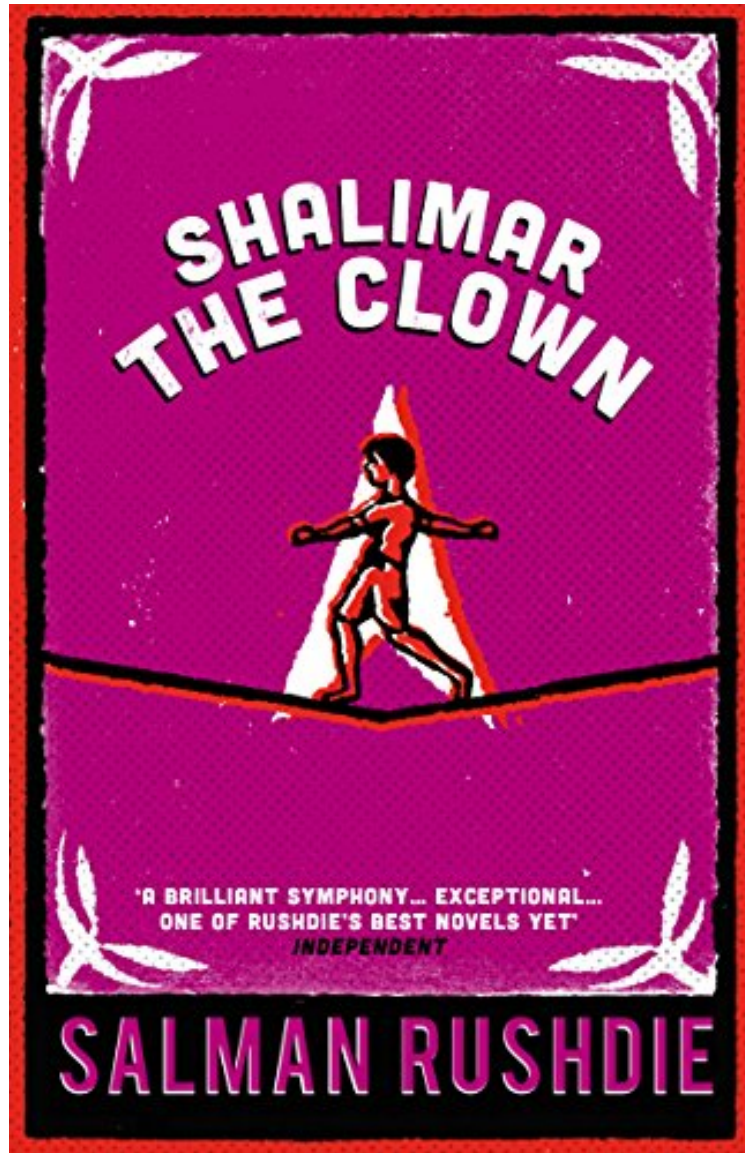


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Shalimar the Clown

Von Salman Rushdie

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Von Salman Rushdie : Shalimar the Clown before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Shalimar the Clown:

Kundenrezensionen Hilfreichste Kundenrezensionen 11 von 11 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Liebe, Religion und Terror Von Michael Dienstbier In "Shalimar der Clown" findet sich fuer jeden Geschmack etwas: Liebe, die zu Hass fuehrt. Freiheitskaempfer, die zu Moerdern und Vergewaltigern mutieren. Religion, derer alleiniger Wahrheitsanspruch die Welt ins Elend stuerzt. Und dies alles wird verkoerpert in der Person von Shalimar dem

Clown. Die erzählte Geschichte erstreckt sich über nahezu 35 Jahre und beginnt in einem kleinen Dorf in Kaschmir 1965 kurz bevor der Konflikt zwischen Hindus und Moslems, Indien und Pakistan, explodiert. Die Teenager Boonyi und Shalimar, sie Hindu und er Moslem, verlieben sich und schlafen miteinander, ein grober Verstoss gegen die Tradition. Dennoch wird ihnen erlaubt zu heiraten und einer glücklichen Zukunft scheint nichts im Wege zu stehen. Doch dann wird das junge Glück jäh durch den Besuch des amerikanischen Botschafters Maximilian Ophuls gestört. Er verliebt sich in Boonyi und lockt diese nach Amerika unter dem Vorwand ihr dort eine Ausbildung zur Tänzerin zu ermöglichen. Niemand schöpft Verdacht, bis sie mehrere Jahre später ein Kind zur Welt bringt. Shalim schwört blutige Rache. Kaschmir ist mittlerweile Kriegsgebiet und Hindus sowie Moslems begehen regelmäßig Greueltaten gegen Angehörige der anderen Religion. So ist es für Shalimar ein leichtes sich einer dem Freiheitskampf verpflichteten Terrororganisation anzuschließen. Doch sein wahres Motiv bleibt ein anderes: Rache an Maximilian Ophuls.

Rushdie erzählt die Geschichte in chronologisch nicht geordneter Reihenfolge. So startet der Roman mit dem Mord Shalimars an Ophuls und beginnt dann erst die vielschichtigen Ereignisse, die zu dieser Tat führten, aufzudecken. Dies ist durchaus spannend, jedoch weisen die einzelnen Kapitel gravierende qualitative Unterschiede auf. So zählt vor allem der zweite, aus der Sicht von Maximilian Ophuls erzählte, Abschnitt zu den Höhepunkten des Romans. Mitreissend und packend legt Rushdie seine Entwicklung vom heldenhaften Widerstandskämpfer in Frankreich während des Zweiten Weltkrieges über seine politische Karriere in den 60er und 70er Jahren, inklusive seiner Schwäche für das andere Geschlecht, bis zu seinem gewaltsamen Tod Anfang der 90er dar. Das sehr ausführliche Kapitel aus der Sicht Shalimars hingegen weist einige Längen auf und dem Leser wird bei einigen Passagen nicht wirklich klar, inwiefern sie zur Entwicklung der Handlung oder Charaktere beitragen. Übertrieben wirkt auch die Metaphorik der Namen im Roman. So wird Boonyi gezwungen ihre Tochter India zu nennen, obwohl sie eigentlich Kaschmira heissen sollte. Trotzdem ist der Roman unbedingt lesenswert. Im Gedächtnis bleibt vor allem die Methode religiöser Fanatiker, die persönlichen Gefühle anderer Menschen auszunutzen, um ihre Ziele zu erreichen.

4 von 4 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A struggle to pleasure
Von Dr. Thomas Hart
Reading Rushdie's books provide for some of the best reading experiences you can get with a living author. Some of them swallow you like a maelstrom and spit you out hours weeks or months later with that certain dizziness that is typical for the end of an out-of-the-world experience. You were gone - now you're back, and have to face dull reality again. If his style appeals to you, reading Rushdie is the best use of your time conceivable. Apart from reading Philip Roth, of course. While "Midnight's Children" and "Satanic Verses" did this to me quite easily (also the "Moore's Last Sigh", even though today I do not have a clue what it was about - complete amnesia), there are others that are more challenging. "The Ground Beneath her Feet", "Fury", but also "Grimus" did not grab my attention in the same wild manner - and neither did "Shalimar the Clown". It was, I have to admit, a bit of hard work to get through. That was partly owing to my lack of concentration to begin with, but it had, I think, also to do with a lack of focus in the book. It was never really clear to me what it was about: the ruthlessness of diplomacy and what collateral damage it does on people's lives? That would be the best one, actually. But maybe it was "only" about the way young Muslims become attracted by and engulfed in terrorism? A bit simple? Or the ever-popular power of love, of everlasting love, of everlasting hate, and how both guide humans like missiles to destruction? Yes, but not in the book. Witchcraft and potatoe curses and snake curses? Yes, that you can find, but it keeps diminishing in the background of the story about. Hmmm Anyway: there is a certain dynamic in the book, which reappears whenever Shalimar the Clown reappears. It is clearly a book about him, and his victims and lovers and parents and teachers are not as interesting as he is. Even the Ambassador, the character that gets most lines in the 400-page volume, I guess, diminishes against the very simple way forward which Shalimar has chosen as his aim in life. Forward towards destroying his enemy. There is only one, but in order to complete the deed, garnishment is required in the same way as some veggies are lined up around a nice steak. They don't matter, but they make it a meal. What I find most interesting about the character of Shalimar is that, while he is a killer, that has nothing to do with him killing that one enemy he really wants to kill. The other thing is his job, the final deed is his destination. After this, he can become one of these half-real half-magic creatures of which so many inhabit Rushdie's books. He deserves the exit he gets, a magic "escape" into oblivion, a bit similar to the exit Castorp gets at the end of the "Magic Mountain", definitely not as clumsy, but as spirited in many ways. Only that he turns up again later, just for a few pages, to complete his task. Or not. The others are left behind, whether alive or dead does not really matter, because this side-figure Shalimar affects their lives so deeply that life will not be able to continue one way or the other. As the final chapters of the book drew me in considerably stronger than the first half, and as I still would never be able to drop a Rushdie novel and not finish it, I think the end of the day I can be pleased. I met some people I liked, some people I loathed, and some about whose fate I could not care less - and I have the suspicion that this is very near to what the author wants me to be.

1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. kaschmir, liebe und politik
Von K. Somers
sprachgewaltig wie immer entführt rushdie nach kaschmir - in seine historie, poesie, kunst, folklöre, politik, natur. dennoch startet und endet der roman eigentlich als krimi: wer hat den amerikaner max ophuls warum ermordet? die antwort ist vielschichtig und verschlungen und zeigt die geduld, die für diesen mord aufgebracht wurde. liebe kann in tödlichen hass umschlagen, ein

clown zum auftragsmörder werden.

Kurzbeschreibung Shalimar the Clown was once a figure full of love and laughter. His skill as a tightrope walker was legendary in his native home of Kashmir. But fate has played him cruelly, torn him away from his beloved home and brought him to Los Angeles, where he works as a chauffeur. One morning he gets up, goes to work, and brutally slays his employer, America's former counter-terrorist chief Maximilian Ophuls, in full view of the victim's illegitimate daughter, India. Despite the political overtones, it soon emerges that this is a murder with a much darker heart to it. The killing has its roots halfway across the globe, back in Kashmir, a ruined paradise not so much lost as shattered. And gradually it emerges that beyond this unholy trinity of Max, India and Shalimar, lurks a fourth, shadowy figure, one who binds them all together. From Publishers Weekly Starred . [Signature] ed by William T. Vollmann The focus of this novel is extremism. It tells the tale of two Kashmiri villages whose inhabitants gradually get caught up in communal violence. As we know from Yugoslavia, hatred takes on especially horrific manifestations when neighbors turn against each other. The neighbors to whom Rushdie introduces us are memorable and emblematic characters, especially his protagonists, the Hindu dancer Boonyi Kaul and her childhood sweetheart, Shalimar the clown, son of a Muslim family. Their passion becomes a marriage solemnized by both Hindu and Muslim rites, but as conflict heats up, Boonyi seduces the American ambassador. The resulting transformation of Shalimar into a terrorist is easily the most impressive achievement of the book, and here one must congratulate Rushdie for having made artistic capital out of his own suffering, for the years he spent under police protection, hunted by zealots, have been poured into the novel in ways which ring hideously true. Bit by bit, Shalimar becomes a figure of supernatural menace. The life of the ambassador, Max Ophuls, is also brilliantly invented. In a series of highly effective set pieces: Nazi-occupied Strasbourg, where he failed to persuade his principled parents to save the books they published, not to mention themselves, from the flames (the family was Jewish); southern France, where his exploits on behalf of the Resistance were so colorful that I would spoil the reader's pleasure if I betrayed them; England, where a glamorous wartime romance led him into his only marriage the author builds our sympathy for the man who (with her connivance) ruins Boonyi's life and sets in motion Shalimar's destiny. Now for the novel's defects: Rushdie's female characters are generally less plausible than the male ones. When he is describing Kashmir's good old days of communal tolerance, he too frequently takes refuge in slapstick. His depiction of Los Angeles relies so much on references to popular culture that the place becomes a superficial parody of itself. In terms of technique, Rushdie's most irritating tic is the sermonistic parallelism or repetition, but the novel's best passages (not to mention his other great work, Shame) prove him capable of great style. Never mind these flaws. Shalimar the Clown is a powerful parable about the willing and unwilling subversion of multiculturalism. And for those readers who even in this post-September-eleventh continue to cling to American narcissism, the parable grows more urgently pointed: Ophuls and Boonyi conceive a daughter, who is taken away at birth and in due time becomes a beautiful, troubled, privileged ignoramus in Los Angeles. About Shalimar the clown, her mother's husband, she doesn't have a clue. Is that her fault? Is it our fault that we never paid much attention to the rest of the world? But one day, without any warning, two planes smashed into the Twin Towers, and now (wake up and run!) Shalimar the clown has arrived in Los Angeles. (On sale Sept. 6) Vollmann's most recent novel is Europe Central (Viking). Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist Before the eyes of his grown daughter, a former (and famous) American ambassador to India is stabbed to death by his enigmatic chauffeur, the Shalimar of the novel's title. What contemporary novelist knows more than Rushdie about the political-religious tensions besetting the globe since the middle of the twentieth century and, specifically, how such tensions not only affect personal lives but also, in many instances, create the lives many people lead? The historically shaped lives of Maximilian Ophuls, born into a wealthy Jewish family in Strasbourg, France, and later a Resistance hero and vastly popular diplomat, and Shalimar the Clown, who grew up in the devastatingly beautiful (but Hindu-Muslim disputed) Kashmir region of India, intersect, and why one is compelled to take the other's life seems to be the perfect material for Rushdie's cosmopolitan, sociopolitical consciousness. To characterize the novel as "rich" seems inadequately broad as a general description of a Rushdie book, including this one. Let it stand, however, as a cogent descriptor of Rushdie's sheer and magnificent talent. His beautifully metaphoric language and sly sense of humor keep his complex plot, with its layers of personal and cosmic meaning, tightly woven. Brad Hooper Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved