

CHAPTER III

Ecocritical Analysis in *Under the Never Sky* Novel

The chapter explains about the analysis to answer the statement of the problem in this research. First, the analysis is about the representation of natural environment using concept of Pastoral, Wilderness, and Apocalypse in Garrad's perspective. Second, the interaction of Aria and Peregrine as the main character with the natural environment in Veronica Rossi's *Under the Never Sky*, is described in detail.

1. Representation of Nature

This part will analyze the first question of the statement problem about the representation of natural environment. The analysis is carried out based on some dominant concepts namely wilderness, pastoral, and apocalypse.

a. Pastoral

Garrad explains that nature represents in pastoral as the spatial distinction of town and country as well as a temporal distinction of a fallen present and an idyllic past (Garrad 39). The portrayal of pastoral is shown by two different place in *Under the Never Sky* novel, there are Pod and Death Shop. According Garrad explanation, Pod represents a town described as a frenetic, corrupt, impersonal place. Meanwhile, Death Shop represents a country known as peaceful and abundant place.

Pod is known as the domed city that protects people from the outside. Most of Pods is aboveground, sheltered under the dome and surrounded by walls. One of

the Pods called Reverie where Aria lived and other is Bliss where Aria's mother, Lumina stayed. 'Aria had kept communication with her mother, who had followed her research to Bliss, another Pod hundreds of miles away' (Rossi 10). Dome is designed for the safety of every Dweller so there is no gap to look out. The Dweller is the people live in Pod. Even, no one has ever seen the real sun in the dome.

"Most of the Pod is aboveground. The walls protecting Reverie are ten feet thick. There's no way you could ever get through them again."
He even had a tan, a ridiculous upgrade considering none of them had ever seen the sun. (Rossi 8)

The Reverie dome makes everyone who lived inside safe from Aether storm. Pod from the outside is like a man-made mountain amid earthen hills. The largest dome at the center would be the Panop. The off-shooting structures were the service domes, like Ag 6. 'Aria spent seventeen years in Reverie's Panop. Contained in one place. With daylight fading, the Pod's deep charcoal shape was fast blending into the night' (Rossi 445).

As a representation of a town, Pod like Reverie contains the modern building, intellectual society and high technology development. In the Pod 'most everything, from the production of food to the recycling of their air and water, was automated. Only the minority work in real' (Rossi 304). Many places are set as the progress city.

Reverie had stood nearly three hundred years, but she had never seen signs of its age until now. She'd spent her whole life in the Panop, Reverie's vast and immaculate central dome. Most everything happened there, on forty levels that housed residential, schooling, repose, and dining areas, all organized around an atrium. (Rossi 68)

Based on the quotation about, Reverie is drawn as the metropolis city contain the modern building which has good facilities such as housed residential, repose and dining areas. The places is organized to facilitate Dwellers in their daily activity.

High technology in Reverie makes innovation in science research. Genetic experts create steril environment in Reverie thus make no one can't be sick, even someone can live until the second centuries with genetic manipulation.

How could she be sick? Reverie's sterile environment eradicated disease. Genetic engineers like her mother kept them physically well.

Aria gripped the edges of the bed. "What are you saying?" she heard herself ask. "Are you saying Paisley's *dead*?" It wasn't possible. No one *died* at seventeen. They easily lived into their second centuries. (Rossi 65)

The development of technology grow rapidly, makes Reverie as perfect city. Steril environment in Reverie helps the Dwellers free from disease. The age – reversal treatments kept the Dwellers over a hundred years old looks young but their skin as thin and tender-looking as an infant's.

Inside the Pod, Nature is present in two ways. First, through illusion using Smarteye. Developing technology in Reverie creates the clear device called Smarteye. It is worn over the left eye and it was always on. The Eye sends impulses that flow right into the brain, fooling it and Telling it, 'You're seeing this and touching that.' But maybe some things haven't been perfected yet. Maybe they're close to the real thing, but not the same. The Eye took them to the Realms. The virtual spaces where the Dwellers spent most of their time. The Realms allow them to visit any place.

"Realms are virtual places," she said. "Created with computer programming."

“They’re places as real as this is. If my Smarteye was working, I could go to any part of the world and beyond too, from right here. Without going anywhere. There are Realms for times that have passed. Last year the Medieval Realms were champ. You’d be great in one of those. And then there are Fantasy Realms and Future Realms. Realms for hobbies and any kind of interest you can think of.” (Rossi 175)

The Realms is the copy of world contains many places and many things like earth. Plants in Realms are artificial because Smarteye helps stimulate brain to be able to see and feel something with more live and real. ‘In the Realms food still grew, or pretended to grow virtually, on farms with red barns and fields under sunny skies’ (Rossi 14). Although the plants pretend to grow, flowering and fruiting but the Dwellers don’t even know the smell of roses. Aria even asks “What about roses? Do they really smell so great?” (Rossi 160).

The Second way, nature is present inside the pod is through service dome called Agriculture 6. Dozens of domes supply Reverie with food, water , oxygen and all the things an enclosed city needed. Ag 6 looks like a cavernous space. Farming rows stretched back as even as stripes. High above, pipes and beams crisscrossed the ceiling. The real plants in Agriculture 6 looked liked old people, wrinkling and lacking brightness.

The real food in Ag 6 looked like old people before aging-reversal treatments.

The food grew from waist-high plastic mounds. Row after row of decaying fruits and vegetables spread out around her in endless lines. Like everything in the Pod, they were genetically designed for efficiency. They had no leaves, and needed no soil and little water to grow. (Rossi 13)

Located at the far end of the dome, Agriculture 6 contains terrariums in other part.

‘A forest loomed in front of them, beautiful and green. Then she looked up, seeing the familiar white ceiling above the treetops, run through by a maze of lights and

The storms came in force over the coming days, slowing their progress toward the coast. Funnels wheeled above constantly. The glare of the sky brightened nights and stole the warmth from the light of day. Winter had begun. (Rossi 476)

Pastoral focuses on dichotomy between urban and rural life (Garrad 33). Urban life in the novel is the Dwellers who live safely in the dome like Reverie. A rich life and technological developments can help them everyday such as Smarteye. As most region, Reverie has goverment called Consuls. There are five Consuls. 'They were the most influential people in Reverie, governing all aspects of life in the Pod' (Rossi 67).

Reverie dome is described as the perfect town where everyone can live happily. 'Aside from the Consuls, everyone is entitled to the same living quarters and clothes and diet. Pod has pseudo-economy, where people amassed virtual wealth, but that there were black markets and hackers. None of it changes what happens in the real' (Rossi 305).

While, the rural life is represented as Death shop. The place outside the Pod is known to be filled with dangerous and terrible Aether storms. The people who lived in Death shop are called Outsiders or Savages. They build houses of stone and survive by hunting and farming.

Homes made of stones rounded by time. Wooden doors and shutters worn by salt air and rain. As weather-beaten as the compound was, it looked sturdy. Like a root growing aboveground. (Rossi 47)

From the roof, he had a good view of the hills that formed the Tides' eastern border. Farmland stretched back in a patchwork of browns and greens, woven through by a line of trees that followed the underground river. Perry could also see the stretches of Aether-blackened earth where the funnels had struck early in the spring. (Rossi 86)

In the Death Shop, Outsider lives in deprivation. They have to work to fill their needs. All people works. The women's duty is cook the food and the men go farming or hunting.

The Outsider lived by claiming a territory and forming a tribe for survival. A tribal leader is called a Blood Lord. Tide tribe is one of them.

“Bigger tribes claim territories. My brother is a Blood Lord. He commands my tribe, the Tides.” (Rossi 185)

Every tribes have their own rule to organize the tribe. But most of the tribes use the primitive rules to decided something such as the election of Blood Lord. In a challenge for Blood Lord, the loser died or was forced to disperse.

Environment and society situation are not only ways to explore pastoral nature. Sometimes nature has their own power to change the environment, no exception with the society who relates with nature directly like Outsider. Accoding Glofelty Human and nature have an inseparable relationship. Both affect each other. In the novel, nature influences human who lived in Death Shop. It makes them have an ability to adapt to harsh environments. The dangerous Aether makes theory of basic genetic happen. Aether made some of them 'marked'.

‘The population of Outsiders was small. Any shifts had the possibility of running rampant in such a limited pool. A drop of ink in a bucket was more potent than a drop in a lake. And with the Aether accelerating mutations, the Unity had created an environment ripe for genetic jumps’. (Rossi 243)
People said that the Marked had the Aether flowing through their blood. Heating them up and giving them their Sense. (Rossi 58)

Those marked people are divided into three classes, scire, audile, and seer. Scire has a good sense of smell that is useful for hunt. They can smell the animal from a

As the untamed place, Death Shop has the real dangers. That is Aether. The blast makes the gray surface of the earth gray and charred. Aether can grab anything or anyone, so traveling underneath is very dangerous.

Aria stopped beside the Outsider as they took in a wide patch of earth that was gray, almost silver, and perfectly bare. She didn't see a single twig or blade of grass. Only the golden wink of a few scattered embers and gentle traces of smoke rising here and there. She knew this was the scar left by an Aether strike. (Rossi 187)

Aether is one of the representation of nature power. Nature also have their own power to destroy nature itself and the civilization. Aether is disaster and the part of dangerous nature in Death Shop.

When the sky has aether, another thing to worry is the danger inside the forest. Nature provides the travelers need to survive, example food. Usually, they hunt to get food but when the game is not there, the plants inside the forest produces fruit. But most of the fruit is poisonous. Aria almost eat the poisonous fruit. 'She didn't trust her own judgment anymore. What did she know out here? Even *berries* might kill her' (Rossi 217).

Wolves become another danger of Death Shop. Aria meets wolves when she tries to escape from a cannibal tribe. 'Seven wolves prowled into view. Huge animals with glinting blue eyes and silver pelts. Their musk came at Perry in a red wave of blood hunger. They raised their shining snouts, reading scents as he did, then laid back their ears and bared their teeth, their hackles rising' (Rossi 417). The only way to be save is to look for a high place like a tree or makes fire but it'll takes long time.

Second, the other trend of new world literature focuses on the issue of wilderness not only in geographical wilderness space, but also in cultural signifier of a site of contested high-technology industrial and military activities (Garrard 78). Using technology human can save or destroy nature.

In *Reverie* dome, Dwellers choose to stop connecting with nature and the outside world. They can not go anywhere. This situation makes genetic experts try to create a virtual world with Smarteye; a world with no fear and no pain. They are only in place of pseudo-visualized as real named Realms. The existence of Smarteye makes Dweller can do two things at once without the need to move. The dangerous situation came when the region is inaccessible. The risks appear a new disease called Degenerative Limbic Syndrome (DLS). The disease makes the Dwellers crazy. Chaos spreads throughout the pod. ‘Aria pressed her eyes closed, fighting the image of the chaos in Ag 6 on a grand scale. A Pod-wide riot where her mother was. A thousand people starting fires and ripping off Smarteyes’ (Rossi 342).

This chaos happens when the Dwellers turn off their smarteye like in the Ag 6. Soren, Aria's friend is like a person who has an addiction to fire. He approached the fire without fear. The madness increases as Soren intends to burn the entire terrarium area.

“It happened in Ag 6,” she said to Marron. The only difference is that we shut off on purpose that night. This thing. DLS.” Aria remembered Soren’s wide, glazed eyes as he’d stared at the fire. How intent Bane and Echo had been. How even Paisley had been afraid the trees might fall on her. (Rossi 346)

Situation got worse by time. Many Dwellers are crazy and their behavior becomes uncontrollable. The pod that was once filled with moral and educated people became a chaotic and dangerous place. The only safe place on earth also has another dreadful danger.

Meanwhile, the Outsiders has direct relation with nature. They live as part of nature and they have their own action to survive and adapt in harsh environment. Sometimes, the behavior of outsiders is influenced by nature itself, and it is not always in good way. Thoreau writes, And yet we have not seen pure nature, unless we have seen her thus vast, and drear, and inhuman . . . Nature was here something savage and awful, though beautiful (Thoreau 17). The natural environment outside Pod is dangerous. Only the strong people will survive. One of the tribes is called the cannibal tribe, the Croven tribe.

She shook her head, turning a stunned look from the Croven's dead body to him. "How could you? They wanted to share their food with us . . . and you just *killed* them."

Perry was coming off the rush and beginning to shake. She didn't know what he had scented from those men. Their ache for her flesh had been so potent it had nearly scored his nostrils. "Fool. You were going to *be* their food." (Rossi 203)

The Croven tribe also slaughtered many other tribal leaders. A tribe in the west is in crisis because it has been a victim of the Croven tribe. They take strong youth and children. The rest, they eat it.

"What happened to the Fins?" Marron asked. He calmly cut his meat into a perfect square, like he had no idea of the sudden tension in the room. Roar took a long drink before he spoke. "The Fins were already weakened when illness hit them in the open. Then the Croven came and took the strongest children into their fold. To the rest . . . well, they did what the Croven do." (Rossi 308)

fires had leveled all but one of the homes, but one was all he needed. There was no door and only part of a roof' (Rossi 204).

The effect of the storm is the tribe couldn't stay for much longer. No with rare game and the Aether storms growing worse every winter. The last nearly wiped out the tribe's sheep, the flock is too far from the compound to be brought to safety in time. Without food and game they can not survive.

On calmer days, it was like being on the underside of waves, seeing the Aether roll and pitch above. Other times it flowed like rapids, furious and blazing blue. Fire and water, come together in the sky. Winter was the season for Aether storms, but in the past years the storms were starting earlier and lasting longer. Already they'd had a few. (Rossi 55)

Buell explains that apocalypse is the single most powerful master metaphor that the contemporary environmental imagination has at its disposal. The role of the imagination is important to metaphor, for it implies that the very fate of our world hinges on the arousal of the imagination to a sense of crisis (Buell 285). In fact, apocalypse in the novel is also the imagination to a sense crisis. Lumina, Aria's mother explains another part of doomsday because the new disease. Actually, the new disease has not yet coming and infecting all Dwellers. Only some of Pods was fall in the disease. The crisis is cause of human power.

It all started from the time that some of human race had to enter the Pod during the union period. The area was created to make copies of the world they left behind, a pseudo-world called Realms. They can travel anywhere only by thinking. In the Realms the bad parts and the pain are removed, there's only fun.

"I have to begin with the Realms. The CGB created them to give us the illusion of space when we were forced into Pods during the Unity. They were only meant to be copies of the world we left behind, as you know, but

of the chaos in Ag 6 on a grand scale. A Pod-wide riot where her mother was. What chance did Lumina have, between the Aether and DLS?’ (Rossi 342).

Besides the use of Smarteye, the another cause is the aether storms. The storms destroy the generator and cut the connection of Smarteye. Dweller can not go anywhere because the extinguishment of Smarteye. ‘Past three years the Aether storms have intensified at an alarming rate. They damage our Pods and cut off our link to the Realms. Generators fail. Backups fail. . . . We’re left in dire situations that we’re incapable of handling. Entire Pods have fallen to DLS’ (Rossi 339). This causes a precarious situation. All pods are infected with DLS outbreaks in short time. The pain and pleasure emotion confused. Bliss become first place in Pod infected the disease. People are caged and contracted this syndrome. Damage, violence and even massacres may occur as a result of this syndrome. Doomsday has just begun.

“I think you can imagine, Aria, the anarchy of six thousand trapped people who have come under this syndrome. I see it around me now.” (Rossi 339)

Humans are confronted at the end of the world where aether storms are getting worse and disease outbreaks are spreading causing noise and death. There is no place to be safe in their world other than survival by escaping from aether storms, looking for new safe settlements.

“Yes, that’s right. A dual attack. External first. A storm weakens the Pod. Then internal, as the disease manifests. Your mother was among the first to study DLS. She was working toward a cure, along with many other scientists. But as you can see by what happened here, we don’t have an answer. And we may run out of time before we do.”

He glanced at Ward, sending an obvious cue. The doctor spoke immediately, his voice carrying more passion than Hess.

or feel anything when she touch it but real plants in Ag 6 has strange and rough texture. She feel comfortable sit under the tree.

The next experience is Aria see real fire. She thought, it was a magic. ‘She moved closer, drawn by the gold and amber tones in the flame. By the way it changed shape constantly. The smoke was richer than anything she had ever smelled. It tightened the skin along her arms. Then she saw how the burning leaves curled and blackened and disappeared’ (Rossi 28). It differs with fire in the Realms. In there, fire was a rippling orange and yellow light that gave off a gentle warmth. But now, she knew the real fire was really different.

Aria’s experiences with nature is not only in Reverie. She knows about the different nature and culture when she was thrown into the Death Shop for allegedly killing her best friend, Paisley. Aria is also accused bringing outsiders into Reverie, Peregrine. When she comes to Death Shop, Aria only can see the empty desert landscape around her. ‘She didn’t see anything that looked like Bliss. Empty land ran clear to the horizon. Desert, reaching as far as she could see’ (Rossi 95). And within 17 years, for the first time Aria saw the sun. The real sun.

She found the brighter patch in the cloud cover, where light shone through in a golden haze. That light came from the sun. She might get to see the real sun. She had to fight off the urge to cry, thinking about seeing the sun. Because who would know? Who would she tell about seeing something so incredible? (Rossi 98)

Aria felt sick. She thought, she would die because she is in the Death Shop. The dangerous land with a million ways to die. In the Death Shop Aria has counted the inventory of her discomforts. A headache, muscle pains, blisters feet

Aria really likes learning about the new environment in the Death Shop. She asks many things and gets information from Peregrine about nature. She felt fantastic with what she sees and finds in Death Shop because nature felt different than in the Realms.

Finally thanks to Peregrine, Aria knows what the real rose smells like. A red rose sat on top of the stack. Aria picked it up gingerly and breathed in the fragrance. Beautiful. Softer than the scent of roses in the Realms. But roses in the Realms didn't make her heart race' (Rossi 293). It smells nice and soft.

Aria has a new habit since she lived in Death Shop. She likes to collect stones and sort them according to color, shape and size. She recognizes and learns even from stone. She was fascinated by the irregular stone structure. 'Aria picked up a rock. She'd developed a habit of lining them up. By color. By size. By shape. Making sense of the randomness she'd admired at first' (Rossi 213). In the Realms, stones are different but Aria knows that the twelfth stone is the first stone to be modified either shape or size or color but in Death Shop all the different stones.

"Each one of these is unique," she said. "Their shape. Their weight and composition. It's amazing. In the Realms, there are formulas for randomness. I can always pick them out, though. Spot how every twelfth rock is a modified version of the first one's color or density, or whatever the variation might be.

"But rocks aren't the only thing. When I was out in that desert, and then when . . ." The way she looked at him, he knew whatever she'd say next, he was part of it. "I've never felt that way. We don't have fear like that. But if those two things are different, then there has to be more, right? Other things besides fear and rocks that are different in the real?" (Rossi 177)

interaction with nature train his sense stronger. He really relies on his ability to survive in the Death Shop.

Aria and Peregrine as the main characters have their own action to adapt and survive in the nature. In the beginning, both of them rejects the different situation of nature but they can not avoid. However, they have to interact with nature, like Aria learns to survive in the Death Shop or Perry goes into Realms to save his nephew.

