pervasiveness, the damage it does to people's finances and communities, and the need for protective measures to be put in place.

Overall, it is appropriate and important to examine how Kombani's *Of Pawns and Players* uses humor and human attributes to illustrate the illusion of control in wagering. This study has the potential to shed light on how literature may be used to critique society concerns, increase awareness, and encourage responsible decision making. This research can help the readers have a better educated and thoughtful conversation, about the repercussions of the gambling business by illuminating the literary strategies the author uses to address the issue.

1.7 SCOPE AND LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Focusing entirely on Kombani's insightful novel *Of Pawns and Players*, this research analyzes the ways in which the author uses humor and character quirks to depict the illusion of control within the framework of betting. A limitation lies in the fact it is confined to *Of Pawns and Players*. Assessing how the author employs humor and personality traits to depict a sense of futility in a gambling setting. Furthermore, it is advisable to broaden one's research scope by consulting many scholarly resources, as complete investigations on betting and gambling encompass a range of disciplines beyond the confines of the Department of Literature library. It is worth noting that a substantial body of research, particularly studies examining the influence of gambling on individuals who place bets, is predominantly available in the field of psychology.

1.8 LITERATURE REVIEW

In the literature review, I engaged previous works on illusion of control and gambling. The research also examines how others have analyzed texts on illusion of control and texts on gambling, and explained the gap this research sought to fill.

1.8.1 Illusion of control

Using data from real-world experiments, Thompson, S.C. (1999) shows how frequently we overestimate our control over events that are, in reality, dictated by chance. According to Thompson's findings, a control heuristic is used by individuals to estimate how much control they have over a given result. A heuristic is a set of guidelines that can be followed to make an educated guess about how much influence an individual has over a given circumstance and the results that one hopes to achieve. The two components of a heuristic are the goal itself and the perceived relationship between the action and the outcome. It's worth noting that this heuristic can help you make good decisions, but it also causes you to overestimate how much power you actually have. The study's focus was the gambling industry leaders' tendency to believe they had total authority, notwithstanding the reality that significant interactions and deliberate behavior can emerge even in the face of feelings of powerlessness.

In his scholarly work titled *The Illusion of Control in the Betting Industry*, John Smith (2023) delves into the concept of perceived control within the realm of gambling. This thesis investigates the phenomenon of perceived control among major stakeholders in the gambling

industry. This paper examined the various manifestations of this illusion and investigates the potential ramifications associated with it. This phenomenon pertains to the illusion associated with gambling behavior.

In her scholarly work titled *The Significance of the Illusion of Control in Sports Betting*, Jane Doe (2022) dives into the examination of the role played by the illusion of control within the realm of sports betting. The present study explores the significance of the illusion of control within the context of sports betting. This study investigates the various mechanisms through which this cognitive illusion can impact individuals' decision-making in the context of betting. Additionally, it delves into the potential ramifications of this illusion in terms of fostering gambling-related issues. In her scholarly article titled *The Illusion of Control in Online Gambling*, Mary Johnson (2021) explores the phenomenon of perceived control among those engaged in online gambling activities. The primary objective of this thesis centers around the examination of the phenomenon known as the illusion of control within the context of online gambling. This study examined the various manifestations of this illusion inside online gaming platforms and analyzes the potential consequences it may have on individuals with gambling-related issues.

Jones, P, (2020) conducted a comprehensive literature review on the topic of the illusion of control in gambling. This review article presents a comprehensive examination of the existing body of research pertaining to the phenomenon known as the illusion of control. This paper examined several methodologies employed in measuring the illusion under consideration and provides a synthesis of research outcomes pertaining to the association between the illusions of control and gambling conduct.

Brown, S. (2019) presents a theoretical framework that explores the concept of the illusion of control in the context of gambling. This scholarly essay presents a conceptual framework aimed at comprehending the phenomenon of the illusion of control in the context of gambling. The paper examined many aspects that lead to the formation of this perceptual illusion. It analyzes the potential consequences of this illusion on individuals' gambling behavior. The industry attracts a lot of wealth and hence it has been riddled with a lot of corruption and conspiracy to steal and woe bettors. While a lot of research has been carried out on betting from the consequences to the driving force a lot has been left out especially in the literary world. It is from

this trend stems this research. Literature, as explained by Ashshofi Rois Burhanuddin (2020) in *The Meaning of Gambling in Ben Merzrch Bring Down the House*, is one of the most adaptable and original means for humans to share their mental, emotional, and spiritual experiences. Through a literary work a reader is able to avoid misfortune and can also take an example to solve problems that they encounter, as the authors use the novels to convey messages to readers. It is correct to conclude that the Massachusetts Institute of Technology students' gambling in Las Vegas is a well-planned business, as Rois Ashofi explains in his analysis of *Bringing Down the House*. However, it is also correct to conclude that losses are inevitable, as Mikey has associations with financiers who are willing to provide funding for the entire operational expenses of the team. The film *Bringing Down the House* depicts the underhanded dealings that take place in the gaming industry, especially in casinos. This relates to our text of study. However, in my study the focus was not be on how the players cheat in the industry but rather how the industry is playing on their customers by creating fake wins to lure them to continue betting with the hope of them getting huge wins in the end.

In her research of the theme of corruption in 'The Queen of Spades', Panda Ivy demonstrates the author's deliberate exploration of the realm of gambling as a means to unveil the central focus of his work: the detrimental outcomes associated with greed and moral decay. In her research, Ivy elucidates the portrayal of Herman, the central character, exhibiting avarice and morally compromised conduct, ultimately resulting in his tragic demise. Herman exhibits a tendency to prioritize personal gain over the well-being of others. This is evident in his actions, such as causing the elderly woman extreme distress, yet displaying no remorse for her subsequent demise. Despite this, he remains determined to acquire the knowledge of the card's secret, even if it entails enduring a lifetime burden of indulgence characterized by horror. Upon acquiring knowledge of the game's strategy, Herman's satisfaction with his victories diminishes, as he proceeds to amplify his gambling triumphs, ultimately resulting in the substantial depletion of his winnings and even his mental well-being. This analysis contributed to the scholarly examination of the text, as it aims to explore the author's utilization of characters to unveil prevalent societal vices, namely greed, manipulation, and corruption. However, it is important to note that this study diverges from the aforementioned analysis by focusing on the examination of the industry itself, rather than the individual actors within it. In addition the study explored how the characters employ the use of humor to discuss or rather satirize the evils in the industry.

George, Sanju (2018) analysis of ‘*The Gambler*’ in ‘*The Gambler within*’ explores the cognitive errors. My study shares the same concept with George as he illustrates that betting leads to cognitive errors or distortions and these include the belief that they can beat the system which result from an illusion of control, over estimating their abilities by using set of rules that they have devised themselves. The current study differs from 'The Gambler's' concept of addiction and the illusion of control in that it concludes that attempts to conquer the system are fruitless due to its random nature.

Of Pawns and Players examines how the system manipulates its players, with the hope of showing that it is possible to win despite the odds, since betting is not always a game of chance but may also be a strategic mental game. To warn readers, especially young adults, of the dangers of gambling and to reveal the truth behind the gamblers' boasted triumphs, novels like *Of Pawns and Players* use compelling life tales. An examination of how Kombani uses literary tropes like characterization and comedy to expose the corrupting influence of money and power and the systematic abuse of gamblers for gain.

1.9 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study was guided by three key theories. Narratology, Marxism and post modernism.

1.9.1 Narratology

The theory of narratology examines the impact of stories and narrative structure on our thinking. Interdisciplinary approaches such as postmodern narratology and feminist narratology emerged after the classical stage of narratology, when its focus shifted from identifying common narratives and repetitive narrative patterns to recognizing its scope in additional disciplines (Prince, 1982). Here, we'll zero in on postmodern narratology, a relatively new method of analysis that, rather than viewing fiction and nonfiction as two distinct genres, seeks to forge a direct connection between them. Narratives are characterized by their attention to the work's "formal or structural aspect" (Gennet, 1980) by analyzing its component parts, including characters, setting, plot, conflict, and resolution. Although there are many various kinds of stories, our study concentrated on written ones, with a special emphasis on the protagonist, antagonist, and resolution.

George Lukacs (1971) *The Theory of the Novel* views society as a totality. He views life as the intrinsic richness and potentiality of experiences and actions of individuals and societies. The research draws from George Lukac's idea of totality to show how characters in the *Of Pawns and Players* are a representative of communal realities.

According to Masha Wasilewsky's (2022) definition of narratology, these are the guiding principles of the field: consistency, meaning, and purpose. My research focused on these three areas because they are central to understanding the purpose and function of the narratives that the betting industry and Kombani promote. I examined the narratives' coherence (how well they make sense), semantics (what they mean), and intentionality (why they were created). The research looked at why Kombani is telling this story to the public and what the betting company's story is trying to accomplish.

1.9.2 Marxism

The ideology of the German philosopher Karl Marx forms the basis of the idea; Marx argued that the 19th-century European economic class system was inherently unjust. According to Karl Marx, oppressed people and their oppressors have always been at odds with one another throughout history (Hasa, 2016).

To understand how the wealthy (those in control of the betting industry) perpetuate their oppression of the poor (bettors), including Elisha and Thomas, the theory was invaluable. The theory enabled the research to show if the characters' social status has limited or empowered them.

Marxist theory suggests that if hegemony is maintained through ideology, the oppressed must gain control of their own ideology. The study made use of Virginia Woolf's idea in *'A room of one's Own'* (2004) where she uses the theory to illustrate that women will break the cycle of oppression by writing their own stories and defining themselves as human, intelligent, equal, likewise the poor in the text *Of Pawns and Players* breaks the cycle of oppression by telling their stories and illustrating how the rich take advantage of them: Thomas narrates his story using the betting company to illustrate the exploitation, manipulation, greed and corruption in the industry that continues to woe the poor as they seek financial freedom.

1.9.3 Post Modernism

The postmodernist idea in literature has been painstakingly built by a number of proponents, who have each defined new intellectual avenues spanning several time periods. Jean-François Lyotard's influential work *The Postmodern Condition* (1979) is noteworthy for highlighting an epoch characterized by a critical attitude towards overarching narratives. This seminal contribution has had a substantial impact on the fields of literary and cultural analysis. In a similar vein, Jacques Derrida, particularly in his influential work *Of Grammatology* (1967), revealed a complex array of viewpoints about text, language, and significance, so promoting the deconstructionist approach that subsequently became an integral component of postmodern literary examination. Postmodern critiques of authority and discourse owe a great deal to Michel Foucault, whose writings include *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1969) and *Discipline and Punishment* (1975) overturned conventional understandings of these concepts. In his works like *Gravity's Rainbow* (1973), Thomas Pynchon delved into the literary world, presenting a literary patchwork that veered between historical background and futuristic fiction by weaving elaborate storylines around elements of authority, technology, and societal paranoia. Kurt Vonnegut, in his literary works such as *Slaughterhouse-Five* (1969), effectively immerses readers in a narrative universe characterized by non-linear timelines and candid dialogues between the narrator and the audience. This narrative technique serves to expose the artificial nature of storytelling and the concept of time.

Post-modernist writers seemed to feel that they were living in a world even more chaotic than the modernist could have anticipated and as a result the writing tends to mix humor with description of extremely dark events. It is this explanation that the research sought to make use to analyze Kombani's *Of Pawns and Players* as I analyze how he makes use of humor as he describes the dark world of betting and describes the corruption, greed and manipulation that continues to riddle the betting industry. The text *Of Pawns and Players* obeys the characteristics of the postmodern era as the text discusses serious matters; the author has made use of humor and irony despite the novel addressing very weightier matters.

Jameson Fredric (1991) in his Essay *Post Modernism or The Cultural Logic of the Late Capitalism* called postmodernism the cultural logic of the late capitalism. It is clear in the text *Of Pawns and Players* that the author demonstrates the role technology, especially media, serves in allowing the betting as well as the system of the story by the betting industry, supporting

Jameson's argument that our culture has shifted over capitalism into the knowledge age, where we are continually bombarded by advertisement.

1.10 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

As part of my research, I acquired information from two separate sources. My major research was mostly an in-depth analysis of Kombani's book *Of Pawns and Players*. This was my primary source. The secondary source included research conducted in libraries, as well as articles, comments, and internet-based research; together, these provided a plethora of knowledge and literature that was quite helpful to my study. In addition, the research entailed an in-depth examination of other writings that addressed gambling and betting, which included *Crime and Punishment* and *The Gambler* by Fyodor Dostoyevsky as well as *The Gambler* by Ngumi Kibera. Both of these authors contributed to the research. Dostoevsky analyzes the negative effects of gambling on persons and relationships in this story. The author explores the appeal and hazards of the casino through the figure of Alexei Ivanovich, highlighting the consequences of monetary ruin and emotional enticement. The plot weaves together themes of love, treachery, and the enslaving power of gambling, providing a devastating meditation on the fragility of humanity and the dangers of unrestrained appetites. *The Gambler* by Ngumi Kibera clearly depicts the perils of gambling addiction. After losing everything, especially property and family, desperate recruits fall into the unrelenting quest for a winning hand. They sell their souls in a downward cycle, and ownership papers secretly shift hands, leaving them desperate for alcohol and gambling money. The story dives into the vicious cycle of addiction, with characters such as Rex whose everyday life discloses when he turns as a gambling dependent, drowning in remorse and isolation. These materials were obtained by me from the library at the University of Nairobi, local bookstores, the internet, and other daily newspapers that were stocked in the library.

In order to carry out the analysis, I relied on certain passages from the source material. For the purpose of independent study, I selected on my own specific keywords, statements, clauses, sentences, and other sections of the book. This method required me to make trips to the library as well as maintain close communication with my supervisors, which ultimately allowed me to do a comprehensive analysis of the chosen information. Examining Kombani's *Of Pawns and Players* in depth required a complex multi-theoretical approach, relying on post-modernism Marxism, and narratology to unpack the text's multiple themes, narratives, and sociological observations.

Postmodernism emerged as a significant viewpoint due to its ability to deconstruct reality through elaborate levels of sarcasm and satire and its skepticism of big narratives. The study illuminated Kombani's critical involvement with the betting culture by demonstrating how he utilized characters and humour to uncover vices buried inside the gambling setting. Kombani's use of narrative paradoxes and contradictions to portray a character's skewed concept of autonomy, offered a window through which the author could explore the illusion of control inside the seemingly random and chaotic realm of gambling. Close reading of the book, illuminated an environment where corruption and inefficiency were vital to the pursuit of wealth and power by revealing instances where traditional moral and social norms were skewed or subverted.

To properly appreciate the economic and social commentaries weaved through the characters and events, Marxism, due to its basic focus on socio-economic injustices and institutions, emerged to be an important tool. The book's characters and humor were more than just that; they shed light on the economic and social divisions that are exacerbated by the nature of gambling. The capitalist structures under which the characters functioned were also dissected, with the emphasis being placed on the economic and social components that maintained a classist system. It allowed for a more nuanced examination of the characters' financial and societal interactions, which in turn helped clarify the possibility that Kombani was critiquing broader issues with capitalist and oppressive social norms.

The study employed narratology methods to examine how Kombani's characters and use of humor critique gambling's detrimental impacts. The study examined the narrative's tone of voice, focalization, and movement through the characters' multiple experiences to determine how the negative effects of gambling were depicted. The research in the field of narratology also elucidated the text's underlying power dynamics by demonstrating how the narrative shifted, interacted, and even clashed with the experiences of different characters. Through a closer examination of the story's structuring and development, we see how the narrative's primary themes of manipulation and deceit shape the characters' arcs and propel the action.

This rich, multifaceted prism was created by combining post-modernism Marxism, and narratology to analyze *Of Pawns and Players*. Each perspective shed light on the text's explorations of temptation, authority, and the social construction of norms and expectations,

resulting in a more complete and nuanced understanding of Kombani's intricate web of wagering, power dynamics, and social critiques.

CHAPTER TWO

USE OF HUMOUR IN THE ILLUSION OF CONTROL IN BETTING IN KOMBANI'S *OF PAWNS AND PLAYERS*

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The humour in Kombani's *Of Pawns and Players* is discussed in this chapter, along with how it depicts the illusion of control in betting. This chapter ~~appropriately~~ explores the storytelling strategies used by Kombani to analyse the alluring illusion of control in the realm of betting via the prism of humour. In this chapter, we began to see the fascinating interplay between chance and free will. This section analyses the novel's humorous scenes in detail, showing how Kombani skilfully uses humour to highlight the human need for mastery even in the face of randomness. This chapter examines specific situations and instances in the novel in order to reveal the deeper meanings lurking beyond the work's surface humour, wit, and satire by taking a look at how humour and the perception of one's own power interact with one another. In this chapter, the contradictory character of human psychology is revealed, as is the process by which humans create stories of empowerment and control even in scenarios in which chance predominates.

2.2 HUMOUR

Due to the arbitrary character of humour, defining it and addressing the question "why do we laugh?" is difficult, if not impossible. Because of individual differences in humour preferences and cultural upbringing, people's interpretations of jokes might vary. Something that is seen as humorous in one setting may be taken cynically in another. When asked to define humour, experts give dozens of different answers. A humorous message is one that elicits a "positive cognitive or affective response from listeners," as defined by Crawford (1994: 57). Humour is defined as "communications that elicit positive emotional and cognitive responses from an audience" (Romero & Cruthirds, 2006: 59).

Humour, in its most basic sense, is simply the ability to find humorous elements in everyday life, be it in one's surroundings or oneself. Humour can be defined as "that which elicits laughter." One generation's idea of humour may not resonate with another. The study of humour is multifaceted and often subjective. Despite several attempts to explain humour from various

academic fields (including psychology, linguistics, anthropology, and medicine), its precise mechanism remains elusive. As stated by Gardner (2008:9)

Studies of humour have been conducted not only in the field of psychology (Freud, 1960), but also in that of semiotics (Dorfles, 1968), and in that of linguistics (Raskin, 1985; Atardo & Raskin, 1991). According to Freud, the use of humour can help alleviate the stress and anxiety that might accompany sadness. Raskin argues that the capacity for humour appreciation and enjoyment is innate to all humans, whereas different people have different reactions to humour depending on how much they use this capacity (1985).

Humour is a tool for building community and recognizing shared values among people (Hay, 2001; Dynel, 2009). Because it allows us to put some emotional space between ourselves and the stressful situation, humour can be a useful coping mechanism (Morreal, 1983). It's something we all do naturally, a type of play and an artistic experience because it's done for its own sake, to be enjoyed without any other purpose (Morreal, 1983). It's a mental apparatus that helps us get new insights and appreciate experiences that defy our assumptions (Forabosco, 2008; Dynel, 2018). Thus, like language and rational thought, a sense of humour is an essential aspect of what makes us human. That alone makes it an intriguing subject for investigation.

2.3 THEORIES OF HUMOUR

The relief theory, the superiority theory, the incongruity theory, and the theory of comprehension and expansion are fascinating lenses through which to examine the nature of humour. These theories provide light on the various mechanisms by which humour amuses us and reveal the myriad ways in which it influences our minds and hearts. We learn more about the fascinating complexity that underpin the common human trait of finding humour in odd and counter intuitive situations by delving into these theories.

2.3.1 Release/Relief Theory

It is obvious that psychologists sparked the first and most fervent interest in humour research, and as a result, the first attempts to establish theories of humour were made in the field of psychology. Humour as a kind of release is "a way to stay sane." Freud's study in *Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious* (1960) is most often cited when discussing the role of humour

in providing relief. Humour is said to be therapeutic because it allows people to release pent-up, socially taboo feelings through the release valve of laughter.

According to Cooper (2008), Sigmund Freud was the conceptual ancestor of the relief hypothesis since he thought that the pleasure we get from a hilarious occurrence or utterance had its roots in the subconscious. Ego and superego use humour as a defence strategy to avoid the emotional fallout of unpleasant experiences by diverting attention elsewhere. Furthermore, Freud argued that humour (especially in the form of jokes) allowed people to safely express their repressed aggressive and sexual instinctual drives (Freud 1960; Cooper 2008). In a similar vein, Meyer (2000) suggests that humour helps people release the pressure that builds up as a result of their ambitions and worries.

2.3.2 Superiority Theory

According to the superiority theory, humour is the outward manifestation of an inner sense of superiority (Berger 1987; Cooper 2008). A humorous utterance may, then, be a manifestation of the speaker's "lording" it over someone else he or she views as inferior (or, in the case of self-deprecating humour, of the speaker's desire to deflect attention from some phony committed. Those who subscribe to the theory of superiority argue that the emotion of "sudden glory" is what causes others to laugh. Glory is experienced in response to a lower-quality thing, person, or group of people, or a lower-quality version of ourselves from the past. The "butt of the joke" refers to these inferior things or people. According to the theory of social superiority, humour is used to curb antisocial behaviour (Attardo, 1994: 52).

Humour, according to the Superiority Theory, is a means through which people express themselves and negotiate power relationships. This theory sheds insight on the multifaceted nature of the role that superiority-driven humour plays in reflecting and shaping societal processes, whether directed outward or inward. The various forms that Superiority Theory takes provide a lens through which to examine the human propensity to use humour to negotiate power interactions and maintain emotional health. The Superiority Theory sheds light on an ageless facet of human nature—a nature that both unites and separates us via the shared joy of humour—as laughing bridges the gap between communal rules and individual expression.

2.3.3 Incongruity Theory

Incongruity theory, according to Cooper (2008), differs from the first two theories because, while the former two try to explain how particular conditions stimulate humour in individuals, the latter two focus on the item that is the source of the humour (joke, cartoon, etc.). According to this view, incongruity inside an object is necessary for it to elicit a hilarious response. There may be a discrepancy between an individual's expectations and reality (Veale, 2004). The idea that comedy stems from a dissonance or 'glitch' in a situation, or incongruity, has become one of the most widely held tenets of the study of humour. Raskin paraphrases Mindless to illustrate that "we are led along one line of thought and then booted out of it" in comedic situations.

The incongruity theory of humour postulates that a joke or amusing scenario contains two incongruous aspects that are both connected in some way. That is to say, the components must not be so drastically discordant with one another that the humour is lost (Raskin, 1985: 31-32). According to incongruity theory, comedy is generated when an observer's expectations for a certain action, speech, or sequence of events are subverted.

2.3.4 The Theory of Comprehension and Expansion

According to Cooper (2008), the comprehension-elaboration theory is a fresh attempt to explain why some people find certain situations hilarious while others do not. This hypothesis proposes that the cognitive processing performed by the recipient of an attempt at humour shortly after he or she has understood it is a significant predictor of the degree to which that person enjoyed the humour. Considerations like whether the humour is insulting to a specific person or group, or if it is acceptable in society under the given circumstances, are all part of the cognitive processing that follows comprehension.

2.4. THE USE OF HUMOUR IN THE TEXT

2.4.1 Contrast

In literature, contrast is a potent device that points out the differences between various elements, such as characters, settings, themes, or ideas. Contrast gives a story depth and complexity by emphasizing differences. It enables writers to highlight differences and create a dynamic interaction that draws readers in. This literary device adds to the general richness of the plot, whether it is through the thematic divergence, the sharp distinction of in contradiction environments, or the personality dichotomy of the characters. In addition to generating tension,

authors can use contrast to elicit deep insights from their readers and encourage introspection. (Yeghiazaryan, 2018).

As I land in the mud filled ditch behind me, I see what we grew up calling esiorori. There is no direct translation for esiorori. It is just esiorori – many circles of different sizes and colour merging into each other. (1)

The extract's humour comes from the contrast between the possibly funny comment of the narrator and the chaotic or messy circumstance the narrator finds himself. A muddy ditch is described, which is a common metaphor for chaos and discomfort. However, the description of a visually complex and vibrant phenomenon provided by the word "esiorori" quickly changes the tone. (Esiorori- feeling dizzy and out of control as though one were spinning in circles.) In contrast to the murky and disorderly mud filled ditch environment, creating a surprising and humorous mental image. The absence of a literal translation for "esiorori" contributes to the term's air of mystery and uniqueness, heightening the humour. The potential of language to make something boring or disagreeable into something inventive and amusing is demonstrated here, hopefully eliciting a humorous remark from the person who reads it despite the seriousness of the circumstance the narrator finds himself.

As she entered, I picked the shoes and carried them in. A few weeks earlier, a thief had helped himself to all the shoes that had been left outside the houses in the block of flats. I was not going to risk her shoes out there, especially because they looked like they cost my rent. (23)

The comedy in this line has been used to illustrate the idea of class and the gap between the rich and the poor. When Aria visits Thomas, he is careful to ensure that her shoes which are very expensive that they cost the same as his one-month rent are safe. The humour illustrates the level of poverty and insecurity in the area as thieves will steal anything available. Using the theme of insecurity and poverty, this extract gently focuses on the illusion of control in the context of gambling. The humour arises when Thomas, fearful of the theft of costly shoes, seizes control by taking them inside. This is similar to how gamblers might think they may influence results by making specific decisions. The root cause of insecurity as well as the need for protective

measures demonstrates the illusion of control, highlighting parallels between shoe protection and the perceived effect on gambling outcomes.

“I should probably get your number” Her soft voice brought me back to the conversation. She whipped out an expensive looking phone and looked expectantly at me. When she saw the expectation on my face she added, “so that i call you when I want some...”

“Err...sure.” I blurted out my number. She pressed the call button and in a moment I felt a vibration in my pocket. “Now I have your number too,” I told her. For the first time I felt conscious of my phone they was no way I was going to remove the contraption from my pocket and embarrass myself. (13)

This snippet from the text emphasizes the difference between Aria and Thomas's socioeconomic status. The things they own and the way they behave highlight this discrepancy and ultimately lend social criticism and humour to the story.

The phones, in particular, play a crucial role in the depiction of Aria and Thomas's lifestyles. The fact that Aria has an "expensive looking phone" instantly establishes her as a wealthy, high-status individual. As a symbol of opulence and cutting-edge convenience, this item is more commonly found in households with greater incomes. However, Thomas's "contraption type of phone" betrays a lower degree of wealth or, at the very least, a preference for utility over opulence. The phrase "contraption" suggests that the phone is antiquated, unorthodox, or even awkward in its design, all of which have negative connotations. This disparity in phone quality is a microcosm for their fundamentally dissimilar ways of living.

The irony of the two things being so different is where the fun lies. The contrast between Aria's high-end phone and Thomas' "contraption" phone is nearly laughable. Anxiety and introspection arise from Thomas's reluctance to take out the "contraption" in his pocket and write down Aria's number. He is reluctant because he is self-conscious about the material gap between them. The combination of their social ineptitude and self-awareness makes for a comedic scenario that not only illustrates the contrast between their ways of living but also draws attention to the intricacies of societal dynamics and individual fears.

In conclusion, the sample depicts the levity created by the incongruity between the two people's material belongings and the social embarrassment that ensues. This disparity in standard of living between Aria and Thomas serves to both lighten the tone of the story and make a pointed commentary on class inequalities and self-perception. This passage, in the setting of gambling, discreetly comes into contact with the illusion of being in charge of socioeconomic differences. Aria, with her pricey cell phone, she suggests they exchange numbers with Thomas, who is self-conscious about his less expensive device. The phones are transformed into emblems of financial and social status, illustrating the social deception that physical possessions equate to power or influence. Thomas' reluctance to reveal his phone exemplifies the disconnect between their social classes, demonstrating how individuals may struggle with perceived weakness and the illusion of control in relationship dynamics.

"I want to invite you to join us for dinner." "Um... no "I said it with a finality that shocked me too. I saw the look on her face and realized she was taken aback. "You haven't even heard my reasons for inviting you." "I doubt that it will change my mind."

I avoided her eyes. Once you lock eyes with a girl who wants you to do something for her, you will do it whether you like it or not. It is the same with the hawker 'look' I had said earlier. (Once you locks eyes with a hawker who wants to sell something to you, and then a deal has already been struck.) (34)

Awkwardness, self-awareness, and a facetious comparison are the sources of laughter in this paragraph. The discomfort of Thomas's answer to Aria's invitation provides the comic relief. His awkward "Um... no" comes as a complete surprise and immediately heightens the awkwardness of the situation. Self-awareness is the second factor. The text takes on a lighter tone as Thomas reveals his own response as he speaks, indicating his amazement at the conclusiveness of his response. The fact that the man is surprised by his own reaction gives a genuine and humorous dimension to the story. Finally, a satirical contrast. Thomas ups the ante by jokingly equating Aria's serious expression with the "hawker 'look'" he referenced previously. The analogy suggests that you are more likely to give in when someone, be it a hawker trying to sell you something or a friend inviting you out to dinner, locks eyes with you. The reader will immediately relate to the analogy because the compulsion to make eye contact is a common human emotion. The surprising rejection, Thomas's self-awareness of his reply, and the amusing

contrast that offers understanding into the character's viewpoint on relationships and decision-making all contribute to the passage's overall humour.

With a combination of awkwardness, self-awareness, and facetious comparison, this passage in a humorous way explores the illusion of control through gambling. Thomas' sudden and awkward refusal of Aria's dinner invitation provides comic relief, as it both surprises Aria and himself. The unexpected response's self-awareness provides honest and amusing dimensions that range to the situation. The witty comparison of Aria's expressing themselves to the "hawker 'look'" presents satire by implying that having eye contact with another person seals the deal, regardless of whether it's a hawker offering a thing or someone you know inviting you to dinner. The passage's overall humour is enhanced by the awkwardness, self-awareness, and satirical contrast.

He laughs. He retrieves a business card from his coat pocket. "this is my RM. We will set up a meeting with her", he says. "RM?" I ASK. "Relationship Manager... at the bank", he explains. It is good I asked. I was going to walk around thinking RM means Rumour Monger. (79)

Miscommunication, puns, and sharp contrasts are what make this piece so funny. The humour stems from Thomas mistaking the initials "RM" for "Rumour Monger" rather than "Relationship Manager," and from the play on words that results from this misunderstanding. The abbreviation has two different meanings, and the play on "RM" makes the whole thing humorous.

Contrast is also evident in the phrase. The Thomas's comical interpretation of "RM" (Rumour Monger) stands in sharp contrast to the real meaning of "RM" (Relationship Manager), which adds to the comedic effect. The sudden transformation of a serious technical term into an amusing misinterpretation makes for a pleasant diversion. Thomas's comical misinterpretation of the abbreviation "RM," their forthright admittance of their blunder, and the sharp distinction between what they meant and their interpretation all contribute to the extract's levity. This scenario is propelled by wordplay, which lends an air of playfulness to the conversation.

2.4.2 Hyperbole

Hyperbole refers to the practice of exaggerating or making something seem more significant than it actually is for dramatic effect. Similarly, exaggerating a problem can be comical. The reader knows what's going on and finds it hilarious when the author exaggerates. (Claridge, Claudia, 2010.)

Mutura is a Kenyan sausage. There is simply no other way of defining it. If you want to know what it is go to street corner where a large crowd is milling around a man who invariably is in not so clean white overall. There will be some pieces of meat on a jiko if you can't find one I can't help you. (5)

This passage's humour stems largely from hyperbole and flippant dismissal. First, the extract overstates the difficulty of grasping a relatively straightforward notion (a Kenyan sausage known as "mutura") in order to make a point. A dramatically exaggerated scene is created when the reader is told to imagine coming to a street corner where there is already a large crowd and a man in not-so-clean white overalls, and where meat is being cooked on a jiko (grill). This exaggerated description of the search for mutura puts a humorous spin on an otherwise elementary explanation.

Second, a light-hearted manner of brushing aside any lingering uncertainty about what mutura is, the remark "If you can't find one I can't help you" serves as a playful dismissal. It implies, somewhat facetiously, that one can't possibly grasp mutura if they can't identify this particular situation. By making the idea of mutura seem so elementary, the absurdity of actually having to search for it adds to the sense of levity created. The humorous tone of this section is driven by the author's exaggeration of the difficulty in grasping mutura and his caustic rejection of any doubt that the reader could have. The extract uses exaggeration and degrading dismissal to underline the illusion of control. The writer establishes a pleasantly complicated scene with an adult male in soiled pants alongside an activity-packed corner by overstating the challenges in comprehending an easy concept like "mutura." "If you can't find one, I can't help you," eliminates uncertainty in an amusing way, emphasizing the fundamental nature of comprehending mutura.

It always amazes me how Elisha is able to drink piping hot tea. He seems to have a cooler in his mouth. I have to blow on the tea before sipping it. Yet he gulps it down without trying to cool it. (90)

The humour in this passage stems from hyperbole, astute observation, and witty contrast. The humour stems, in part, from an exaggeration of Elisha's purported ability to drink extremely hot tea without showing any outward signs of distress. The fact that his mouth has been likened as a "cooler" implies he has an abnormally high tolerance for hot beverages.

Thomas's humorous tone comes from his keen eye for detail. Elisha's behaviour is observed, and the speaker expresses their astonishment at the way he manages to drink hot tea without diluting it. This funny twist is based on a sympathetic observation of a mundane everyday occurrence. Elisha's mouth being compared to a "cooler" is a metaphor that is both humorous and exaggerated, and it serves to enhance the overall visual effect. Using Elisha's mouths as an example of a specialised appliance designed to cool off hot drinks is a clever way to bring some humour to the analogy. The text is humorous because of the contrast between the speaker's own behaviour and the speaker's humorous exaggeration of Elisha's capacity to drink hot tea.

Elisha was always rooting for me to settle down. "far from it. Aria ni moto wa kuotea mbali." Aria was way beyond my league. (14)

The wit in this extract comes from a combination of exaggeration, allusions to pop culture, and self-deprecating comedy. For example, Thomas remark that "Aria was way beyond my league" is a form of self-deprecating comedy. In a humorous and modest way, the speaker diminishes their own value or attractiveness by saying that Aria is beyond his league.

The Swahili word "Aria ni moto wa kuotea mbali" provides further cultural depth to the joke. Directly translated, the phrase means "Aria is a fire." It paints a vivid picture that playfully underlines the point that Thomas is completely out of her league when it comes to Aria. Using hyperbole ("fire"), the phrase "Aria ni moto wa kuotea mbali" emphasizes how unreachable Aria seems. The passage's hilarious tone is enhanced by the use of hyperbolic vocabulary. Light-hearted and approachable, this moment portrays the speaker's modesty and their opinion of Aria's

unattainability through a blend of self-deprecating humour, cultural reference, and overblown language. Using the theme of romantic relationships, this extract carefully touches on the illusion of control in the context of gambling. The humour arises when Thomas, self-deprecatingly, asserts that Aria is "way beyond [his] league." This viewpoint shows the social illusion that people have control and determination over their romantic success. The use of hyperbolic words, such as referring to Aria as "moto wa kuotea mbali" (a fire beyond reach), provides a playful element to the exaggeration, emphasizing the perceived absence of control in matters of the heart.

"Yes how can I help you?" It is the other lady. She has short cropped hair and her face is heavily made up. She has shaved off her eyebrows and then draws dark brown lines where she thinks they should be. I do not have a problem with ladies who do that- let them draw what they want on their faces. but some of them really need drawing lessons, because they end up looking like there are always surprised. (74)

The humour in this chapter stems from the author's use of hyperbole, opinion, and observation. One source of the comedy is the Thomas's observant and judgmental tone towards the lady they are conversing with. The main character describes the female character in great detail, including her short cropped hair, heavily made-up face, and drawn-on eyebrows. His no-nonsense attitude and forthright commentary only serve to heighten the comedy. The humour is amplified by the author's dramatization of the drawn-on eyebrows' thickness and shape. The author's comment that "some of them really need drawing lessons, because they end up looking like they are always surprised" overstates the visual effect, creating a comedic image of people with overemphasised or poorly drawn eyebrows.

Commentary that is humorous and amusing, such as the protagonist's remarks about letting people draw anything they want upon their faces and his statement that he needs sketching lessons. The commentary ups the hilarity by implying that the makeup choices of some people may result in unintentional face expressions. This amusing introspection on the importance of how one presents oneself is the result of a blend of observations, opinion, exaggeration, and light-hearted commentary. As the protagonist navigates the encounter with the lady in issue, their straightforward and sometimes snarky perspective provides a light-hearted touch to the piece.

"I think they should call Aria. " I say with sudden boldness. I reckon if he wanted to harm me, they would have done it already. This house is located in a large tract of land right in the middle of Queens. They would shoot me with a shotgun and the neighbour if there was any would not hear anything. (17)

This passage's humour stems from dark humour, irony and exaggeration. The passage uses dark humour to humorously and absurdly approach a potentially serious topic. The speaker's casual dismissal of the perceived threat by saying "if someone wanted to harm me, they would have done it already" belies the gravity of the situation. Thomas's seemingly off-the-cuff statement, "I think they should call Aria," and the accompanying explanation of his thinking are the source of the irony. Thomas might recommend phoning Aria for some other reason, perhaps to get her help or support, but that's not what he says. To add an unexpected layer of humour, he instead provides a scenario that has nothing to do with the supposed seriousness of the matter.

The humour stems from the speaker's exaggeration of the situation. Having someone blast the speaker with a shotgun and the neighbour not hearing anything because the land is so vast is an extreme and implausible scenario. The absurdity of the image created by the dramatization of the possible injury serves as a humorous aspect. The text is humorous despite its potentially grave subject matter because of the use of dark humour and exaggeration. The speaker's cavalier dismissal of the imagined threat adds a frightening yet amusing dimension to the joke. This extract on gambling's illusion of control employs dark humour, irony, and hyperbole. The speaker's light-hearted handling of a potentially dangerous situation, laughing off harm with a charming indifference, is risible. The unforeseen idea to call Aria, straying from conventional answers to a perceived danger, creates irony. As the speaker creates an extremely absurd situation of getting shot using a shotgun in a vast area without anyone hearing, exaggeration amplifies the humour. The interaction of all of these factors brings a hilarious layer to the curiosity of control illusions in the overall setting of betting.

2.4.3 Irony

Irony means to use language to mask true meanings. It's most common comedic application is when someone says the opposite of something serious or painful with tremendous feeling. Irony is often used humorously in works of literature. While there are many varieties of irony, they all centre on a discrepancy between appearance and reality. The purpose of the ironic subject is the source of verbal irony. Being ironic on purpose is the topic of irony. In dramatic irony, for example, the audience knows something that the protagonist does not. It is when there is a knowledge gap between the characters and the audience, which makes the situation funnier or more absurd. Both verbal and situational ironies were present. (Roger J. Kreuz and Sam Glucksberg, 1989)

The last time I fought I was in upper primary. It was with a girl which was a big thing in my school because nobody expected a boy to be beaten by a girl. I was skinny back then. Needless to say she made minced meat out of me with the whole class watching. (11)

This sentence is humorous because it has elements of sarcasm, role change, and self-deprecating humour. Firstly, there's the irony of the reality that the individual speaking, a boy, lost a fight to a girl. This finding runs counter to the stereotype that boys should be stronger physically, which is widely held in our culture. This anticipation being subverted gives birth to the irony that provides the story's comic turn. Secondly, the gender roles are reversed, a sly nod to the common belief that males are superior to females in terms of physical prowess. In recounting the speaker's defeat at the hands of a female opponent, the author Kombani subverts the cliché of the male victor and succeeds in making the reader laugh.

The speaker's confession that they had been "skinny back then" is an example of self-deprecating humour. The speaker adds humour and endearment by highlighting the unforeseen circumstances of their failure by mentioning their physical condition. As an example of humorous narrative delivery, the sentence "Needless to say she made minced meat out of me with the whole class watching" is a hyperbolic portrayal of the scenario. In reference to the speaker's loss in the fight, the expression "made minced meat out of me" evokes a funny mental image. The humour in this paragraph comes from the speaker's self-aware, self-deprecating tone as well as the reversal of gender norms and the speaker's unanticipated setback. The scene explores the illusion of control using sarcasm and role reversal. Social norms are challenged when a boy loses a duel with a girl,

undermining the notion of male physical superiority. The gender reversal subtly mocks widely held beliefs. The speaker's dismissive humour endears them by highlighting the unforeseen circumstances that led to their defeat and their sense of control. Exaggerated statements like "made minced meat out of me" add an extra dimension to the story's hilarity by revealing the absurd and unpredictable elements that contribute to the perceived dominance.

Last time I visited my bank there was a rude teller who was taking ages to serve us. The long queues snaked from the exit across the banking hall. I complained to the supervisor and threatened to close my account. The supervisor asked for my account number, looked up something on the computer and gave me an account closing form. Well I did not close the account. (78)

It is the use of irony, sarcasm, and exaggeration that contribute to the humour of this paragraph. The irony in this text arises from the fact that Thomas's complaint has such an unexpected result. Thomas is unhappy with the teller's treatment of him and threatening to close the account. The supervisor simply hands them a form to close their account instead of resolving the problem. The irony is that the boss's reaction to the complaint was not at all what he had expected. Thomas's sarcastic response by failing to use the account-closing form he was sent only adds insult to injury. The supervisor's statement is even more ridiculous when you consider the insinuation that they were given the form without question despite their objection.

The long lines depicted and Thomas's claim that they snaked throughout the banking hall are examples of exaggeration. This hyperbole serves to increase the comic effect by creating a more vivid representation of the mayhem. When Thomas tries to talk to their supervisor about their concern, the boss gives them a surprising and mildly comical reaction full of irony, sarcasm, and hyperbole. The passage humorously depicts the aggravating difficulties of navigating bureaucratic procedures.

He was no longer the Elisha I knew. The betting was affecting his business. He will have a nasty argument with a client whose shoe he was yet to repair. In the cause of the argument, he would pick the shoe in question and start working on it. As soon as the owner left Elisha would throw the show back into the pile. (17)

This text contains a humorous blend of sarcasm, irony, and humorous situations. The irony is that Elisha, an expert in his shoe repair industry, acts in a way that goes against the grain of what one might anticipate from him. A shoe repair done by a cobbler should be done with diligence and attention. According to the account, Elisha subverts this hope by acting as though he were fixing the shoe only if the owner was around and then discarding it as soon as the owner left.

There's an undercurrent of sarcasm in the sentence, most notably in "he would pick the shoe in question and start working on it." The phrase "working on it" suggests that Elisha is only making a show of fixing the shoe, while his actions prove that he is not. Humour is derived from the ridiculousness of the circumstance in situational comedy. Elisha's argumentative behaviour with customers over unrepaired shoes is unexpected and humorous because he just acts as if he is working on the shoes for the sake of looks before throwing them away. The text is humorous due to several factors: the sarcastic tone in the explanation of Elisha's activities, the absurdity of the circumstance depicted, and the ironic juxtaposition among the expectations of professionals and Elisha's behaviour. Elisha's actions in this passage serve as an example of the illusion of being in control in the setting of gambling. Elisha, a skilled cobbler, feigns control by claiming to fix shoes only when owners are present, comparable to those who gamble and believe they can influence outcomes. The irony emerges when he throws away the shoes after they leave, revealing the futility of assuming control. The sarcastic tone in "Working on it" reflects the deceitful nature of believing one is in charge, echoing the perilous belief in control common in gambling scenarios.

“ That thing will cause you a heart attack,” I told him one day when he threw his phone into a pile of shoes. “Bet imekunywa maji?” I asked him. (15)

The look of defeat he gave me was the answer to my question. He had lost yet another bet. (16)

Wordplay, sarcasm, and irony are the foundations of the humour in this piece. Wordplay comes first. The pun comes from the juxtaposition of the phrases "That thing will cause you a heart attack" and "Bet imekunywa maji?" When translated literally, the second line asks, "Did you lose the bet?" The play on words comes from the fact that the expression "imekunywa maji" (drank water) relates hilariously to the image of a lost wager, because it seems that the bet had been

"consumed" by the water. As the overstated statement regarding the possibility of heart attack stands in contrast with the routine act of losing a bet, sarcasm emerges. Elisha's defeated expression reveals the uncertainty inherent in gambling alongside the illusion of control.

Secondly, the sarcastic quality of the line "That thing will cause you heart attack" exemplifies the usage of sarcasm. Probably an exaggeration of Elisha's real response to losing a wager and dumping his mobile device into a pile of shoes. The absurdity of the circumstance arises from the contrast between the supposed "heart attack" and the loss of a bet.

The only rosemary I know is a girl. So there is a spice called rosemary? This world will show us wonders. (13)

Situational humour and irony best describe the tone of this paragraph. One ironic element in this section is the revelation by the narrator that the word "rosemary" can be both a name and a spice. The line "The only rosemary I know is a girl" implies that the speaker is referring to a female with such name. The later discovery that a spice can also be named "rosemary" reveals an unanticipated ambiguity in the word. When the speaker's initial expectation is compared to the reality they encounter, irony is created.

Secondly, the speaker finds the circumstance humorous because he or she mistook "rosemary" for the name of a person before learning that it is actually a spice. The statement "This world will show us wonders" emphasizes the levity of the situation by adding an air of overstated wonderment. The unexpected double meaning of "rosemary" is the source of some of the irony in this text, along with the speaker's discovery and their funny reaction to it. This passage uses contextual humour and irony to investigate the illusion of control. The speaker's discovering that "rosemary" may represent either a name or a spice adds a humorous twist, as the speaker's the original assumption of a Rosemary person differs with the unforeseen finding of the spice. The expression "This world will show us wonders" emphasizes the comical contrast between the speaker's the original anticipation and the amusing reality, emphasizing the unpredictability of spoken speech and the illusions it can create.

“Betting companies are always announcing winners. What is different?” I ask.

My thoughts went back to Elisha. He won a little money here and there but he was losing money more times than he won. Perhaps he was a special case. (46)

Irony and sarcastic humour best describe the tone of this text. The speaker's cynicism and scepticism about the betting companies announcing victors is the irony of this text. The question posed by the speaker is as follows: "Betting organisations are constantly proclaiming winners. Their question, "What is different?" indicates they are not persuaded by the continuous declarations of winners. The irony here is that bookmakers may highlight winners to draw in new clients, but the speaker's scepticism suggests that those that win may be the outliers.

Secondly, the passage's cynicism and scepticism add to its humorous quality. A note of pessimism is added by the speaker's consideration of Elisha's experience, where he earns "a little money here and there" but loses more frequently. That Elisha could be a "special case" suggests irony about Elisha's chances of winning money. The speaker's critical take on Elisha's betting experience and satirical doubt of the veracity of the betting businesses' victory notifications create the humour in this paragraph. This results in a commentary on gambling and the odds of winning that is both insightful and lightly comical. This extract uses irony and sarcasm to emphasize the illusion of control provided by gambling. The speaker's scepticism toward betting companies' constant announcement of winners reflects scepticism toward such claims. The irony is in the implied scepticism about the veracity of these announcements. Furthermore, the speaker's mention of Elisha gaining "a little money here and there" with the implication that he may be a "special case" adds a satirical element. The passage mocks the reliability of betting firms and the unpredictability of gambling winnings.

“ your mutura head cannot see that she is in love with you”, he kept saying. “ These things... you don’t just go diving in fuaaa”, I defended my tact and careful planning. “ Ha! ha! You know what they say a man who hangs around a beautiful girl without making his intentions clear ends up fetching water for guests at her wedding. You have to be the early bird.” “ Sometimes you think you are the early bird but you are actually the early worm. But Elisha, don’t you have shoes to repair?” I would change the topic. “ This one? Is this a Shoe? No... we did not fight for independence for this. “ (32)

This interaction is humorous because of the irony, sarcasm, and light-hearted criticism used by both speakers. Sarcasm and Irony is evident when Thomas's attempts to minimize Elisha's comments add comical irony to the situation. Thomas's justifying and defending words stand in stark contrast to Elisha's unabashed acceptance of Aria's emotions. Thomas's desire to play it safe and strategically runs counter to Elisha's blatant observations. Thomas asks Elisha if he has any shoes that need fixing as a subtle attempt to change the subject away from Aria and his own love prospects. Elisha is a cobbler by trade, so it's ironic that he's talking about romantic relationships instead of his area of expertise. Thomas's tone of sarcasm is clear when he suggests Elisha's participation in such conversations is funny or surprising.

Elisha's witty commentary, such as calling Thomas's head a "*mutura head*," lends a dimension of wordplay and amusement to the story. The "early bird" vs. "early worm" exchange is an amusing play on words, and Elisha's comeback about freedom is a clever way to change the subject. In response, Elisha asked, "This one?" Shoe or not a Shoe? To which the light-hearted aside, "No... we did not fight for independence for this." Elisha uses comedy to highlight the absurdity of the current situation by contrasting the relevance of the circumstance to the past importance of fighting for independence. This shoe-to-historical-event analogy is ridiculous and over the top, which adds to the humour.

To avoid an uncomfortable or personal discussion, Thomas uses the comic method of "changing the subject" by referring about Elisha's work. It's an approachable strategy for easing tension or shifting focus. The hilarity in this discussion comes from the exaggerated connection that exists between the shoe and its place in history, as well as the juxtaposition between Elisha's occupation and his interest in discussing romantic topics. The funny commentary and the shift in subject create a humorous pause in the discussion. Using a combination of wordplay, sarcasm, and situational comedy, this passage humorously examines the illusion of control using gambling. The comparison of Thomas' "*mutura head*" to his believed blindness in love by Elisha provides an amusing and sarcastic tone. The ironic contrast between being an "early bird" and an "early worm" emphasizes the unpredictable nature of romantic endeavours. Thomas' attempt to divert attention by inquiring concerning Elisha's shoe repairs presents situational comedy, considering Elisha's unexpected preference for romantic issues over his expertise.

Elisha's witty analogy, which connects a shoe to the fight for liberty, brings ridiculousness and humour to the discussion.

There were men in reflector jackets guiding the vehicles to a large lawn. Further ahead, a huge mansion towered over the trees, one of those I had seen in films and property magazines. “ wow!” “which hotel is this?” I could not hide my amusement. She chuckled. “that is home.” (39)

Misunderstanding, irony, and pleasant surprise all contribute to the levity of this text. Thomas's confusion about what's going on provides the comic relief. Because of the striking contrast between the mansion's spectacular appearance and his expectations, he mistakes it for a hotel. The comedy hinges on this misunderstanding of the situation. Thomas's notion that the mansion in question is a hotel is completely incorrect, making the situation ironic. Because the reader knows the place is not what Thomas thinks it is, the dramatic irony creates a comedic gulf between Thomas's expectations and the truth. Thirdly, the element of surprise adds to the comedy when Aria says she actually lives in the mansion. Thomas's naiveté and subsequent comprehension set up a funny contrast between the two states.

This chapter is humorous because of the interplay of misinterpretation, irony, and surprise that occurs between Thomas's assumption and his later reaction. The reader's understanding of the scenario just heightens the humour.

This extract examines the illusion of control by gambling, with facets of misunderstandings, irony, and pleasing surprise. Thomas's confusion over an amazing mansion, misunderstanding it for a hotel, is amusing. The irony stems from the huge disparity between Thomas' expectations and the reader's knowledge of the mansion. When Aria reveals that it is her home, the aspect of shock adds to the comedy. A combination of misunderstanding, irony, and surprise adds to the chapter's overall levity.

“Hallo there” his voice filled the room. “ Dad , this is Tom. I told you about him.

Honey this is my dad , Mr Walaki.” Honey. She called me honey. (41)

Irony, social awkwardness, and a pleasant surprise all contribute to the levity of this chapter. Aria's use of the word "honey" to address the reserved and reticent Thomas in the presence of her father is a bit rich. Given the context and Thomas's outward behaviour, the use of the term of affection seems out of place. Thomas's precarious position provides the section with its primary source of humour. He finds the contradiction between his timidity and the fondness, such as when he is called "honey" in a meeting with someone he has just met, to be hilarious. It comes as a shock for Thomas and the reader as well that the word "honey" is being used. It's surprising that Aria would use such a close and affectionate term for him in front of her dad. The comic effect is boosted by the element of surprise. The collision between Aria's choice of affection and Thomas's restrained character and the formal presentation to her father creates irony, embarrassment, and surprise, making for a lively and amusing occasion.

“What if I do not agree to proceed with the plan? What will happen to me?” I ask . He picks his phones. “ nothing. We will just forget that this conversation took place. You will rot in jail.” “What about this other case... this false accusation?” “ what other case ? Remember, this conversation didn’t take place and I don’t know you”, he stand s up and prepares to leave. “ you will let me go to jail because of a fabricated case?” my voice is shaking. “Listen, Thomas. There are about two or three hundred people in the cells. I don’t know any single one of them. He starts buttoning his coat. “Wait” I beg (67)

“ it seems you are not ready to make a decision. I should probably come back in the evening when you are ready.” He walks out.

In the morning, the lawyer comes back. I almost hug him. He does not have to ask if I have made up my mind. “ yes. I will do it,” I say as soon as I see him. (68)

It is the irony, the awkwardness, and the dramatic turnaround in this passage that make it so funny. Thomas's reluctance to accept the plan at first is contrasted with his eagerness to do so later. After initially expressing apprehension about joining the scheme, he eventually begs to take part in it. The scenario is given a comical twist by this ironic reversal. The awkward nature of Thomas's appeal and the lawyer's casual reaction make for a funny situation. There's an uncomfortable chemistry between Thomas and the lawyer because of his trembling voice and his

efforts at reasoning with him. The awkwardness serves to make the conversation more humorous. Thomas's attitude contributes to the humour. His fast and dramatic shift from tentative questioning to enthusiastic endorsement of the concept generates a humorous effect. Thomas's initial worries give way to an unforeseen plea for participation in the plan, creating a comedic moment that is equal parts sarcasm, awkwardness, and dramatic reversal. Thomas's abrupt change in attitude and the suddenness of the plot twist both add to the humour.

Thomas questions the repercussions of rejecting the lawyer's plan, demonstrating the apparent lack of control in gambling. The lawyer's casual reaction, suggesting they may disregard the conversation, highlights Thomas' lack of control. The irony unfolds as Thomas, who initially appeared cautious, abruptly shifts to excitement, highlighting the unpredictability of gambling decisions. The awkwardness stems from Thomas's request, and the lawyer's laid-back attitude provides humour, highlighting the unpredictable nature that occurs in such circumstances, where perceived power can shift quickly.

I should probably ask who it is , but it is not my thing. I rarely ask who is knocking. Perhaps it is because I know that I'm unlikely to be attacked by robbers. They would probably go to Andy's house first- he is the one with two satellite dishes. (52)

The humour stems from Thomas's nonchalance and air of self-assurance. The speaker claims to feel safe enough from robbery that they rarely check to see who is at their door. This air of confidence sets a humorous tone and gives the impression that the speaker views prospective dangers from an unusual angle. The irony in this chapter is that Thomas gives as an excuse for not opening the door to a potential intruder the fact that his neighbour has two satellite dishes on his roof. The thought that burglars would be drawn to the neighbour's place owing to the presence of satellite dishes is ludicrous and comes as a complete surprise, making it funny. A sharp contrast is made between Thomas's house and Andy's (his neighbour) house; this is the source of the humour. The speaker's neighbour has two satellite dishes, which create a comical distraction for would-be burglars. The comedy is amplified by the overstatement of the effectiveness of satellite dishes as a deterrent to robbery.

The text is humorous because of the confident tone, irony, and analogy that are all interwoven throughout. The narrative is given a light-hearted and comical air by the speaker's offbeat take on

security and the unorthodox justification given for not answering the door when someone knocks.

Thud!

I'm rudely woken up by a loud knock on the door. It must be Andy, the next door neighbour, who comes home drunk at 3 am and tries to open all doors because he cannot comprehend which door is his. Then the knock comes again, this time louder. I realize it my door. (52)

It is the absurdity, irony, and awkwardness of the situation that provide the passage's comic relief. The humour stems from the absurdity of Andy, the drunken neighbour, going door to door at 3am in the morning. The circumstance is made fun of by the ridiculousness of him not recognising his own door. The irony is that Andy is confused by Thomas's knocking because Thomas isn't used to late-night interruptions. Thomas, who didn't anticipate to be interrupted in this way, finds himself in an amusing situation.

The humour of the extract is amplified by the uncomfortable Thomas feels when he hears a loud knock at his own door. It's already socially embarrassing, but now he has to deal with the added discomfort of realising his drunken neighbour is disturbing his sleep. Thomas's night of sleep takes an unexpectedly comical turn as he and his befuddled neighbour negotiate the ridiculousness, irony, and awkwardness of the scenario.

2.4.4 Satire

Satire is employed to poke fun at the real world and its inhabitants. It has a long history of serving as an effective method of bringing down through mockery those in authority and those who need to be brought down to size. It is any kind of writing which attacks, directly or indirectly, something which is hated or feared" (Kernan 1973). One of the most prevalent forms of humour, satire can be used to poke fun at anything from a political leader to a current event to a person's own flaws. Satire is humorous writing that takes itself seriously while discussing an absurd topic. There are several literary satires to be found.

I did not know when or if he would ever win the jackpot. All I knew was that all the betting and football was turning him into a different person. He was no longer the Elisha I knew. The betting was affecting his business. He would have a nasty argument with a client whose shoe he was yet to repair. In the cause of the argument, he would pick the shoe in question and start working on it. As soon as the owner left Elisha would throw the shoe back into the pile. (17)

Satire and exaggeration are the basis of the humour in this paragraph. The paragraph uses irony as it describes how Elisha's connection with gambling has changed him. The speaker realizes that Elisha isn't the same person they formerly knew, which runs counter to the common perception that activities like gambling are trivial and unimportant. Elisha's increasingly unreasonable and unproductive actions provide the irony. The deleterious effects of Elisha's gambling addiction are satirized throughout the story. Satirical criticism on the ridiculousness of Elisha's activities is provided by the description of him getting into a dispute with a customer about a shoe repair and then pretending to continue working on the shoe after the customer leaves.

Exaggeration is also used by Kombani. The passage is meant to be humorous, thus it exaggerates Elisha's actions. His habit of arguing, then acting as though he is making progress on the shoes, only toss them aside later, provides an exaggerated situation that emphasizes the ludicrousness of his behaviour. Elisha's sudden metamorphosis, the satirical remark on the futility of gambling, and the exaggerated depiction of Elisha's erratic conduct all contribute to the comedy. The text weaves together various components to form a humorous and introspective story. This paragraph explores the illusion of control through gambling, employing irony, satire, and exaggeration for comedic effect. The irony lies in Elisha's transformation due to gambling, challenging the perceived insignificance of such activities. Satirical critique is evident in the depiction of Elisha's detrimental behaviour, satirizing the absurdity of his actions during a shoe repair dispute. Exaggeration enhances the humour by portraying Elisha's erratic conduct in a ludicrous light. The extract cleverly employs these elements to underscore the comical consequences of the illusion of control within the context of gambling.

“These summer bunnies acquire American accents even when they go to India,” She had added. (48)

This passage is humorous because of its satirical and hyperbolic tone. The sentence is satirical because it aims to draw attention to the widespread practise of using non-native accents in non-native contexts. The speaker is being sarcastic when he or she makes the remark about "summer bunnies" picking up American accents in India. The satire comes from the ridiculousness of the circumstance, in which people speak with accents that aren't representative of where they are.

The humour stems from the overstatement of the circumstances. "Summer bunnies acquire American accents even when they go to India" is a ridiculous oversimplification of the process of picking up a new accent. This hyperbole injects some much-needed humour into the observation. Satire and exaggeration are used in this text to make a point about how some people talk with a foreign accent no matter where they are from. This analysis is hilarious and over-the-top, offering a more relaxed take on the occurrence. This passage employs a satirical and hyperbolic tone to highlight the illusion of control in the context of adopting American accents. The speaker's comment about "summer bunnies" acquiring American accents even in India is satirical, aiming to mock the widespread phenomenon of people adopting non-native accents in non-native environments. The humour arises from the absurdity of the situation, using exaggeration to emphasize the speaker's point about people speaking in accents that don't align with their origins. This satirical and hyperbolic approach adds a comedic layer to the commentary on linguistic influences.

2.4.5 Personification

The rhetorical figure of personification, in which something that is not human acquires a human identity or 'face,' is easily identified, but the figure's logical form and function, as well as its rhetorical devices and graphical effects, rarely elicit scholarly attention. As a means of communication, it can either be taken for granted or disregarded as mere convention. (Melion, Walter S., and Bart Ramakers, 2016.)

He laughed heartily and turned his attention to the shoe he was repairing. "Man!" he said to the shoe. "Your owner should just admit that you have reached the end of your life. " Ha! Ha! They say it is not over till the fat lady sings" " here, all the ladies have sung and left how do you put another patch on another patch? I didn't leave my job for this. No!" He complained, albeit with a smile. (31).

Personification and sarcasm are the foundations of the humour in this piece. The humour is based on the shoe becoming personified, which is a figure of speech. It's clear that Elisha, the cobbler, treats the shoe as though it were sentient and capable of responding to his conversation. The cobbler's amusement stems from the fact that he is having a conversation with an inanimate thing as if it were conscious and felt emotions.

Elisha's remark about the owner of the shoe confessing that it has worn out is ironic because the shoe is nearing the end of its useful life. The irony here is that the cobbler is treating the shoe with the assumption that it was conscious while discussing its condition. It's funny because it's so out of character to attribute human traits to something like a shoe, but the thought that its "life" has ended does just that. The cobbler's snarky comments about repairing the shoe are an example of this. His remark that "all the ladies have sung and left" reinforces the point that the shoe has been worn out beyond repair. The cobbler's sardonic remark that he won't quit his occupation for such work implies that he didn't choose that profession so that he could overcome adversity.

The use of irony, sarcasm, and personification in this passage makes it humorous and whimsical. The cobbler's light-hearted banter regarding the shoe and subsequent hilarious comments about the shoe's condition are major comic elements. This passage explores the illusion of control through gambling with a blend of dark humour, irony, and exaggeration. The speaker's casual dismissal of a potential threat and suggestion to call Aria introduces dark humour, offering an absurd take on a serious situation. Irony arises as the speaker deviates from conventional responses to danger by proposing an unrelated scenario. Exaggeration adds a comedic dimension, turning a potentially grave subject into a humorous exploration of the speaker's cavalier attitude. The use of dark humour and exaggeration in the face of a perceived threat contributes to the overall comedic tone of the passage.

2.5 CONCLUSION

In this section, we analyzed the use of humor and language as used by Kombani in his text *Of Pawns and Players*. The chapter identifies the various forms of humour used in the text the purpose for which it serves as it illustrates that humor was not only made for laughs. Through use of simple language in the text, the humor becomes simple to comprehend and hence relatable to the target audience who are the young adult.

In the third chapter, I analyze manipulation through the use of characters to explain the idea of greed for power and money and the aspect of betrayal among characters as they fight to gain power and wealth. This chapter effectively conveys the author's main argument on the prevalent illusion of control throughout the setting of betting by making use of the characters and the major issues brought out in the text.

CHAPTER THREE

UNVEILING THE ILLUSION: BETRAYAL, GREED AND MANIPULATION THROUGH CHARACTERS IN THE WORLD OF GAMBLING IN *OF PAWNS AND PLAYERS*

3.0 INTRODUCTION

In the chapter two, we examined humour present in *Of Pawns and Players* by Kombani, shedding light on its sad representation of the illusion of control prevalent in gambling. The investigation skilfully used the storytelling techniques mastered by Kombani, providing an insightful examination of the captivating illusion of control in the chaotic world of betting via the lens of humour. In this next chapter, we'll go deeper into the intricate web where deceit and unbounded greed lead people down a path of no return to poverty and the alluring grip of addiction. This section attempts to bridge the gap between humour and tragedy by exploring the intricate interplay between deception, despair and the tragically comical complications inherent in the realms of gambling and human frailty.

We follow the lives of well-developed individuals as they take us on a roller coaster ride through this intricate story: Elisha, whose aspirations are tarnished by the promise of easy money; Mr Ambrose Walaki, Aria's father, that fortune and power impact the destiny of those around him, and Ali Abdi, Walaki's lawyer, whose participation in the developing drama points out the persistent greed that pushes the story forward; Thomas, who struggles with ethical quandaries as he traverses the dark seas of manipulation; and Aria, who finds herself in a web of ambition.

By following their stories, we can see how well woven the web of deception is, entrapping the victims in a tangled dance of lies and betrayal. Hereby, we examined the complex relationships between these people and how their destinies are connected to show how manipulation can have catastrophic effects on a person's moral fibre and how the pursuit of fortune may lead to a downward spiral into poverty and addictions.

3.1 THE CONCEPT OF MANIPULATION

A detailed examination of the methods through which people and their communities are subjected to systematic exploitation reveals a bleak picture in the interplay involving manipulation, poverty, and addictions. Manipulation, especially when it sprouts from a

foundation of greed and hunger for financial and authoritative power, has far-reaching negative consequences for society as a whole, not just for the individuals caught up in its web of lies. When we start by exploring the relationship amongst manipulation and poverty, we find multiple vectors of economic exploitation. At the outset, others' financial security is always put at risk when people or organizations use economic systems for their own benefit. Economic growth is stunted and poverty cycles are maintained when labour forces are managed, wages are purposefully skewed, and resources are cunningly controlled. Scams and fraudulent operations also create a fertile environment for manipulators to falsely present prospects for financial progress, luring victims into parting with their money and forcing them into poverty. In addition, manipulators erode social safety nets meant to prevent persistent poverty by undermining community support systems, which disrupts collective attempts and bargaining strength.

When we shift our focus to how manipulation and addictions are intertwined, we gain a sad awareness of the manipulators' exploitation of their victims' weaknesses. These settings present opportunities for manipulators to benefit from the misery and addiction of their victims by subtly introducing them to addictive drugs or habits. Moreover, establishing a pattern of dependency allows manipulators to demonstrate dominance over individuals or communities through the use of addiction as a means of escape or coping, whether the dependency is based on substances, actions, or financial resources. Individuals may choose these destructive pathways in search of illusive aims or fleeting solace and this contributes to the epidemic of addiction. Social ideals have been corrupted by manipulators who promote consumerism and normalize hazardous actions.

Finally, the pervasive themes of greed and betrayal, as well as the destructive cycles that ensue from them, reveal a breakdown of trust within relationships and community dynamics, isolating individuals and weakening collective activities to oppose exploitation. Manipulative behaviours that lead to rewards can be seen as a pattern, and this can lead to a continuous routine of exploitation and poverty. Furthermore, the widespread techniques of manipulators, along with innate distrust and an absence of cohesion within society members, may damage the social fabric, weakening joint efforts to reduce poverty and tackle addiction at the structural level.

According to Murfin, R and Ray, S (2003), the concept of character in literature encompasses a wide range of figures, not necessarily limited to human beings, although the majority of

characters are indeed human. It is well acknowledged that contemporary iterations of the persona are commonly referred to as character sketches. In addition, they provide a more precise definition of characterisation as the author employs a range of techniques to depict and advance the characterization of individuals inside a literary work. Characters may struggle to overcome structural problems caused by a lust for power and wealth that has entangled them in deceitful and exploitative webs. By delving deeply into these topics, we can see how greed fuels actions across the board, from the personal to the societal, and how this in turn accelerates the spread of social ills like manipulation, poverty, and addiction. Because these issues have such a profound effect on so many people and communities all over the world, it is crucial that discussions about manipulating others, poverty, and addiction be approached with a mixture of sensitive and a nuanced apprehension.

3.2 MANIPULATION, GREED AND BETRAYAL

“That thing will cause you a heart attack,” I told him one day when he threw his phone into a pile of shoes. “Bet imekunywa maji?” I asked him. The look of defeat he gave me was the answer to my question. He had lost yet another bet. (15)

Thomas, worried about Elisha's health, tells him that his gaming could cause a heart attack out of concern. This demonstrates that he is concerned for Elisha's well-being and fears the outcomes of his actions. Elisha is an obsessive gambler. Elisha's disappointed expression after yet another loss is indicative of his obsessive gambling behaviour, which shows that he may be a pathological gambler. He seems driven by an intense urge to gamble despite the obvious risks. Elisha seems to be motivated by a compulsive impulse to wager, even when faced with the prospect of losses, in contrast to Thomas, who has concerns about the consequences of gambling, as shown in the paragraph.

In particular, the interplay between manipulation and addiction in the context of gambling is explored, providing a moving peek into the complexity of this relationship. Thomas and Elisha's back-and-forth helps build a story that sheds light on subtle and overt manipulation, such as that used by betting networks to keep economically weak people hooked on gambling. With genuine care for Elisha's well-being in mind, Thomas issues an urgent cautionary message: "That thing will cause you a heart attack." Thomas's "thing" here is clearly the cell phone, which facilitates Elisha's gambling and therefore becomes a metaphor for a deadly weapon with the potential to

hasten Elisha's bodily and emotional mortality. Elisha's powerful visual metaphor of throwing his cell phone into a heap of shoes in defeat is representative of his inner turmoil and despair, but he is helplessly trapped in a cycle of obsessive gambling, influenced by the schemes of betting companies that attract and retain customers by preying on their weaknesses, hopes, and despairs.

In this conversation, Elisha's open defeat and Thomas's subsequent anxiety create a beautiful symphony that mimics the ubiquitous realities many experiences when they fall into the grips of addiction to gambling, where manipulation by betting sites paves the way. To manipulate the perceptions of people like Elisha, betting companies like the one depicted in Kombani's novel, *Money Bet*, methodically spin stories of future wealth and prosperity. These corporations use stories of overnight riches and jackpot wins to convince their customers that their impossible dreams are within reach. Elisha's perseverance in betting despite mounting losses paints a bleak picture of the how manipulation, especially when coupled with an individual's optimism or desperation, can lead to compulsive behaviour. This is especially true in settings with large socioeconomic gaps, as those who control the odds and results in the gambling sector can provide the promise of a quick buck to those in need. In this way, Kombani provides perceptive insight into the dark world of manipulative operations employed by betting entities through the lens of Elisha's gambling behaviours and Thomas's consequent anxieties. This story not only adds to the novel's thematic tapestry, but it also encourages readers to consider the broader socioeconomic and psychological consequences of gambling, especially in settings where manipulated practices prey on the aspirations as well as desperations of the financially disadvantaged.

He was no longer the Elisha I knew. The betting was affecting his business. He will have a nasty argument with a client whose shoe he was yet to repair. In the cause of the argument, he would pick the shoe in question and start working on it. As soon as the owner left Elisha would throw the show back into the pile. (17)

From the excerpt presented, we can assume the following about both Thomas and Elisha: Elisha seems to make snap decisions, especially in the heat of an argument with a client. After the customer leaves, he begins to work on the shoe right away to make them happy, but then he abandons it. Secondly, Elisha's actions show he is not professional. He doesn't deal with client disagreements or anger in a matured or business like way and it shows in his work. Thirdly, there

is inconsistency in Elisha's behaviour. In an effort to settle a disagreement, he begins repairing a pair of shoes, but he never finishes them. Also, it's easy to criticize his behaviour as careless and reckless, like when he tossed the shoes back into the heap. He risks damaging his reputation and earnings because of his actions. Impulsive and unprofessional conduct might result from being under stress or strain, which may explain Elisha's reaction to the betting-related concerns hurting his firm.

On the other hand, Thomas is observant. Thomas has observed Elisha's business and behaviour shifts as a result of Elisha's betting. He is perceptive enough to see that Elisha has changed significantly from his earlier acquaintance. Thomas's concern for Elisha's well-being and the effects of gambling on his life and career is evident in his observation and reference of Elisha's altered behaviour. Thomas's statement indicates that he is thoughtful and introspective, since he has taken the time to consider the situation and is willing to recognize the changes he has seen in Elisha. These qualities can be gathered from the extract's descriptions of the characters' activities and interactions.

Manipulation has taken a firm foothold. Elisha falls prey to the draw of gambling and, without realizing it, becomes a piece in the broader, more devious game of deception played by gambling establishments. His preoccupation with gaming is emblematic of not just his own demise, but also the careful manipulation of vulnerable customers by the gambling industry. They lure people in with well-designed stories of future prosperity and psychological tricks, all the while destroying their material and mental well-being. Gambling offers Elisha instant satisfaction and the possibility of windfalls, but it wrecks his business and his relationships. This reflects how manipulation can cause one to focus on short-term profits at the expense of long-term stability and genuine participation.

The treachery in this situation is multifaceted. Elisha's betrayal of the people he serves is one aspect and his betrayal of himself and, perhaps, his community is another. Elisha breaks the implicit trust and social contract of business transactions when he disputes with a customer, pretends to fix their shoe, and then throws it away after the customer leaves. And by choosing the volatile and unreliable realm of betting, he is sabotaging any chance he had of building a successful firm in the first place. It's possible that Elisha's actions are symbolic of the deceit perpetrated by gambling establishments, which lure customers with the promise of improved

quality of life through betting before delivering stories in which those customers sacrifice their own values in order to cash in on the action.

Elisha's actions reflect the same conflicted, materialistic drive that motivates the betting industry as do their own. Companies in the gambling industry are particularly greedy since they profit off their customers' happiness and misery. Elisha, however, displays a sort of avarice in which his desire for instant monetary gain through betting outweighs the continuous, albeit slow and gradual earnings and societal contribution afforded by careful workmanship. His interactions are infused with a sort of avarice that is likely born of both desperation and skewed perception because he puts private, immediate benefits through gambling ahead of the long-term viability and credibility that comprise his business and relationships.

Kombani illustrates the larger, systemic problems fostered by deceitful and selfish methods inside businesses like betting through the microcosm of Elisha's failing business and relational practices. Elisha becomes a metaphor for the way in which the vicious cycles of deception, treachery, and greed can corrode not only individual lives but also the social fabric as a whole. His story becomes more than just an account of his own fall; it serves as a stark cautionary tale against the manipulative, betrayal, and greedy dynamics that permeate some parts of our societies, and it compels us to look inward and critically evaluate the systems we participate in.

As she entered, I picked the shoes and carried them in. A few weeks earlier, a thief had helped himself to all the shoes that had been left outside the houses in the block of flats. I was not going to risk her shoes out there, especially because they looked like they cost my rent. (23)

It is possible to assume the following characteristics of Aria and Thomas from the excerpt provided: By letting Thomas carry in her shoes, Aria shows her confidence in him. This indicates that she is at ease with him handling her stuff and trusts him to do so. By bringing Aria's shoes inside with him to keep them safe from thieves, Thomas demonstrates his protective nature. He is worried about the security of her possessions and takes preventative measures to ensure their safety. Thomas's thoughtfulness toward Aria and her belongings is evident in the way he carried her shoes inside the house. After the latest theft, he has been thoughtful about making her feel safe and at ease. Thomas is now in charge of keeping the shoes secure in case they are stolen.

This demonstrates a concern for the welfare of others and a willingness to step up and take charge when necessary. Thomas is caring, Thomas's desire to safeguard Aria's shoes is indicative of his considerate and caring character. In this predicament, he is concerned first and foremost with her well-being.

As with the thief in our example, manipulating a betting situation could mean bending the rules or setting up artificial circumstances to guarantee a certain outcome. Online gambling sites may prey on the gullibility of their customers like Elisha (from the previous context) by exaggerating the likelihood of winning and downplaying the inherent dangers of gaming. Companies in the gambling industry may deceive customers into increasing their time, money, and emotional investment in the game through the use of alluring ads and intentionally created storylines, such as the appearance of easy winnings.

Betrayal in gambling could take the form of raising false expectations or taking advantage of a player's faith in the game's integrity. When players discover that the systems in which they wager are rigged against them or lack the transparency that was previously assumed, they may feel deceived. In contrast to Thomas, who carefully protected Aria's shoes, betting businesses acted dishonestly by not looking out for the players' best interests.

In gambling, greed manifests as a need to win at any cost, putting other people's lives and morals second to one's own. Gamblers' greed in seeking quick cash at the betting tables is mirrored by the betting establishments' greed in preying on the players' hopes and fears for financial gain. In the same way that the robber put their own greed before the safety of the neighbourhood, gaming establishments may put their own financial interests ahead of the well-being of their customers and the broader social consequences of gambling addiction.

Betting offers an internal threat, founded in deception, treachery, and greed, which compromises personal and societal wellness, in a narrative parallel to Aria and Thomas's scenario, where the theft occurrence generates an outward threat and needs protective steps. Despite their distinct dynamics, both stories shed light on the nuanced ways in which these ideas present themselves in diverse social settings. In contrast to Thomas's caring and protective behaviour in the face of external dangers, the way in which individuals deal with the internal dangers presented by

manipulative and exploitation betting situations can introduce complicated character patterns and moral dilemmas.

“I should probably get your number” Her soft voice brought me back to the conversation. She whipped out an expensive looking phone and looked expectantly at me. When she saw the expectation on my face she added, “so that i call you when I want some...”

“Err...sure.” I blurted out my number. She pressed the call button and in a moment I felt a vibration in my pocket. “Now I have your number too,” I told her. For the first time I felt conscious of my phone they was no way I was going to remove the contraption from my pocket and embarrass myself. (13)

It is possible to assume the following characteristics of Aria and Thomas from the excerpt provided: Aria is self-assured. By approaching Thomas directly and asking for his number, Aria demonstrates confidence and aggressiveness. She states her intention to get his number with certainty, showing that she is clear on what she wants. The ease with which Aria requests Thomas's number and then utilizes her phone shows her self-assurance. Part of her attractiveness comes from how assured she is. Thomas is anxious and hesitant: Thomas's hesitation to give Aria his phone number implies he is uncomfortable. Perhaps he feels awkward in social situations; therefore he gives out his number abruptly. Thomas, despite his initial anxiety, is kind and helpful. He readily gives Aria his phone number, demonstrating his friendliness and cooperative spirit. Thomas is Self-Aware. He starts to feel embarrassed by his phone and avoids pulling it out of his pocket. This indicates that he is at least somewhat self-conscious about the way his phone outlook might be interpreted by others. The extract's conversation and actions allow us to deduce these features. Thomas's uneasiness and subsequent self-consciousness stand in stark contrast to Aria's assertiveness and confidence.

Aria and Thomas, two very different people, might get tangled up in a web of deceit, treachery, and greed in the ebb and flow of the betting world, where the odds are extremely high and the attraction of fortune is pervasive. The ease with which Aria managed to acquire Thomas's phone number hints at her bold, aggressive personality, which could pave the way for careful, possibly subconscious manipulation as she uses her confidence to negotiate and even dominate the betting

arena. She has the capacity to identify and play on people's weaknesses; she may use Thomas's awareness of his own nervousness to lure him into a subtle form of compulsion in which the promise of social advancement through betting serves as alluring bait. Thomas, with his naive trust and innate worry, turns into a pliable participant who may give in to manipulation. His cooperative nature is both friendly and vulnerable. There is potential for betrayal in this relationship, especially if Aria uses Thomas's trust for her own betting purposes. Thomas could be misled by Aria's assurances, turning what was supposed to be a happy ending into an unpleasant surprise. And it's possible that Aria's basic attitude to betting would be transformed into an unfettered hunt for more by avarice, the ever-present dark shadow of human desire, using Thomas's generosity as a stepping stone to her own gains. These foreboding yet plausible scenarios probe the potential for deception, betrayal, and greed in the risky world of gambling, and they weave a speculative story beyond the scope of the offered material. These potential extensions of the characters' identities beyond the bounds of the text should be taken for what they are: just that: hypothetical.

“Betting companies are always announcing winners. What is different?” I ask.

My thoughts went back to Elisha. He won a little money here and there but he was losing money more times than he won. Perhaps he was a special case.(46)

We can learn a lot about Thomas's personality from this extract. Thomas first demonstrates a healthy dose of scepticism by casting doubt on the on-going claims of winners provided by betting establishments. His scepticism reflects the fact that he is not one to take things at face value but rather to analyse them carefully. In addition, Thomas demonstrates his analytical abilities by discussing Elisha's gambling background. Elisha demonstrates his ability to use reasoning and take unique instances into account when developing judgments and views by recalling his own mixed results with gambling. Thomas also demonstrates a wonderful degree of empathy in alongside these attributes. He avoids snap judgments and instead makes a concerted effort to comprehend others' situations. Thomas's willingness to put himself in another person's shoes and describe Elisha as an exception "special case" illustrates his compassion and curiosity. Thomas comes across as an analytical and sceptical thinker in this paragraph, one whose capacity to sympathize with others is firmly rooted in his consideration of the lives of people like Elisha. All of these aspects of his personality work together to make him who he is.

The aforementioned excerpt and additional details provide a glimpse into the nuanced complexities of betting as seen through the unique perspective of Thomas, who appears out for his sceptical thinking, analytical ability, and empathy in a world tinged by manipulating others, betrayal, and greed. Betting firms' practices reek of deception since they constantly highlight victors, creating the illusion of easy success for their clients. This strategy allures gamblers and aspiring bettors like Elisha with the promise of easy triumphs, tapping into the desperateness and hope of people who, notwithstanding being frequently stung by loss, are enticingly drawn to the fleeting joy of occasional wins and the beckoning call of winner announcements.

Elisha walks a path strewn with losses across the bleak landscapes of betrayal, representative of the complicated web of betrayal spun by gambling corporations. The contrast between the high hopes stoked by their triumphant winning announcements and the crushing reality of his repeated setbacks is poignantly illustrated by his trip. It's possible that the organizations trick gamblers into thinking victory is not only possible, but also easy to achieve, before breaking their confidence and leading them down a path to disappointment and financial ruin.

Elisha's dogged pursuit of gambling despite overwhelming loss and the betting businesses' insatiable lust for profit both betray a sordid underbelly of avarice. Elisha, bound by avarice, ignores the wisdom that would tell him to quit a losing venture in favour of the excitement of the occasional victory and the potential of a jackpot. While people like Elisha suffer financial and emotional costs as a result of their gambling habits, betting corporations, possibly motivated by their own gluttony, deliberately create a betting labyrinth through carefully tailored messages and marketing methods. Furthermore, the gamblers, woozy from random winnings and the conspicuously exhibited triumphs of a select few, dive headfirst into a devouring cycle, oblivious to the underlying hazards and the prevalent financial losses that suffocate the euphoric tales of triumph.

Thomas's sceptical mind, analytical eye, and empathic heart stand in stark contrast to the web of deception, betrayal and greed that surrounds him. If we take Elisha as a "special case," then his mistrust of the endless parade of winners proclaimed by betting organizations allows us to take a step back and consider the possibly deceptive and treacherously greed-infused tendencies that permeate the field of betting. His point of view compels us to think about, analyse, and maybe

even feel compassion for people who become caught up in the complex and often mysterious networks of the gambling industry.

“What if I do not agree to proceed with the plan? What will happen to me?” I ask. He picks his phones. “Nothing. We will just forget that this conversation took place. You will rot in jail.” “n what about this other case... this false accusation?” “what other case? Remember, this conversation didn’t take place and I don’t know you”, he stand s up and prepares to leave. “you will let me go to jail because of a fabricated case?” my voice is shaking. “Listen, Thomas. There are about two or three hundred people in the cells. I don’t know any single one of them. He starts buttoning his coat. “Wait” I beg “it seems you are not ready to make a decision. I should probably come back in the evening when you are ready.” He walks out. (67)

In the morning, the lawyer comes back. I almost hug him. He does not have to ask if I have made up my mind. “yes. I will do it,” I say as soon as I see him. (68)

Multiple characteristics of both Thomas and the lawyer's personalities and demeanour are shown in their conversation. Thomas is shown to be a person who struggles with anxiety and phobias. His voice wavers as he asks about the plan's potential implications, revealing his inner struggle. This hints at a person who is highly sensitive to pressure and uncertainty. Thomas is also the type to tread carefully and ask lots of questions. He doesn't rush into accepting the lawyer's offer without first asking some questions. His inquisitive nature suggests that he gives careful consideration to all of his options before making a decision.

Interestingly, Thomas demonstrates some degree of openness to reason as well. When the lawyer presents his strategy to him again the next morning, he gives in despite his initial hesitation. This indicates that Thomas is open to persuasion and can be convinced of anything despite his initial reluctance. However, the lawyer comes out as realistic and defensive. He gives Thomas an ultimatum that highlights the lawyer's disinterest in the incarcerated. This level of realism stems from a concern for one's own safety and a readiness to put rational legal issues ahead of sentimental ones.

The lawyer also demonstrates patience. When Thomas seems hesitant, he leaves, only for him to come back the next day. The fact that they are ready to give Thomas as much time as he needs to make a decision shows that they appreciate the importance of the situation. The lawyer is characterized as realistic, self-protective, and patient in dealing with Thomas's worries, while Thomas is portrayed as initially afraid, cautious, and somewhat persuadable. These individual differences shape the dynamic of the developing relationship between the two people.

Thomas and the lawyer's words and actions create a complex web of manipulating others, betrayal, and avarice within the chapter at hand, throwing a gloomy pall over their otherwise endearing qualities of anxiety, curiosity, persuasion, realism, defence, and patience. The lawyer, Ali Abdi, uses Thomas's fear and persuasiveness as a weapon, and then forces him to make an impossible choice: either becomes embroiled in the web of an illegal scheme, or fall into the abyss of being imprisoned the result, perhaps, of a fabricated case. In this high-pressure environment, Thomas's anxiety turns into a useful weapon the lawyer may use to coax him into complying with his demands despite his misgivings.

Thomas is thrown into a whirlwind of mistrust and unfairness, and this pervasive sense of betrayal is most vividly depicted by the moving image of a system of justice, personified by the legal professional, that abandons its holy obligation to safeguard the innocent. As the lawyer values the throbbing accomplishment of the scheme over the smouldering ruin of ethical and legal fairness, it becomes clear that he is willing to subject Thomas to the ferocious maw of imprisonment, even on an accusation that may emanate of concoction and deceit.

In addition, the encounter is tinged with an ugly colour of greed, as the lawyer appears self-centered in his drive to assure the unrestrained continuation of the scheme, oblivious to the moral and legal dilemma choking Thomas and indifferent to the countless individuals imprisoned in cells. This may be an indication of avarice motivated by a need to benefit in some way from the plan's realization, whether that benefit is monetary, professional, or otherwise. Thomas, on the other hand, reluctantly matches himself with the strategy, suggesting greed or possibly a desire for self-preservation that pushes him to relinquish the ethical superiority in order to protect his personal liberty and wellness, even if this means being a collaborator to a possibly unlawful scheme.

In essence, the text gracefully develops an ethical drama by highlighting an encounter in which the lawyer skilfully exploits Thomas's frailties with his pragmatism and morally ambiguous approach. Embedded in the thorn brambles concerning one's own survival and ethical difficulties, this conversation becomes a powerful conduit for the underlying concepts of manipulation, treachery, and greed, providing a reflection on the morally complex choices that individuals may be compelled or choose to traverse.

“Yes how can I help you?” it is the other lady. She has short cropped hair and her face is heavily made up. She has shaved off her eyebrows and then draws dark brown lines where she thinks they should be. I do not have a problem with ladies who do that- let them draw what they want on their faces. but some of them really need drawing lessons, because they end up looking like there are always surprised. (74)

Attributes of both the Desk Attendant of Wamali International Investments as well as Thomas are out rightly revealed. The receptionist's friendly greeting to Thomas is indicative of the high level of service to which she is committed. Her business like demeanour suggests she has refined the art of client interaction. Her short cropped hair, heavy eyeliner, and well-drawn eyebrows all attest to her determination to present herself in a particular manner. It's unclear whether her focus on her beauty is driven by a desire to please others or by the pressures of the business.

Thomas, on the other hand, displays characteristics that help define who he is. His lack of bias is evident in the fact that he doesn't criticize ladies who opt to fill in their brows. His reply exemplifies a non-judgmental, welcoming worldview and a willingness to let things be as they may. Thomas's talents of observation are on full display as he not only describes the office attendant's makeup with great detail yet additionally manages to inject some humour into his account. This light-hearted tone indicates that he is perceptive and enjoys the little things in life.

In conclusion, this text provides helpful insights into the desk clerk's character by stressing her professionalism and precise devotion to her appearance, and into Thomas' character by displaying his openness, observation, and humour. These individual characteristics contribute to the dynamic of their brief meeting in the story.

In the manipulation domain, the Front Desk Attendant's attentiveness to her appearance may mask a subtle desire to silence or beguile clients, lulling them into a serene harbour of safety or

diversion, especially in a betting scenario where every detail might tilt the scales. In the risky realm of gambling, where trust may serve simultaneously as a solid foundation and a masquerade, her polite, professional approach could serve a dual purpose: to generate trust and to suck client attention and possible abuse.

Those who are drawn in by the Desk Attendant's friendly demeanour may be led astray if their trust is exploited for financial gain by using their apparent sincerity as a cover for dishonest betting practices or schemes. Thomas, who has a non-judgmental and open perspective, may show genuine interest in and trust of others; yet, any attempt to take advantage of this trust by using dishonest means would cruelly expose his true colours.

As represented by the Office Attendant, an unquenchable lust for money could sweep through the business, prompting dishonest practices such as false pretences and carefully planned interactions with customers in order to maintain a steady stream of gamblers and their cash. Exploiting customers' frailties or possibly destroying addictions to supply the endless maw of profit is a sign of profound greed, especially if the business is aware of the problem but does nothing to stop the destruction it is wreaking. Thomas, despite his perceptive eye, could be seen as giving in to greed and abandoning his informative and often jovial perspective on life and its inhabitants if he chose to ignore inconsistencies or suspicious transactions within the betting establishment.

Finally, this fictitious investigation sketches the potential trajectories where these themes may entwine inside the intricate fabric of the story, depending on subsequent narrative strands and revelations, even though the present-day narrative doesn't have clear tendrils integrating to deception, betrayal, and greed by means of betting. Because of this, the groundwork has been laid for potential future interactions and turning points in the story's development.

Last time I visited my bank there was a rude teller who was taking ages to serve us. The long queues snaked from the exit across the banking hall. I complained to the supervisor and threatened to close my account. The supervisor asked for my account number, looked up something on the computer and gave me an account closing form. Well I did not close the account. (78)

Thomas exhibits various distinguishing characteristics. Thomas's frustration and assertiveness shine through when he describes his trip to the bank. He talks about the day he had to wait in line at the bank because of a grouchy cashier who kept everyone waiting. His boldness is on full display in his choice to file a formal complaint with the supervisor to the point of threatening to cancel his account. When Thomas's high standards for service are not satisfied, he does not hesitate to take decisive action. Thomas is a person who can take charge and make a decision once they've thought it over. After complaining about the subpar service he received, he reconsiders and decides to keep his account open. This exemplifies his ability to step back and examine the situation more objectively before committing to a course of action.

Thomas, according to this sentence, is expecting to receive high-quality customer service. He apparently wants prompt and polite service because he threatened to cancel his subscription. This indicates that he has high expectations for the quality of service provided. Overall, the chapter paints a picture of Thomas as an independent person who demands to be treated well. He is fast to act, but also capable of pausing to examine a situation more thoroughly before deciding how to proceed.

There are many underlying themes at play in the scene where Thomas threatens to close his bank account after receiving subpar treatment during his visit, despite the fact that gambling is not directly mentioned. But since we're here, let's speculate on how themes like manipulation, treachery, and greed may be woven into this story in a more subtle way than you might expect all while being firmly rooted in the idea of betting.

The bank manager's apparent lack of concern for Thomas's complaints and his immediate offer of an account cancellation form as a solution may be read as manipulative. This suddenness could be understood as a manipulative tactic to stifle any developing objections. Discouraging others from voicing unhappiness and slowly but surely establishing a culture of tacit acquiescence among the clients. In addition, the supervisor's immediate agreement to the possibility of account closure, without any attempt at improvement or retention, and may discreetly work to discourage Thomas and possibly other witnesses, manipulatively tamping down expectations of improved service or client valorisation.

The supervisor's cavalier reaction to Thomas's dissatisfaction and the bank's apparent lack of care in rectifying the service gaps threw a pall of treachery over the entire situation. There is an unstated contract between customer and institution that calls for decent and efficient service, as well as some degree of compassion or regard for customer discontent. If Thomas had been a regular customer who occasionally placed bets through an associated platform, the obvious lack of appreciation for his past business could have left him feeling betrayed, and he might have stopped doing business with the company altogether.

The bank reveals a form of greed in which cost-saving is prioritized over customer experience if its operational model allows subpar service to persist by apparently sacrificing customer satisfaction on its altar of efficiency in operations, such as by means of staff minimization and the resulting prolonged wait times. Adding a hypothetical layer of gambling into the mix, if Thomas were to look elsewhere for his financial issues and betting transactions out of discontent, he might unwittingly become a victim of organizations whose financial greed leads them to exploit customers in less secure or ethically dubious ways. In addition, if this pattern of disdain for customers can be seen across the bank's operations, it may be indicative of a more systemic problem in which the unquenchable thirst for profits, through channels such as betting sites as well as additional financial services, is given higher priority than the ethical and moral duty to guarantee customer satisfaction and maintain virtuous business conduct.

Next time I win the jackpot, I will change my phone number. My phone has not stopped ringing since the announcement was made. I have to charge it almost continuously.

Everyone- including the landlord- seems to have suddenly realized that it has been long since we spoke. They all seem to have a business deal. Mambo bad, the landlord, tells me that he has always wanted a partner for his real estate business.

“Infact I was going to tell you about it last week. There are some nice plots on sale near Greater Bypass. I tell you, the value will double in a few months. It is something to consider,” he suggests. (123)

One of the admins of the neighbourhood WhatsApp group has added me back. He had removed me a few months before, saying I was inactive. Back then I did not want to

argue much but I knew neighbours who were less active than I was who were spared.
(126)

In a setting heavy with the recent recollection of a jackpot victory, the protagonist swims through a sea of convenient opportunities and unexpected reconnections to show the naked exposing of deceit, treachery, and greed. As they work to quietly mimic their transparent goals of benefiting from the increased wealth, friends and even strangers quickly transform into figures of apparently real concern, exemplifying the art of manipulation. For example, the landlord, who had previously shown no interest in discussing business opportunities, decides it is time to broach the subject of an investment opportunity, riding the crest of good luck in the hopes that it will wash his way.

The protagonist feels betrayed by the selective associations he or she now has, as evidenced by the admin of a local WhatsApp group, for example. A feeling of community and fair and unbiased principles within social circles are betrayed by the initial exclusion for "inactivity" and subsequent warm reception following the lottery victory. Furthermore, as many persons emerge from the periphery, stretching hands under the guise of friendship or worried entries, they morph into representations of betrayal, their goals firmly grounded not in true unity, but in a self-centred effort to gain from the win.

Without a doubt, greed becomes central, as evidenced by the material concerns colouring the newfound generosity of individuals who are reaching out to the protagonist. All of their actions, from the landlord's overt offer of a business partnership to the more subtle pleas for financial assistance, reflect a common goal of profiting off the protagonist's good fortune. The subsequent flurry of interest and business proposals serves as a striking example of how some people, motivated by greed, will go around norms of decency in order to benefit financially from another person's good fortune.

When viewed through the lens of gambling, this scenario reveals hidden truths about human nature that are brought to light in the wake of unexpected prosperity. The path taken by the protagonist is illustrative of real-world possibilities in the betting and gambling industry, where victors often face a minefield of deception and treachery at the whims of those driven by unbridled greed. There may be a swarm of people and organizations eager to take advantage of

their good fortune by offering them dubious investment possibilities or posing as old acquaintances in order to gain access to some of the money. This portrays a sombre picture of the hidden dangers of financial success, especially if it is attained by dishonest means like betting or gambling, which can cause people's true intentions in their relationships and interactions to be clouded by their desire to get money.

“I have not done drugs,” I say out loud, “but I have seen what they can do to people. There is this guy with a history of bhang smoking and things haven’t gone well for him.” The poor guy has done what Elisha calls kufyatuka – lost his wits. He dances to every sound, even the noise from the generator when it comes on. (106)

He laughs out. “MM is your code name. Mutura Man.” Of all the code names they can pick for me they have Mutura Man? Haidhuru, I think , pained by the crude code name. (118)

The manipulation of the protagonist, who goes by code nickname "Mutura Man," is intriguing in its subtlety. This moniker, which at first glance seems completely benign, may actually include undertones of coercion, especially if it is used to categorize them into a specific position of authority within the group. The protagonist may, unintentionally, take on characteristics or responsibilities associated with this nondescript pseudonym, whether or not he intends to do so.

As we enter the world of treachery, specifically as it relates to the mismatch between what the protagonist believes about himself and what others believe about him, we find a touching dissonance. The protagonist's perception of himself as more than just the unimaginative and possibly disrespectful code name "Mutura Man" makes the name particularly striking as a potential embodiment of a subtle betrayal. This isn't a classic case of betrayal; rather, it's a complex disappointment, a break from the norm, and an indirect attack on the protagonist's sense of identity.

However, greed isn't immediately obvious, but becomes clear after reading between the lines of the protagonist's observed experiences, particularly those involving the detrimental effects of drug usage. This is not the avarice and materialism that we usually associate with greed. Instead, it manifests as an unconscious "greed" for mental health, a self-protective aversion to activities

like drug usage that could jeopardize his well-being. It's not a wasteful kind of greed; rather, it stems from a need to protect oneself from harm.

A betting perspective on the story might reveal the protagonist's evident prudence, as evidenced by his deliberate avoidance of drugs while experiencing their disastrous repercussions. In the context of gambling, this may be indicative of a cautious player. One who exercises greater caution in his own gambling after witnessing the failures of more impulsive bettors. In a twist of fate, the protagonist's naive code name may give others the wrong impression of him in the gambling arena, leading to him gaining an unexpected edge.

The young man had pointed across the road. There were no less than five other young men. They had all smiled and waved, then pulled back their coats to reveal long knives griming in the sun. Realising that there was more to the brotherly salutation Elisha stopped. "No, don't stop walking. I suggest that you hold my shoulder and keep laughing as you hand over all your valuables and money." (97)

That is how Elisha found himself disposed at midday. What had irked him most was that that was the week he has finally won something on Money bet. Luckily they had not taken his mobile phone, stating that such a contraption will not fetch much if sold. (98)

A seemingly harmless exchange (young males waving and smiling) becomes a potentially dangerous encounter for Elisha, who is unaware that he is being used. An eerie connection can be drawn between this sense of safety and the allure but deceitful nature of some online gambling sites. These sites, like the young men at first appearing kind but hiding sinister intentions, hide the harsh and risky reality of gambling behind cheerful images and promises of rewarding rewards. By coercing Elisha into laughing as he hands over his possessions, the perpetrators hope to exert further psychological control over the scenario and his reaction while giving off the air of normalcy.

As the young men's initial demonstration of friendliness transforms into a violent demand, Elisha's experience unfolds into an emotionally charged story of betrayal that reflects a striking difference from expectations to reality. Elisha's experience is a reflection of a deception by the system itself or, more generally, the environment as well as its residents, just as gamblers are frequently welcomed in with the excitement of first winnings or bonuses just to be sharply

confronted by huge losses or potential frauds. In the same way that gamblers who are attracted by what appear to be favourable odds or prospective windfalls are ultimately greeted with unanticipated often devastating losses, the broad daylight, typically a sign of security and visibility is cruelly deceived by the sudden ambush.

The individuals who take advantage of Elisha's weakness to steal from him are a symbol of the avarice that runs through the story. Their methods are similar to those used by gambling establishments to encourage people to risk more of their money in the hopes of achieving the American Dream. Somewhat interestingly, the young men's choice to spare Elisha's cell phone hints at intentional malice and selective greed. This could be compared to gambling sites that provide users the chance to win little amounts of money while reducing the risk of losing everything.

Elisha's stormy encounter is mirrored in the ups and downs of gambling, and vice versa, thus drawing connections between the two produces a rich, if disturbing, tapestry. Elisha's experience, with its twisted trust, harsh betrayal, and subtle avarice, is a striking metaphor for the plight of the gambler, who is lured in by the prospect of easy money and grand rewards, only to be left devastated by a string of bad luck and broken promises. The contrast between the reality of the occurrences and their gambling counterparts highlights the vulnerability of trust, expectations, and manipulation in both regular life and the high-stakes realm of betting.

Why does a bank need you tax certificate if all they are doing is keeping your money? Why does a bank need to know where I stay? How do I prove my residence now? I do not have a tenancy agreement. The money I pay to Mambo covers the rent, water and electricity bills. This means that I do not have water and electricity bills. Mambo will not sign anything that exposes him to the taxman. I doubt if he has a bank account. He does not even trust mobile money so we have to pay him in cash. Every end of the month he moves from house to house wearing a multi pocketed vest jacket collecting the rent. The day he will get mugged.... (93)

In this scenario, the individual must deal with a banking system that seems more complicated than it is and that asks for more private data than seems necessary or appropriate, all while navigating a cascade of deceit, treachery, and greed. The bank's emphasis on obtaining a tax

certificate, even when doing so is unnecessary for protecting one's finances, can be perceived as a form of subtle manipulation meant to push the individual into providing more information than they are comfortable with. The speaker's rhetorical questions highlight the absurdity and discontinuity between the bank's strict criteria and the purportedly simple act of retaining money, and are likely born out of the speaker's bewilderment and irritation with these regulations.

The feeling of betrayal, on the other hand, is more subtle, and it captures the individual's attitude towards a system that appears to betray their expectations of transparency and respect for confidentiality. A perceptible tension is created by the dissonance between the bank's systematic standards and the speaker's fairly unusual living and payment arrangements; the speaker appears to feel betrayed by a rigid system that cannot adjust to individual needs. The irony of the circumstance provides some light respite from the palpable tension that arises from the incompatibility of standard banking procedures with the reality of people's varied living conditions.

Furthermore, the landlord, Mambo, personifies avarice; his acts are motivated by a palpable aversion to interacting with conventional monetary and tax institutions. His neurotic protection regarding his financial affairs is evident in the ways in which he avoids the taxman, refuses to use mobile money, and collects cash from tenants with extreme precision. The satirical element is most blatant in the character of Mambo, who avoids contemporary banking at the risk of being mugged while collecting rent from tenants at their front doors. A hilarious and ironically dangerous layer is added to the chapter by Mambo's activities, which serve as a sarcastic commentary on those who, in their attempts to avoid conventional financial structures, accidentally exposing themselves to other risks.

The extract weaves together humorous elements through rhetorical inquiries, overstatement, irony, and satire through the prisms of deception, betrayal, and greed, creating a complex tapestry that subtly criticizes the allegedly overly complicated structure of the banking industry and the conundrums inherent in staying away from formal financial engagement. A lively discourse that fuses humour and critique among the intricacies of financial discussions and expectations is framed by these topics, which invite reflections on the tensions between old systems and the diverse, sometimes illusive, financial and living realities encountered by individuals.

3.3 CONCLUSION

I have explored the maze of lies and unchecked greed in this chapter, a combination that leads people down a dangerous road to poverty and the alluring grip of addiction. Deception, hopelessness, and the painfully comic difficulties inherent in the worlds of gambling and human fragility were all revealed as we probed the symbiotic relationship connecting humour and tragedy. Aria, Ali Abdi, Elisha, Mr Ambrose Walaki and Thomas were fully realized characters whose stories added texture and depth to the story. The promise of wealth ruined Elisha's dreams; Mr Ambrose Walaki's power determined the destinies of everyone in his sphere, as well as Ali Abdi's involvement highlighted the enduring avarice that drove the plot. Both Thomas and Aria struggled with moral quandaries as they navigated through the waters of manipulation.

From their accounts, we have learned how the web of deception is so intricate that it entangles its prey in a tangled ballet of deceit and betrayal. This analysis shed light on the intricate web of relationships between the characters, exposing how manipulation might rip apart a person's moral fibre and how the chase for wealth may lead to a downward spiral of poverty and addiction. The interconnectedness of these lives highlights the tremendous and tragic implications of unbridled selfishness on an individual's soul as we draw to a close on this chapter.

CONCLUSION

Kombani examines the gambling industry in his novel *Of Pawns and Players* using humor and characterization. Examining the illusory feeling of control in gambling, as well as manipulation through betrayal, thirst for money, and dominance among major actors in the gambling business, are all parts of the author's research agenda. The research aspired to offer an answer to the societal problem of young people's prevalent desire to earn money rapidly through gambling. These studies have given us useful information about the psychological factors that lead to gambling-related problems.

The story uses comedy and human traits to reveal the evils of the gambling industry and the underlying psychological dynamics that cause people to believe false promises. Understanding the scope of the problem, the harm it does to economies and societies, and the importance of taking preventative actions may all be communicated through this study. The false feeling of control has been studied in the betting business, especially in sports betting and online gambling. Deeper reflection on the ethics of society and the complex moral landscapes travelled by people on their ways to survival and wealth are prompted by Kombani's vibrant characters and utilization of ludicrous humour. In reflecting on the journey through the narrative, it becomes evident that the delicate interplay between humor and the illusion of control in the world of betting has created a rich tapestry of critique and exploration. The story, aptly named *Of Pawns and Players*, served as my guide through the labyrinth of precarious decisions within the betting realm, drawing attention to the precarious balance between laughter and the serious consequences of surrendering to the illusion of control. The Kenyan authenticity infused into every scene, character name, and pop culture reference enhanced the reading experience, making the narrative not only relatable but also a mirror reflecting social disorder. The concluding plot twist, delivered with a satisfying punch, left me eager to witness the aftermath, particularly the reactions of pivotal characters. Themes of betting prevalence, youth poverty perpetuated by betting, and the moral differences between the rich and the poor resonated deeply, provoking a thoughtful reflection on societal challenges.

In essence, the novel stands as a testament to the power of humor in unmasking the illusion of control within the unpredictable realm of gambling. Through laughter and wit, the narrative encourages readers, including myself, to critically examine our roles in the sophisticated mechanism in the betting industry. This socially relevant piece of literature serves as a timely

reminder, emphasizing the importance of hard work over the perilous allure of get-rich-quick schemes for the youth navigating the treacherous terrain of betting.

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