



THE EYES ARE NOT HERE **- RUSKIN BOND**

: STRUCTURE :

- 3.0 Objectives**
- 3.1 About the Author**
- 3.2 About the Short Story**
- 3.3 Text of the Story**
- 3.4 Key Words**
- 3.5 Summary of the Short Story**
- 3.6 Critical Analysis and Appreciation of the Story**
- 3.7 Tone of the Story**
- 3.8 Themes of the Story**
- 3.9 Style and Diction of the Story**
- 3.10 The title of the Story**
- 3.11 Questions (answer In brief)**
- 3.12 Multiple Choice Questions**
- 3.13 Let Us Sum Up**
- 3.14 Books Suggested**
- Answers**

3.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit, you will be introduced

- to one of the most popular forms of literature i.e. Short story.
- to a brief prose narrative.
- to a single episode with limited characters.
- to five important elements namely; plot, characters, setting, conflict and resolution.

Here you will study a beautiful short story by Ruskin Bond one of the greatest short story writers in Indian writing in English.

3.1 ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ruskin Bond is an Indian author of British descent. He was born on May 19, 1934 in Kasauli, Himachal Pradesh. He spent his early childhood in Jamnagar (Gujarat) and Shimla. After his father's death he went to live at his grandmother's place in Dehradun. He was raised by his mother and step father. He studied at Bishop Cotton School in Shimla. After his high school education, he went to his aunt's place in the Channel Islands (U.K.) in 1951 and stayed there for two years. In London, he wrote his first novel *The Room on the Roof*, semi-autobiographical story of an orphaned Anglo Indian boy 'Rusty'. He won the John Llewellyn Rhys Prize in 1957. He returned to India and settled in Dehradun.

Ruskin Bond went to live in Mussoorie in 1963. He became fulltime writer

who wrote novels, short stories, poems, essays, ghost stories and autobiographical works and travelogues. He has written over five hundred short stories, fifty books for children, novels and two volumes of autobiography. Presently he lives in Landour, Mussoorie's Ivy Cottage with his adopted family. He started writing at the age of 17 and he still writes regularly even at the age of 83.

The Major works of Ruskin Bond include:

1. *The Room on the Roof* (1956)
2. *The Blue Umbrella* (1974)
3. *The Night Train at Deoli* (1988)
4. *A Flight of Pigeons* (1978)
5. *Delhi is Not Far* (1994)
6. *Our Trees still Grow in Dehra* (1991)
7. *Cherry Tree* (1980)
8. *Angry River* (1972)
9. *Rusty, the Boy from the Hills* (2002)
10. *A Season of Ghosts* (1999)
11. *Panther's Moon* (1969)
12. *Vagrants in the Valley* (2016)
13. *Landour Days* (2002)
14. *The Adventures of Rusty*
15. *The Lamp is Lit* (1998)

Ruskin Bond received the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1992 for *Our Trees Still Grow in Dehra*. He was awarded the Padma Shri in 1999 and Padma Bhushan in 2014. His several works have been adapted into films. The Bollywood film *Junoon* was based on his historical novella *A Flight of Pigeon*. In 2005, the famous film director Vishal Bhardwaj made a film based on his popular novel for children *The Blue Umbrella* which won the National Award for Best Children's film.

Ruskin Bond says that writing is his passion. He loves words and putting them together and creating a beautiful sentence. Nature always inspires him to write. He loves India so much that he would like to be reborn in India and nowhere else and be a writer.

3.2 ABOUT THE SHORT STORY

The Eyes Are Not Here is a marvellous story by Ruskin Bond. He has used the first person narrative technique in the story. The narrator is a blind person who narrates the story from his perspectives. His eyes are sensitive only to light and darkness. While he is travelling by train to Dehradun, he comes across a girl who enters his compartment. He hears the sound of her slippers and imagines about her beautiful face. He liked her voice as they began to converse. Gradually, he gets interested in her. He tries to hide his blindness tactfully from the girl. He tries to impress her by describing the trees that seem to be moving. The girl asked him if he saw any animals. The narrator replied that there were hardly any animals left in the forests near Dehra.

Daringly, the narrator told the girl that she had an interesting face. She laughed

and said that she was tired of people telling her about her pretty face. The narrator could now realize that she had a pretty face. The girl called her a gallant young man. Soon, the girl's destination Saharanpur arrived where her aunt had come to receive her. The girl stood up to collect her luggage. The narrator wondered whether she wore her hair in a bun or it was plaited or it hang loose over her shoulders or it was very short.

As the girl stood very close to the narrator the perfume from hair tantalized his sense of smell. As she moved away, the perfume still lingered where she had stood. The girl bade good bye to the narrator and got down on the platform of the railway station. The train started again and a new male passenger entered the compartment. The narrator asked him whether the girl had a long or short hair. The man said that he had not noticed her hair but he noticed her eyes. He said that her eyes were beautiful but they were of no use to her as she was completely blind. The revelation shocked the narrator and he felt that he had deceived himself. The ironical twist at the end makes the story highly appealing.

The story *The Eyes Have It* was originally published in *Contemporary Indian English Stories*. Later it was included in several other collections with different titles such as *The Eyes Are Not Here* and *The Girl on the Train*, etc. The story has only three characters the narrator, the girl and the new male passenger. It is an ideal short story that can be read in one go. Ruskin Bond's art of story-telling is simple and striking. It shows the author's deep insight into human psychology. The plot is well knit and coherent. The story ends with a striking discovery like O. Henry's short stories.

There are ironical twists and turns in the story as the narrator tries to hide his blindness but at the end he realizes that the girl is also blind. He realizes that the eyes are neither here nor there. Ruskin Bond deals with the theme of blindness showing that the blind people are more sensitive than those with eyes "The people with good eyesight fail to see what is right in front of them. Whereas the blind people take in only the essentials, whatever registers most tellingly on their remaining senses" remarks Ruskin Bond in the story. We are reminded of beautiful words of Helen Keller's *Three Days to See* where she says, "only the deaf appreciate hearing, only the blind realize the manifold blessings that lie in sight".

3.3 TEXT OF THE STORY

I had the compartment to myself up to Rohana, and then a girl got in. the couple who saw her off were probably her parents; they seemed very anxious about her comfort, and the women gave the girl detailed instructions as to where to keep her things, when not to lean out of the windows, and how to avoid speaking to strangers. They said their good-byes; the train pulled out of the station.

As I was totally blind at the time, my eyes sensitive only to light and darkness, I was unable to tell what the girl looked like; but I knew she wore slippers from the way they slapped against her heels. It would take me some time to discover something about her looks and perhaps I never would. But I liked the sound of her voice, and even the sound of her slippers.

'Are you going all the way to Dehra?' I asked. I must have been sitting in a dark corner because my voice started her. She gave a little exclamation and

said, 'I didn't know anyone else was here.'

Well, it often happens that people with good eyesight fail to see what is right in front of them. They have too much to take in, I suppose. Whereas people who cannot see (or see very little) have to take in only the essentials, whatever registers most tellingly on their remaining senses.

'I didn't if I would be able to prevent her from discovering that I was blind, I thought. 'Provided I keep to my seat, it shouldn't be too difficult.'

The girl said, 'I'm getting down at Saharanpur. My aunt is meeting me there.' Then I had better not be too familiar. I said, 'Aunts are usually formidable creatures.'

'Where are you going?' she asked.

'To Dehra, and then to Mussoorie.'

'Oh, how lucky you are, I wish I were going to Mussoorie. I love the hills. Especially in October.'

'Yes this is the best time, 'I said calling on my memories. The hills are covered with wild dahlias, the sun is delicious, and at night you can sit in front of a log-fire and drink a little brandy. Most of the tourists have gone, and the roads are quite and almost deserted. Yes October is the best time.'

She was silent, and I wondered if my words had touched her, or whether she thought me a romantic fool. Then I made a mistake.

'What is it like?' I asked.

She seemed to find nothing strange in the question. Had she noticed already that I could not see? But her next question removed my doubts.

'Why don't you look out the window?' she asked.

I moved easily along the berth and felt for the window-ledge. The window was open, and I faced it, making pretence, of studying the landscape. I heard the panting of the engine, the rumble of the wheels, and in my mind's eye, I could see the telegraph-posts flashing by.

'Have you noticed,' I ventured, that the trees seem to be moving while we seem to be standing still?

'That always happens,' she said. 'Do you see any animals?

Hardly any animals left in the forests near Dehra.'

I turned from the window and faced the girl, and for a while we sat in silence.

'You have an interesting face,' I remarked. I was becoming quite daring, but it was a safe remark. Few girls can resist flattery.

She laughed pleasantly, a clear ringing laugh.

'It's nice to be told I have an Interesting face. I am tired of people telling me I have a pretty face.'

'Oh, so you do have a pretty face.' Thought I, and aloud I said:

'You are very gallant young man,' she said. 'But why are you so serious?

I thought then, that I would try to laugh for her,' but the thought of laughter only made me feel troubled and lonely.

'We'll soon be at your station,' I said.

'Thank goodness it's a short journey. I can bear to sit in a train for more than

two or three hours.'

Yet I was prepared to sit there for almost any length of time,

Just to listen to her talking. Her voice had the sparkle of a mountain stream. As soon as she left the train, she would forget our brief encounter; but it would stay with me for the rest of the journey and for some time after.

The engine's whistle shrieked, the carriage wheels changed their sound and rhythm.

The girl got up and began to collect her things. I wondered if she wore her hair in a bun, or if it was plaited, or if it hung loose over her shoulders, or if it was cut very short.

The train drew slowly into the station. Outside, there was the shouting of porters and vendors and a high-pitched female voice near the carriage door which must have belonged to the girl's aunt.

'Good-bye,' said the girl.

She was standing very close to me, so close that the perfume from her hair was tantalizing. I wanted to raise my hand and touch her hair,' but she moved away, and only the perfume still lingered where she had stood.

'You may break, you may shatter the vase if you will, but the scent of the roses will linger there still.....

There was some confusion in the doorway. A man, getting into the compartment, stammered an apology. Then the door banged shut, and the world was shut out again. I returned to my berth. The guard blew his whistle and we off. Once again, I had a game to play with a new fellow- traveler.

The train gathered speed, the wheels took up their song, the carriage groaned and shook. I found the window and sat in front of it, staring into the daylight that was darkness form me. So many things were happening outside the window. It could be a fascinating game, guessing what went on out there.

The man who had entered the compartment broke into my reverie. 'You must be disappointed,' he said, ' I'm not as attractive a travelling companion as the one who just left.'

'She was an interesting girl,' I said.' Can you tell me –did she keep her hair long or short?'

'I don't remember,' he said, sounding puzzled.' it was her eyes I noticed, not her hair. She had beautiful eyes but they were of no use to her, she was completely blind. Didn't you notice?'

- Ruskin Bond

3.4 KEY WORDS

Anxious	: Eager, Concerned, worried
Instructions	: Information about how to do, make or use something
Slap	: Hit, Strike, Smack
Startle	: Surprise, alarm, frighten
Essentials	: Necessary or important things
Register	: Express or convey an opinion or emotion
Tellingly	: Significantly, strikingly, effectively

Formidable	: Frightening, dreadful, threatening
Dahlia	: A flower plant with bright coloured flowers
Log fire	: Wood fire
Tantalizing	: Something that is tempting or alluring but unlikely to provide a way of satisfying that desire
Deserted	: Empty of people
Romantic fool	: Passionate stupid person
Berth	: A fixed bunk on train, ship or other means of transport
Window-ledge	: Windowsill
Telegraph post	: Telegraph pole
Flash by	: Shine, sparkle, blaze, glimmer
Resist	: Counter, combat, try to prevent, defy.
Flattery	: Excessive and insincere praise
Pleasantly	: Happily, Joyfully
Gallant	: Brave, Courageous
Brief	: Short
Encounter	: To come in contact, come across, confront
Shriek	: Scream, Screech, Cry out loudly
Vendors	: Sellers, traders in the street
Linger	: Remain, stay, wait around, stick around
Perfume	: Fragrance, fragrant liquid, Scent
Confusion	: Disorder, chaos, turmoil
Stammer	: Stutter, speak haltingly, falter, fumble
Apology	: Expression of regret, beg pardon
Bang	: A sudden, loud, sharp noise
Fellow-traveler	: Companion in travelling
Groan	: Moan, whine, whimper (painful sound)
Fascinating	: Attractive, Charming
Reverie	: Day-dream
Bun	: A hairstyle drawn back into a tight tail at the back of the head
Rumble	: Continuous deep, resonant sound
In mind's eye	: In one's imagination or visualization
Plaited	: Hair formed into a plait
Puzzled	: Confused, perplexed, unable to understand
Guess	: Estimate, speculate, surmise, reckon

3.5 SUMMARY OF THE STORY

The narrator was travelling to Dehra by train. He was alone in the compartment. He was a blind man whose eyes were sensitive to light and darkness only. At Rohana railway station, a girl gets into the compartment. Her par-

ents give her many instructions about her luggage, safety and her well-being as she takes her seat in the compartment. They advise her to take care, not to lean out of the window and to avoid talking to strangers.

The train starts and narrator begins to talk with the girl. The voice of the narrator startles her as she thought that she was alone in the compartment. The girl told him that she was going to Saharanpur where her aunt would come to receive her. The narrator tells her that he was going to Mussoorie a lovely hill station which was full of colorful flowers in October. The girl says that she too loved hills, particularly in October. The narrator's description of Mussoorie touches her heart.

The narrator is blind but he tries to hide his blindness from the girl. After some talk, the narrator tells her quite daringly that she has an interesting face. The girl replies happily that people generally said that she had a pretty face. Soon the destination of the girl arrives and she bids goodbye to the narrator. The narrator wonders whether she had a long hair or short hair. He wonders if her hair was plaited or tied in a bun. She stood up near the narrator and filled his sense of smell with lovely, tantalizing perfume from her hair. She moved away but the perfume still lingered where she was standing.

The girl gets down from the carriage and another male passenger enters the compartment. He apologizes to the narrator for not being an attractive travelling companion as the previous one. The narrator asks him about the girl's hair whether it was long, short, plaited or tied in bun. The man replies that he had not noticed her hair but he saw the eyes of the girl which were really beautiful but of no use to her as she was completely blind. The man asks the narrator if he had not noticed her blindness. The narrator felt that he tried to cheat her but he too was cheated. The train moved on and the narrator continued to pretend that he was a man with normal eye-sight.

3.6 CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND APPRECIATION OF THE STORY

The Eyes Are Not Here is one of the most appealing stories by Ruskin Bond. It has other two titles too- *The Eyes Have it* and *The Girl on the Train*. The story is in first person narrative by the narrator who is blind. He is travelling to Dehra by train. He is alone in the compartment. He is blind but his eyes are sensitive to light and darkness. At Rohana, a girl enters the compartment. Her parents had come to see her off. They were giving her detailed instructions about her safety and well-being. They told her not to lean out of the window and avoid talking to the strangers. They said goodbye and the train moved on.

The narrator was curious to know about the girl's appearance. He was naturally unable to tell what the girl looked like. He liked the slapping sound of her shippers. He began to talk to her asking her whether she was going all the way to Dehra. She was surprised and exclaimed that she thought that there was nobody else in the compartment. The narrator liked her voice which was like sparkling mountain stream. The narrator wanted to hide his blindness from the girl and therefore he behaved and talked like a man with a normal vision.

The narrator remarks that people with good eyesight fail to see what is right in front of them as they have so many things to see. Whereas the blind people

or people with weak eyesight have to take in only the essentials that their remaining senses register most effectively.

Here we are reminded of the famous essay *Three Days to See* by Helen Keller who was deaf and blind but she overcame her disabilities with the help of her great teacher Ann Sullivan. In her essay "Three Days to See" she describes how she would feel and do if she was blessed with three days to see. She remarks that people with ability to see, hear and talk take such privileges for granted. She suggests that darkness makes one appreciative of light and sight. The voice and sounds make one appreciate the ability of hearing. People with normal eyes and ears take all sights and sounds hazily without concentration and with little appreciation.

The narrator who is blind understands the importance of eyesight and other senses. He suggests that those with eyes are often blind towards beauty and sights around them. The narrator is very curious to know about the appearance of the girl. During their conversation, the narrator comes to know that the girl was going to Saharanpur where her aunt was to come to railway station to receive her. She asked the narrator where he was going. The narrator replied that he was going to Dehradun and then to Mussoorie. The girl exclaimed that he was very lucky and wished that she were also going to Mussoorie. She added that she loved hills especially in October. The narrator described the beauty of the hills covered with wild dahlias in October. He said that in October, the sun was delicious and at night people would sit in front of log-fire and drink a little brandy. He added that as most of the tourists had left the hill station, the roads were quiet and desecrated. The narrator agreed with the girl that October was the best time to visit Mussoorie.

The girl was impressed by the words of the narrator. She probably thought that the narrator was a romantic fool. The narrator thought that probably she had come to know that he was not blind. However, soon she said that he should sit near that window to see things outside. The narrator moved near the window and pretended to see things outside. He could only feel the telegraph-poles flashing by. The girl asked him if he saw any animals. The narrator replied that hardly any animals could be sighted in the forests near Dehra.

The narrator then moved away from the window and sat facing the girl. For a while, silence prevailed. Then the narrator daringly remarked that she had an interesting face. She laughed pleasantly and said that it was nice to be told that she had an interesting face because she was tired of hearing that she had a pretty face. The narrator then realized that she was a pretty girl. The girl called him a gallant young man.

The narrator told her that they would soon be at her station. The girl said that she preferred short journey as she could not bear to travel for more than two or three hours. The narrator liked to travel for any length of time, hearing the sweet voice of the girl. Soon, the train whistled and arrived at Saharanpur Railway station. The girl got up and began to collect her luggage. The narrator wondered whether she had a long hair or short hair, or they were plaited or tied in a bun. As the train drew into the station, there were shouting of the porters and vendors and a high pitched voice of the girl's aunt who had come to receive her.

The girl bid good bye to the narrator. She was standing quite close to her and the perfume from her hair tantalized him. He had a desire to touch her hair

but then she moved away leaving the fragrance lingering behind. He remembered the words of a beautiful verse that said.

“You may break; you may shatter the vase if you will,
but the scent of the roses will linger there still.....”

The girl left and a male passenger got into the compartment. The door banged shut and the narrator returned to his berth. The guard blew the whistle and the train started again. The narrator decided to hide his blindness from the fellow traveler once again. The man said to the narrator, “You must be disappointed. I’m not as attractive a travelling companion as the one who just left.”

The narrator asked the man whether the girl had a long or a short hair. The fellow traveler said that he had not noticed her hair but he had noticed her beautiful eyes. Though her eyes were beautiful, they were of no use to her. He added that she was completely blind. He asked the narrator if he had not noticed it. The story ends with an ironical twist which makes it very appealing and effective. Like O. Henry, Ruskin Bond has employed the technique of abrupt and surprising ending. The narrator feels that he tried to deceive the girl and the fellow traveler but in fact it was he who was deceived in the end.

The Eyes Are Not Here is an ideal short story that can be finished in a short single sitting. The story contains only three characters, the narrator, the girl and the new passenger. The setting is a train compartment with no other passengers except the narrator, the girl and the new passenger who enters after the girl gets down at Saharanpur. The time span of the story is a few hours of travelling between Rohana and Saharanpur though the narrator was travelling all the way to Dehra. It was the month of October when Mussoorie looked enchantingly beautiful.

Ruskin Bond’s art of storytelling is simple and poetic. His style of narration is lucid and appealing with profound insight into human psychology, particularly the thought processes of the blind people. Ruskin Bond very aptly describes the narrator’s sharp sense of hearing and smell. The blind people’s senses of hearing, smell, taste and touch are far more powerful than the people with a normal eye-sight.

The plot of the story is well-knit without any frills. The language and writing style of Ruskin Bond is quite precise and compact. The description of beautiful Mussoorie in October is vivid and picturesque. Bond uses the word ‘delicious’ for the warmth of the sun in October creating sensuous appeal. The story ends strikingly with ironical twist. The narrator’s attempt to hide his blindness is humorous but it ends ironically at the end of the story. Ruskin Bond does not pity the blind but highlights their profound curiosity and sensitivity towards life and nature.

The story is about limited human perception even if a person has eyes or not. Eyes can see things but what one sees is not whole. Human perception or understanding is often limited by assumptions. The narrator in the story hides his blindness but realizes at the end that the girl was also blind. The girl proves herself more intelligent and smarter than the narrator. The narrator tried to deceive the girl by pretending that he was not blind but at the end, he felt that not only the girl but he too was deceived. It is like “hunter was hunted”.

3.7 TONE OF THE STORY

Tone is the opinion about characters and events conveyed by the narrator. When the narrative is first person and participant in the story, tone and mood can overlap. Mood is an emotional quality of the story which is related to setting and also influenced by the narrator's psychological states.

The tone of the narrator in *The Eyes Are Not Here* is observational. The narrator plays the game of hiding his blindness as pastime. Though the tone strives to be objective, it slips into subjective sometimes. Ruskin Bond's story is more focused on narrator's efforts to prevent his fellow passengers from discovering his blindness.

3.8 THEMES OF THE STORY

There are several themes, in the short story *The Eyes Are Not Here* by Ruskin Bond. The major theme is blindness which the writer sees from a different angle. Blindness is generally taken as a disability but it is a fact that those with normal eyesight take things for granted. They do not see many things as their eyes take in everything. On the other hand those who are blind take in only essentials through their other senses such as touch, hearing, smell and taste. Their perception is more sensitive and profound.

This story by Ruskin Bond is quite brief but also quite intriguing and complex. It deals mainly with the theme of human perception. In this story, there are three characters that prove to be imperceptive in various ways. Human perception is usually limited by assumptions. As J. Krishnamurti used to say, our seeing is conditioned and limited by our assumptions thinking or conditioning. When we look at a rose, we forget to see its real beauty but compare it with our previous experience of seeing the rose.

The story begins with a blind man sitting in a compartment of the train which is heading towards Dehra. At Rohana, a girl enters the compartment. She does not notice that her companion was blind. The blind man and the girl converse pleasantly while the man tries to hide his blindness. At Saharanpur, the girl gets off the train and another male passenger enters the compartment who tells the blind man that the girl who just left the compartment was blind. The male passenger too fails to see that his fellow passenger was blind. Thus the game of hiding goes on but the blind man realizes that he tried to deceive the girl but in fact, he too was deceived. The eyes were neither here nor there.

Ruskin Bond suggests that we take our assumptions as reality and they influence our perceptions turning them into illusions. The joke of the narrator about people with eyes turns into a joke about the narrator too. At the end, we all learn a very important lesson that our assumptions mar the perception of the reality whether we are blind or people with normal eyes. Both the real blind and the people with normal vision turn in to 'blind' people as they fail to see reality an account of false assumptions. The eyes are the means to see but the mind and thoughts determine how we "see" things around us.

3.9 STYLE AND DICTION OF THE STORY

Ruskin Bond's writing style reflected his lonely childhood and love for nature. Many of his stories are based on his personal experience of Dehradun and Mussoorie where he grew up and lived for major part of his life. His

language is lucid, simple and engaging. His sentences are well formed, descriptive and often poetic. Sharing his secrets of a writer's life, Ruskin Bond gives a few useful tips for growing writers. He says that writing is a craft that requires discipline and rigour. One must write regularly to make one's conscience clear.

Ruskin Bond further adds that "Solitude is something you seek as a writer." As a writer he has kept away from modern technology like laptops, cell-phones etc. He also shuns the company of people at various times. Instead, he chooses to spend his time having regular siestas that beget dreams and push his imagination into creativity. He finds joy in different aspects of nature and they have become the part of his writing.

Ruskin Bond says that a writer must be an avid reader of good literature and study the style of great writers. For him, writing is therapeutic that heals the wounds of difficult and lonely childhood. "The Eyes Are Not Here" reflects Ruskin Bond's views on writing and his love for language.

Ruskin Bond is gifted with exceptional power of minute observation and curiosity. For him, characters play an important role in shaping the plot structure of the stories. His stories are nostalgic, vivid and full of poetic imagination.

3.10 TITLE OF THE STORY

The story *The Eyes Are Not Here* has two other titles: *The Girl on the Train* and *The Eyes Have It*. At the beginning of the story, we learn that the man in the compartment of the train is blind. He can only distinguish between light and darkness. It is true that "the eyes are not here". The girl who enters the compartment is also blind. When she enters, the narrator takes her as a girl with normal eyesight. The narrator also tries to hide his blindness from the girl who takes him as a man with normal eyes. The true realization takes place only when the next passenger enters and apologizes for not being as attractive as the girl who had just got off the train at Sahranpur. The narrator asks him about the girl's hair (whether it was long or short) the new passenger replies that he had not noticed her hair but he had seen her beautiful eyes which were of no use to her because she was blind.

So, the passenger with good eyesight fails to see what is right in front of him. He fails to notice that the man in the compartment was also blind. The title of the story shows that the eyes of the girl and the man "are not here" because both are blind. The irony of the story is that even people who can see are often blind.

Check Your Progress: 1

3.11 ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IN BRIEF.

- (i) What are the other titles of the short story *The Eyes Are Not Here* by Ruskin Bond?

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- (ii) Who are the three main characters in the story?
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- (iii) How did the narrator pretend to hide his blindness?
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- (iv) Describe the conversation between the narrator and the girl?
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- (v) What did the narrator remark about the girl's face? What was her reaction?
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- (vi) What did the narrator want to know about the girl's hair?
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- (vii) What is the ironical twist at the end of the story?
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- (viii) What did the new male passenger say about the girl's eyes?
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- (ix) Discuss briefly the author's remark about people with eyes and without eyes ?
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Check Your Progress: 2

3.12 CHOOSE THE CORRECT OPTION FROM GIVEN BELOW.

- The Eyes Are Not Here* is written by _____.
 (a) John Ruskin (b) Ruskin Bond
 (c) O. Henry (d) Somerset Maugham
- The narrator was a _____ man.
 (a) deaf (b) lame
 (c) blind (d) lumb
- The girl entered the compartment at _____.
 (a) Saharanpur (b) Dehra
 (c) Meerut (d) Rohana
- The blind narrator was travelling to _____.
 (a) Dehra (b) Haridwar
 (c) Ronana (d) Delhi

5. The girl was travelling to _____
(a) Rohana (b) Saharanpur
(c) Haridwar (d) Rishikesh
6. The girl said that she loved hills during the month of _____
(a) April (b) May
(c) October (d) December
7. The girl's _____ was to come to receive her.
(a) uncle (b) aunt
(c) brother (d) father
8. The narrator said that the girl had _____ face.
(a) an interesting (b) an attractive
(c) a pretty (d) a lovely
9. The narrator remarks that people with normal eyesight fail _____
(a) to see everything (b) to hear everything
(c) to understand everything
(d) to see what is right in front of them
10. The girl probably thought that the narrator was
(a) a romantic man (b) a foolish man
(c) a talkative man (d) a romantic fool
11. The narrator was curious to know about _____
(a) the girl's face (b) the girl's appearance
(c) the girl's clothes (d) the girl's hair
12. The narrator compares the voice of the girl with
(a) the ringing of the bell (b) the music
(c) the sparkle of the mountain stream
(d) the murmur of the flowing river
13. After the girl got off the train, a new passenger who entered was
(a) a beautiful girl (b) a blind girl
(c) a new man (d) a new woman
14. The new passenger told the narrator that
(a) the girl had a nice long hair
(b) the girl had a short hair
(c) the girl had a plaited hair
(d) the girl was blind
15. Another title of the story *The Eyes Are Not Here* is _____
(a) *The Girl Traveller* (b) *The Eyes Are Everywhere*
(c) *The Eyes Have It* (d) *The Eyes Are Not here*

3.13 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have studied a very appealing story by Ruskin Bond. This short story is an example of an ideal story that contains only three characters,

short span of time, compact plot and universal theme of limited human perception. It ends with an ironical twist which is one of the important characteristics of a good short story. Though the story has been written in a simple lucid, style, it has a complex plot that ends in a striking manner.

3.14 BOOKS SUGGESTED

Bond, Ruskin. *Scenes from a Writer's Life*, Penguin Random House India, 2010. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ruskin_Bond

Pant, Neha. "At 81, Ruskin Bond's tryst with his tireless pen continues" <https://www.hindustantimes.com/books/at-81-ruskin-bond-s-tryst-with-his-tireless-pen-continues/story-6st8jXIEz5EWadwoBGfWNP.html>

Answers

Check Your Progress: 2

- 1.(b) 2.(c) 3.(d) 4.(a) 5.(b) 6.(c) 7.(b) 8.(a) 9.(d) 10.(d) 11.(d)
12.(c) 13.(c) 14.(d) 15.(c)