



## The Summons of Love

*Mari Ruti*

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## **The Summons of Love** Mari Ruti

We are conditioned to think love's purpose is to heal wounds, make us happy, and give our lives meaning. When the opposite occurs, and love causes us to feel fractured, disenchanted, and full of existential turmoil, our suffering is compounded by the sense that love has failed us, or that we've failed to experience what so many others effortlessly enjoy.

In this eloquently argued, psychologically-informed book, Mari Ruti portrays love as a much more complex, multifaceted phenomenon prompting us to access the depths of human existence. Love's ruptures are as important as its triumphs, and sometimes love succeeds because it fails. At the heart of her argument is a meditation on interpersonal ethics that acknowledges the inherent opacity of human interiority and the difficulty of taking responsibility for what we cannot fully understand. Nevertheless, the fact that humans are not always rational in love does not absolve us of ethical accountability. In Ruti's view, we need to work harder to map the unconscious patterns motivating our romantic behavior. As opposed to popular spiritual approaches that urge us to live fully in the now, Ruti sees the past as a living component of the present. Only when we learn to catch ourselves at those moments when the past speaks in the present can we keep from hurting the ones we love. Equally important, transcending our individual histories of pain means facing the unconscious demons that dictate our relational choices. Written with substance and compassion, *The Summons of Love* reveals the enlivening and transformative possibilities of romance.

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