

Class 10 - Footprints without Feet

Chapter 2 - The Thief's Story

By- Ruskin Bond

Introduction

A young boy makes friends with Anil. Anil trusts him completely and employs him. Does the boy betray his trust?

The story is about a 15-year-old thief who changes his name every month to stay ahead of the police and old employers. This time he kept his name Hari Singh. The other person in the story is a 25 year old writer named Anil. The thief meets Anil and asks him if he can work for him. The story unfolds on how the thief betrays Anil by committing a theft but retracts later on.

About the Author

Ruskin Bond (born 19 May 1934) is an Indian author of British descent. He lives with his adopted family in Landour, Mussoorie, India. The Indian Council for Child Education has recognised his role in the growth of children's literature in India. He was awarded the Sahitya Academy Award in 1992 for *Our Trees Still Grow in Dehra*, his novel in English. He was awarded the Padma Shri in 1999 and the Padma Bhushan in 2014.

Summary:

Anil was 25 years old writer. He was living his life very carelessly. He was struggling to write for earning the money to run his life. One day Anil was watching the wrestling match. He meets Hari. Hari used his old formula to flatter the person. Anil impressed and promised him that he would teach him how to write, add numbers and how to cook tasty food. Now both were living together happily.

One day Hari saw that Anil had brought a bundle of notes. He saw him keep them under the mattress. As Hari saw the bundle of notes, so his evil spirit aroused in his mind. He decided to rob Anil that night. After taking dinner Anil slept calmly. Hari crept to the bed and slipped his hand under the mattress. He got the notes and ran away from there. He left for the railway station to board a train to Lucknow. But, he missed it. He wandered through the bazaars. It was raining and Hari Singh was completely wet.

There was a conflict in his mind. He did not want to betray the faith of Anil. Moreover, Anil was teaching him how to write and add numbers that could transform his life. So he left the railway station. He came to the field and sat on the bench. Just then heavy rain was going on. A chill wind was blowing. He felt guiltier as he had cheated an innocent person. His shirt and pyjamas wedged to his body because it was wet due to the rain.

Hari Singh had a change of heart. He decided to return to Anil and keep the money under the pillow. He reached the room and placed the money back. The next morning, he woke up a bit late and Anil had already made his tea. Anil offered Hari Singh Rs. 50 saying he had earned it. He told him he would now be paid regularly. Hari kept the note in his hand. He realized that the note was still wet from the rain last night. Hari got to know that Anil had come to know about his misdeed but there was no sadness, anger or guilt in his mind.

Conclusion of The Thief's Story

The moral of the story is the human values and relations are important in life and such values can change a person too.
