

Revisiting Healing Mother Nature in Ruskin Bond's *The Room on the Roof, Rain in the Mountain and Tales of the Tree Lover*

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Abstract: Famous Indian novelist Ruskin Bond has produced a wide range of works that demonstrate his love for nature and concern for the environment. Although *The Tree Lover*, *Rain in the Mountain*, and *The Room on the Roof* aren't specifically about the environment, these depict the connection of author with the nature and how concerned he is for its health. Ruskin Bond wrote very much but here we will discuss the aforementioned three works: *The Tree Lover*, *Rain in the Mountain* and *The Room on the Roof*. This paper will examine the themes and key concepts found in these three works and how these texts are connected with nature. This paper will do an eco-critical analysis of the above three stories.

Keywords: Eco-criticism, Self-discovery, Human, Nature, Environment, Awareness.

The protagonist of the short story *The Tree Lover* explores his intense bond with nature, especially trees. It draws attention to the value and beauty of these quiet friends who provide comfort and company. Bond underlines the value of protecting and appreciating the natural world via the narrator's experiences and reflections. The monsoon season in the Himalayas is described in *Rain in the Mountain* in a colourful and evocative manner. Bond expertly catches the essence of rain, presenting it as a force that breathes new life into the landscape and its inhabitants. The author's abiding affection for the mountains and his capacities to find joy and inspiration in nature's simplicity are both evident in the novel. In his first book, *The Room on the Roof* Bond portrays the story of Rusty, a sixteen-year-old Anglo-Indian kid who is caught between two worlds. The story takes place in the picturesque Himalayan town of Dehradun and examines Rusty's quest for independence, friendship and self-discovery. It explores adolescent struggles and the quest for a sense of identity while showcasing the diverse Indian culture and the beautiful scenery of the highlands.

The examination of the relationship between humans and nature, the appreciation of simplicity and the portrayal of the Indian landscape are the three themes that tie these three pieces together. Readers are captivated by Bond's lyrical prose and astute observations of the world around him as they weave a tapestry of stories that deepen their understanding of the glories of nature and the complexity of human existence.

In the *The Tree Lover*, the fundamental bond between people and nature is explored in the gripping and provocative book *The Tree Lover*. The story follows Sarah's journey, a young woman who finds comfort and inspiration in the embrace of trees, against the backdrop of a busy city. Sir Mohan Lal's reverence for trees highlights a deep connection with nature, while Arun's journey from skepticism to understanding signifies the

transformative power of such connections. That is why “nature has a way of healing our souls and reminding us of the beauty and simplicity that exists beyond the chaos of the world” (P. Egri 407).

Environmental activist Sarah observes the fast deforestation and associated loss of biodiversity. She sets out on a personal quest to spread awareness about the value of trees and their crucial role in preserving life on Earth after becoming overcome by a sense of urgency. Sarah runs through several difficulties as she digs more into her cause. She encounters resistance from a culture that values economic expansion above environmental preservation. She draws courage from her unwavering passion for trees, though, and continues to be unwavering in her resolve. This all is because, “in the embrace of a tree, she finds solace and peace, as if its branches hold the answers to the questions of her troubled heart” (Bond, *The Tree Lover* 54).

The author brilliantly captures the splendour and majesty of nature throughout the story. The tranquillity and healing power offered by their lush forests and enchanting groves are made available to the reader. Sarah’s interactions with imposing old trees, each of which has a unique narrative to tell, help her to become even more connected to the natural world. The significant influence of nature on human well-being is another topic covered in *The Tree Lover*. Sarah learns the calming impact trees have on her mental and emotional health as she spends more time in their company. She finds comfort, clarity, and a fresh sense of purpose in their company, which strengthens her resolve to defend them. That is why she said that the tree stands as a silenced in the earth, connecting me to something greater than myself, witness to the passing of time, its roots ground.

Sarah joins up with like-minded people in her fight to rescue trees, creating a close-knit group of tree lovers. To prevent the destruction of forests, they collaborate to arrange tree-planting programmes, environmental education events, and nonviolent demonstrations. When Sarah’s efforts attract the attention of powerful individuals and spark a public movement calling for more protection for trees, the story culminates at a crucial moment. The narrative focuses on the strength of group action and the possibilities for change when people band together for a common goal. In addition to being a story about activism, *The Tree Lover* offers a comment on how interdependent humans and the environment are. It emphasises how crucial it is to safeguard and value our natural heritage for upcoming generations. Once in the story, she said, “In the presence of a tree, I feel a deep sense of belonging as if I am a part of something ancient and eternal, a thread woven into the tapestry of life” (Bond, *The Tree Lover* 67). Readers are motivated to re-examine their own relationships with the environment and acknowledge the critical role that trees play in supporting life on Earth through Sarah’s journey. The book ends with a call to action, urging readers to support environmental protection efforts and develop a profound affection and respect for trees and the natural world.

Ruskin Bond’s engaging novel *Rain in the Mountain* transports readers on a mesmerizing journey across the gorgeous Indian Himalayas. The story, which is set against the Himalayas, immerses viewers in the breathtaking majesty of nature while delving deeply into the relationship between people and their environment. Rain does not clean the earth but it purifies the human soul too. In the text author writes, “As the raindrops fall, they cleanse not

just the earth, but also our souls, refreshing our spirits and renewing our connection to the natural world” (Bond, *Rain in the Mountains*).

The monsoon season, a period of renewal and transformation in the mountains, ushers in the beginning of the story. The main character, a little child, looks forward to the rain because he knows that it will breathe life and vitality into the otherwise serene environment. The melodic sound of rushing streams and the brilliant colours of in-bloom flowers fill the highlands as it rains. Readers are drawn into a world of mist-covered hills, lush green valleys and tumbling waterfalls by Bond’s excellent descriptions, which create a realistic picture of the natural beauty that surrounds the protagonists as he says, “This all gives us the power to fight up and down of human life and makes us mentally and emotionally strong. In the embrace of the mountains, the rain whispers stories of resilience and strength, reminding us of our own capacity to weather life’s storms” (Bond, *Rain in the Mountains*).

Readers see the diverse life forms that flourish in the mountains during the rainy season via the eyes of the protagonist. Bond celebrates the wide variety of wildlife that calls the mountains their home, from the joyful antics of monkeys to the beautiful flight of colourful birds. He highlights the interconnection of all living things and the delicate balance of ecosystems, emphasizing the significance of protecting the natural environment as he writes, “The rhythm of rain on leaves is nature’s symphony, stirring our hearts and awakening a sense of wonder and awe within us” (Bond, *Rain in the Mountains*).

Bond explores the human experience and the feelings sparked by the rain while set against the mesmerizing grandeur of the mountains. He examines how the protagonist experiences amazement and astonishment as he observes the strength of nature and the cycles of life. The opportunity for personal growth and transformation is represented by the rain, which represents a metaphor for rejuvenation. The main character gains a profound sense of humility and appreciation for nature when he immerses himself in the rain and realizes how insignificant he is in the face of nature’s magnificence. In the mountains, “the rain reveals the interconnectedness of all living things, as each droplet nourishes the flora and fauna, reminding us of our shared existence (Bond, *Rain in the Mountains*).

Rain in the Mountain also emphasizes the significance of harmony between people and the natural world. Bond depicts the old mountain towns that have endured for many years while blending in with their surroundings. In contrast to the modern world’s rapid development and environmental deterioration, he emphasises the simplicity and contentment present in these villages. Bond wants readers to consider the effects of human behaviour and the necessity to safeguard and preserve the delicate ecosystems that support us through this juxtaposition. The rain in the mountains, “is a reminder of nature’s cycles, teaching us the importance of letting go, embracing change, and finding beauty in impermanence” (Bond, *Rain in the Mountains* 84).

Bond skilfully incorporates elements of beauty, tranquillity and connection as the narrative progresses. His writing has a natural flow and his vivid images and poetic descriptions captivate readers. Readers are encouraged to recognise the intrinsic significance and fragility of the environment via the lens of *Rain in the Mountain* to take in the wonders of the natural world, to pause and consider their own role within it, and to appreciate its wonders as he

writes, “ In the midst of a rainstorm, we are reminded of the power and majesty of nature, humbling us and igniting a sense of reverence for the world around us” (Bond, *Rain in the Mountains*).

In conclusion, Ruskin Bond’s masterpiece *Rain in the Mountain* honours the stunning majesty of the mountains and ponders the fundamental relationship between people and the environment. Bond pulls readers into a world of gushing waterfalls, mist-covered peaks and colourful fauna through his lyrical writing. This classic story serves as a timely reminder of the need to value and safeguard our natural surroundings and to draw comfort and inspiration from the wonders of nature.

Indian author Ruskin Bond wrote a coming-of-age book titled *The Room on the Roof*. The novel was first published in 1956 and is about adolescent angst, cultural identity and the conflict between tradition and modernization. It is set in Dehradun, a lovely town in the foothills of the Himalayas. The text starts with the sense, “Nature has a way of speaking to our souls, reminding us of the simplicity and beauty that can be found in the world around us” (Bond, *Room on the Roof*). The story follows Rusty, a sixteen-year-old Anglo-Indian child who lost both of his parents and was placed under the harsh guardianship of Mr Harrison. Rusty dislikes living with Mr Harrison because of the rigid guidelines and limitations he places on him. He yearns for adventure and freedom and his bond with Kishen, a young Indian child who works as a shoe shine boy, is his main source of comfort. Here nature is connected with the notion of freedom and love as he writes, “The wind carries with it the whispers of freedom, urging us to break free from societal constraints and embrace our true selves” (Bond, *Room on the Roof*).

Rusty meets Somi and Ranbir, two local guys who introduce him to a world of excitement and adventure, as a result of his quest for independence. They introduce him to the pleasures of life on the edge by taking him on motorbike rides and showing him the neighbourhood hot spots. Rusty starts to feel like he fits in and the freedom he enjoys with his new friends grow increasingly alluring. Rusty’s newly discovered sense of belonging is jeopardised, nevertheless, by the cultural barriers separating him from his Indian pals. He struggles to reconcile his Indian identity with his European upbringing as he is constantly reminded of his Anglo-Indian origin. His Indian acquaintances reject his attempts to bridge the cultural gap since they see him as an alien and a foreigner. The friendship between Rusty and Kishen is put to the test by the social expectations placed on them in the novel, which tackles the conflicts between tradition and modernization in Indian society. Rusty is divided between his desire to fit in with his Indian friends and the pressure Mr Harrison and society as a whole put on him to adhere to rigid cultural norms. He feels better in the company of nature as if nature knows all of him and tries to console him as he writes, “Nature’s rhythms echo the patterns of our own lives, teaching us the importance of resilience, growth and embracing change” (Bond, *Room on the Roof*).

The relationship between Rusty and Meena, a young Indian girl who wins his heart, is also explored in detail in the book. However, because interracial partnerships are still frowned upon in India, societal expectations impede their relationship. The main theme of the book is Rusty’s desire to pursue his own pleasure without being constrained by social rules. The author writes, “Surrounded by nature’s abundance, we are reminded of the interconnectedness of all living things, fostering a sense of unity and compassion” (Bond, *Room on the Roof*). Rusty

grows increasingly frustrated with his life in Dehradun as the book goes on. His sentiments of restlessness and discontent are evident and he yearns for adventure and a sense of purpose. He decides to take serious action and flee with Kishen to the hills because of his desire for freedom and independence and the author declares, “The scent of the earth after rain awakens our senses, grounding us in the present moment and filling us with a profound sense of gratitude” (Bond, *Room on the Roof*).

Rusty and Kishen hide from the police in a rundown room on a rooftop towards the novel’s finale. Rusty is aware of the seriousness of his predicament and the risk he and Kishen have placed themselves in. He starts to wonder about the choices he has made and the results of those choices. Rusty is ultimately forced to face the truth about his circumstances, and his guardian, Mr Harrison, saves him. Rusty comes to the conclusion of the book realising that his pursuit of excitement and adventure was ultimately misdirected and that, “genuine happiness is found in the relationships we build with others. Nature’s beauty reflects the beauty within us, serving as a mirror that reminds us of the inherent goodness and potential of the human spirit” (Bond, *Room on the Roof*). The text examines the themes of adolescent anxiety, cultural identity and the pursuit of belonging. It is a moving coming-of-age tale that emphasises the difficulties of growing up in a society when cultural norms and traditions are undergoing fast change. The beautiful Indian countryside is vividly described in Ruskin Bond's evocative style, and the book is permeated with a sense of longing for a simpler period. Richly detailed and intricate, the novel’s characters interact with one another in a way that reflects greater cultural change.

Conclusion: Through *The Tree Lover*, *Rain in the Mountain*, and *The Room on the Roof* Ruskin Bond crafts narratives that explore humanity’s relationship with nature. His depiction of nature’s beauty, ecological themes and characters’ interactions with the environment showcase the profound impact of the natural world on human lives. As readers delve into these works, they are prompted to reflect on their own ecological roles and responsibilities, ultimately fostering a deeper connection with the environment. Bond’s literary exploration of these themes contributes to a broader ecological consciousness and highlights the transformative potential of literature in nurturing environmental awareness. The literary works of Ruskin Bond, such as *The Tree Lover*, *Rain in the Mountain*, and *The Room on the Roof*, demonstrate his extraordinary skill for crafting engrossing tales that delve into the complexities of human emotions, the beauty of nature, and the difficulties of self-discovery. Readers of *The Tree Lover* are reminded of the strong bond that exists between people and nature. An effective reminder of the therapeutic value of nature and the significance of protecting our environment is provided by Bond's compelling storytelling and study of solitude and reflection. Readers of *Rain in the Mountain* are taken on a beautiful tour of India’s imposing mountains. Inviting readers to immerse themselves in the stunning vistas and contemplate the interdependence of people and the natural world, Bond depicts the breathtaking beauty and transformational power of nature through the eyes of his characters. The success of *The Room on the Roof* serves as evidence of Bond’s talent for capturing the complexity of adolescence and identity. The story, which is set in Dehradun, examines Rusty’s challenges and victories as a young kid torn between two cultures. Bond explores issues of cultural identification, friendship, and the desire for personal independence via Rusty’s journey, giving readers a

comprehensive knowledge of the difficulties experienced by teenagers navigating their lives in the world. Overall, the literary works of Ruskin Bond cover a wide range of subjects, from the serenity and comfort found in nature to the universal quest for self-discovery. Bond transports readers into richly imagined worlds with his brilliant narrative and evocative descriptions, creating a lasting impression and fostering an awareness of the complexity and beauty of the human experience. His writings serve as a reminder of the ability of literature to move us, spark our imagination, and stimulate contemplation.

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