

Nightingale Point By Luan Goldie



On an ordinary May morning in 1996, the residents of high-rise Nightingale Point in London wake up to their normal lives and worries.

Mary is a Filipina nurse with a secret life that no one knows about, not even Malachi and Tristan, the brothers she vowed to look out for after the death of their mother and their grandmother's return to the Caribbean

Malachi has had to grow up too quickly trying to look after both his troubled mum and his little brother, and now struggling to keep up with his university studies while nursing a broken heart.

Tristan is nearly sixteen and desperate to be cool and street-smart. But he's falling in with the wrong crowd and Malachi is too distracted to notice.

Elvis is getting his first taste of independent living in Nightingale Point. He loves it

but it's tough. He tries hard to remember the instructions his care worker gives him, but sometimes he gets confused and forgets things.

Pamela wants to be with Malachi but her overprotective father has locked her in and there's no way out.

It's a day like any other, until something terrible happens and their lives are changed completely.

The novel was shortlisted for the Women's Prize for Fiction in 2020 and chosen as one of the titles on offer for this year's **World Book Night**. Thanks to The Reading Agency for their generous donation of books.

Discussion Questions

1. The novel is told from the different points of view of five characters. Which character did you find most interesting and why?

2. Why do you think the book doesn't explore the perspectives of Jay or Harris?

3. The Author's Note at the end explains that the starting point for the book was the 1992 accidental crash of a cargo plane into two high-rise blocks of flats in Amsterdam, killing up to forty-seven people.

There are also clear echoes of both 9/11 and the Grenfell fire and there have been criticisms of the novel for mixing fact and fiction, for 'making up' characters and stories when there are real people still suffering the trauma of these events. What do you think?

4. The novel follows the characters and their attempts to recover and 'heal' for five years after the fire. How do they feel about the anniversary gatherings of survivors? Are they helpful? Why/why not? And what about the memorial?

5. The novel is full of guilt and secrets. Do you think Tristan makes the right decision about the secret he has kept from Malachi?

6. Which characters do you feel most and least hopeful about at the end of the book? Why?