IRONY IN MATT BETTINELLI OLPIN AND TYLER GILLET'S *ABIGAIL* (2024)

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Abstract

This research contributes to the analysis of irony that builds the horror formula. Irony is one of the techniques used in movies to convey the message of the contradiction between hope and reality. The movie *Abigail* (2024) by Matt Bettinelli Olpin and Tyler Gillet illustrates that irony can construct a horror formula. The analysis in this study aims to find out what aspects of irony are contained in Matt Bettinelli Olpin and Tyler Gillet's *Abigail* (2024) and to identify aspects of irony that construct the horror formula in Matt Bettinelli Olpin and Tyler Gillet's *Abigail* (2024). This research uses Petrie and Boggss' theory for irony, while the horror formula theory used is Sarricks' theory. This research uses a descriptive qualitative analysis method to analyze the data. The results of the study found six types of irony that help construct the horror formula: dramatic irony, irony of situation, irony of character, irony of setting, irony of tone, and cosmic irony. The data used are dialog scenes collected in the form of screenshots.

Keywords: Movie; Irony; Horror formula.

1. Introduction

The film is present when a story has a message that wants to be conveyed to the general public. The way messages are conveyed in films is channeled through moving images, colors, and sound, or it can also be said that films are visualized literary works. According to Yusuf, Nasir, and Mahmud (2022), the film is a means of depicting human life that is more modern than novels or other written literary works because of its ability to be presented in audio-visual form. This is also conveyed according to Wahyudi (2017) film is a contradiction of expectations and experiences that become human imagination through visual media. One of the essential elements in a film is intrinsic, which is the element that connects and builds the film itself. Film can be said to be a form of visualization of literary works because it can adapt the elements of literary works into audio-visual media that can be accessed directly by the audience. Therefore, films can adapt to changing times from time to time. Films also continue to develop in making and delivering messages, making films popular with various groups of children, teenagers, adults, and parents.

The film plays an essential role as an educational tool to convey social reflections in society. Intrinsic elements in film, such as plot, character, and setting, become a means to convey social, political, and cultural messages that exist in their society or elsewhere. According to Spottiswoode (2022), film is where many dramatic, literary, musical, and scientific interests meet. A film can expand the reach of literature by utilizing visual and audio elements to convey literary works in text into moving images and sounds. According to Cornis-Pope (2014), text studies have historically meant writing and reading verbal texts in printed media. Advertisements, web publications, film, television, digital video and sound, graphic media, mixed media texts, and even installations are all examples of "text" that now extend far beyond the printed word. Literary traditions inspire many modern films. This shows that film, as a visual medium, can continue the literary tradition

and contribute to literature development in new and innovative narrative forms. So, it can be concluded that film, as an audio-visual medium, presents a more modern representation of human life than novels or other written literary works.

Literature is a work of art that conveys cultural values, social criticism, and entertainment (Mukherjee and Sarkar 2022) The question "What is literature?" relates to literature as a historical institution with conventions and rules, literature as a fictional institution, and literature as a fictional institution that is free to say anything and initiate its own rules. Modern literature in the West has in mind the power to say anything without restrictions. Simaremare et al. (2023) believe that literature gives us an opinion on the issues that surround it and, in general, a view on various aspects of life. Meanwhile, according to Dewojati (2021), literature is an imaginative or fictional work with aesthetic value that uses language as its medium. This indicates that literature will be able to maintain cultural values. Concerning the social, what is meant by literature is not literature understood only as a work of fiction and imagination but as the subjective individual with social relations. According to Dewojati (2021) Plato explains that the world of literature is an imitation made in the real world, where the imitation represents the world of ideas. Literature then develops from time to time; popular literature is one part of fiction or literature in general.

Movies are part of popular culture because they approach their viewers' lives with experiences common in everyday life. According to Strinati (2007) popular boundaries are experiences that usually come from a culture of consumption along with information technology, folk art (with its traditions), national art (with its populist ideology), and media art (with its ideology of capitalism and consumption). Social relations that were previously aesthetic and moral have been reshaped by consumption and media. Among the media, movies are known to encompass a variety of genres and themes that would be classified as popular culture. Theater and cinema integrate film into a form that many people can enjoy.

Matt Bettinelli Olpin and Tyler Gillett's *Abigail* (2024) is a movie that belongs to popular culture. Because it is in the very popular horror genre, it is widely known and has a strong appeal among audiences. Matt Bettinelli Olpin and Tyler Gillett, who are known for their work in this genre, bring their experience and skill to this movie; popular genres such as horror often have loyal fans, and this genre has great potential to become part of popular culture because it has a universal appeal. The horror formula in this movie gives the audience a sense of curiosity because this movie tells a horror story played by a child, there are many unexpected things in this movie, techniques and elements to create tension, fear, and emotional effects to the audience, this movie manages to present it well.

Irony can be a brilliant way to make a horror story more interesting. Horror films use irony, a combination of promises and reality, to shock the audience's perception. Petrie and Boggs (2017) stated, "Irony in its most generalized sense is a literary, dramatic, and cinematic technique that has opposed or joined opposites. Irony, on the other hand, is employed to insist on emotional and even intellectual contrasts, reversals, and paradoxes, to intensify by sharp instant of attractions and repulsions and to allow an intellectual and at the same time comic and tragic effect." Therefore, irony can bring surprise, paradox, and contradiction in the film, for some of the irony types are Dramatic Irony, Irony of situation, Irony of setting, Irony of character, Irony of tone, and Cosmic Irony. Irony, then, is a complicated feature of a movie, revealing something wider, such as social and cultural dynamics. Irony in films helps to understand how films emphasize social values and how films process the image of popular culture.

In this study, irony becomes a tool to convey conflicting meanings in films. Irony can appear in various forms, and irony can also be found in various film genres. Irony is often closely related to comedy films, but irony can also influence horror films because in horror films, there are many unexpected and conflicting events that create horror, and this is the reason that irony can construct a horror formula.

To support this research more comprehensively, researchers took previous research. The first previous research that wrote analysis was research conducted by Puteri and Kristiana (2023) entitled "An Analysis of Irony Used in Wednesday Addams Series". This research analyzes irony contained in the Wednesday Addams series using Laurence Perrine's theory. The results obtained from this study show that there are three types of irony in the Wednesday Addams series, namely verbal irony, situational irony, and dramatic irony. On the other hand, this study concludes that the use of irony in Wednesday Addams aims to emphasize something, state or explain something, express an opinion, satirize, and describe someone's character.

The second previous research was conducted by Oktarini (2020) entitled An Analysis Of Irony In "Harrison Bergeron" by Kurt Vonnegut. Jr. This research focuses on analyzing Irony in Harrison Bergeron by Kurt Vonnegut. JR. Verbal and situational irony are the two types of irony that are the findings of this research on Harrison Bergeron by Kurt Vonnegut. JR. This research also reveals that irony is often used for satire.

The third previous research was conducted by Damayanti, Hartono, and Rukmini (2024) entitled The Irony in Enola Holmes Movie (2020): A Study of Figurative Language. This research analyzes the irony in the movie Enola Holmes (2020). This study found that irony can be used to criticize societal norms or to express a character's underlying emotions without direct confrontation.

There are uniqueness and advantages of this research compared to previous studies. In "An Analysis of Irony Used in Wednesday Addams Series," there are three types of Irony: verbal irony, situational irony, and dramatic irony, as tools to reflect the opinion and satirize characters. Oktarini (2020) investigates verbal and situational irony in Harrison Bergeron's short stories used to scrutinize social satire. In The Irony in Enola Holmes Movie (2020): A Study of Figurative Language focuses on irony in the film Enola Holmes, the authors highlight a character's use of irony to criticize social norms. This research differs from these studies in that it studies six types of irony: dramatic, situational, character, setting,

tone, and cosmic, to develop a horror formula in the film *Abigail* (2024). In this analysis, the author offers a broader and deeper scope of how irony successfully carries out emotional effects, creates suspense, and reinforces horror elements in the movie's narrative. This work contributes a new approach to the analysis of a hauntingly complex use of irony as a horror formula.

Conducting this research primarily aims to illuminate the role of irony as an essential element in constructing the horror formula, which, to date, has not been adequately investigated. Previous studies on using irony in a narrative context generally focused on a particular type or function of irony. An approach towards this new research uses an intentional irony analysis of six different types of irony taken together within the context of the horror film *Abigail* (2024). This research also attempts to analyze how irony can deepen and enrich cinematic experience phenomenologically and emotionally, and this contributes in a substantive way to the study of aspects of visual narrative. This research aims to broaden insights into the dynamics of irony in visual media by choosing a popular horror genre and using relevant theories.

2. Method

This research focuses on content analysis using descriptive qualitative research methods. Qualitative research itself, according to Hikmat (2011) produces descriptive data in words or spoken from an observed phenomenon. By using qualitative research methods, the author aims to observe every small detail in depth to understand how irony builds horror in the movie *Abigail* (2024). The theory from Saricks (2009) is the basis for analyzing the horror formula contained in the film *Abigail* (2024), while the theory from Petrie & Boggs (2018) is used to analyze the types of irony in the film.

This study's main data source is the scenes in the film *Abigail* (2024) directed by Matt Bettinelli Olpin and Tyler Gillett, filmed in April 2023 and premiered at the Overlook Film Festival on April 7, 2024. Data was collected by watching the movie *Abigail* (2024) repeatedly to understand the content of the movie's story. During the process of watching, the selection and marking of each scene containing irony and horror formulas were also carried out. After the selection and marking of each scene containing irony and horror formulas is completed, the next step is data display, which is the last step in data collection to present the data collected during the research.

Data analysis was conducted by identifying scenes in the movie. Furthermore, the process of grouping was carried out based on the types of irony and horror formulas. Pictures of each scene relevant to the topic of discussion were also taken, which were then grouped based on similar terms to get a more in-depth explanation. The author then describes the scenes by explaining the types of irony and horror formulas in the movie using the theory of irony according to Dennis W. Petrie and Joseph M. Boggs, and the horror formula according to Joyce G. Saricks. Finally, the author concludes the overall research discussion.

3. Findings and Discussion

This study defines the forms of irony in the film *Abigail* (2024), which play an essential role in establishing the basis of horror. In this study, irony as a cinematic and literary approach is highlighted as a means to develop a frightening opposition between the innocent and the evil, the safe and the dangerous, and other things that build the plot of the story. This study found 6 types of irony, based on the classification of irony types according to Dennis W. Petrie and Joseph M. Boggs. By analyzing specific scenes, this study shows how dramatic irony, situation irony, character irony, setting irony, Irony of tone, and Cosmic irony complement and enhance each other to design the horror experience of the film *Abigail* (2024).

1. Dramatic Irony

Dramatic irony, according to Dennis W. Petrie and Joseph M. Boggs, is an element that creates tension through the gap between what the audience knows and what the characters in the story do not know. In the film *Abigail* (2024), dramatic irony plays an important role in creating fear while building audience expectations for the story's development.

One clear example of dramatic irony in the film is when the kidnappers, who think Abigail is an ordinary child, kidnap her without knowing that she is a vampire. In this scene, as seen at minute 00:44:11, Abigail is initially depicted as a fragile and harmless child, creating the illusion of safety for the kidnappers. However, the audience knows from the beginning that Abigail is not an ordinary child but a deadly vampire.

Figure 1. (00:44:11)

The tension created by dramatic irony provides a visceral experience for the audience. The kidnappers' ignorance of Abigail's true identity keeps the audience guessing as to when this secret will be revealed and how it will affect the kidnappers' fate. When Abigail finally reveals herself as a vampire in the massacre scene, the audience feels a mixture of emotional satisfaction and intense horror.

Furthermore, this dramatic irony works not only to create fear but also to establish Abigail's character as the center of the story's conflict. This information gap allows the audience to view Abigail from an ambiguous perspective: on the one hand, as a kidnapping victim, but on the other hand, as the main threat. We can see this in the scene in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2 (00:49:13)

According to Saricks (2009), horror formulas are often built on a foundation of suspense and anticipation, which, in this context, is realized through dramatic irony. When the audience knows something that the character does not, the audience's emotions become more deeply involved, creating a more intense horror experience. In this case, the dramatic irony increases narrative tension and affects the audience's psychological experience by creating a constant sense of alertness and anxiety.

2. Irony of Situation

According to Dennis W. Petrie and Joseph M. Boggs (2018), irony of situation is the contrast between what is envisaged and what befalls you and ends up in a surprise. Irony of situation means, in the context of Abigail (2024), a strong horror element for an audience, in particular, twisting the audience's expectations with various unexpected and often terrifying events.

A significant example of the irony of the situation can be seen in the scene at minute (00:12:34) Abigail is then locked up by the kidnappers in an old house in the hope that her father will pay ransom money for her. The kidnappers think the action will earn them money. However, reality speaks otherwise: If their home is turned into a place of horror, filled with terror, all because Abigail turns out to be a vampire (it goes all wrong), then that's what ends up happening.

Figure 3(0:12:07)

Figure 4. (0:12:34)

This situation sharpens the contrast between their hopes and the horrible reality that they go through. Instead of funding hopes, they have to struggle for survival, and that house where they should be held hostage becomes a stage for a terrible massacre. Not only are the characters in the story being taken by the irony, but the audience also gets a deep emotional shock from the irony of the situation.

More generally, situational irony is used in this context not only as a joke but also to highlight a greater aspect of the film: the destiny of humanity, which may be frowned upon as being commended to their undivided control. From the beginning, the audience is shown an impression that portrays how no matter how hard one tries to plan everything, it only takes a single factor out of one's hand for the whole plan to crumble. This adds a great philosophical element to the horror aspect of the movie, which is following Saricks' (2009) claim that characteristics of the horror genre include patterns of surprise that work against the constructed safety of the audience.

The blindness of the situation in *Abigail* (2024) enables the recipients to relate to the plot line through situational irony. For instance, the audience observes as the kidnappers walk towards the scene, and all they do is laugh, understandably so, as it's ironic. Nonetheless, those feelings go to the opposite side as reality sets in. This drastic sequence of emotions helps illustrate why situational irony was better placed, as it achieves so much more for the horror genre.

On the contrary, it was not as distressing as it was envisioned, the abduction turned horrible as Abigail was fed on blood and lunged at the abductors, she even turned into a vampire. The situation is also paradoxical, given that the amount of faith or hope is the opposite of reality. The role of irony situation in the horror formula of the Abigail (2024) movie as a whole is to create out-of-the-blue shocks and accumulate emotions of letdown, situation irony also places the viewer in the position where he knows something that the character does not.

3. Irony of Character

One of the elements that support the horror formula in *Abigail* (2024) is the irony of the character. In this case, irony of character is a change in attitude or perhaps assumptions regarding the truth of a character by the audience. One example is the change in the character of Abigail, the main character in this movie, who was described as a weak and helpless little girl at the beginning of the movie. We can see the depiction of Abigail's weak and helpless figure at the beginning of the story towards the middle of the story. One example is Abigail's helplessness is demonstrated in minute 00:18:24 as she sobs in front of one of the kidnappers. The fact that Abigail sobs in front of one of the captors reinforces her portrayal as a fragile and frail person. visible in Figure 5 below.

Figure 5. (00:18:24)

Abigail's attitude, described or narrated as a helpless girl, is one of the gaps. The gap is referred to here in the sense that there is an opportunity for an event to occur, which in this movie, the event that occurs is the judgment of the kidnappers who see that Abigail is a girl who will not be able to fight anything. However, a character change occurs in the middle to the end of the movie, where Abigail, originally a weak little girl, shows her true form as a vampire. In this case, the occurring character changes contribute to and construct the horror formula in the movie. This character change surprises

the audience, who initially had their stereotypes of Abigail as an innocent little girl. When Abigail, who was once the sad victim, reveals her dark side and her secret power, this lack of nuance is the first spark of character irony. Abigail's mental and physical changes reveal a shift in her character. Time of scene (00:49:28): Abigail is the complete opposite of the Abigail we first see as she laughs happily after viciously attacking her kidnapper, her face covered in blood.

In this case, the change in Abigail's nature provides not only something called irony but also a plot twist. A plot twist is a term used when there is a twist or turn in a story in other words, a moment that changes the course of the story in a way that the audience or reader does not anticipate (Putra and Manesah 2024). The storyline that the audience cannot anticipate is certainly something that also binds the audience to continue the story until the end. This can happen because by giving surprises to the audience, the audience will look forward to other surprises in the future. This effect results in the audience's attachment to what they are watching.

Figure 6. (00:49:28)

The audience's expectations of Abigail are undermined by her change, which causes emotional conflict. Here, Abigail takes on the role of an executioner rather than the typical victim. The seeming lack of bravery in this visage does not portend that Abigail will continue to change into a vampire; rather, it represents the more commonplace, universal occurrence of the human condition between weakness and strength, innocence and ruthlessness. According to Dennis W. Petrie and Joseph M. Boggs (2018), a character may exhibit irony of character if she deviates from the audience's preconceived notions about her.

The use of character irony in this movie gives depth to portraying the individuals' actual selves, particularly Abigail's. Although everything is still gray, character irony, in this instance, questions the audience's presumptions. This is obviously still connected to dramatic irony, which is the interplay between knowing and not knowing. One method of adding a sense of terror to the film is through Abigail's character development. Naturally, Abigail, who was initially portrayed as a defenseless, innocent girl, became a vampire in this film, precisely contrary to what most spectators believe. In line with Dennis W. Petrie and Joseph M. Boggs' opinion that Irony of character may be present when a character violates our stereotyped view of him, as illustrated by this imaginary scene, in this case, Abigail's unexpected character change reflects the unpredictability inherent in horror narratives.

4. Irony of Setting

The setting in *Abigail* (2024) also plays an essential role as a component in the horror formula. The irony of the setting itself is a contradiction between place and function. Dennis W. Petrie and Joseph M. Boggs argue that the Irony of setting occurs when an event occurs in a setting that is exactly the opposite of the setting we usually expect for such an event. One of the significant settings in this movie is the house. In essence, home is a comfortable place and a place to rest to eliminate all tension and fatigue. However, in this movie, the house is used as an irony, and the place called home is identified with the opposite. In this movie, the house is not only a place for kidnapping but also a place for horrific incidents or events. As an example, we can see in Figure 7 below.

Figure 7. (00:47:43)

In Figure 7 above, we can see that the characters show tension and also a high level of alertness to what they are about to face. This scene shows how the kidnappers prepare for the terror they experience, namely Abigail's transformation into a vampire. Then the scene continues with the kidnappers facing the figure of Abigail who has transformed into a vampire. A house that should be a place to calm down comfortably becomes a place that should not be. Of course, the irony of this setting gives a remarkable impression to the audience. If it is likened to a doctrine of the audience's mindset, it often occurs in mythical and mystical matters. For example, we often find scenes where the terrorizing figure hides under the bed in horror movies. Viewers who see the scene often think or remember it and when they enter the room, they think about the figure hiding under the bed. In a minute (0.59.54), a house that generally has many good memories and is supposed to be a safe and secure place becomes a place of murder and torture, and this is the opposite of what is expected in the event. The irony of the setting in the horror formula functions to convey social or moral messages, such as a safe place in general does not secure to be safe forever but has dark secrets; the contradictions in the setting help strengthen the themes raised in the film's story.

Figure 8 (00:59:54)

Likewise with the house in this movie, of course, the house that we usually live in with a feeling of security turns into a place full of fear, reflecting the concept of the uncanny that makes something familiar become scary. The Uncanny itself is a concept where Sigmund Freud defines The Uncanny as a condition of limited reason and intellect in understanding objects, forms, or situations so that it creates a frightening feeling in us. Besides the house, the irony of the setting can also be found on the dance floor, as seen in Figure 9 below.

Figure 9. (00:48:23)

A dance floor is meant to be a place of entertainment with a sense of fun and excitement. However, in this movie, it is intended for the opposite. It is true that Abigail is performing in the right place, but it is not a performance that can be enjoyed in contrast to the general dance floor. Abigail's character dances with a headless corpse, displaying terror and horror. We can find the irony of the setting here: the dance floor, which is supposed to be a place full of fun, is instead a place full of fear. Saricks (2009) states that a well-crafted horror setting must evoke strong emotions, often by turning familiar spaces into sources of dread.

5. Irony of Tone

Irony of tone is easily one of the best techniques utilized in film to compare two emotional stances, adding another level of resonance and meaning for viewers. It is a dual-emotion elocution, where one thing is said but another is meant (Petrie and Boggs, 2018). In movies, it is practiced by having elements of contrasts in both the music and the scenes; in other words, it provokes different sorts of feelings. When described further, this irony of tone is the opposite of the tone played in the scene being shown. Like a sadistic scene but accompanied by a cheerful song.

This form of irony also plays a role in constructing the horror formula in a movie. The contrast in a movie's tone and scenes will certainly give certain intentions to the audience who follow the storyline. Emotional changes and discomfort are some of the elements that make a movie scarier. On the other hand, this is exactly what horror movie fans are looking for. One way to create that feeling for the audience is by using irony of tone. In *Abigail* (2024), the irony of tone is particularly evident in the scene where Abigail performs a graceful ballet routine (01:12:52) in Figure 10 below.

Figure 10 (01:12:52)

The scene is characterized by cheerful and energetic music, but the scene in the movie shows Abigail with a face full of blood while dancing on the dance floor. However, as the performance goes on, there are measures of tension in this score, and gestural chaos in Abigail's dances foreshadows her evil vampire. These two modulations create unease amid utter fascination with Abigail's artistic performance and terror. Here, irony can be seen in the contrast between what is heard and what is shown. On the other hand, as Petrie and Boggs (2018) suggest, such moments can achieve a haunting quality that elevates the narrative's emotional and thematic depth.

Of course, this scene also gives a haunting impression and also gives the impression of discomfort because of the contrast between what is shown and what is played. In addition, this scene occurs after the murder scene. Of course, the previous scene gave more context to what was happening. The audience, who were previously in high tension after seeing a vampire bite a human neck, continued with a scene of a vampire with a face full of blood dancing to an energetic song.

The choice of music also affects the horror formula in the movie. So, the irony of tone is not only limited to the contrast between music and scene, but also pays attention to other aspects. For example, the timing of the use of irony, which is shown in the movie Abigail (2024) after the murder scene. This selection is suitable as a means of shaking the audience's emotions. Perhaps another example of the application of irony of tone can be seen in the scene when Abigail dances ballet on the dance floor with a headless corpse, as shown in Figure 9 above. The music played is calm and gentle ballet music, while the scene shown is cruel.

6. Cosmic Irony

As stated by Petrie and Boggs (2018), cosmic irony is a worldview in which human endeavors become the butt of a higher power, regardless of human effort, be it Fate, God, or Destiny, a paradoxical combination of triumph and tragedy. Cosmic irony comes into play in *Abigail* (2024) as a story of humanity's futile attempts to control circumstances to the point where existence becomes obscure and often cruel. Abigail's transformation into a vampire gives her immense power but denies her humanity, so she must live as a victim and a monster at the same time. It is a contradiction that emphasizes the absurdity of existence. This cosmic irony is also, of course, directly related to the storyline of the film itself. In the film, each element must go hand in hand with each other to form a complete unity, as explained by Saricks (2009) "a good

Horror story is to evoke an emotional and spiritual response in the reader: true fright. In Horror, all elements (storyline, characterization, pacing) help create this sense of menace and contribute to this emotional impact". Likewise, in horror films, every aspect that constructs a horror formula must be complete and complement each other.

Besides influencing the horror formula, cosmic irony in Abigail (2024) also gives a comedic impression if we think about it more deeply. Humans, who are supposed to be able to control what happens to them, can do nothing when faced with fate. The cosmic irony shown in this movie is also about the character of the kidnappers. The kidnappers are essentially the perpetrators, but in this movie, they become the victims which of course is ironic. One example can be seen in the scene at minute (00:38:42) in Figure 11 below.

Figure 11 (00:38:42)

The outcome of life seems to blur the line between security, chaos, life, and living. A house is supposed to be a safe haven, but in this movie, it becomes a stage for chaos and death. The cosmic irony here pokes fun at humanity's attempts to stay in control, that when they try to do so, they only make things worse for themselves. This kind of irony lets Petrie and Boggs know that this is a subtle and bitter humor mixed with resignation, which forces the audience to enter into the tragic absurdity of the characters' destinies, Petrie and Boggs (2018). Cosmic irony offers an important dimension to the narrative in Abigail that exposes all the paradoxes of power and powerlessness in a haunting study of the impossible contradictions of life.

4. Conclusion

Irony is used in *Abigail* (2024) to build the horror formula. The analysis shows that the movie uses several different types of irony. These are dramatic, situational, character, setting, tone, and cosmic irony. Each of them has a role in building the horror formula of this movie. Dramatic irony, which builds suspense by keeping the audience focused, creates an incredible possibility for an explanation at the end of the story that can leave the audience reeling with the shock of dramatic irony. Transformations in character, such as Abigail becoming a monster, work as a type of character irony that complicates the audience's emotional involvement. By using the irony of setting, familiar spaces become sources of fear. Tonal irony juxtaposes conflicting emotional cues to heighten tension. Finally, cosmic irony highlights the futility of humanity in the face of the almost indecipherable, underscoring the absurdity of the situation and helping to build the horror formula in *Abigail* (2024). Combining these ironies makes for a powerful and multi-dimensional horror formula that keeps the audience engaged and brings out the more profound psychological effects of the story.

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