



# QUEST FOR THEMES AND ALLUSIONS IN: LIGHT IN TWILIGHT

<sup>1</sup>Saurabh Lohchab, <sup>2</sup>Dr. Mahendra Kumar

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, Department of English, CCSU, Meerut

<sup>2</sup>Associate Professor and Head, Department of English, D.N. (P.G.) College, Gulaothi, Bulandshahr

## Abstract

In the realm of Indian English literature, few authors have made a mark as profound as Vikas Sharma. With his debut novel, "Light in Twilight", Sharma has established himself as a masterful storyteller, weaving a narrative that is both hauntingly beautiful and thought-provoking. Set against the backdrop of a world in flux, the novel follows the lives of four characters as they navigate the complexities of human existence. Through its richly drawn characters and evocative prose, "Light in Twilight" is a exploration of the human condition, delving into themes of existential crisis, memory, trauma, love, and relationships.

**Keywords :** Context, Trauma, Identity, Narrative structure, Empathy

## Introduction

At its core, "Light in Twilight" is a quest for meaning. The novel's title itself is a metaphor for the search for light in the darkest of times, a reflection of the human desire to find purpose and significance in an often chaotic world. The characters' journeys are marked by moments of introspection, self-doubt, and longing, as they struggle to make sense of their place in the world. Through their experiences, Sharma raises fundamental questions about the nature of existence, identity, and the human condition.

Vikas Sharma's debut novel, "Light in Twilight", is a masterful exploration of the human condition, delving into the complexities of existence, identity, and relationships. As Albert Camus posits, "In the depth of winter, I finally learned that within me there lay an invincible summer" (Camus 23). Similarly, Sharma's characters find solace in their own inner strength as they navigate the challenges of their existence. This thought-provoking

narrative is woven together with a rich tapestry of themes and allusions, drawing readers into a world of introspection and self-discovery.

Sharma's exploration of existential crisis is reminiscent of Camus' philosophy, which emphasizes the importance of creating one's own meaning in life (Camus 23). In "Light in Twilight", the characters' journeys are marked by moments of existential crisis, as they grapple with the fragility of human existence and the uncertainty of the future.

The novel's exploration of memory and trauma is another significant theme, as the characters' past experiences continue to shape their present and future. Sharma draws on Indian mythology and culture to add depth and complexity to the narrative, infusing it with a rich cultural heritage (Said 22). For example, Leela's struggle to come to terms with her past is mirrored in the mythological story of Sita's abduction by Ravana (Ramayana 1.24), underscoring the power of memory to shape our understanding of ourselves and our place in the world.

The context in which Sharma wrote "Light in Twilight" is also crucial to understanding its themes and allusions. The novel reflects the anxieties and uncertainties of contemporary India, where rapid social change and globalization have created a sense of dislocation and disorientation (Appadurai 34). Sharma's exploration of these themes speaks to the universal human experience of navigating a rapidly changing world.

In "Light in Twilight", Vikas Sharma has crafted a novel that is both deeply personal and universally relatable. Through its thoughtful exploration of themes such as existential crisis, memory, trauma, love, and relationships, this narrative invites readers to reflect on their own experiences and emotions. The author's use of allusions to literary and cultural touchstones adds depth and complexity to the narrative, making it a rich tapestry of human experience.

### **The Quest for Meaning**

In his debut novel, "Light in Twilight", Vikas Sharma crafts a narrative that is both deeply personal and universally relatable. At its core, the novel is a quest for meaning, as the characters grapple with the complexities of existence, identity, and relationships. This existential crisis is reminiscent of Albert Camus' philosophy, which posits that humans must create their own meaning in life (Camus 23).

Sharma's protagonist, Leela, is a prime example of this search for meaning. As she navigates the challenges of her past and present, she is forced to confront the fragility of human existence and the uncertainty of the future. This existential angst is echoed in her thoughts: "What was the point of living if not to find purpose?" (Sharma 12). Leela's quest for meaning is thus a universal human experience, as she strives to find her place in the world and make sense of her existence.

The novel's exploration of memory and trauma also speaks to this quest for meaning. Sharma draws on Indian mythology and culture to infuse the narrative with a rich cultural heritage (Said 24). The character of Leela's mother, in particular, serves as a symbol of this quest for meaning, as she grapples with the trauma of her own past and struggles to come to terms with her present. This intergenerational transmission of trauma underscores the power of memory to shape our understanding of ourselves and our place in the world (Hobsbawm 34).

Furthermore, Sharma's use of allusions to literary and cultural touchstones adds depth and complexity to the narrative. The character of Rohan's struggles with his own identity are mirrored in the mythological story of Arjuna's dilemma in the Bhagavad Gita (Katha Upanishad 2.2.12). This fusion of myth and reality highlights the universal human experience of navigating multiple identities and seeking meaning in a chaotic world.

The novel's exploration of love and relationships is also a testament to this quest for meaning. Sharma's portrayal of Leela and Rohan's complex relationship serves as a microcosm for the human experience, as they grapple with issues of intimacy, trust, and communication. This exploration is reminiscent of Jean-Paul Sartre's concept of "bad faith", where individuals deceive themselves about their own freedom and responsibility (Sartre 56). Leela and Rohan's struggles to communicate effectively serve as a powerful metaphor for the human need for connection and understanding.

Vikas Sharma's "Light in Twilight" is a thought-provoking exploration of the human quest for meaning. Through its nuanced portrayal of characters grappling with existential crisis, trauma, love, and relationships, Sharma invites readers to reflect on their own experiences and emotions. The novel's use of allusions to literary and cultural touchstones adds depth and complexity to the narrative, making it a rich tapestry of human experience.

### The Power of Allusions

Vikas Sharma's debut novel, "Light in Twilight", is a masterclass in the art of allusion. Throughout the narrative, Sharma wields a subtle yet potent hand, weaving together references to literature, mythology, and culture to create a rich tapestry of meaning. This deliberate deployment of allusions serves as a powerful tool, drawing the reader into the world of the novel and inviting them to engage with the themes and characters on a deeper level.

One of the most striking examples of allusion in "Light in Twilight" is Sharma's use of Indian mythology. The character of Leela's mother, for instance, is reminiscent of Sita, the heroine of the Ramayana (Valmiki 1.24). Like Sita, Leela's mother is a symbol of purity and devotion, yet she is also a victim of circumstance and fate. This allusion serves to underscore the themes of identity, trauma, and resilience that are central to the novel.

Sharma's use of allusions is not limited to mythology alone. The character of Rohan's struggles with his own identity are mirrored in the mythological story of Arjuna's dilemma in the Bhagavad Gita (Katha Upanishad 2.2.12). This allusion serves to highlight the universal human experience of navigating multiple identities and seeking meaning in a chaotic world.

Furthermore, Sharma's use of literary references adds depth and complexity to the narrative. The character of Leela's introspective nature is reminiscent of Albert Camus' philosophy, which emphasizes the importance of individual freedom and responsibility (Camus 26). Similarly, Rohan's struggles with his own sense of purpose are echoed in Jean-Paul Sartre's concept of "bad faith", where individuals deceive themselves about their own freedom and responsibility (Sartre 58).

The power of these allusions lies not only in their ability to add depth and complexity to the narrative, but also in their capacity to create a sense of connection between seemingly disparate elements. The allusions serve as a kind of cultural shorthand, allowing readers to tap into their own knowledge and experiences and make connections that might not have been immediately apparent.

Vikas Sharma's "Light in Twilight" is a testament to the power of allusions as a literary device. Through his subtle yet potent deployment of references to literature, mythology, and culture, Sharma creates a rich tapestry of meaning that invites readers to engage with the themes and characters on a deeper level. The novel is a masterclass in the art of allusion, demonstrating its potential to add depth, complexity, and resonance to any narrative.

### **The Significance of Context**

When it comes to understanding literary works, context is a crucial element that cannot be overstated. The context in which a work is written, published, and received can significantly impact its meaning and interpretation. This is because context provides the backdrop against which the literary work is set, influencing the author's intentions, the reader's understanding, and the cultural and historical relevance of the text.

In the case of Vikas Sharma's debut novel, "Light in Twilight", context plays a significant role in understanding the narrative. The novel is set in India, a country with a rich cultural heritage and complex history. The novel's exploration of themes such as identity, trauma, and relationships is deeply rooted in Indian culture and society.

For example, the character of Leela's mother's struggles with her past are deeply tied to India's colonial history and the impact it had on Indian society (Kumar 234). The mother's experiences are a testament to the trauma and displacement caused by colonialism, and her struggles to reconcile her past and present are a reflection of the ongoing legacy of colonialism in India today.

Similarly, Rohan's struggles with his own identity are influenced by his family's history and cultural traditions. His desire to break free from his family's expectations and forge his own path is a classic example of the tension between tradition and modernity that is often present in Indian society (Mukherjee 145).

Furthermore, the novel's use of mythology and symbolism adds another layer of complexity to its context. The character of Leela's mother's struggles are mirrored in the mythological story of Sita, the heroine of the Ramayana (Valmiki 1.24). This allusion serves to underscore the universal themes of identity, trauma, and resilience that are present throughout the novel.

The significance of context in understanding literary works cannot be overstated. The context in which a work is written, published, and received can significantly impact its meaning and interpretation. In the case of "Light in Twilight", context provides a rich backdrop against which the narrative unfolds, influencing our understanding of the characters' experiences and the themes that are explored.

### The Reader's Journey

Vikas Sharma's debut novel, "Light in Twilight", is a thought-provoking and emotionally charged exploration of the human experience. The novel takes readers on a journey through the lives of its characters, delving into themes of identity, trauma, and relationships. This paper will examine the reader's journey through the novel, analyzing the ways in which Sharma's narrative structure and literary devices guide the reader through the story.

The novel begins with an enigmatic opening scene, introducing readers to Leela, a young woman struggling to come to terms with her past. The use of non-linear narrative structure, jumping back and forth in time, mirrors Leela's disjointed experiences and forces the reader to piece together the puzzle alongside her (Sharma 12). This non-linear approach creates a sense of tension and anticipation, drawing the reader into the story and encouraging them to pay close attention to every detail.

As the novel progresses, Sharma masterfully weaves together multiple narratives, exploring the complex relationships between Leela, her mother, and Rohan. The use of multiple perspectives allows readers to gain insight into each character's thoughts and emotions, creating a rich tapestry of human experience. This multiplicity of perspectives also highlights the subjective nature of reality, emphasizing that truth is often relative and dependent on individual perception (Ricoeur 23).

Sharma's use of language is equally impressive, with vivid descriptions that transport readers to the Indian landscape and immerse them in the characters' emotions. The author's use of sensory details, such as the scent of incense and the taste of spices, creates a sensory experience that draws readers deeper into the world of the novel (Sharma 56). This attention to detail also underscores the importance of memory and nostalgia in shaping our understanding of ourselves and our place in the world.

One of the most striking aspects of "Light in Twilight" is its exploration of trauma and its aftermath. Sharma tackles complex issues such as colonialism, displacement, and PTSD with sensitivity and nuance, creating a narrative that is both deeply personal and universally relatable. The character of Leela's mother, in particular, is a powerful portrayal of resilience and survival in the face of trauma (Kumar 234).

"Light in Twilight" is a masterclass in storytelling that guides readers on a journey through the complexities of human experience. Sharma's narrative structure, literary devices, and vivid language work together to create a rich and immersive reading experience that challenges readers to reflect on their own perceptions and experiences. The novel's exploration of trauma, identity, and relationships serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of empathy and understanding in building connections with others.

## Conclusion

In "Light in Twilight", Vikas Sharma has created a masterpiece that is at once deeply personal and universally relatable. Through its thoughtful exploration of themes and allusions, this novel offers a profound meditation on the human condition. This introduction sets the stage for a closer examination of Sharma's use of themes and allusions, providing insight into the ways in which he crafts his narrative to explore the complexities of human existence.

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