Satyajit Ray is regarded as a maestro in film making from India. However, his short stories are full of intrigue, suspense, and thrill. While most of his novels as crime thrillers and science fictions, the short stories of Ray are indeed unparallel having more diverse themes. His language, style, wide range of topics, humor, suspense, and sensitive treatment of his characters all combine to make his stories unique and impactful. Most readers would agree that the best of Satyajit Ray must be the ones tinged with supernatural flavor. “Fritz” is one such simple story of two gentlemen going for a small vacation to a place which one of them had visited before in his childhood. However, problems arise when Jayanta recalls his memories of the place including that of a certain doll from his childhood.

The story begins with Shankar, the narrator giving details about their trip to Bundi, about Jayanta and his insistence to visit Bundi despite there being so many places of popular visit being present in Rajasthan. It is observed from the very moment that the story begin is not quite himself. His friend and co-traveler Shankar tries hard to find why Jayanta should be so worried and preoccupied “most people go to Jaipur, Udaipur, Chittoor when they go to Rajasthan: but Jayanta insisted on going to Bundi” Shankar had no objection for, having read Tagore’s poem, “The fort of Bundi”, he was certainly familiar with the name of the place and felt a pleasurable experience at the prospect of actually seeing the fort. The circuit house they checked into was splendid. Built in the British era, it must have been a hundred years old it had a sloping tiled roof and was a single-stored building. The rooms had high ceilings with sky lights and having “Long dangling ropes which could be pulled to open and shut them.” The description of the house, garden outside, with a variety of flora and fauna, cries of peacocks, the description of the famous fort of Bundi with the reminiscence of old Rajputana all provide evidence of Ray’s keen attention to minute details and how, in simple, lucid language, he makes the surroundings come alive...The same chairs seem so tiny and the dining room so ordinary. It shows how things change with time, not in appearance but in perspective. Jayanta is glad that he returned or else the memories that he had as a six-year-old child would have “remained stuck” in his mind, forever. He also recalls something about a “Deodar tree” and discovers it at the same place, he seems to recollect glimpses of some unfortunate incident connected to that same tree, which bothers him.

While having dinner, Jayanta even remembers how the cook looked and how excellently he cooked. In this way, slowly,

He forgot all his other toys and played only with him; a time came when he began to spend hours just talking to him. Their conversation had to be one sided, of course, but fritz had such a funny smile on his lips and such a look in his eyes, that it seemed to Jayanta as though he could understand every word. Sometimes Jayanta wondered if Fritz would converse with him if he could speak to Fritz in German. This was Jayanta’s childish fantasy but at that time the whole thing was very real to him.

Jayanta’s parents warned him not to overdo but he listened to no one. He had not yet been put in a school, so he had all the time in the world for Fritz. This increased and intensified his childhood obsession for the doll. Jayanta began ruminating the past and sank deep in the alleys of his nearly obscure memory. Slowly he recalled the fate of the doll with a sigh. It was brought to Bundi where one fine day, in Jayanta’s momentary absence, “His face was battered beyond recognition…” Fritz was dead, he did not exist for Jayanta anymore. Having realized that the doll was a European Jayanta buried him as a sort of funeral. Jayanta’s recalling of this incident from his childhood memory explained the mystery behind the Deodar tree.

Latter that night Shankar is awakened by a slight noise, he found Jayanta sitting up, complaining of a small animal, like a cat or mouse walking over his chest. He even shows “Tiny brown circular marks” on his quilt. Shankar concludes that it must have been a cat, but Jayanta is clearly still bothered by some other thought. Even at the next day’s sightseeing, he appears to be vexed by some troubling thoughts and turns out to be a spoilt sport and urges his friend to the circuit house earlier than he would have liked. Then, slowly, to an incredulous Shankar, Jayanta reveals his suspicion, that the footprints on the quilt the other night were made by Fritz. “He distinctly felt whatever walked on his chest had 2 feet, not 4”. Shankar found this abnormal, and it was not possible to talk sensibly to someone whose mind was obsessed with such an absurd idea. He decided that Jayanta must be given some…childhood.

Finally Shankar comes up with a solution “to bring Jayanta back to normalcy”…