

# Gaslight (2023 film)

***Gaslight*** is a 2023 Indian Hindi-language mystery-thriller film, directed by Pavan Kirpalani and produced by Ramesh Taurani and Akshai Puri. The film stars Sara Ali Khan, Vikrant Massey and Chitrangada Singh.<sup>[1][2][3]</sup> It was released on 31 March 2023 on Disney+ Hotstar.<sup>[4]</sup>

## Plot

### Meesha Comes Back Home

Meesha Gaikwad, the only daughter and the heir to the palace of the Gaikwads in Morbi. Her father, Ratan Singh Gaikwad, had written a letter to her requesting her to come back home, the place where everybody is eagerly waiting for her arrival. It is implied that Meesha has stayed away from the home of her childhood for years, which is why a lot of it seems strange and familiar at the same time. Meesha has been going through a lot in her head since she decided to meet her estranged father after all these years. She remains quiet and contemplates something in her head about what she would say to her father. Meesha is hoping to get to meet her new family, including her stepmother and possibly a new staff at the palace to take care of her needs. Meesha is a wheelchair-ridden woman, so she requires ramps everywhere to move around. There is more to be discovered about the family dynamics Meesha shared with her father and her new stepmother, Rukmani.

Meesha has no idea what to expect when she comes back to her palace. She has no topic of conversation ready except the fact that her father has written a letter to her. As she reaches the palace, she is welcomed by her stepmother Rukmani and the other staff members, who are happy to see Meesha coming back to her roots. Meesha starts going around the palace, which is essentially her home, but she doesn't see her father, whom she always called "Daata." Rukmani is not too carried away by Meesha's behavior, but she informs her that her father is out of town for some work at their salt factory. Meesha senses something odd about the place, and she can't seem to put her finger on what it is. She feels a presence always around her, and she is keen to know why her father was not here to welcome her when he was the one who wrote this heartfelt letter for her to come back. Meesha is upset, angry, and confused at not seeing her father. She relieved all the

Gaslight	
<span></span> <div>Official release poster</div>	
Directed by	Pavan Kirpalani
Written by	Neha Veena Sharma <div></div> Pavan Kirpalani
Produced by	<div><span><span></span></span> Ramesh S. Taurani</div> <div><span><span></span></span> Akshai Puri</div>
Starring	<div><span><span></span></span> Sara Ali Khan</div> <div><span><span></span></span> Vikrant Massey</div> <div><span><span></span></span> Chitrangada Singh</div>
Cinematography	<div><span><span></span></span> Ragul Dharuman</div>
Edited by	<div><span><span></span></span> Chandan Arora</div>
Music by	<div><span><span></span></span> Gaurav Chatterji</div>
Production companies	<div><span><span></span></span> Tips Industries</div> <div><span><span></span></span> 12th Street Entertainment</div>
Distributed by	<div><span><span></span></span> Disney+ Hotstar</div>
Release date	31 March 2023
Running time	111 minutes
Country	India

memories she has of her father, one of which is of him being the magician at her birthday party many years ago when her mother was still in love with her father.

Language

Hindi

## The Sightings

It has been years since her mother passed, and ever since, her father seemed happy with Rukmani, but Meesha has not moved on from the fact that her parents' family broke up because of her father and Rukmani's affair. The relationship they share is still tense, and Meesha refuses to properly communicate with her stepmother. Meesha is only keen on seeing her father, but Rukmani keeps insisting that her father is away for urgent business work and that he will be back soon. This is the only conversation Meesha has with Rukmani. Though the stepmother tries to establish contact with Meesha, she has built a wall around herself, which has made it difficult for Rukmani to break it or scale it to be able to reach out to Meesha. Meesha, on the other hand, starts being suspicious of whatever she has been told about her father's whereabouts. She starts spotting him at different spots in the palace. At times, she hears knocks on the doors or footsteps along the deserted corridors of the palace.

She also witnesses the piano keys playing the notes on their own and she feels a hand forcefully holding her wrist. All these sightings inside the palace are only witnessed by Meesha, and she can't seem to explain any of this to anybody. That would include Rukmani, Kapil, the estate manager, and Dr. Shekhawat. When Meesha insists she saw someone wandering around the palace at odd hours of the night, all of them dismiss her claims. This is exactly what gaslighting entails. Questioning her memory and her experience and dismissing it as something trivial. Meesha is sure to have felt a presence in the house, and she is sure that it is her father who is trying to reach out to her. All these lead to Meesha's conclusion that her father has been harmed and an understanding of the fact that people around her are not trying to understand her fear and are gaslighting her to believe their truth instead of hers. This makes Meesha more uncomfortable living in the palace because no one has believed her so far. Rukmani keeps insisting that her father will be back in a few days, but Meesha knows there is more to the story—her stepmother is hiding behind that chirpy smile. At this point, Meesha does not trust anyone.

## 'Gaslight' Ending Explained: Is Ratan Singh Gaikwad Dead?

Meesha starts hanging out with Kapil, the estate manager, to understand the new dynamics she is noticing brewing between Rukmani and the acquaintances of the family. Meesha is sure her stepmother has something to do with her father's not showing up at the palace so far. So, she is willing to learn more about what is going on in the household. Kapil comes across as Meesha's ally, who lets her know that he is close to King Ratan Singh but not close enough to know all the details of his life. He mentions that her father's distant cousin Rana has been wanting to sell Meesha's father's palace and, at the same time, has been flirting with Rukmani. Rukmani, on the other hand, knows local SP Ashok, who happens to be her oldest friend in the town. Everyone knows Ashok has a soft spot for Rukmani. Meesha and Kapil have their eyes on Rana and Ashok and wonder who Rukmani might be having an affair with, which will lead them to the bigger question: where is her father? Meesha cannot let go of the fact that her father left her all alone with this bunch of vultures ready to devour her. She is left to do the digging on her own, which is the need of the hour.

At a party, Kapil and Meesha come across a conversation between Rukmani and Rana where she is offering him money to keep his mouth shut. To get to the bottom of this, Meesha and Kapil confront Rana, who reveals that Meesha's father had agreed to convert the palace to a hotel before he backed out and

disappeared, which has buried Rana in a huge debt. Along with that, Rana reveals that there is a rumor of Rukmani being pregnant with someone else's child. If it was Ratan's child, he would have made big news out of this. Here, neither Meesha nor Rana has any proof of what Rana is claiming about the pregnancy, but Meesha wants to believe the man because she does not trust Rukmani. Meesha is hoping that Kapil will stand by her and be her ally in this crusade that she is about to start against her stepmother. Meesha confronts Rukmani about the pregnancy; a shocked Rukmani does not deny the allegations, but sadly, they hear the news of Rana being brutally killed. Meesha now knows someone knew he divulged the truth about Rukmani's pregnancy, and that person would be responsible for his death. Meesha is closing in on who might be the killer of Rana, and that same person would be responsible for the disappearance of her father. Meesha is hoping that person would be Rukmani because it would confirm all her biases in such matters.

Meesha comes across her father's personalized engraved cufflinks. Her father's dog, Commander, was very close to him, and he would quickly be able to locate him using his scent. Meesha is sure her father is in this palace. Her sightings of him make her confirm that her father would have to be on the premises because his cufflinks were found in his car as well. The Commander takes them to a small water body inside the palace itself. Their house help is finally able to locate the body of her father, who was tied down by a heavy stone below the water. Meesha's worst fears come true as she sees her father's rotten, floating body. Meesha cannot believe her beloved father had been dead for quite some time before she arrived at the palace, and she knows for sure Rukmani is somehow involved in this. Meesha and the house help are kidnapped by someone, tied to their car, and thrown into a quarry. The person turns out to be Kapil.

Kapil and Rukmani are involved with each other, which is what led to her pregnancy. Meesha's father caught them red-handed and tried to kill both, but Kapil ended up killing the man himself. Meesha's father had a charity NGO run in his daughter's name that sheltered many kids over the years, and Kapil had been one of them. Over the years, he realized Ratan Singh was doing this noble work not out of gratitude but only as an obligation. Angered by selective hypocritical behavior, he chooses to have an affair with Rukmani and avenge his behavior. Meesha survives the car crash, which shocks Rukmani, which is when Dr. Shekhawat reveals that the girl in their house is not Meesha but Fatima. Fatima was a nurse at rehab when she came across Meesha and remembered the brief friendship they shared. Fatima realized Meesha had been out of touch with her dad since her mother's passing, and she has since gone into depression. Fatima helps get her back on her feet and out of her depressive state.

The real Meesha, on insistence from Fatima, gets in touch with Ratan, and he promises to meet her. But Ratan never showed up, which caused her to relapse into depression. Meesha ended up killing herself because of her father's constant unavailability as a parent and the fact she thought she would always remain lonely. Fatima was heartbroken because Meesha had become her closest friend. Fatima came across the letter asking Meesha to come back, followed by Ratan's phone being unavailable for days, which made Fatima and Dr. Shekhawat realize things were not good at the palace and things had to be sorted out before it got worse. Fatima only wanted to help Meesha and assist her in coming to terms with the fact that her father might not be perfect, but he deserved to be heard. Meesha wanted to know her father, thanks to Fatima, because the latter grew up in one of the charity homes started in the name of Meesha. Fatima had a fulfilling childhood, while Kapil had quite the opposite. Kapil tries to attack everyone now that his truth has been revealed. He injured Dr. Shekhawat and accidentally killed Rukmani as well. In his attempt to kill Fatima as well, he ends up using a rifle that malfunctions, with an internal detonation killing Kapil instantly.

Rukmani was wracked with guilt over her involvement in Ratan's death, which made her try to be nice to Meesha as well. She had no intention of killing the girl, but the fact that Kapil kept pushing her to the brim made her lose her mind. Fatima realized that Rukmani had repented for her role in Ratan's death, and her

death came as the closure she wanted for herself; she did not want to wish to live anymore. Fatima wonders about the point of this visit because it opened Pandora's box, which led to not just messy family dealings but also violent deaths. This is not something she ever wanted for the real Meesha. Fatima just wanted to know the truth for Meesha so that it would help her move on. Kapil, though had no regrets for his actions, wanted to get hold of everything that Ratan Gaikwad owned just because the man had insulted his heritage. Kapil's death came as retaliation for his deed, which forced Rukmani to be involved in his schemes as he led her on. "Gaslight" was all about the cycle of manipulations the women were put through, especially by Kapil. Kapil not only led Rukmani on to fulfill his desire to get back at Ratan Singh, his boss. He also manipulates Meesha or Fatima to question her sanity, which adds to her mental stress.

## Cast

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- [Sara Ali Khan](#) as Meesha Singh Gaikwad aka Meeshri/ Fatima
- [Mannat Duggal](#) as Young Fatima
- [Vikrant Massey](#) as Kapil
- [Chitrangada Singh](#) as Rukmani
- [Akshay Oberoi](#) as Rana Jai Singh alias 'RJ'
- [Rahul Dev](#) as SP Ashok Tanwar
- [Shishir Sharma](#) as Dr. Shekhawat
- [Shataf Figar](#) as Ratan Singh Gaikwad alias 'Daata' / 'Raja Saheb'
- [Ashmita Jaggi](#) as Meesha Singh Gaikwad
- [Shivika Rishi](#) as Young Meesha
- [Manjiri Pupala](#) as the blind psychic
- [Vinod Kumar Sharma](#) as Padam

## Production

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The [principal photography](#) commenced in February 2022 in [Ranjit Vilas Palace](#), [Wankaner](#)<sup>[5]</sup> and completed in just 36 days. The second schedule of the film was shot in and around Mumbai; with underwater sections being shot in Khopoli.

## Release

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It was released on 31 March 2023 on the OTT platform [Disney+ Hotstar](#) in Hindi.<sup>[6]</sup>

## Reception

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*Gaslight* received mixed to negative reviews from critics. It was criticized for Khan's performance, weak and old storyline but there were praises showered for the horror scenes and the atmospheric cinematography and production design; as well as for the performances by the actors (particularly Massey and Singh).

*Bollywood Hungama* rated the film 2.5 out of 5 stars by calling its narration slow and clitched but appreciated the cast's performance and the unpredictable climax.<sup>[7]</sup>

*The Indian Express* rated the film 1.5 out of 5 stars and wrote that the film fails to dial up the dread, but appreciation to [Akshay Oberoi's](#) performance.<sup>[8]</sup> *Times Now* rated the film 2 out of 5 stars and wrote that film is packed up with twist and turns but still cannot give an 'edge of the seat thriller'.<sup>[9]</sup> *The Hindu*

critiqued it negatively as "A murder mystery that invests more in mood than matter, Gaslight sparks interest with its setting and sharp twists but eventually turns out to be a rather insipid whodunit."<sup>[10]</sup>

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## External links

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- *Gaslight* (<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt27012110/>) at IMDb
  - *Gaslight* (<https://www.bollywoodhungama.com/movie/gaslight/cast/>) at Bollywood Hungama
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