

## Beastie as Bestie in Ruskin Bond's *Animal Stories*

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### Abstract

Bond's narration indicates his attitude of love and understanding towards other creatures. His treatment of animals and birds is so much interesting that it keeps joining the reader with the bent of mind of the author. It seems that he has portrayed the real picture of an animal before the readers. For most animal species, keeping in touch with other animals of their species is often essential for their survival. Animals communicate with one another for a variety of reasons including hunting for food, warning others of approaching danger and attracting a mate. Animal communication can be easily identified around the world and noises such as whistles, chirps, bellows, screams, howls, grunts and squeaks are common throughout the entire habitat.

**Keywords:** Animals, birds, nature, love, creatures.

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In *Animal Stories*, Bisnu and his pet dog Sheroo dash into the shallow stream early in the morning. They feel fresh after every plunge and slowly with the current; they swim across to a small inlet which formed a fairly deep pool. This is obvious in the lines, "He gazed for a few moments at the goose pimples rising on his flesh, and then dashed into the shallow stream.... Sheroo hated cold water at this early hour. Now he contented himself with sitting on a smooth rock and gazing placidly at the slim brown boy splashing about in the clear water..." (4).

In "Uncle Ken's Rumble in the Jungle", Uncle Ken is fascinated when he sees a number of spotted deer and pheasants. On a particular evening, he sat on the veranda of the rest house in the forest and listened to the trumpeting of elephants and the chanting of hundreds of frogs. When Uncle Ken sang one of his favourite songs, instead of receiving an answering love call he was answered by more strident jackal calls, not one but several. Early next morning, he renewed his efforts to track down the red jungle fowl but it remained elusive. Returning to the rest house weary, Uncle Ken exclaimed: "There it is- a red jungle fowl" (AS 159). But it turned out to be the caretaker's cock bird, a beautiful one all red and gold, but not the jungle variety.

A squirrel acquaints Bond's home, when the former's abode in the oak tree gets waterlogged. This squirrel is bold enough to climb on the dining table looking for tidbits which he always finds because Bond leaves them there deliberately. Bond happily says, "I am not looking for pets, these are simply guests" (AS 172). The writer is startled to see an emerald-green praying mantis sitting on his writing pad. When he gives the insect a prod, he moves off in