**Summary On:**

**(i)Rich like usby Nayantara Sehgal**

In “Rich Like Us” the two families of the Indian elite is being potrait at the time of the Emergency (1975-1977), the darkest period in modern Indian history, when Prime Minister India Gandhi suspended elections and civil liberties. The title of the book suggests that the book aims at criticizing the system and prevents richness to trickle down to poor people in India.

In the novel, the story is partly narrated from the point of view of Sonali , who lives in a joint family with her sister Kiran and her brother-in-law. She has a friend name Rose, an English lady who unconvincingly tries to hide her Cockney accent from her highborn friends. Rose is taking care of her Indian husband who had a stroke and cannot run his family business like he used to. Ram’s son, an lazy young man who has seriously been affected by the unusual double marriage of his father, is forging cheques to get his father’s money on his account. After some days, Rose came to know that her rights as a woman and wife are getting worse, so she talks to her friend Sonali for help. The story now goes through flashbacks from the characters’ past: for instance how Rose came to marry Ram and how she accepted to be his second wife, living on the second floor while his first wife living down stairs with her children Dev and Nishi.She also says how she got engaged with Ravi while in Oxford and then got split with him , only to see him married with the youngest daughter of the second cousin of the Prime Minister’s mother (Nishi).In the background, the political upheaval and the corruption of this horrible time in Indian history has been shown and Sonali’s father is sent to prison for no reason and they owned a shop.

In 1959 flashback, Sonali talks about communism with Ravi, telling that she don’t want to get to any doctrine. Her motivation is personal being a woman as she has lived too many restrictions to voluntarily have another one in her life. Sonali states “I don’t like dictatorships, not even of the proletariat, not even as a passing phase because who knows the phase might get stuck and never pass”(pg 112 of book). That is the reason why they broke up. According to Sonali, the implied motivation is that Ravi is actually bossy, rigid and selfish and if she married him she’d have to agree with him all the time ,Especially towards the end of the book when Rose has to face her limitations as a woman in Indian society. Only in the second half of the novel we come to know that Mona, Ram’s first wife, is compared to Sita, the heroine and suffering wife of “The Ramayana”. It is not the only allusion to mythology.  Rose also bought an old postcard of Cythera after hearing from her husband that compared India to the island of love. In the end, Rose dies in the most horrible way and it stands for our disillusionment because this India narrated by Sehgal is no island of love, but a country where patriarchal power wins over everything else, in spite of the refined manners of its ruling class.

Sehgal’s style is flawless and she manages to show the lifestyle of the ruling classes with doubt and impartiality. The narration of the story is mostly built through flashbacks, which freezes the story in a timeless reality.