



# Illustration of Depiction of Child Characters and their love for animals in Ruskin Bond Short Stories

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**Abstract--** Ruskin Bond is one of the renowned writers in the field of literature in India. His stories narrate the various realities of life ranging from childhood experiences to the harmonious relationship of people and nature. One such topic of immense interest in the short stories written by Ruskin Bond is animal-human relationship. It portrays the innocence and purity of children along with their care towards the animals. This paper tries to focus on the portrayal of child characters and their relations with animals. Their mutual association has been discussed here with reference to the positive impacts they exert on each other.

**Keywords--** Ruskin Bond, childhood, innocence, relationship with animals, environment

Throughout history of literature stories have portrayed the reality of human beings and their conduct with each other. Ruskin Bond is an eminent writer in literature as his short stories are full of meanings. Ruskin Bond depicts the innocence and purity of children who are not only fascinated with nature but also love playing with and making friends with animals which are considered to be a part of their families.

Through his literary works Ruskin Bond tells us about the innocence of childhood and importance of kindness and consideration towards animals and the nature as well.

## I. RUSKIN BONDS AFFECTION FOR NATURE AND ANIMALS

Affection for nature and animals are the prominent features of Ruskin Bond. Having lived in the hills of Mussoorie and Dehradun for a long time, he gained a deep insight into birds, animals, trees and nature as a whole. Thus, he was able to portray the animals in real sense through his short stories.

Animals are no more background in his stories. Instead, they are described as living entities having personalities. Moreover, Ruskin Bond has revealed the intelligence and emotions of the animals that are capable of friendship.

## II. CHILDREN CHARACTERS SYMBOLIZING INNOCENCE

It has been observed that Ruskin Bond has presented the innocence and purity of childhood through the depiction of children characters in his short stories. Such characters are characterized as imaginative and emotional.

Contrary to grown-up individuals, children do not calculate the benefits they derive from the animals. Rather they simply love the animals and care for them.

## III. LOVE FOR ANIMALS IN SELECTED SHORT STORIES

### 1. *The Cherry Tree*

The short story "The Cherry Tree" is one among those stories of Ruskin Bond that is based upon the innocence of childhood depicted through the character of Rakesh. Taking proper care of his tree, Rakesh symbolizes the affection of children towards animals in general.

### 2. *The Blue Umbrella*

Though there is no mention of animals in the short story "The Blue Umbrella" but the girl named Binya has proved herself very loving and sympathetic. Hence the innocence of childhood is represented through her.

### 3. *The Night Train at Deoli*

Children characters in the stories of Ruskin Bond are very sensitive and emotional. They can comprehend the feelings of animals and feel concerned if they face any problems or sufferings.

### 4. *Animal-centered stories*

There are many stories in Ruskin Bonds repertoire wherein animals become best friends of the children and vice-versa. Such children are neither afraid of animals nor indifferent to them rather they become curious and friendly towards them. The stories narrate their affection towards them.

Dogs for instance, are considered to be their loyal companions. Not only dogs but birds and wild animals too receive attention of Ruskin Bond.

## IV. DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN BEINGS AND MORALS THROUGH INTERACTION

The interaction between children and animals leads to the development of human virtues such as responsibility and patience. They become humans after growing up while looking after animals.



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Ruskin Bond emphasizes upon the fact that if children prove themselves good enough to take proper care of animals, then they can deal with other human beings in a good manner as well. In this way they will be able to develop morals within themselves.

#### V. ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS AND ECOLOGICAL VALUES

The environment is one another aspect highlighted through Ruskin Bonds stories. His short stories are a great source of information for children regarding affection towards animals. Moreover, they teach us the need to take care of the environment since our planet has been facing a threat of pollution and destruction of forests. Children have a unique capability of comprehending that every form of life is interconnected and requires harmony with each other.

#### VI. LITERARY TECHNIQUES USED BY RUSKIN BOND

Being a proficient writer, Ruskin Bond has made use of some literary techniques in his writings. Simple yet meaningful language, accurate descriptions of nature and animals and portrayal of strong interactions between kids and animals symbolizing love and freedom of nature are some such techniques.

Thus, these techniques help him to win the hearts of his readers.

The short stories of Ruskin Bond are a mirror of affection of children towards animals. By means of depicting their relations with animals he imparts valuable lessons to his readers. These lessons include being sympathetic and compassionate, taking care of the environment and living in peace with nature.

In a modern world where people are busy with materialistic goals of life Ruskin Bonds short stories remind us of the importance of simplicity and kindness.

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