

# Postmodern Indian Short Stories: Suggesting the Environment of the Stories of Ruskin Bond

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## INTRODUCTION

Postmodernism is used to describe as a particular sensibility of the period which is reflected in literature, film, music and architecture in the later 20<sup>th</sup> century. The era is filled with unclear and uncommon features, it gives picture of new ideologies, breaking of old forms, making things easier or simpler. One of the dominant features of postmodernism is its use of historic forms, text, periods and characters to new purposes. There are notable changes occurred in postmodern literature, like stern rules of plot construction rejected; a big question raised by postmodernism is existence of reality, which is seemed as perception of people, differs from one person to another person. And language a very effective tool, which not only expresses reality but also, creates it. It opposes traditional metaphysics of purity and believes in hybridization of global communities. It questions on notions, philosophy and rejects the claim of any universal theory on notion. It chooses to play and experiment with the nonsense to create new works of art. The postmodern writers often use irony, black humour, and hyper reality, combination of multiple elements in their works as well as multi-narrative voices and indeterminacy.

## INDIAN SHORT STORIES

Literature is an art that employs language as a medium of expression. And a good literature always inspires human beings in every era. Among the world literatures, Indian English literature has its unique position and identity. In the ancient literature and culture of India, its roots are to be found. We can see literature of many countries, but one thing is common that these literatures are explaining about their religions and customs with the help of Stories of legends in an extensive piece of writing known as epic, these epics contains small stories which have some moral values for mankind they also had inspired and were the source of entertainment for the people of all ages, all over the world. With the passing of years the variety of literature has been developed by the writers everywhere, on the basis of liking of readers. Writers around the world developed poetry, drama, novel, essay and short story, many different forms of literature. Out of a range of variety, one of the remarkable and short forms of literature is short story; it has range of themes and various elements in which the novel and drama have. All kinds of position events, characterizations are given in the short stories. H. G. Wells defines: "A short story is, or should be, a simple thing; it aims at producing one single vivid effect".(19) A short story contains all the necessary elements like plot, characters, themes, dialogues, setting etc. In Short story, the writers put together various incidents and as a result

the story comes to us. The aim of writing story is not to present the situation but to highlights human behaviors like foolishness, hypocrisy, intelligence, tolerance etc. Short story is broadly read form of literature, which has a large number of varieties of various themes.

In the current postmodern era the Novels holds high and a very strong position among readers around the world, but short stories are the big entertainment in small packets. And it has immerged as one of the favorite forms of the postmodern literature. The postmodern short story is different from the short stories before the world war I or II, Today's short story can be said as developed by novels only, as they have similar features. Like a novel cannot be abridged to a short story and same a short story also cannot be expanded to novel as novel deals with many plots or incidents and many characters, whereas short story limits in plots and characters. Novel represents equivalent to contemporary epic. But short story exposes a situation representing a mood.

Postmodern short story has some unique features like it needs one sitting for a reader to read it. Short story is a broadly read form of literature, and it has a variety of themes. The language used for short story is very easy and trouble free so that readers can understand very well and it uses minimum use of vocabulary that makes its reader feels fresh and pleased after reading the story. The dialogues in the short story are very concise and not complex and at the very same time are very sharp; the readers know are able to sense about the characters through every small description. Very long speeches and long conversations are avoided here. One more notable aspect of short story is the suitable environment. The environment of the story may be sad, tragic, pleasant, decent, horror, suspense, comic etc. there are many writers like RK. Narayan, Mulkraj Anand, Anita Desai, Bharti Mukherjee, Ruskin bond etc. these writers are known for their outstanding contribution in the development of Short stories. These writers are the path maker for the budding short story writers. The short story is a mirror of the society through the story the readers can understand the real picture of the society.

## **RUSKIN BOND A PROLIFIC STORY WRITER**

Ruskin Bond, India's most adored writer who added a huge variety of themes to the short stories was born in Kasauli in 1934 and he grew up in Jamnagar, Dehradun, New Delhi and Shimla. At present Ruskin Bond lives in Mussorie in Ivy cottage with his large adopted family of sons and grandsons. Bond claims that India is his home, he states that he is drawn to India because of the atmosphere- diversity that has mingled to produce it a unique place. The fragrance of Indian domicile and tradition reflected abundantly in his short stories. He received Sahitya Academy award for his book "Our Trees Still Grow at Dehra" in 1992, and was honored with title "Padam Shree" in 1999, for his life time contribution to Indian literature in English have made him an internationally acclaimed author.

Bond is considered as a living legend for depicting the life and his personal experiences along with environmental concern in his stories. The fragrance of Indian domicile and tradition reflected in his short stories. He finds endless material for stories in the trees and wild flowers,

birds and animals, rocks and rivers, and simple hill folk. The changing relationship with Himalayas and Bond environment Bond explores, from the freedom of childhood to a deep love. Bond's short stories, poems, essays are, now included in school syllabus all over India. Bond has won the hearts of millions of readers. For example while reading his horror story 'Face in the dark', we feel always thrilled when the story ends with fear and surprise when it is over. The environment of the story is horror while the story "The Train Stops at Shamli" presents a romantic mood, of young boy the protagonist who falls in love with the basket seller. But when next time he passes from the Dehra, he did not talk at all with the girl, at the end the protagonist tries to find out the girl in the same station of Deoli, but he could not find her. When we talk about a tragic story, "The Funeral" is the story portrays the gloomy and tragic environment. A small boy who has lost his father at the end of the story we find is a description of the death, sadness and loneliness. Thus the story is decorated with various colours the writer presents the various perceptions in the story, the writers create a suitable atmosphere; he skillfully handled the issues and relations of a man with environment and animal. In story "Animals on The track" he describes about an interesting family travelling with odd variety of pets including a tiger, a squirrel, a parrot, and a python. In another story "Panthers Moon" a boy Bisnu can't go to school because of the presence of a man-eater in the forest. But his determination to study makes him succeed and forces a Panther to change its territory.

In "The Room on the Roof" Ruskin Bond has made a beautiful picturization of nature; the light spring rain, the wind, an exhilarating freshness to the air, a smell of earth, a scent of flowers etc. Here the boy Rusty is the representation of Ruskin Bond, his love for nature is an expression of freedom which gave him boundless pleasure. The story "displays the relationship between man and nature. Here authors also acknowledged the reflection of nature on man like outbreak of spring make people fall in love, blooming flowers and new leaves of the tree make people relax and stress free. Another short story "Angry River", this story depicts the two different aspects of a river which flows from glacier and benefits mankind in different ways, and another aspect when it becomes destroyer. Similarly story also shows protagonist's changing relationship with river. How it becomes blessings to curse. The story also describes protagonist's deep insight towards mythological concepts. In 'Death of the Trees' is the story of great concern as the Bond laments for the trees which are going to be cut, due to giving a way to a new bypass in front of his home. He is showing his helplessness. As he cant interfere in PWD work. One more very sensitive story narrated by Bond is 'My First Love' which describes his love for maid, as she cares like a mother, she fulfills all his material needs, comforts him when he uses to get afraid at night. Adores and usually tells fairy tales to entertain him.

## CONCLUSION

Postmodern Short Stories deal with common and unpicked incidents of day to day life and the selection of these incidents reflect the writer's point of view towards life. Each writer skillfully uses themes or shapes the story in such a way that reduces human tension and revives the mood. Ruskin Bond has been regarded as an Indian writer or Indian magician, the themes

and settings of his stories create spell among readers. He portrays real scenes of Himalayas, flora-fauna; animals, rivers, trees, flowers, gardens, cities, forests, railway stations and more than natural scent of flowing air, the patrichor can be felt by his nature stories. His deep love for kids, villagers and animals also observed beautifully from his stories. And his stories end with a meaningful note. Many stories contain advice and concern for environment. The stories of Ruskin Bond are straight from his heart.

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