



The Kitemaker: Stories

Ruskin Bond

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Filled with characteristic warmth, gentle humour and keen observations on daily life, this collection brings together some of the finest short fiction by one of India's best-loved authors.

The Kitemaker: Stories Details

Date : Published 2011 by Penguin Books India (first published January 1st 2005)

ISBN : 9780143415978

Author : Ruskin Bond

Format : Paperback 152 pages

Genre : Short Stories, Fiction, Classics, Childrens

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Sanket says

Ruskin is simply great. He is one of the writers where you learn that a writer can create magic from simple words. Recreating the atmosphere with just words is not an easy task, but Ruskin does it so easily that it makes me wonder, why we do not have another writer of his caliber in India. The stories are superb. The narration is excellent. Must read for a Ruskin Bond fan.

Avirup Sen says

Ruskin Bond is a master of simple yet nuanced storytelling using atmosphere and imagery to breathe new life into simple tales and experiences. In the Kitemaker, we get a set of stories that ring close to this personal life, told beautifully with its soul in the right place.

The initial two stories speak about his childhood through the trauma of separation of his parents and his experiences with his father which has highs and lows and a heart wrenching finale. The next three stories are more at ease in terms of content and style with 'The Boy Who Broke The Bank' standing out for its beautifully crafted humour. Bond goes back to introspection of his own life and heartbreaks through the next two tales 'Love Is A Sad Song' and 'Time Stops At Shamli'. The two best stories in the set, it takes the readers on a journey of love, togetherness, belief, pain and sacrifices through beautifully fleshed characters in a society that seems all too real.

'The Kitemaker' is a musing on innocence lost and 'The Tunnel' speaks about the sync of mankind and nature. 'A Face In The Dark' delves into the supernatural and is an eerie horror pairing in this set. 'He Said It With Arsenic' has a fascinating context to keep you gripped and the collection ends with Bond's musings in the write up 'The Last Time I Saw Delhi', a melancholic remembrance of the days gone by.

Beautifully crafted with enchanting imagery, Ruskin Bond conjures up a fine cocktail through The Kitemaker collection. A perfect read by the window for that rain drenched evening.

Neha Santwani says

Like his way of writing, simple and charming. Bunch of interesting and not so interesting stories, was pleasantly surprised to know that he has spent quite some years in my hometown Jamnagar during his primary childhood days :)

Harish Puvvula says

So good that I finished the book in just one sitting. Tales of poignancy, humour, nostalgia, and irony.

The Boy Who Broke the Bank - humor and had O.Henry like twist.

Love is a sad song, Time Stops at Shamli - heart-warming tale of futile love.

A Face in the Dark - gave me goosebumps and who says horror stories need to be long winding? This story is a flash fiction.

Mradul says

"SIMPLICITY" is all i can say for Mr.Bond. You do not need to have tonnes of difficult words or the vocabulary of highest standard if you are master at expressing the "EMOTION". The boy who broke the bank and He said it with arsenic are pick of the stories.

Bikaz says

was there really a leopard in the tunnel ? i just adore whatever ruskin bond writes . every single story of this collection captivates imagination . i love the way ruskin describes solitude , how beautifully he creates those unbelievable images in readers mind .

KUDOS to ruskin bond . >_<

Deepthi Narasimhaiah says

Interesting stories about himself and others. Components of the natural world are mentioned in all of his stories. As a bird watcher, I love it when he mentions the names of birds in his stories. A story on his life with his father is heart warming and touching.

Richard Parker says

The best thing about reading Ruskin Bond is his simple yet compelling art of narrating the details of the surroundings that we usually miss out. This book is a collection of some of his acclaimed short stories. Three of them are on his autobiographical account describing his correspondence with his father, his father's love towards him and how the failed marriage set off ripples of insecurity and stress on his childhood.

There are a couple of stories which reveals his romantic side. An affair at an age of 32 gives this author a reason to leave the hills for Delhi to convince the girl's relatives for her hand in marriage.

The ones that I liked the most are 'Time stops at Shamli' and 'He said it with Arsenic'.

If anyone enjoys reading short stories which give you a nice, lively feeling with fleeting bits of humor, this one is surely a treat for you.

Kunal Sen says

“The Kitemaker: Stories” (by Ruskin Bond, publishers: Penguin Evergreens)- A Review

The first story, ‘Life with Father’, is a fitting start to the book. At once, in its beguiling simplicity and compassionate monochrome, it embodies all good things Ruskin Bond has come to be known for. In this story, he paints the picture of a year spent with his father. It is a picture in retrospect, painted not with CGI but on a drawing sheet with water colors, 32 in a set. The story tangentially also speaks about the days of the ‘Raj’, Ruskin’s life in a boarding school (more of this life would be depicted in the next story, ‘My Father’s Last Letter’), the separation of his parents, tidbits about his sister and grandmother and importantly, the various houses (and bungalows and tents and apartments) Ruskin and his father lived in, during an eventful year when as the World War-II raged on, a young boy’s world was breaking apart as well.

‘Untouchable’, also included in the collection is the first story Ruskin Bond had written. Written as a sixteen year old and a year before ‘Room on the Roof’, his John Llewellyn Rhys prize winner that would break him into the mainstream, ‘Untouchable’ is a disarmingly awkward account of the friendship between two children, each from different strata of society. The theme of friendship is further explored in the fifth story, ‘The Fight’, that evokes R.K. Narayan’s ‘Malgudi Days’ in its wholesome charm and innocence.

‘Time stops at Shamli’ is perhaps Bond’s best loved story. And it pleases me no end that it has aged well. Playing around with facts and fiction, this story tells the untold tale of a small, languid town where nothing much ever happens. ‘Shamli’ is intriguing because we realize that it has come to become a microcosm of the other India we know so little about, the India that grazes by our urbane train windows and continues to lead a life of anonymity, the India that would soon be lost on us like Atlantis. Yes, the second act is probably contrived, but the atmosphere that the author manages to create is unparalleled and the story is a success.

‘The Kitemaker’ takes me back to my school days because I remember having read this story in our those N.C.E.R.T standard seven English books. Nostalgia aside, this again is a strong short story, a commentary on the changing times, migration and industrialization. Mehmood, the story’s protagonist, is a composite picture of many lost souls in this rat-race.

‘A Face in the Dark’ is another famous Bond story, a story you may have heard of as some urban legend, while not knowing then who the author was. Well, here is that very story and it is just as scary in print as it is in narration. ‘He said it with Aresnic’ is almost a misfit in the collection: a dark, noir-ish tale of a planned crime and its consequences. It is quite a gripping tale in its own way but not the quintessential Ruskin Bond.

‘The Last Time I Saw Delhi’ is a touching end to the collection, with the author (or the narrator, difficult to say which one) describing a taxi-ride he had taken in one late-August to meet his mother in Delhi. Again, the story talks about the burgeoning urbanity and how it is impacting the things and people of yore. He succeeds in making the reader so disarmed with his non-threatening prose that if and when he does make statements on capitalism, education and politics, then the reader is quietly receptive to give those statements the gravitas they deserve because Bond rarely rants or lashes. He describes and he describes so heartbreakingly.

“The Kitemaker: Stories” is a must-read collection of short stories by one of India’s foremost storytellers.

Lester says

I had heard a lot about Ruskin Bond, so picked up this short collection of stories. The style is very endearing, and easy to read. I can see why he became a known author. The stories themselves are very varied. A couple I just did not like at all, but most were written in the first person. The start was autobiographical, and so the most interesting stories for me were those where weird and wonderful characters turned up, and I was never sure if he was still being autobiographical or not!

Rizowana says

Reading Bond is always an adventure, of the slow kind. One can feel time slowing down its pace as one goes over his carefully chosen words. This one is a collection of his short stories that has accrued the status of 'classics' over time, as well as a few autobiographical entries. Because I grew up on his stories, I remember most of the shorts and it was a joy going over them again. Reading this edition, in particular, had the effect of hearkening me back to an older, simpler time - a time I was not a part of but had yet managed to catch a last breath of before its extinguishment by our current modern days. It is a mark of an excellent writer if they can transport you to another time and move your emotions through words; Bond achieves this with remarkable ease. The simplicity that he is master of eases its way into hearts and settles in cozily, and his style of writing with his fluid movement across genres mischievously makes sure the reader is engaged throughout. The selection of stories is also excellent, as the book begins with reminiscences about his father and closes on his mother in the hospital bed. Complex emotions are given the most magical of touches through the sheer humanness that Bond captures so well - life, love, death and laughter are all intertwined and given lives of their own. Little wonder, then, that this book is now occupying a special spot in my heart.

PaRth Vaghela says

Well this is the first book of Ruskin Bond I have read. And it is very good. All stories are well written and what I love most about this book is Ruskin's great style of narrating details of the surroundings. I enjoyed almost all the stories. Though which I liked most are:

Life with Father

My father's last letter

The photograph

Time stops at shamli

The kitemaker

He said it with Arsenic

The last time I saw Delhi

..

Must Read. If you like short stories then this book is a treat for you.!!

Ankit Saxena says

Its a great collection of stories by Mr. Bond.

All stories are more than just interesting. I enjoyed all of them, but quite scared when reached to the 'A face in the dark'. That's somewhat scary. Short but SCARY.

The story I enjoyed the most are:

Life with Father

Time stops at Shamli

The Tunnel

The most funny was the "The Boy who broke the Bank".

The writing skills of Mr. Bond is far better than any other Indian writers of his times. Very well known as the Children's Writer, Mr. Ruskin bond is the epitome in his category of Literature. One should learn from his writing for how to mold the stories and how to become one good writer?

This is the first book of him, that I read and it amazed me to the depth. Very soon I'll pick one more from his shelf of classics.

For me it deserves: 5.0/5.0

Pallav Mishra says

Ruskin Bond's stories remind me of my school years...especially the story A Face in the Dark...

Srikumar Krishna Iyer says

Great collection of short stories by Ruskin Bond.

I am just starting to exploring his work, and was worried that it shouldn't be a children's classic, its not, and its a very nice collection of his growing up years, when he was a struggling writer & also going through his parent's seperation, being moved from his father to his mother (after his death), to his grandmother's home in Calcutta (after mom's 2nd marriage), eventually decided to roam around alone, probably all the great stories (like visit to Shamli, romance time etc) should be credited to this period.

A must read collection of very fine writing.
