

# ASHISH GAUTAM

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### Title & Author

**Black Light** by Rimi B. Chatterjee

#### Introduction:

I read *Black Light* because I'm interested in books that uncover unsuspected depths of self and social conflict. I craved a deep, textured consideration of life within families and the impact of concealed truth, and I was curious to know how the author could strip away a life behind convention. The intriguing premise promised to deliver both mystery and emotional depth.

#### Summary :

*Black Light* brings to light the secret and somber existence of Medhasri Sen, a woman whose liberty and unconventional decisions fueled bitter family rivalries and final desperation. Preempting her shocked suicide, the novel takes a jump to her nephew, Satya, as he attempts to piece together the mosaic of her hidden existence. Rebuilding fragments of shattered memory and concealed documents, Satya reveals the tension between the public image demanded by convention and the inner radiance of Medhasri's private existence. We encounter an array of characters—bitter hostile relatives who resented her as a burden and devoted ones who revelled in her creativity. The controlling motifs are the suffocating weight of convention, the search for liberty of the individual, and the redemptive force of secret light that endures even in darkness. Through the interweaving of personal biography and cultural critique, the book quietly subverts conventional assumptions about success, identity, and sacrifices too readily demanded by convention.

#### Analysis & Opinion :

The strength of *Black Light* is in its robust narrative and the author's tactful handling of sensitive matters. Chatterjee succeeds in intertwining several strands of family history and individual self, so the reader can feel the very real tension between the inner self of an individual and the demands of society. Medhasri's life is a tragedy and an enigma—she is a near-mythical figure whose repressed genius is a symbol of what society represses when it demands conformity. One of the most moving points in the book is heart-wrenching where Satya, drenched in emotion, bursts out, "I will never let your memory fade!" This use of direct speech gives an idea of the intensity of his profound love and admiration for his aunt's repressed genius. Further, the novel tells us indirectly that most of the members of the family, in their unspoken disapproval, had long since lost any pretence of emotional support—she told them that their silence was more condemning than any criticism. Although the pace is at times slow, with some parts being too descriptive, these parts help to reinforce the reflective mood of the novel. On the whole, the character of Satya appears to be a ray of hope and determination, urging readers to look beyond the simplistic stories and accept the richness of truth hidden in everyday life. The novel conveys a strong message regarding the long-term power of art, memory, and the repressed parts of ourselves that, when revealed, can challenge and transform society.

#### Personal Connection :

Black Light opened my eyes in the way that it made me question long-held assumptions about heritage and identity. The novel was personal to me in the way that it reminded me that regardless of how black life gets, there is always light behind to be found. I couldn't help but remember times when I too had to fight despite being underestimated. The graphic presentation of characters fighting against the constraint of societal expectations made me realize that sometimes you must step back and allow your true you to shine through—sometimes the ball is in your court. Furthermore, the use of narration made it simple to infer on how outward appearances have inner realities. Imagery and word choice reminded me of times when I was unfairly judged, and I realized that living life on your own terms means being different. Bottom line, this book challenged me to look deeper than the surface and appreciate the significance of every untold story. It was an eye-opener that has made me more empathetic and resolute to uncover the hidden side of my own life.

## **Conclusion :**

I highly recommend Black Light to any reader looking for a rich, thought-provoking exploration of heritage and identity. Its mix of suspense, poignant family tragedy, and artistic self-discovery is perfect for readers who enjoy literary fiction that defies common sense. Though readers who prefer linear stories will find its layered structure difficult to follow, readers who prefer introspective and layered stories will love the richness and depth of emotion of the novel.