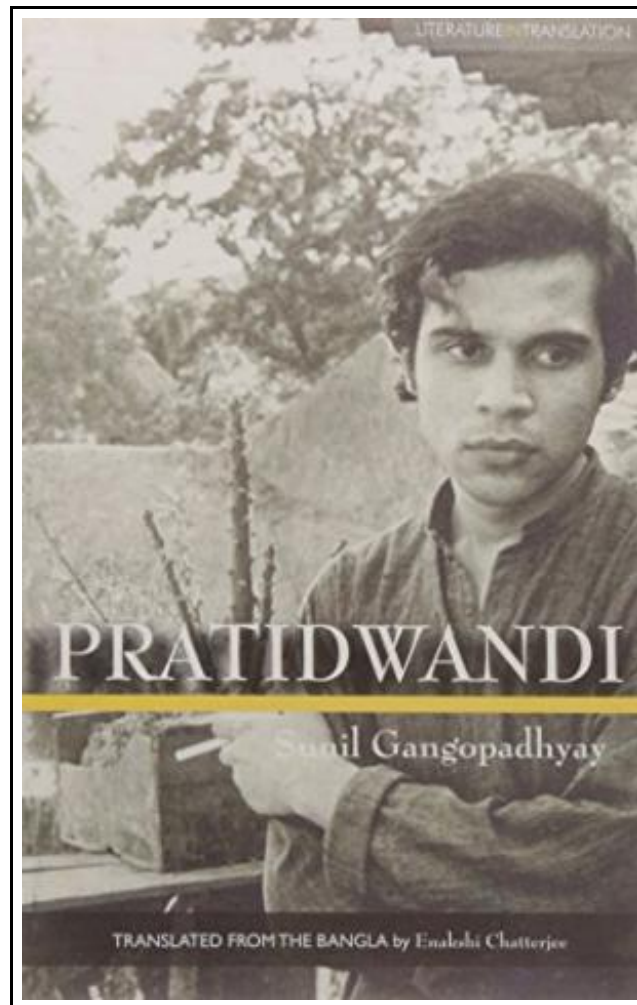


Pratidwandi



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Reviews

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Orient BlackSwan, New Delhi, India, 2004. Paperback. Book Condition: New. First Edition. Pratidwandi, meaning 'adversary', is the English translation of the Bengali original by Sunil Gangopadhyay. The story is about a family living in Calcutta during the 1960s-- the mother, two sons, the daughter, and an uncle, who moves in at the death of the father. Having lost their tea estates, they are undergoing a severe financial crisis. Siddhartha, the central character, was able to complete his graduation, because his sister ,Sutapa, was persuaded to take up a job but at the cost of her own education. Siddhartha wishes to become a doctor, but there is not enough money to fund his studies at medical college. Attempts at getting a job prove futile and his sense of frustration and obligation deepen. The apparent immutability of the situation leads to constant bickering and fights in the family. Sutapa, forced into the role of selfless breadwinner, is fed up and in trying to find an escape route brings dishonour to the family-- the final blow to their dignity. The bleakness of the narrative is relieved by a streak of romanticism and an idealistic vision of a world once inhabited by Siddhartha. Satyajit Ray made this story into a film, drawn by the compelling characterisation of Siddhartha. Printed Pages: 112.

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