

CHAPTER III

The Inheritance of Loss : An Ecocritical Evaluation

‘All day, the colors had been those of dusk, mist moving like a water creature across the great flanks of mountains possessed of ocean shadows and depths. Briefly visible above the vapour, Kanchenjunga was a far peak whittled out of ice, gathering the last of light, a plume of snow blown high by the storms at its moment.’[Desai,1]

The novel *‘The Inheritance of Loss’* begins with this beautiful description of Kanchenjunga. Kiran Desai pictures various natural scenes and landscapes of Himalayan mountains especially Kanchenjunga. This peak provides a very suitable background to this novel. Most of characters wanders and lives in the lap of Himalaya Mountain. According to mood and theme of novel this nature provides favourable background atmosphere. Novel begins with description of mist and mountains. Mist is moving like a water creature across great flanks of mountains. Kanchenjunga is a peak looking as if whittled out of ice. Sai is observing movements of mist.

Sai observes Kanchenjunga, its wizard phosphorescence with a shiver. Judge the grandfather of Sai sits at the far corner with his chessboard, playing against himself. There is Mutt, the dog snoring gently in her sleep. Cook is trying to light the damp wood in kitchen.

There is misty atmosphere and forest is old and thick. The bamboo thickets which rose thirty feet were personified as gloomy. The trees were personified as moss-slung giants, bunioned and misshapen, tentacle with the roots of orchids. Taking advantage of thick mist and dense forest Gorkha boys intruded in house of judge Jemubhai. They took away his guns.

Kalimpong ecologically rich, situated in northeastern Himalayas. Indian Nepalese were fighting for their own country. It was important Juncture where India blurred into Bhutan and Sikkim. Beauty of Kalimpong and its environmental richness not only attracted but create hunger to possess this land in Chinese. Here mist was working like a dragon dissolving, undoing and drawing borders. Beautiful mountains, thick forest of north eastern Himalaya is great gift of India. But it has got curse of greedy neighbour. Due to mist one hardly can perceive clear vision of borders.

Gorkhs were fighting for Gorkhland where they can manage their own affairs. When police was informed about robbery in judge's house they came for investigation. They carefully investigated house of judge and hut of cook. There they came across a hole of snake. According to cook two snakes mia bibi lives there. Cook has sympathy for creature like snake though they are poisonous. He worshipped cobra of clay. There was permanent hole only for snakes. It was left for them. Cook was happy and comfortable in his hut which was near hole of snake.

When Sai arrived at Cho Oyu at Kalimpong, nature suggested she is not going to get much happiness in Cho Oyu. It is suggested by Kanchenjunga which glowed macabre, trees stretched away on either side trunks pale, leaves black.

Cook believes that snake never bit his son when he used to go to cut the grass in childhood for cow. It is due to his good nature even dogs also never bit him. When he was small he used to pick mice by tail, lift frogs by neck. Here cook has love and sympathy for animal.

Sai suffered a lot of perversities of the convent. Her father was space pilot. She spent four years of learning with humiliation, fear. After death of her parents she returned at Cho Oyu. She travelled from Dehradun to Delhi, Delhi to Siliguri. She watched a panorama of village life where India looked old. Sai was accompanied by a visiting nun. They saw women walked by with firewood

on their heads, too poor for blouses under their saris. There was wetter climate, a rusty green landscape and paddy fields. There was Teesta river leaping and flowing between white banks of sand.

‘By the riverbank, wild water racing by, the late evening sun in polka dots through the trees, they parted. To the east was Kalimpong, barely managing to stay on the saddle between the Deolo and the Ringkingpong hills. To the west was Darjeeling, skidding down the Singalila mountain. The nun tried to offer a final counsel, but her voice was drowned out by the river roar.’ [Desai, 31]

Sai felt new, changed fresh atmosphere. From strict and tense atmosphere she entered into free and open atmosphere. They were in six thousand feet up into tea growing country. They came there by jeep. Now Sai took car to Cho Oyu. While coming through car it tilted back its nose pointed to the sky the slightest wrong more would have made them tumble into deep valley. Nature was very beautiful but at the same time it was dangerous where anything can be happened at any time. Such was horrible and huge structure of nature where she arrived. At one side high mountains of Himalaya and at another side there were deep green valleys and there was only forest making sss tseu ts ts se uuu sounds.

Grandfather of Sai is referred as lizard. Sai arrived at Cho Oyu. To welcome her cook had modeled the mashed potatoes into a motorcar using tomato slice as wheels. Sai admired dog as it was looking like film star. It is to be noted that attitude of human being [judge] is compared with creatures [lizard] and dog is compared with star. In this context Steve Bakers thoughts can be mentioned.

‘much of our understanding of human identity and our thinking about living animals reflects-and may even be the rather direct result of-the diverse uses to which the concept of the animals is put in popular culture, regardless of how bizarre or banal some of those uses may seem....Culture shapes our reading of animals just as much as animals In cold night dog was wrapped in a shawl of

Angora rabbit wool. Judge loves his dog very much. He used to look after him like a human being. Kiran Desai describes judge as lizard man, a hunch backed cook- pannalal, Sai as lush-lashed woman, Mutt as a long tailed wolf dog.

Sai entered in enormous space where there was mountains covered with mist, swollen forest, sounds of hollow-knuckled knocking of bamboo, the sound of jhora that ran deep in the décolleté of the mountain. She had a fearful feeling of having entered in a space so big. In this climate, she would learn, untreated wood could be chewed up in a season.

Since ages human being is using earth fire water air for fulfillment of needs. Russia used dog named Laika in sputnik II in 1961 a chimp named Ham had made Journey. To make experiment and for fulfillment of curiosity man always used animals.

When Sai arrives on Cho Oyu judge remembers his journey to England and from England to India. After one month of marriage he left India for England. His father gave him courage while going in foreign country and he advised him to throw coconut for his well being. It was supposed to be good omen.

With little knowledge about globe he started his journey. He had first learned that the ocean traveled around a globe, he had felt strengthened by this fact but when he stood on the confetti-strewn deck of the ship he felt his knowledge weaken him. Small waves subsided against the ship in a parsimonious soda water fizz. In his cabin bunk at night Jemubhai remembered his bride. It is said that sea made indecent licking sounds about the ship's edge. Indecent mood of Jemubhai is attributed to sea. Jemubhai was thinking how he had half undressed and hurriedly re-dressed his wife. This indecency is in his mind which suggests his lusty desire was remained unfulfilled. He glimpsed expression of his wife. In memory of the closeness of female flesh, his penis reached up in the dark and waved about. It is compared with a simple blind creature.

Jemubhai did not get enough food like India. Change in country changed his mood, habit, nature. He always remains lost in his study because it was the only skill he could carry from one country to another. He failed (to mix in people) to make a courageous gesture outward at a crucial moment. He became pusillanimous and lonely. He lived always in solitude. The solitude became a habit, the habit became the man and it crushed him into a shadow. For entire days nobody spoke to him at all, his throat jammed with words unuttered, his heart and mind turned into blunt aching things. He forgot how to laugh, called barely manage to lift his lip in a smile, and if he ever did he held his hand over mouth because he couldn't bear anyone to see his gums, his teeth. There was one sort of inferiority complex. He began to wash obsessively. He was concerned he would be accused of smelling. He became dry, practical, stern in nature. He could not enjoy beauty of the English countryside, could not appreciate beauty of carved colleges and churches painted with gold leaf and angels, didn't hear the choir boys with the voices of girls, and didn't see the green river trembling with replications of the gardens that segued one into the other or the swans that sailed butterflyed to their reflections. River is described as trembling. This trembling is human quality which is attributed to river.

Some Pet animals and birds are described such as Mutt dog of Jemubhai, Mustafa, cat of Lola and Noni. All these animals are used for entertainment and to fulfill hobby and likes. There are cows which booms like foghorns through mist. There is rooster of uncle Potty from where kookar Raja sent big kukrookoo up like a flag, sounding both silly and loud as if calling everyone to circus.

Sai was fond of reading National Geographic which includes various beautiful pictures of nature as a transparent butterfly, snail in the sea, old Japanese house slumbering in the snow they affected her so much. She studied the photographs taken via satellite of a storm blowing a real cloud off the sun's surface. She remembered her parents, her father's hope of space travel. She felt

a terrible desire for the father she did not know, and imagined that she, too, must surely have within her the same urge for something beyond the ordinary.

Sai and cook trudged the long path that travelled thin and black as a rat snake up and down and hills. Uncle Potty was their nearest neighbour who had rabbit-red eyes. There was Noni [Nonita], who lived with her sister Lola [Lalita] in a rose-covered cottage named Mon Ami. After death of Lola's husband Noni moved with her sister. They lived on pension of Lalita's husband. So in order to make her contribution to household finances Noni accepted the judge's request that she tutor Sai. But her knowledge of mathematics was poor so judge appointed Gyan. It is to be noted that sisters Noni and Lola considered Sai as orphan child of India's failed romance with Soviets. They criticize Russian who thought that India is a prosperous country. They had never seen anything like markets of India. They also show disbelief in their watchman Budhoo who was Nepalian who could not be trusted.

Due to cloudy atmosphere in Kanchenjunga there was not clear broadcast of radio television. There was messy weather when moths occupied trees. Mountains used to shimmer in pure 24k and everyday powdery mist burn off in the sun.

Cook and judge used to go for tour. Judge used to ride on horse because there were no good roads and hardly any bridges spanned the rivers. When there were jungly areas and deeper swifter currents he used to ride on elephant. In Kalimpong there was very hot summer. All over the mountainside the heat reduced the townspeople to a stupor. Tin roofs sizzled, dozens of snakes lay roasting on the stones, and flowers bloomed as plushly and perfectly as on a summer outfit.

In garden of Lola they grew the English broccoli. There were caterpillars off the English broccoli. Lola picked caterpillars which were mottled green and white with fake blue eyes, ridiculous fat feet, a tail and an elephant nose. She studied it closely and described it as magnificent creature.

She threw it to a waiting bird that pecked and a green stuffing squiggled out of the caterpillar like toothpaste from a punctured tube.

Sai was fond of reading books especially National Geographic in which she saw pictures of the chocolary Amazon of stark Patagonia, a transparent butterfly snail in the sea. These pictures created in her strong will to travel and to see beautiful nature. She also studied the photographs taken via satellite of a storm blowing a red cloud off the sun's surface.

Judge was accustomed to living lonely. Now in company of Sai he felt uncomfortable. He could not communicate frankly with anybody. He could not establish good, hearty relationship with Sai not even with fellows in Cambridge. When he returned in India he felt difference between weather of England and weather of India. Heat of summer in India reminded him nationality.

Noni left job of tutor because she was not good at physics and mathematics. Gyan is appointed to tutor Sai. He was Nepali. Cook remarked it is so strange that tutor Gyan is Nepali because he thinks that coastal people are more intelligent than inland people. Ocean or land creates deep impact on physic, nature and on total body of human being. According to cook there is difference in body and talent of people who live in mountain area and inland or coastal people who eat fish. Bengalis, Malayalis, Tamils are cleverer. Inland people they eat too much grain and it slows digestion especially millet – forms a big heavy ball. The blood goes to the stomach and not to the head. Nepalis make good soldiers, coolies but they are not so bright at their studies.

Nature grows and gives with free hand to human being without any expectations. Man wants pure water, pure air and everything clean and fresh. In Kalimpong plum tree (outside clinic,) was watered with rotted blood from path lab. It produced so many flowers. Mountains covered with snow were tokens of bounty and beauty of nature. People who live in the lap of this nature were dependent upon natural resources available in the region. In the market one can see herbs, vegetables kept for sale. For e.g. there were muddy

mushrooms covered with brackish leaves or greenery, ganglions of roots, stalls of yak hair. Untidy and rough as the hair of demons and sacks of miniature dried shrimp with oversized whiskers. There were smuggled foreign goods from Nepal. Smuggling was possible because natural structure of region make foreigners to intrude and capture Indian market. It is also told that wool caravans were coming through, chaperoned by Tibetan muleteers in furry boots. Yaks were carrying over two thousand of salt.

Though Biju was working in America he always remembered his village where he lived with his grandmother. The village was buried in silver grasses that were taller than a man and made a sound shuu, shuuuu, shu, shuuu, as the wind turned them this way and that. He remembered dry gully through the grasses there was a tributary of Jamuna. Men travelled downstream on inflated buffalo skins, the creatures' very dead legs, all four, sticking straight up as they sailed along. There river scalloped shallow over the stones. Fishing eagles hovered above the water. They changed their horizontal glide within a single moment, plunged, rose sometimes with thrashing muscle of silver. A hermit also lived on this bank, positioned like a stork. On diwali the holy men lit lamps and put them in the branches of the peepul tree and sent them down the river on rafts with marigolds. Kiran Desai here throws light on how culture of human being interferes in the nature and creates serious impact on it. It was beautiful sight of lights bobbing in dark. Biju is lost in memories of village. When he visited his father in Kalimpong they used to sit outside of home in evenings and his father had reminisced

How peaceful our village is. How good the roti tastes there it is because the atta is ground by hand, not by machine... and because it is made on *choolah*, which is better than anything cooked on a gas or a kerosene stove... Fresh roti, fresh butter, fresh milk still warm from buffalo... [Desai,103].

This underlines importance of natural life of village where everything is fresh and original. Biju understood importance and delight of village life when

he got bad experience in America. Ecological wealth of birds like bats, eagles, butterflies, animals like pets buffaloes, horses, elephants, donkeys, snakes, caterpillar, gives novel crucial importance from ecological perspective. .

Characters face natural disasters like landslides, storm, thick fog, extreme cold, aqueous season. To add this there were man-made disasters like morchas, demonstrations, strikes, rasta roko.

When Lola read news of approaching of storm clouds she became very happy. When storm approached anxious sand came from banana trees as they began to flap their great ears for they were always the first to sound alarm. The masts of bamboo were flung together and rang with sound of an ancient martial art. Kiran Desai has beautifully personified nature. She has stick human qualities to nature. Somebody welcomed it and somebody resisted it by taking precautions. Cook clamped everything, shut doors and windows, but then Sai opened the door just as he was sifting the flour to get rid of the weevils and up the flour gusted and covered them both. The sky gaped lit by flame, blue fire ensnared the pine tree that sizzled to an instant death leaving a charcoal stump, a singed smell, a crosshatch of branches over the lawn. An unending rain broke on them and mutt turned into a primitive life form an amoebic creature, slithering about the floor. There were thunder and blast upon the tin roof. This aqueous season was four to five month. It created various leaking and dripping in house.

‘Condensation fogged the glass of clocks and clothes hanging to dry in the attic remained wet for a week.’[Desai 106]

People who lived in that part of Kalimpong were helpless in front of mighty nature.

‘A white scurf sifted down from the beams, a fungus spun a shaggy age over everything. Bits of color, though, defined this muffled scene: insects flew in carnival gear; breed in a day turned green as grass.’[Desai,106]

Sai found a bright pink jelly scalloping the layers of dreary cotton clothes and pages of books bruised with flamboyant disease. This season made Sai calm and cheerful. She sat on the veranda, riding the moods of season. She enjoyed solitariness as only this she got peaceful life because communication with anyone was nearly impossible. Nobody could visit her for the jhora had overflowed its bank and carried the bridge downstream. Gorkha's were expressing their discontent through strikes and procession but strike and raasta roko were postponed because of the bad weather because of excessive rain streets had flowed. Even main road into Kalimpong from Teesta bazaar had slipped off the incline and lay in pieces down in the gorge below. Because of bad weather everybody was imprisoned in their house. They could not do outdoor movement. Cook warned Gyan not to go as it was beginning to hail. In his village a man stuck his head out of door in a hailstorm a big goli fell on him and he died. Same weather created romantic mood of Gyan.

All seasons with its vivid colours, changes and its various effects on human being are pictured very beautifully by Kiran Desai. All minute creatures as beetles which flew by in many colours in rainy seasons are described. The air was spiked with pinpricks of moisture that made it feel as if it were raining indoors as well. Nature is personified here,

‘Rain and wind whooshed and banged. Tree heaved and sighed.’[Desai120]

Due to aqueous season even the letter in post office was also wet. It was humanly impossible to keep them dry. They got wet while transferring them from van to office. Roads remain closed for so many days. There were frequent landslides. Post could not come. Lola could not contact pixie to wish her happy holiday because STD booth was not working. Satellite in the sky has fallen down. There was no way to telephone, no way for letters to get through. It was difficult to communicate with anybody on distance. Harmful tiny creatures became active. Season gave birth and there grew insects, mosquitoes, ants,

termites, millipedes centipedes, spiders, woodworms, beetles in thousand numbers.

Sai fell in love with Gyan. She was sixteen and Gyan was twenty. There were agitations and morchas by Gorkhas who supposed themselves as constitutionally tortured. They were demanding their separate Gorkhaland. It was described as gathering insurgency. Noni Lola were discussing about Gorkha's agitations. According to Lola those Neps will be outsiders now. They have been plotting. State making is biggest mistake that Nehru made. It started with Sikkim. Neps played such a dirty trick and began to get grand ideas now they think they can do same thing again. While discussing on the topic Mustafa climbed onto Sai's lap and twirled on her knees in a trance, eyes closed, a mystic knowing neither one religion nor another, neither one country nor another, just warm feeling. Her innocent relaxation is contrasted with avariciousness of human being for separate state. Every creature of nature is shown to be peaceful and happy in just warm feeling. This small scene tells much about nature and one who lives in its lap. Human being is fighting for possession of land but innocent animals doesn't know any ownership or border. They just know language of love and affection. Human being has close relationship with nature. It remains firm on its place only selfishness of human being makes them to fight for its possession. They did not care for it or love it or preserve it. But whenever climate becomes unfavorable they become helpless and they have to surrender.

It is told that India had swallowed the jewel- coloured kingdom whose blue hills Nepalis could see in the distance, where the wonderful oranges came from and the Black cat rum was smuggled to them by Major Aloo. In front of huge Kanchenjunga monasteries dangled like spiders, the country seemed unreal which is full of fairy tales.

Neps were thrown out of Assam and then Meghalaya and then King of Bhutan. Several generations of Neps had lived here now they are

demanding separate state. They have encouraged by the Sikhs and their Khalistan by ULFA, NEFA, PAA. There was colonial subjugation by British who looked after Pakistan but forgetting India. Lola mentions it as apartheid genocide. Darjeeling and Kalimpong never belonged to Nepali. In fact Darjeeling was annexed from Sikkim and Kalimpong from Bhutan. Noni blamed British who were supposed to be very unskilled at drawing borders. According to Mrs. Sen Pakistan is first heart attack to our country that has never been healed. Neps multiply like Muslim but Lepchas are not multiplying they are disappearing who has first right to this land. Kiran Desai has revised history and its serious impact on land and natives of that land.

Mrs. Sen comments on Muslims and Koran. Its teachings were beyond human capability. Lola says Muslims were already here but the Nepalis have come from another country and they took over.

Biju was working in America as a cook in restaurant where cow's beef was being eaten. His fellow dishwasher Achootan who thought that country [America] was better than England because Englishmen shouted at them openly and ordered to go back to where they came from. He used to respond "your father came to my country and took my bread and now I have come to your country to get my bread back." [Desai, 135]. It hurt Biju that there people was eating cow's beef but business was business. He was thinking one should not give up one's religion. One has to live according to something. There was steak meat charred on the grill. That type of meat ate dog in India. Biju could not continue to job where he has to cook beef of cow.

Judge took good care of Mutt who was very much attached with him. He prepared a winter coat. Rainy season was over. It was winter arriving. In Kalimpong there was no snow but it turned just dull, all around town were brindled white. In the morning there was frost in runnels, frost on the crest, and frost in the crotch of the hills. This frosty season affected everything. There were cracks and holes in Cho Oyu and sterile smell of winter. The bathroom

taps and switches threw off socks, sweaters and shawls bristled with aroused fibers, shedding lighting. Sai's skin became like squamous pattern of drought. When she took off her clothes dry skin fell like salt from salt cellar. Her hair rose in crackling radio antennae above her skull. When she smiled, her lips spilt and spilled blood. It was all impact of weather on the life and living of human being.

Days of fifties and sixties has been described by Lola through her past memories. In those days they used to travel on horseback, for there were hardly any roads, carrying sacks of peas for ponies maps, hip flasks. Their journey to Sikkim or Bhutan was quite difficult. In the rainy season leeches falled from trees on to them. They used to wash it in saltwater to keep them off, salt their shoes & socks even hair. But storms washed the salt off and they had to stop to salt again. At that time forest was fierce and enormous. On the tops of mountains, monasteries limpet to the sides of rock surrounded by chortens and prayer flags. Its white facades were glowing in the light of the sunset. The mountains were rugged like lines of indigo. Buddhism was ancient there more ancient than it was anywhere else. It is told that when there was rainbow in sky it used to connect Kanchenjunga to the crest of hill. It took two week of rough trekking to get to Thimpu. On the way there was thick Jungle. In that jungle there were shiplike fortresses called dzongs built without a single nail which were completely self- contained with their own armies. They used to stay there. Father Booty told his memories of baths in dzongs which were made of hollowed-out of tree trunks, a carved sloth underneath for heated rocks to keep the water steaming, and as you soaked servants came in and out to replace the hot stones and gave a scrub. If they had to camp they used to dig a pit by the river, fill it with water, lower hot stones into it. Thus one gets splashed about with all the Himalayan snows around and forests of rhodendendrons. They used all natural resources to fulfill their needs. Since ages man is totally dependent on nature. They used available natural wealth and exploited it.

There was a museum in Darjeeling. Sai and Gyan visited it where they saw socks of Tenzing and his other things. According to Gyan Tenzing was the real hero. It is to be noted that Sai had wondered should human conquer the mountain or should they wish for the mountain to possess them? Sherpas went up and down ten times, fifteen times in some cases. But they never expected glory, claim of ownership and there were those who said it was sacred and shouldn't be sullied at all. Tenzing and Sherpas were brave, courageous, strong, broad minded. They never think of possessing conquered land. But now Gorkhas were fighting for their separate Gorkhaland. Enchanting beauty of nature and landscapes satisfied and soothed mind of these people but its usefulness created greed in countries around mountain to possess it. Not only natives but foreigners also disturbed nature and destroyed beauty.

Gyan remembered stirring stories when citizens had risen up their millions and demanded that the British leave. Gorkha did agitations for their Gorkhaland. Their contribution in freedom struggle was remarkable but they were always neglected by Indian government. There were labourers on tea plantations, coolies, soldiers. They were not allowed to become doctors and government workers, owners of tea plantations. They fought in world war, wars with Pakistan but they were never rewarded. In their own country for which they fought they were being treated like slaves. It is to be noted that through this novel reality has been highlighted. Forests were being cleared by selfish people. Everyday the lorries leave bearing away their forests. It was sold by foreigners to fill the pockets of foreigners. Everyday stones from riverbed of Teesta are carried to build houses and cities. Thus from all side natural resources were being looted by local corrupt politicians. Nature was being exploited from all sides. Gorkhas were laborers working barefoot in all weather thin as sticks, and they sit fat in manager's houses with their fat wives, with their fat bank accounts and their fat children going abroad. Gyan took active participation in

morchas and regretted for having done tea parties with Sai and tutoring her for small amount of money. There started small clashes between Gyan and Sai.

Jemubhai when returned from England became very cruel and stern. He used to beat his wife mercilessly and never allowed free atmosphere. She was living continually under his pressure and always became victim of his wrath. Nimi , wife of Jemumbhai had spent nineteen years within the confines of her father's home after marriage also she could not think of walking through gate. One day she climbed up to flat roof to watch Jamuna flowing through a scene tenderly cocooned in dust. She thought about free flowing river which do not have any limitations or boundaries. Her longing for outdoor life was frustrated by judge. Cows were on their homes bells were ringing in the temple. She saw birds testing first one tree as a roost for the night making noise like women in a sari shop. The image of river, bird, cow underlines Nimi's suppressed feelings and pressure. Only these nature scenes provided her pleasure and relaxation from terror of judge.

To describe habits and attitudes Kiran Desai has compared attitudes of human being with birds, animals and habits of birds with human being.

Father Booty, Uncle potty, Lola, Noni and Sai went to Darjeeling Gymkhana to exchange their library books by the jeep of Father Booty. In the back of jeep there were umbrellas, books, ladies, and several wheels of cheese for Father Booty to deliver to the Windamere hotel and Lorento Convent. It was month of march. There were blocks to bring economic activity to a standstill and to prevent the trees of the hills, the boulders of river valleys, from leaving for the plains. Every month there was some events by Gorkhas such as strike, morchas, roadblocks, agitations. There was spring. Every flower, every creature was preening, flinging forth its pheromones. The garden was abuzz with fecundity. Huge spread open lilies were sticky with spilling anthers, insects chased each other madly through the sky, zip zip, and amorous butterflies,

cucumber green, tumbled past the jeep windows into the deep marine valleys : the delicacy of love and courtliness apparent even between the lesser beasts.

They saw army came jogging along overlaid by courting butterflies and the colourful dashes- blue, red, orange- of dragonflies, hinged in the severely cricked geometric angles of their mating. Lola and Sai talked about army who was vegetarian. Lola said that to kill somebody they must be carnivorous or otherwise they will be hunted. She gave example of nature- the deer, cow. It is necessary to taste blood to triumph as we are animals. Sarcastically uncle Potty remarks that the army is vegetarian and monks are not vegetarian.

They descended into the tropical density of air thick and hot over the river and into even greater concentration of butterflies, beetles, dragonflies. Sai who was fed up with Cho Oyu, pointed at the government rest house with its view over the sand banks, through the grasses to the impatient Teesta and expressed her joy that it would be very nice to live there in beautiful nature. Teesta is described as impatient. It is symbolic of human restlessness. They rose up into the pine and ether amid little snips of gold rain. Father Booty saw blossom rain which is very auspicious in Tibet. It appears when rain and sunshine appears at the same time. In order to accommodate the population boom, the government had passed legislation that allowed an extra storey to be built on each home in Darjeeling; the weight of more concrete pressing downward had spurred the towns lopsided descent and caused more landslides. It was their observation that Darjeeling has gone downhill. They were discussing about beauty of Darjeeling which it was having in past. It was looking like a garbage heap rearing above and sliding below. It used to be very lovely. When clouds broke Kanchenjunga seemed looming. There was Mt Everest, coy triangle in front of them.

After some months Sai, Lola, Noni, uncle potty and father Booty made library trip to the Gymkhana club which was taken over by Gorkha National Liberation Front. They went in one restaurant to take food while taking food

there was parade of boys going outside. Sai observed Gyan in that parade. She turned green. Father Booty misunderstood her that she must be travel sick. He suggested her to look at the horizon that always helps. It is to be noted that looking at horizon in Himalayan mountains or peaks gives mental relief. It is belief based on nature & landscape of that land. There are glowing peaks, green valleys which gives comfort to eyes and mind. Father Booty's sentence is very much important. Gyan's involvement in parade disturbed Sai who was shouting as Gorkhand for Gorkha. She could not believe in her eyes that Gyan, whom she loved very much, can be part of marches and all that. Suddenly she began to retch into the grass, vomiting up.

There were very beautiful scenes of nature around them. It was afternoon and sun lay thick and golden on the trees and with the light so bright. There were shadows in foliage between the blades of grass and the rocks were black as night. It was hot in the valley but river was icy. The Teesta valley was renowned for its butterflies. Specialists came from around the world to paint & record them. Rare and spectacular creatures were depicted in the library volume 'Marvellous Butterflies of the North Eastern Himalayas' were flying about before their eyes. When Sai was twelve she had given names to all types of butterfly.

Japanese mask butterfly

butterfly of the far maintain

Icarus falling from sun butterfly

butterfly that a flute set free

kite festival butterfly

Scenes of butterflies were astonishing .Father Booty spotted peacock blue and long emerald streamer tails, black one with white spots and a pink flame at its heart. Butterfly was fluttering on a cable of bridge. Booty snapped photograph but guards stopped him as photography was strictly prohibited on the bridge. In this context Heidegger points out that the modern human

generation saw as a surrounding, while postmodern human generation see nature as a product. Early tourist's enjoyment of landscape was based on an appreciation of nature itself than on secondary image of nature that they themselves constructed –either literally, through their amateur sketches or imaginatively, simply in the way that they viewed the scenery. Alison Byerly's remarks are noteworthy. He says 'modern culture defines nature as what is beautiful while not necessarily what is actually native and natural to the particular ecosystem.'

It is said that the bridge was very important. With the help of this bridge there was possible India's contact with north. It was the important border at which they might have to fight the Chinese again someday and now of course there has Gorkha insurgency as well. Thus ecological wealth was getting curse to be controversial or at the stake for its possession. Neps and Gorkha's who lived there were fighting for its ownership. Guards checked their jeep where they found some books and took all books to station for inspection. They hoped for literature of an antinational and inflammatory nature.

Father Booty could not take photographs of butterfly properly he came in trouble instead. Police became suspicious and searched his home and turned everything upside down. They found Booty was residing in India illegally. They ordered him to leave Kalimpong within two weeks. Father Booty loved gardening and growing new trees. Forest department officials had given oyster mushroom spawn so he might have mushrooms in his garden during fungus season. One year when the bamboo clump on his property bloomed and bees from the whole district descended whrooming upon the white flowers, the forest department had bought seeds from him, because they were valuable - bamboo flowered only once in a hundred years. When the clump died after the extravagant effort, they gave him new bamboo to plant, young spears with their tips like braids. Only for national security he was ordered to leave country. Uncle potty assured him he will look after his cows and all .Father Booty had

done much more for development in the hills than any of locals and without screaming or waving kukris.

There were three Ts of Darjiling district, told by SDO who came to investigate judge's Cho Oyu were Tea, Timber, Tourism. Tourism is culture developed by man for entertainment. It has become business, a means to earn economic profit. In this context Neil Overnden says "we must take part in the conversation for the rest of our existence. If we are only there for a temporal period, we become a tourist. We must become the resident, for "to the tourist, the landscape is merely a facade, but to the resident it is 'outcome of how it got there and the outside of what goes inside' the resident is, in short, a part of the place. By becoming the resident in this entity of nature, we become a part of the entity itself. The residence in nature presents humanity with a better picture of their actions and the repercussions they may hold."

It was environment of that region which was favourable to grow tea, timber and its beauty developed tourism. He (SDO) stopped at a flowering creeper. It was beautiful blossom. He believed there is god in such a beautiful flower. The passionflower was a glorious bizarre thing each bloom lasting just a day, it was purple and white striped tentacles, half sea anemone, half flower -all by itself ,it proffered enough reason for faith. Kalimpong made SDO keen gardener. He looked after plants as if they were babies. It is to be noted that there were those who loved forest and there were enemies of nature also who cut trees for business. Cook had heard the sound of wood being sawed. There were pug marks by river sometimes even around the tents.

Nature and landscapes was part and parcel of life of people lived there. There was deep impact on mind and memory of Biju though he was in America He remembered enchanting nature of Kalimpong. The atmosphere of Kalimpong reached Biju all the way in New York. He felt the pulse of forest, smell the humid air, the green black lushness. He imagined all its different textures, the plumage of banana, the stark spear of the cactus, the delicate

gesture of ferns. He remembered the sound of croaking trrrr whonk, wee wee butt ock butt ock of frogs in spinach.

Biju called his father from America but due to bad weather line was not clear. Cook could not hear his voice clearly. There was precarious wire, the fragile connection trembling over ravines and over mountains, over Kanchenjunga which was smoking like a volcano or a cigar – a bird might have alighted upon wire, a nightjar might have swooped through shaky signal, the satellite in the firmament could have blipped. Cook was trying to speak with Biju in America but because of unclear line he could not listen. Line was swaying due to the too much wind was blowing.

There were strikes went on so many days. It was like more moisture in the air than air. It was hard to breathe and there was feeling of stifled in a place that was after all, generous with space if nothing else all business was stopped everyone terrorized to keep their shutter down and not even poke their noses out of the windows. Roadblocks stopped traffic, prevented timber and stone trucks from leaving, halted tea from being transported. Nails were scattered on the road. GNLF appointed boys to sell cassettes of speeches of GNLF, tapes, and Gorkhaland calendar. Children were being plucked from boarding schools and parents opened paper to read with horror of salubrious climate of hills being disturbed.

Boys came at Mom Ami to sell cassettes and calendars. They sold to Noni and Lola. They allowed boys to sleep in their house. Budhoo their Nep watchman did not arrive. After one month two boys encroached on their land and started building a hut, chopping bamboo from their property. They neglected Noni and Lola. Lola went to complain to pradhan who ordered her to leave that land for them as there may occur landslide. He has four queens and if she can become fifth. pradhan forcefully took their land and also insulted her. Gorkhas had encroached there. Noni and Lola felt insecure in their own house.

It was Gyan who made Father Booty to leave India and told boys about guns of judge. He cheated Sai who loved him innocently. Sai returned home. She saw people on the veranda talking to judge and cook. There was woman begging for mercy for the person whom police had caught and questioned about gun robbery. They had practiced their new torture strategy. He was innocent and police had blinded him. Her husband was drunkard. He had worked to rebuild the roads in the district, filling stones from the Teesta riverbed into contractors' trucks, unloading them at building sites, clearing landslides. Judge could not show mercy for woman because he thought that one must stop one's thoughts if one wished to remain intact, or guilt and pity would take everything from one. Even Sai did not show any sympathy.

Narrative moves to America in Manhattan where sky was messy, lots of stuff in it, branches and pigeons and choppy clouds it with weird yellow light. The winds blew strongly and the pink pom-poms of the cherry trees in Riverside Park swished against the unsettled mix. Along the Hudson great waves of water were torn up and ripped forward, the wind propelling the gusts upriver.

Atmosphere in America could not satisfy Biju. Though he was in America he always remembered India and his childhood memories. As a child he had been part of a pack of boys who played so hard they had come home exhausted. They used to throw stones and slipper into trees to bring down ber and jamun, chased lizards until their tails fell off and tossed the leaping bits on little girls. He remembered bathing in the river, feeling his body against the cool firm river muscle, and sitting on rock with his feet in the water, gnawing on sugarcane. Thus river trees, lizards all elements and creatures occupied his memory which gave him pleasure in dull America.

There was morcha and burning of Indo-Nep treaty. GNLF collected one person from each home for morcha. Judge told cook to join. Gyan told excuse of health problem. Cook wished to miss it telling excuse of rain but rain

stopped in the morning and he unwillingly participated. GNLF has organized everything very well. The several thousand people were participated in morcha with kukris, the sickle blades and were shouting slogans 'Jai Gorkha' 'Jai Gorkhaland for Gorkhas. When they reached at important junction an unexpected incident happened. A volley of rocks and stones came pelting down from behind the post office. The stones hit the rooftops. They came flying with greater momentum, bounced down and injured some of the people who went reeling back. The rioters had brought the stones with them to throw in the face of law and order. The crowd began to throw the stones at the jawans outfitted in their riot shields and batons. The police picked up the rocks and returned them. But rioters became more violent and in the end police opened fire. It resulted in scattering of marchers. In this riot thirteen boys were dead. Marchers chased police. They knifed police to death, chopped off their hands. Police ran to take shelter in station but it was already locked from inside by coward police. Some went at Mon Ami and begged Noni and Lola for shelter. Man learns to make good use of available natural material to fulfil his intentions either it may be good or bad.

Seasons changed but incidents of horror grew. Through winter, flowery spring, summer and rain there were riots, morchas, demonstrations. After some days mutt was lifted by trespassers. They bound her with rope and put her in a sack. They carried her through town without drawing any attention to themselves. Woman, whose husband was caught by police and severely beaten, and her father in law kidnapped Mutt and took revenge. Judge could not show any mercy to pleading and begging of woman. It was great blow to judge. Mutt was his dear pet. She had been expensive, delivered from Calcutta Kennel specializing in red setters. A certificate of pedigree had accompanied her: "Sire: Cecil. Dam: Ophelia." He started shouting at cook for his carelessness. Judge asked everybody either they have seen his mutt anywhere. Even he ventured to small busti houses to ask if they had seen her. He asked plumber, electrician.

People criticized his way of worrying a small animal when they can't even eat. He asked Mrs. Thondup who told her bad experience of his two dogs Ping and Ting. They were vanished. Uncle Potty shared his same experience. Here Lola's comments are remarkable. She says that trouble with Indians is that they have no love of animals. A dog, a cat is there just to kick. They can't resist – beat, stone, torment. They don't rest until the creature is dead and then they feel very content. Judge started remembering Mutt and her memories. He had thought his vigilance would protect his dog from all possible harm.

It was price of his arrogance. Judge went to sub-divisional officer. He created awareness of reality in judge. When the integrity of nation was being threatened they should follow Gandhian style of austerity. Keeping dog for hobby is one type of luxury which could not be afforded in such days. People were going through miserable social and political circumstances. People were being killed and judge was worried about his dear mutt. He could not conceive of punishment great enough for humanity. A man was not equal to an animal not one particle of him. Human life was stinking, corrupt, and at same time there were beautiful innocent creature who lived with delicacy on the earth without doing any harm.

Biju returned from America to India. He was not getting any bus for Kalimpong because of riots. Biju waited in Siliguri for four days finally he got jeep of GNLFF. Biju gave them American dollar. There was the thin road above the flooded fields through the incandescence of young rice and banana. They went through a wildlife sanctuary with giant signs, "Do not Disturb The Wild Animals" hammered onto the trees. The road tilted, barely a ledge over the Teesta, an insane river leaping both backward and forward within each moment. There were more holes in the road than there was road and everything from liver to blood was getting a good shake. Biju observed beauty and bounty of nature. There were many butterflies of myriad varieties and when it rained a bit, the butterflies disappeared. When rain stopped they returned; another little

spasm and they vanished again. Clouds blew in and out of Jeep, obscuring the man from one another every now and again. All along frogs sang lustily. This lusty singing denotes lust of human being for the power and possession of land. There were at least a dozen landslides on the road between Siliguri and Kalimpong. They waited to be cleared, vendor came by offering momos in buckets, coconuts cut into triangle slices. Biju was observing everything and thinking how he left his country. This was where his father lived and where he had visited him and they had hatched a plot to send him America and Biju had, in his innocence, done just what his father had, in his own innocence, told him to do.

Biju hadn't seen such vastness in a long time--the sheer, overwhelming enormity of mountainside and scree coming down the flank of it. In places, the entire mountain had simply fallen out of itself, spread like a glacier with boulder uprooted trees. Across the destruction the precarious ant trail of the road was washed away. He felt exhilarated by the immensity of wilderness, by the lunatic creepers, the shooting hooting abundance of green, the great caterwauling vulgarity of frogs that was like the sound of earth and the air itself. One can feel patient before the greatness of nature but with human being one feels impatient. There were teams of hunchbacked midget men and woman whom contract of recarving path through ruin was given. They were rebuilding things stone by stone, putting it all together again each time their work was rent apart, carrying rocks and mud in wicker baskets attached to bands around their foreheads, staggering loony with the weight, pounding on hulking river boulders over and over for hours with hammers and chisels until a bit chipped off, then another bit. GNLF men in the jeep were forced to clamber out themselves and roll boulders aside, remove fallen tree trunks, shovel clods of earth. They went through seven landslides. Because of landslides they could not reach Kalimpong. GNLF man took away Biju's all belongings his wallet, shoes, jacket, belt. He returned

empty hand, quite naked without baggage, without his savings worst of all, without his pride. He came back from America with far less than he'd ever had.

Cook begged for pardon to Judge for deceiving so far. He blamed himself for loosing of Mutt. Judge beats him mercilessly. Mutt was sold to family that couldn't love her in a village beyond Kursong to ordinary family.

Kiran Desai has depicted scenes and landscapes according to mood of character and scenes or events in life of character. Sai thinking about Gyan stood in dark and it began to rain. The electricity went off. The television frizzed and the BBC was diced by storm. The rain boxed and leaves fell in jubilant dung-like plops into the Jhora. The rain slapped, anthem-singing frogs exulted in their millions, from the Teesta up to Cho Oyu high into the Deolo and Singalila mountains. In all this noise sound of Judge hitting the cook drowned. All night it was raining. It would continue off and on, on and off, with a savagery matched only by the ferocity with which the earth responded to the onslaught. Uncivilized voluptuous green would be unleashed the town would slide down the hill. Slowly, painstakingly, like ants, men would make their paths and civilization and there was once again, only to have it wash away again.

It was uncertain how morning will be. It is said that the new morning would hatch black or blue clear or smothered. The congress of hopeful frogs continued to sing, even as a weak whisky light showed in the east as the rain slowed. Beating of Judge to cook created deeper impact on Sai she started thinking about Gyan. It created hope in Sai of Gyan's return. She thought with a burst of hope message. "I will love you after all. Biju arrived at Cho Oyu and his pitaji hugged him. The five peaks of Kanchjunga turned golden with kind of luminous light that made to feel it briefly that truth was apparent. What was needed was to reach out and pluck it. Novel ends with optimistic note suggested by frogs singing hopefully. Thus characters, events, incidents are depicted keeping such background of landscapes that it gave rhythm accordingly

atmosphere, tone and to all events and incidents of novel. Novel begins with misty atmosphere in Kanchanjunga looked whittled out of ice of plume of snow blown high by the storm at its summit. Novel ends with the peaks of Kanchanjunga turned golden with kind of luminous light that made to feel that truth was apparent.

Desai has also used the landscape in her novel to tell the changing circumstances or to describe the mood. The story in India is set in the foothills of the Himalaya, Kalimpong. Kanchanjunga, stands as the ultimate truth and makes its presence felt from time to time in the novel. The story starts and ends with the description of the mountain Kanchanjunga. When Sai first arrived at Cho Oyu the mountain is described as macabre. It reflects the circumstances and unhappy mood of the child who has lost her parents in an accident and is sent to this unusual relative of her whom she has never met. Later in the Novel kanchanjunga is presented as that part of nature which pays for the brutality of humans and where beauty is destroyed in war for power. It is said in the novel "India had swallowed the jewel colored kingdom where blue hills they could see in distance." In this novel landscape itself is dominant character when a significant interaction occurs between author and place, characters and place. Landscape by definition includes the non-human elements of place-rocks, soil, trees, plants, rivers, animals, air-as well as human perceptions and modifications. From eco-perspective this novel can be titled as '*Ecopolitics*'. Thus we see that Desai's "*The Inheritance of Loss*" covers almost all the different concepts and definitions that have been put forth by various critics of eco-criticism. Her novel is rich with eco-critical references and among the recent fictions can be most aptly given an eco-critical reading.
