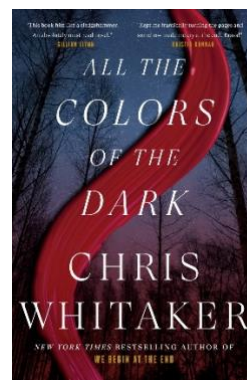


**All the Colors of the Dark**  
**By Chris Whitaker**  
**Reviewed by: Puneet Gill, 17**  
**Star Book Reviewer of Be the Star You Are! Charity**  
[www.bethestaryouare.org](http://www.bethestaryouare.org)



On 1975 inside town of Missouri Ozarks, Joseph “Patch” MacCauley, a 13-year-old boy born with one eye, sets on a dangerous mission to save his crush, Misty Meyer. He frees her from her captor, Eli Aaron, but subsequently gets kidnapped himself and trapped in a room with a mysterious girl called Grace. His friend, Saint—an enthusiastic beekeeper—sets off to uncover who kidnapped the young girls after freeing Patch, yet finds him obsessed on his own path of searching the unknown Grace. Saint becomes an officer as an adult while Patch paints portraits of the girl and robs banks for charities. As years pass on, they navigate the scopes of trauma and darkness in their small town to fight human facades.

My favorite part of the story may have to be the poetic ending: the pirate and the beekeeper. Its connection to Patch’s obsession with Grace and Saint’s love for someone who does not return that same love builds tension and complexity. Patch’s growth from an ingenuine and vulnerable boy to someone that endured the dangerous obstacles of Eli Aaron demonstrated his release of the past and open arms to what the future holds in store for him. Saint’s own compassion for the people she cares for convey how her kind personality does not prevent her from being a strong woman in society.

On the other hand, the ending of the story drags on and does not end sooner. It continued on with multiple characters utilizing filler and “fluff” between the chapters rather than retaining a concise measure. One character in particular, Charlotte Meyer—daughter of Misty and Patch—had interesting, yet unfitting dialogue that did interrupt the flow of the story. Her intense verbal communication due to being born closer to the present significantly contrasts the other characters near the end of the novel. One odd thing I found was how she became Saint’s responsibility rather than her own father, yet it forms the moral complexity on how good and evil may coexist in humanity.

This book may have a longer reading length, yet it is great for a library book on-the-go if anyone wishes to lean more into the crime and thriller side of things. Themes such as women autonomy (in relation to Eli Aaron and Dr. Tooms), mental health, moral ambiguity, and identity are present throughout the entirety of the novel. With aspects such as strong language, psychological tensions, and dark elements unsuitable for children, mature audiences as young as 16 are eligible to read about this heavy topic. However, with some parental guidance, teens may manage to grasp the realities of recovering traumatic experiences with glimmers of resilience.

Recommended Titles:

**The Child Finder, by Rene Denfeld**

**When the Stars Go Dark, by Paula McLain**

**All the Ugly and Wonderful Things, by Bryn Greenwood**

**This Tender Land, by William Kent Krueger**

**The Berry Pickers, by Amanda Peters**