



Ruskin Bond - A Mysterious Ghost Story Writer

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Abstract: *The present paper is an attempt to discuss about the new perception of Ruskin Bond. Ruskin Bond has made a new experiment in the short stories. Here it has been discussed two new volumes of Ruskin Bond's ghost stories. This paper will also discuss some elements of spirits described in the stories Bond. This paper also notices some of English writers who has written ghost stories.*

Keywords: *graveyard, hauntings, ghosts, dark, jinns, pretas.*

I. INTRODUCTION

There can be a controversy over the existence of ghosts and spirit, but there can't be controversy over the existence of ghost stories in English. Many great writers have attempted the stories with ghosts as characters. Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*, Kipling's *The Return of Imry*, Henry James's *The Turn of the Screw* etc. are the works in which supernatural elements and spirits have played a great role. Oscar Wilde also wrote ghost stories. Such stories are read by the people with interest and curiosity.

II. THE SUPERNATURAL STORIES OF BOND

Ruskin Bond, the well-known short story writer of India, has written many ghost stories time to time. His remarkable stories are *A face in the dark*, *The Monkeys*, *The Haunted Bicycle*, *The Vision*, *Whistling in the Dark*, *Reunion at the Regal*, *Wilson's Bridge*, *Topaz*, *The Black Cat*, *Whispering in the Dark*, *The Wind on Haunted Hill*, *The Ghost in The Garden*, *On Fairy Hill*, *Would Astley Return?*, *The Prize*, *Eyes of The Cat*, *Susanna's Seven Husbands*, *The Trouble With Jinns*, *The Haunted Bungalow*, *Ganpat's Story*, *Listen to the Wind*, *Ghosts of the Savoy*, *The Man Who Was Kipling*, *The Daffodil Case*, *Picnic at Fox-Burn*, *Something in the Water*, *The Family Ghost*, *The Prize*, *Night of the Millennium*, *Who Killed Rani?* *The Rakshasas*, *The Black Cat* etc.

His remarkable volume is *A face in the Dark and Other Stories* by Penguin Books India Pvt. Ltd. Ruskin Bond remarks that he does not believe in ghosts but he saw them all the time in woods, in a bar, in a crowd, outside the cinema. These panoramic stories, we find the description of haunted places is portrayed by him during the period of five decades. In almost all stories, we find the description of haunted places weird atmosphere and strange situation which do not take place in real life. But the characters in these stories appear and behave like normal human beings through them are ghost. Another peculiarity of the stories of Bond is that though they are ghost stories and ghost appears in them they are not horrible stories. We can read them as normal stories where abnormal incidents take place in the life of the normal characters.

III. FEATURES OF BOND'S STORIES

We learn from these stories about the peculiarities of ghosts, Jinns, Pretas, Munjas and other unearthly beings. Peepal tree is believed to be the residence of such spirits. In many of the stories of Bond, the ghosts are found to be living either in the graveyard or in the Peepal tree or in the deserted place. Another feature of the behavior of the ghost is that their presence is associated with the howling of dogs, weeping and cries. The mysterious atmosphere and the strange happenings also are associated with the ghosts. These stories are full of them. Ruskin Bond himself says, "Call it a vision if you like the vision, I have sometimes had of my father long dead looking just as he did when I was a child, or boy on the storm's swept on the hill side, there to warn me impending danger, or the children playing on the haunted hill their images trapped in a fragment of time" (Bond)

The remarkable story of Bond is *A Face in The dark* this story is very short but full of fear and dark atmosphere of hills. Mr. Oliver's experience with the ghost in Shimla. Once Mr. Oliver, an Anglo-Indian teacher was returning to his school late one night. He took a short way and passed through Pinr tress suddenly, he heard strange sounds. He had a torch and he lighted it to see what it was. In the light of the torch he saw a boy sitting alone and he asked, "What are you doing out here boy?" But the boy continued to weep and did not answer. So Mr. Oliver said: Come boy you should not be out here in this hour. Tell me your trouble. Look up!" (Bond)

The boy looked up at Mr. Oliver But to the surprise of the teacher, the boy was without eyes, nose, ears, or mouth. The torch fell down from the teachers hand and he began to run towards the school building. He stumbled up to the watchman who asked



him, “What is this Sahib, why are you running?” Mr. Oliver said, “ I saw something horrible , a boy weeping in the forest and he had no eyes” The watchman said , “ Do you mean it was like this, Sahib?(Bond 2004:p.3)

And the watchman raised his lamp to show his own face which had no eyes, no ears, no features at all. It was a ghost. The other remarkable story of M r. Bond is The Vision. Ruskin Bond describes his own experience at Deharadun .He saw his father who was dead when he was ten years old. Once while riding a bicycle, he started singing a song and suddenly saw a strange figure before himself. Though the figure remained him, the writer could recognize his father’s face and form. Suddenly he stopped singing and he tried to raise his hand in greeting but the figure faded away.

Another time, when he saw once standing in his balcony he again saw his father standing and looking at him. He went to greet him again but this time also the figure faded away. In the third incident, once again he was taking a bath in the mountain streams and taking a bath in the mountain streams was very deep the current was very swift .The writer drifted with the current in the direction of water .If he had reached there; he would have been certainly drowned. He tried his hard to reach the river bank. But he was pulled away by the current .Suddenly something made him turn his head to his right and he saw his father standing there. He was smiling at him again. He also saw a branch of a tree which he could not see earlier. He gripped the branch tightly and jumped out of the water .Now he looked felt that it was certainly his father who came there to save. In his characteristic story Topaz, we find an emotional touch against the supernatural background.

IV. CONCLUSION

To conclude we may say that the stories of Bond are so catching that if you start reading anyone of them you can’t leave it unfinished. There are tales, featuring monkeys and a pack of dogs, come back from the dead and elderly lady who a witch after a dark a school boy is riding his bicycle up and down, the country road where he was killed. Such stories make an interesting reading. There are some stories in which we find a fantasy of meeting with Sherlock Holmes at London’s Victoria and Albert museum .These all stories are nice for passing time reading .But they should not be taken very seriously.

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