

**RECLAIMING RUINS: AN ECOFEMINIST ANALYSIS OF
PRASHANTH SRIVATSA'S *A GIRL AT THE END OF THE WORLD*****Nadia Ramadhani¹, Purwarno Purwarno²****English Literature Department, Universitas Islam Sumatera Utara (UISU)
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*Environmental degradation and gender oppression have been widely theorized as interconnected within ecofeminist discourse; however, existing scholarship has largely focused on canonical and large-scale dystopian narratives, leaving contemporary short fiction that explores these dynamics in intimate, post-apocalyptic contexts underexamined. Addressing this gap, this study analyzes how intersecting systems of ecological crisis and patriarchal domination are represented in *A Girl at the End of the World* by Prashanth Srivatsa. Drawing on the ecofeminist frameworks of Vandana Shiva and Val Plumwood, the research examines how the narrative critiques anthropocentric and patriarchal logics while reimagining ecological restoration. Using a qualitative descriptive design grounded in ecofeminist literary criticism, the study employs document analysis, thematic coding, and interpretive textual analysis to identify key ecofeminist patterns within the text. The findings reveal six central categories—domination, othering, ruin, ecological trauma, care ethics, and reclamation—that structure the narrative's representation of the relationship between women and nature. The analysis further demonstrates that the female protagonist operates as a symbolic mediator of ecological renewal, transforming post-apocalyptic ruins into spaces of resistance, ethical care, and environmental regeneration. These findings underscore how contemporary dystopian fiction mobilizes localized, post-apocalyptic settings to reconfigure gender–nature interdependence and challenge hierarchical human–nature relations. By integrating ecofeminist theory with close textual analysis, this study contributes to gender- and environment-oriented literary criticism while extending ecofeminist inquiry into contemporary speculative fiction and discussions of ecological justice.*

Keywords: *Dystopian Literature; Ecofeminism; Gender and Environment; Literary Criticism; Patriarchy; Post-apocalypse.*

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INTRODUCTION

In the discipline of literary studies, ecological awareness has increased significantly due to ecological crises happening around the world. In turn, ecofeminism is a theoretical perspective that attempts to understand, within this context, the common roots of the oppression of women and the exploitation of the environment. The domination and commodification of the natural world are, for theorists such as and (Plumwood, 1993), part of the same patriarchal and capitalistic mechanisms responsible for the marginalization of women. Intrinsic to ecofeminism is that women and nature alike have intrinsic value outside of their usefulness to men or human beings in general; it strives therefore for reciprocity and the non-exploitative quality of all relationships.

Speculative and dystopian fiction is one of the means through which ecological concerns get represented from an ecofeminist perspective, signaling how environmental devastation restructures social and gendered relations. To a great extent, these genres of stories carry in them elements of survival, interdependence, and probable renovation amidst the disintegration of the structure of a society. One such text came recently in the form of a short story entitled *A Girl at the End of The World* by (Srivatsa, 2024). This story narrates the journey that one young girl goes on through a post-apocalyptic world wherein the abandoned human spaces have been reclaimed by nature. Key themes arising within this story include those of survival, ecological wisdom, and the restorative powers of the natural world. Although the ecofeminist perspective in modern speculative literature does have relevance, as found in the works of (Gaard, 2010) and (Chinsya, 2024), Srivatsa's short story itself has garnered little scholarly attention, let alone within an ecofeminist framework

A growing body of scholarship has explored ecofeminist perspectives within dystopian and speculative literature, particularly in relation to the interconnected structures of environmental degradation and gender oppression. (Gaard, 2010) argues that ecofeminist criticism reveals how ecological crises are inseparable from patriarchal systems that sustain gender inequality. Similarly, (Plumwood, 1993) demonstrates that such crises are rooted in dualistic modes of thinking that position both women and nature as subordinate within hierarchical structures of domination. Expanding this framework, Shiva (1988) highlights the ways in which environmental destruction is

closely tied to capitalist–patriarchal practices that exploit both ecological systems and marginalized communities.

Recent developments in ecofeminist and material ecocritical theory further extend these insights. Alaimo (2016), for instance, introduces the concept of trans-corporeality to emphasize the material interconnections between human and nonhuman bodies in environmental discourse. In a similar vein, Gaard (2011) revisits ecofeminism by rejecting essentialist assumptions and repositioning it within contemporary feminist and environmental debates. Together, these studies demonstrate that ecofeminist literary criticism has predominantly focused on large-scale ecological collapse, systemic critiques of domination, and canonical speculative narratives.

However, such approaches have tended to overlook contemporary short fiction that situates ecofeminist concerns within intimate, post-apocalyptic settings. In particular, limited attention has been given to narratives that foreground solitary female protagonists navigating ecological trauma while reimagining ruined landscapes as spaces of care, interdependence, and renewal. In contrast, relatively little attention has been paid to contemporary short fiction that situates ecofeminist concerns within intimate post-apocalyptic settings where gendered agency, ecological trauma, and landscapes of ruin are closely intertwined. The short story *A Girl at the End of The World* by Prashanth Srivatsa presents such a perspective by foregrounding a solitary female protagonist whose interaction with the remnants of a devastated environment reframes ruin not merely as destruction but as a site of ethical care and ecological renewal. Addressing this gap, the present study examines how *A Girl at the End of the World* by Srivatsa (2024) represents the interconnectedness of women, nature, and ruin within an ecofeminist framework, thereby offering a more localized and nuanced contribution to the field.

In order to fill this lacuna, the present study investigates how *Girl at the End of The World* represents the interrelatedness of women and nature by looking into ecofeminist conceptions developed by Shiva. The analysis also looks at the ways in which the narrative represents ruin, survival, ecological trauma, and renewal, and how such tropes challenge embedded anthropocentric and patriarchal structures in the post-apocalyptic setting in which it takes place. How does the short story by Srivatsa represent the ecofeminist conceptions of ruin, interdependence, and ecological renewal?

In posing this question, this study adds to the now-expanding corpus of literary criticism focusing on the gender-environment axis and extends the use of ecofeminism into contemporary speculative fiction. Likewise, it has shown the ways in which literature can be a site for considering forms of alternative ecological futures based on interdependence, an ethics of care, and feminist resistance against domination and Plumwood.

The devastated landscape of *A Girl at the End of the World* (Srivatsa, 2024) is an active force rather than a backdrop, in which her experience of fear, survival, and renewal is shaped. This short story is about a girl who has to make her way, when young, into a world destroyed through ecological collapse. It speaks to the ecofeminist notion that the oppression of women is deeply intertwined with that of the destruction of nature. Herein, her journeys face hostility, abandonment, and lingering violence within her community; thus, as much as environmental crisis brings into light gender-based vulnerabilities, it opens space for resilience and transformation. This will therefore make the text a very compelling site for an ecofeminist reading regarding how the literary narratives delineate the entanglement between ecological devastation and patriarchal structures.

METHOD

The current research uses a qualitative descriptive design based on ecofeminist literary criticism granted an opportunity to analyze the symbolic, thematic and narrative representations of gendered ecological experience in Prashanth Srivatsa's *A Girl at the End of The World*. Qualitative research design is conducive to literary studies as it allows researcher to interpret textual data through cultural, ethical, and theoretical lenses (Supian et al., 2022). It seeks to recover ecofeminist shards from the collisions, especially the chokehold between environmental devastation and patriarchy's hand around women's throats, by using interpretive strategies which emphasize power-relationships within the text.

This methodological focus resonates with recent ecofeminist scholarship that claims the literary representations of ruin, decay, and eco-trauma are constituted in part by gendered modes of domination (Sharma & Singh, 2025). Material for this study included reading and interpreting the primary short story along with a range of secondary materials selected empirically from contemporary ecofeminist and ecocritical

scholarship as it allows the researcher to elicit meaning and produce empirical knowledge from written documents (Bowen, 2009) clarified that document analysis is being rigorous, objective and systematic when reading their records in qualitative research. Drawing on Bowen's theory, the researcher did several readings of Srivatsa's text to establish patterns, rhetorical strategies, metaphors of ruin and embodied female experience. These textual patterns were explored in order to apply it through theoretical constructs suggested by ecofeminist scholars like (Valdivia, 2025) who's recent work on data ecofeminism help see how extraction - environmental and digital can be connected to larger patriarchal regimes.

The analysis process consisted of three phases. First, the scholar initially read the narrative as a whole to clue in as to its structural and thematic boundaries. The second phase involved recording with ecofeminist categories, i.e domination, othering, ruin, ecological trauma, care ethics and reclamation. This approach to thematic coding is predicated on qualitative guidelines utilized in current literary studies research with an ecocritical and ecofeminist leaning (Supian et al., 2022). Third, the themes coded were synthesised with relevant academic concepts via interpretive analysis to generate theoretical insights regarding how the short story represents ruin itself as a patriarchally exploited formation and as an opportunity for ecological and feminist regeneration. This triangulation of textual evidence, theoretical sampling and interpretive reasoning adds to the trustworthiness of findings.

To enhance trustworthiness, this study applies methodological triangulation by integrating multiple data sources, i.e. primary narrative text, ecofeminist scholarship, and ecocritical studies as recommended in qualitative literary research. Researchers reflexivity are also maintained through analytic memos written during each reading cycle to document interpretive decisions and theoretical reflections. This reflexive process minimises researcher bias and ensures interpretive transparency.

Moreover, page-referenced citations are provided to maintain academic rigour and adherence to British journal standards, allowing future researchers to verify conceptual applications and methodological choices. Ethical considerations are minimal because the research involves published literary texts, yet the study acknowledges interpretive positionality and avoids imposing universal claims on culturally specific ecological contexts (Sharma & Singh, 2025).

In order for another researcher to replicate the methodology, this section should include enough information about the experiment, simulation, statistical test, or analysis that was done to produce the results. This paper provides a reliable and reproducible approach to analyzing ecofeminist representations in Srivatsa's *Girl at the End of The World* by combining methodological triangulation, thematic interpretation, ecofeminist theoretical coding, and systematic document analysis.

In presenting new insights on the interrelations of gender, ruin, and ecological crisis, this framework ensures that the analysis remains located within modern academic discourse. This section should contain sufficient detail about the experiment, simulation, statistical test, or analysis used to produce the results such that a different researcher could replicate the methodology.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results

This section presents the key findings derived from the ecofeminist textual analysis of *A Girl at the End of the World*. The analysis identifies three major thematic patterns within the narrative: (1) the collapse of patriarchal structures, (2) the emergence of ecological female agency, and (3) ecological trauma as a catalyst for transformation and reclamation.

1. The Collapse of Patriarchal Structures

According to (G. Gaard, n.d.), patriarchy functions by way of ecologies of domination that simultaneously assail women and the natural world. The ecological destruction within the short story is inextricable from the disintegration of patriarchal governance, showing in full light how both forms of violence are inextricably linked. The protagonist, confronted with environments on fire, abandoned villages, and communities hostile to human emotions, witnesses the failure of social systems that had managed to keep women subjugated. The setbacks become the initial stages of her ecofeminist consciousness when she perceives that the environmental disaster in the world parallels the failures of oppressive human structures.

Data (1)

“Emerging out of the woods, she saw that the fire had widespread effects on the land and rose high with brightness, burning like the heat of a summer noon”.

The fire scene is not simply a description but rather serves as a multilayered ecological and political trope. The brightness and intensity of the flames create an image of destruction that is totalizing, both in terms of the environment and ideologies. According, ecological destruction is entangled with historical forms of domination, such as colonialism and patriarchy, and is thus not an event per se but rather a preordained effect of extractive practices that treat land and bodies as consumable means. Thus, the flaming landscape itself becomes an embodied expression of systemic violence. The fact of the land being on fire is representative of that exact moment when she realized the collapse of the world was not a single disaster but an end product of long-term damage to the structure. As (Sultana, 2023) affirms, climatic catastrophe helps reveal inequalities of social and political systems; hence, disproportionate burdens are borne by the women, the poor, and the land. Fire metaphorically describes patriarchal breakdown from this perspective, showing how human institutions created through domination contribute to their eventual disintegration. The heat "like a summer noon" also reflects the overwhelming pressure created when exploitative systems exceed their limits. It is at this point that the consciousness of the protagonist expands to identify ecological collapse with social collapse; she correlates her struggle with larger structures of violence. It is through such a parallel between the ruined world and ruined patriarchies that the groundwork is laid for her emerging ecofeminist consciousness.

Data (2)

"She understood at that moment; hatred burned in their eyes, fiercely and unforgivingly."

The hatred of the villagers is almost feral and instinctive; rather than interpret this as personal cruelty, however, ecofeminist analysis situates it within larger structures of patriarchal feeling. Research has demonstrated that patriarchal societies inculcate emotional logics that normalize violence, fear, and scapegoating-particularly in moments of crisis or institutional collapse (Echavarren, 2023). The hostility in their eyes reflects not personal malice, but rather a deeper emotional socialization from centuries-old social hierarchies. In ecofeminist research, patriarchal cultures create what (Chinsya, 2024) describe as emotional economies rewarding hostility while suppressing vulnerability. Such emotional imprints survive and outlast long after the formal

structures of authority have started to crumble, which enables patriarchal behaviors to outlive their institutional underpinnings. Thus, the hate of the villagers can be read as the emotional residue of patriarchy - the "afterlife" of a system of domination and exclusion. This systemic hostility forms a moment of critical awareness for the protagonist. She realizes that the violence experienced by her is not an act of individual will but part of a larger pattern that weaves patriarchy together with environmental exploitation. Ecofeminist studies claim that emotional violence and ecological destruction are many times rooted in the same logic of domination. (Liu et al., 2021) The fierce gaze of the villagers reflects the ravaged landscape-both are portraits of a pathological legacy of patriarchal domination. It is precisely at this moment that she is propelled away from human society toward ecological alliances based on interdependence rather than hierarchy.

Data (3)

"The village was empty except for one old man, his face withered, stern, and unapologetic as he stared at her without speaking."

The old man is a representation of the residual shadow of patriarchal authority: intractable, silent, and emotionally desiccated. His very countenance had withered, reflecting the rot of the patriarchal system he comes to represent. As noticed from scholarship on ecofeminism, patriarchal authority often survives symbolically long after its structures of legitimacy have collapsed, thereby leaving behind figures who assume the posture of power without the ability to care or lead. (Chinsya, 2024) His silence speaks volumes. Patriarchal societies often impose silencing on emotions that may reveal care, empathy, or vulnerability. Silence in this context, according to ecofeminist discussions, becomes a relational withdrawal-a refutation of engaging, nourishing, and sustaining (Echavarren, 2023). Thus, the stare of the wordless old man reflects a system incapable of connection and shows the emotional void that remains when authority loses ground. Besides, his unbending stance serves to underscore the hollowness of hierarchical structures of identity. Ecological trauma and social collapse often open up possibilities for persons to reimagine identities outside of patriarchal positions. Ecofeminist studies suggest that such crises clear the way for what (Liu et al., 2021) term "relational ecological selfhood," where individuals turn toward ecological interdependence rather than human-centered dominance. For the protagonist, the

moment of confronting the old man's empty authority is such a turning point: recognizing the futility of relying on patriarchal figures, she starts searching for her new models of belonging rooted in ecological connection rather than social hierarchy. In such a way, his silent, unapologetic stare stands for the final collapse of patriarchal relevance, propelling her toward an identity formed around the natural world, rather than oppressive human structures.

2. The Emergence of Ecological Female Agency

As she travels further from the collapsed human communities, she starts to realize a kind of agency based on ecological relationality rather than hierarchical authority. Scholarship in this area indicates that women often exhibit a greater sense of environmental sensitivity; their ecofeminist critiques read this as a kind of instinctive ecological agency born of relational and somatic thought and imagination (Echavarren, 2023). This aligns with her growing sensitivity to the land, wherein intuition, emotional resonance, and somatic perception provide her with important ways of perceiving her environment. Her relationship with the *alinya* further cements this transition. Ecofeminist studies point out that women often develop important interspecies and ecological associations, strengthening their adaptive capabilities in response to environmental disasters (Chinsya, 2024). These associations are not based on domination but on mutual regard, shared vulnerability, and care in return—attributes that increasingly characterize the protagonist's actions as she proceeds through peril. (Liu et al., 2021) This might explain how ecological agency for women tends to be most pronounced at those moments when patriarchal structures break down and they can reorient their identities in nature-based ethics, rather than oppressive human ones. To this end, the reliance of the protagonist on her embodied intuition and deepening bond with the natural world disclose this ecofeminist mode of resilience as she confronts crisis not with force but with relational strength, ecological awareness, and an emerging sense of interdependence with the more-than-human world.

Data (1)

“Her breath rushed like a storm, and her eyes held a quiet power,
something deep and hidden awakening inside her.”

That moment indeed epitomizes the embodied awakening of the protagonist and is related to ecofeminist understandings of how women experience and respond to

environmental change. In this regard, (Chinsya, 2024) identified that ecological consciousness among women often grows from lived bodily experiences that raise their awareness toward environmental shifts and relational responsibilities toward nature. This storm-like breath symbolizes internal turbulence and emotional clarity, suggesting that ecological agency arises from within the body long before it becomes articulated through language or rational thought (Chinsya, 2024). The "quiet power" in her eyes mirrors a form of intuitive strength, rooted not in domination but in relational knowing—a continuous epistemic mode coming from ecofeminist literature. (Chakraborty & Goswami, 2025) illustrates that the agency of ecofeminism often materializes through emotional awareness, empathy, and deep attunement toward ecological surroundings—all that challenge patriarchal norms in devaluing feminine intuition and knowledge embodied. Thus, an inner awakening that the character undergoes signifies her exodus away from structures of power in hierarchy, toward an ecological relational identity hinged on inter-connectedness. Her bodily reaction is the first sign of this shift: the body becomes a site of resistance, knowing, and transformation. Ecofeminist studies confirm that such embodied awareness enables women to form stronger alliances with ecological systems, resisting patriarchal narratives that frame nature and women as passive entities (Liu et al., 2021). In this context, her awakening serves as the foundation for reclaiming agency through her connection to the natural world.

Data (2)

“The spirit of the alinya stood before her—unshaken, unharmed, and unchallenged—as if the ruin of the world could not touch it.”

The alinya spirit renders ecological resilience—a form of more-than-human agency that sustains collapse of human socialities. Ecofeminist studies illuminate that natural and spiritual ecological agencies often outlive the human-made systems because they emanate from principles of regeneration, interdependency, and balance. Ecofeminism according to (Chakraborty & Goswami, 2025) perceives non-human beings as agents in forging ethical and emotional relations with humans rather than serving as a background object. The alinya, standing unshaken, becomes a symbol of this enduring ecological wisdom (Chakraborty & Goswami, 2025). Furthermore, the alinya's stability contrasts sharply with the chaos of the collapsing human world, aligning with findings by (Liu et al., 2021), who argue that ecological systems possess

inherent capacities for resilience when not subjected to exploitative human control. The protagonist's recognition of the alinya's strength signals her movement toward an alternative, nature-based framework for survival one centered on reciprocity, harmony, and ethical coexistence rather than human domination (Liu et al., 2021). By accepting the alinya as a guide, she participates in what (Chinsya, 2024) describe as "ecological alliance-building," a process through which women reconnect with natural forms of knowledge to resist patriarchal structures. This moment therefore represents a deepening of her ecological agency, shifting her understanding of power from anthropocentric authority to an eco-spiritual relationality grounded in resilience and mutual recognition.

Data (3)

"We either leave through the forest, or we die here. The trees may still protect us if we move now."

This line marks a decisive ecofeminist turn since, here, ecological solidarity is chosen over failing patriarchal systems. The forest in the ecofeminist imagination generally represents refuge, resistance, and renewal—a place where patriarchal hierarchies are dismantled and replaced by relational ecological ethics. According to (Chinsya, 2024), women often seek natural environments as sites of protection and empowerment when the social structures around them become repressive or violent. By trusting the forest to "protect" them, the protagonist attributes agency, wisdom, and guidance to the natural world. This reflects a key ecofeminist idea—nature is not passive but capable of participating in relational survival. (Liu et al., 2021) note that female agency becomes strongest when it matches with ecological systems rather than exploitative human institutions. They show how sustainable survival often depends upon mutual reliance between women and the environment. This reliance upon trees by the protagonist of the tale echoes this relational ethic. The forest, on the one hand, then becomes a place of transformation, a locale within which identities can be renegotiated and reclaimed. According to (Chakraborty & Goswami, 2025), ecofeminist identifications come about usually in threshold ecological spaces where characters break loose from patriarchal mores of restraint and establish new ecological belonging. Thus, by choosing the forest, the protagonist embarked upon the full transition into ecological

subjecthood: embracing interdependence, care, and nonhuman kinship as premises for survival.

3. Ecological Trauma as Catalyst for Reclamation

Trauma acts as a transformative catalyst in the course of the protagonist. But instead of paralyzing her, grief forms the bedrock for ecological responsibility and feminist awakening. (Pihkala, 2022) has mentioned that ecological grief is born from lost landscapes, ecosystems, and futures but may also mediate reconnections and ethical realignments. In the story, the moments of acute pain transform the protagonist toward reclamation and restoration.

Data (1)

“Maya cried until her throat ached and her body trembled; she begged for the beast to breathe again before it slowly fell into stillness.”

The depth of Maya's mourning absolutely expresses what (Cunsolo & Ellis, 2018) called ecological grief: the intense emotional reaction due to loss related to ecosystems. These affective responses to ecological devastation open up paths into moral responsibility and ecological care. Grieving really grew the relationality of Maya towards nature; the death of this animal managed to catalyze a rethinking of her role within this fragile ecosystem. Grief permits her to take apart the old emotional defenses and, more importantly, opens herself to values in the eco-feminist ethic: vulnerability and relationality. For this reason, her shaking body is exemplary-that is, because it shows the ways in which trauma registers both physically and emotionally. It is not a form of weakness but rather a transformative emotional rupture. Trauma serves as a source of strength here: rather, it propels Maya toward further empathy and insight into ecological attunement.

Data (2)

“Her father had betrayed her, and the weight of that truth pressed on her chest heavier than the smoke around her.”

This further deepens the emotional and psychological trauma that the protagonist is going through, specifying how patriarchal authority can inflict harm not only at the structural level but also within the most intimate family relationships. Indeed, feminist political ecology researchers find that such personal betrayals within a patriarchal household often reflect broader systems of gendered oppression, making women

disproportionately vulnerable during times of crisis (Sultana, 2023). In this way, the father-the supposed protector-comes to embody the same patriarchal violence that ecofeminist scholars identify as contributing both to gendered harm and ecological degradation. The asphyxiating feeling she experiences, "heavier than the smoke", reflects what (Marshall et al., 2018) describe as affective burdens associated with compounded social and ecological traumas. Her sorrow is neither merely emotional nor spiritual but reaches to the body, showing how patriarchal betrayal manifests concretely as pressure, weight, loss of breath. This inner rupture destabilizes her previous dependence on paternal authority and opens the space for critical awareness. (Sultana, 2023) points out in this line how the invocation of injustice inside intimate personal relationships can be a source of transformation from which women had finally managed to free themselves from oppressive relational structures. It is, therefore, the father's betrayal that becomes a turning point: the protagonist can begin redefining herself outside of patriarchal expectation and emotional dependence. The emotional severing then allows her to commence the imagination of alliances and forms of security not rooted in hierarchical order but in ecological interconnection and self-trust..

Data (3)

"No one saw her leave the village, and for the first time she realized how easy it was to disappear from a world already falling apart."

Her unnoticed departure illustrates the dissolution of patriarchal surveillance during societal collapse. When social structures weaken, so too does the controlling gaze that typically governs women's movements. In ecofeminist research, women often gain new freedoms when oppressive systems lose their authority, allowing them to step into ecological spaces where alternative identities can be shaped (Chinsya, 2024). The ease with which she disappears indicates not insignificance but the breakdown of that very social order that once dictated her existence. Her collapsing world around her parallels the collapse of gendered expectations. As each patriarchal institution fails, she is no longer confined to the roles and boundaries imposed upon her. (Liu et al., 2021), further contend that ecological disruption often forms openings for women to reclaim agency, autonomy, and relational ethics that are radically different from patriarchal values. Her quiet exit into decaying landscape thus becomes an act of ecological and

personal reclamation rather than retreat. In this instant, the forest takes on a symbolic tone of rebirth—a place unencumbered by human judgment where she might rebuild her identity in concert with ecological rhythms, rather than social imperatives. Her vanishing completes the severing from patriarchal authority and initiates the transformation into an ecological subject capable of self-determination and relational belonging.

Discussion

The findings illustrate how the narrative constructs a relationship between ecological collapse, patriarchal structures, and the protagonist's emotional transformation. When interpreted through ecofeminist frameworks, the story reveals deeper connections between gendered oppression and environmental degradation.

First, the burning landscape and deteriorating village structures reflect the intertwined collapse of ecological systems and patriarchal governance. Ecofeminist scholars such as G. Gaard, n.d. argue that patriarchal societies often operate through interconnected systems of domination that affect both women and the natural environment. The environmental destruction described in the story therefore reflects broader structures of exploitation. Similar perspectives are advanced by Whyte, (2017) and Sultana, (2023), who explain that ecological crises frequently expose existing social inequalities and histories of domination.

Second, the protagonist's increasing engagement with the forest and with the *alinya* reflects the emergence of ecological female agency. Studies in ecofeminist thought suggest that women's environmental awareness often develops through embodied experience and relational engagement with nature. Scholars such as Chinsya (2024), and Echavarren, (2023) highlight how ecological consciousness can emerge through emotional sensitivity and lived interaction with environmental systems. In this narrative, the protagonist's decision to trust the forest and recognize the resilience of the *alinya* indicates a shift from hierarchical authority toward ecological relationality.

Third, the emotional experiences depicted in the narrative illustrate the role of ecological trauma in shaping ethical awareness. Research on ecological grief by Pihkala, n.d. (2022) and Cunsolo & Ellis (2018) suggests that emotional responses to environmental loss can foster deeper commitments to ecological responsibility. The

protagonist's grief over the death of the animal and the betrayal by her father exemplify how personal and ecological trauma intersects. As Marshall et al., 2018 note, such compounded emotional burdens often produce transformative shifts in identity and ethical orientation.

Finally, the protagonist's departure from the village symbolizes a movement away from patriarchal structures toward new forms of ecological belonging. Ecofeminist scholarship suggests that environmental disruption can open spaces for alternative relational identities that emphasize care, reciprocity, and interdependence rather than domination. In this sense, the story reimagines post-apocalyptic landscapes not merely as sites of destruction but also as spaces where new ethical relationships between humans and the natural world may emerge.

CONCLUSION

This study finds that *Girl at the End of the World* by Prashanth Srivatsa compellingly embodies ecofeminist principles by positioning the female protagonist and the natural environment as interconnected agents. The post-apocalyptic setting operates not merely as a backdrop of destruction but as a symbolic space where ecological crisis and gendered oppression converge. The narrative demonstrates that patriarchal-capitalist systems simultaneously produce environmental degradation and women's marginalization, thereby reinforcing core ecofeminist arguments. Moreover, the protagonist's journey highlights an ethic of care, reciprocity, and interdependence as essential conditions for ecological survival and renewal.

These findings suggest that the text reconfigures survival as an ethical and relational practice rather than a purely physical struggle. The protagonist's interactions with the environment challenge anthropocentric hierarchies and foreground nature as an active, generative force. Ruins are reimagined not as endpoints but as living archives of violence and sites of regeneration, where ecological and gendered trauma intersect to produce new possibilities for resistance. In this sense, the narrative aligns with contemporary ecofeminist thought by emphasizing that ecological healing is inseparable from feminist agency and relational modes of existence.

This study contributes to ecofeminist literary criticism by demonstrating how speculative fiction can articulate alternative ecological ethics grounded in cooperation,

care, and mutual sustainability. It advances the understanding of eco-dystopian narratives by showing how female-centered ecological agency functions as a critical framework for imagining sustainable futures. Furthermore, it highlights the role of literature in challenging dominant patriarchal and anthropocentric paradigms while offering transformative ecological imaginaries.

Despite its contributions, this study is limited by its focus on a single literary text, which may restrict the generalizability of its findings across broader ecofeminist narratives. Additionally, the analysis is primarily interpretive and text-based, without incorporating reader-response perspectives or interdisciplinary empirical approaches that could further enrich the discussion.

Future research could explore comparative analyses of other eco-dystopian or post-apocalyptic works featuring female agency across diverse cultural contexts. Expanding into transnational perspectives would deepen understanding of how ecofeminist themes are shaped by specific socio-cultural environments. Further studies may also investigate the pedagogical potential of speculative fiction in fostering environmental awareness, gender sensitivity, and ethical transformation, particularly in the context of contemporary ecological crises.

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