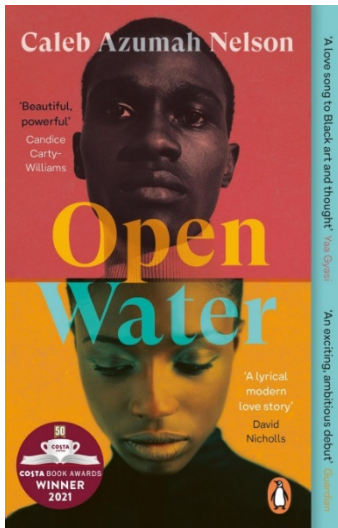




## Open Water

By Caleb Azumah Nelson



Two young people meet at a pub in South East London. Both are Black British, both won scholarships to private schools where they struggled to belong, both are now artists - he a photographer, she a dancer - trying to make their mark in a city that by turns celebrates and rejects them. Tentatively, tenderly, they fall in love. But two people who seem destined to be together can still be torn apart by fear and violence.

At once an achingly beautiful love story and a potent insight into race and masculinity, *Open Water* asks what it means to be a person in a world that sees you only as a Black body, to be vulnerable when you are only respected for strength, to find safety in love, only to lose it.

### Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think the male protagonist refers to his relationship as 'open water'?

2. What do you think of Caleb Azumah Nelson's writing style?

3. Why do you think the male and female protagonists' names are never mentioned?

4. In chapter 27, what do you think the dead seagull was representative of?

5. Do you think we would have gotten such an honest portrayal of the experience of a Black British male if this story was delivered in a first-person narrative?

6. Finally, what passage in this book spoke to you the most?

*Thank you to our volunteer Rayan for choosing this title and creating the resource*