



Childhood Days

Satyajit Ray , Bijoya Ray (Translator)

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Who was Satyajit Ray, writer, director, music composer and artist? Where did he make his beginnings? Who were the people he grew up with? In this charming collection of stories from Ray's childhood and film-making days, we get a glimpse into the life of a man who appeared serious and aloof to the world, and find a different, more accessible Ray humorous, tender, affectionate. He tells us about his first taste of an ice cream, his initial understandings of the principles of photography, and the teasing he had to endure in school because of his famous father and grandfather. With unassuming grace he writes about his vast, talented family, where each member had his or her special quirks and eccentricities.

In this volume, Ray also shares some of his experiences while shooting Pather Panchali his epic debut, and subsequent films, particularly for children. He describes how an entire field of kaash flowers was eaten up by cows before he could shoot his famous scene with the train in Pather Panchali; and how a circus tiger let loose in a bamboo grove chased away a group of curious onlookers in the blink of an eye.

Frank and funny, these stories written originally for the Bengali children's magazine Sandesh, are an essential read for all Ray enthusiasts as well as those who want to know Ray, the writer and film-maker, better.

Translated from the Bengali by Bijoya Ray.

Childhood Days Details

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I relished this book. It was written by Satyajit Ray in Bengali and later translated by his wife into English. It is divided into two parts - the first one dealing with his childhood and the next portion devoted to his movies - anecdotes during movie shootings. I don't remember watching a Ray film. But now I am well versed with all his major films like Pather Panchali, Aparajito, and something (a big title), and Raja Diamond (some name in Bengali which I don't remember) and how some tricky scenes were shot. The first part was engaging, but the second part much more so. This book would be a real treat to all Bengali and non Bengali fans alike. My only lament is that the book ended somewhat abruptly and the title is not very accurate as half the book describes his life as a director.

Ankita Chauhan says

Best book to know about childhood of Satyajit Ray under 80 pages. I have read it in hindi, titled "Jab Main Chhota Tha".

Wasima Noor Iqra says

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Appu says

This is two books in one. Childhood Days is about the incidents and characters that Ray encountered growing up. The second part of the book is a bunch of recollections about film shooting mainly in Varanasi and Rajasthan. Ray was born in a family of very talented people. He lost his father at a very early age. He grew up in an extended family surrounded by many eccentric and talented relatives. Ray's recollections of his childhood days make for interesting reading. We get a glimpse of Pre-Independence Calcutta and also get to meet some very interesting people. In comparison to the first part of the book, the latter part dealing with film shooting, is tame. Varanasi and Rajasthan were two of his favourite locations and he went back to these places again and again. He has some interesting yarns to tell.

These recollections were originally written in Bangla in the children's magazine Sandesh, published by the Ray family. After his death his wife Bijoya translated these into a book. The translation is competently done. Ray was a renaissance man. He was an artist, writer, musician and film maker. We get some glimpses of his genius from this book. Ray has written another memoir called My Years with Apu which is about the making of the famous Apu Trilogy.

Shaid Zaman says

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Zinat Tasnim says

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Jishnu Banerjee says

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Israt Zaman Disha says

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Tisha says

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Utsob Roy says

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Neha says

Childhood.. words can't describe the beauty of it.. its like a personal treasure that everyone has.. Sometimes when you meet an old friend, or visit your home town or someone tells you about their own childhood... images start pouring in.. how things were then, what pranks, what carefree days, what games..

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