

BOOK CLUB in a bag

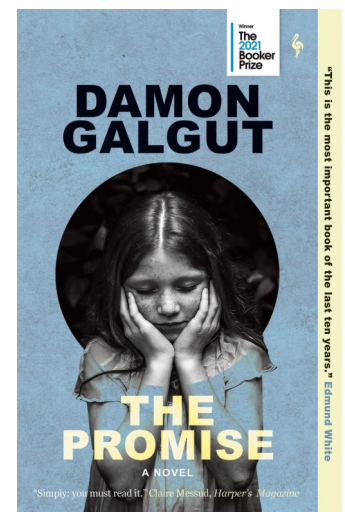


The Promise

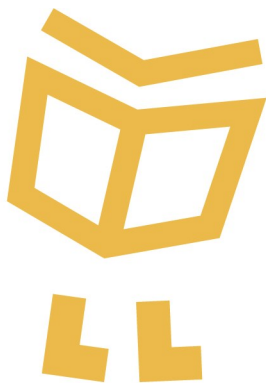
Damon Galgut

Discussion Questions

1. The “promise” of the title is both a literal one and a figurative one about the characters’, or the country’s potential. Can you explore that idea?
2. What do you make of the narrator’s voice: the way it shifts and swoops and becomes almost like a movie camera with its alternating perspectives?
3. How does the Swart family stand for what is happening more broadly in South Africa?
4. Discuss the supernatural elements of the book.
5. The story is told over 30 years, as the family comes together for four different funerals. How has the family changed after each time jump? How has South Africa changed?
6. Discuss the character of Salome, who is initially depicted as a side character despite the promise made to her by Rachel being the event on which the book is centered. How does the family’s treatment of her change throughout the book? Or does it?
7. Amor, Astrid, and Anton are set apart by their differences. That being said, do they share any similarities?
8. Towards the end we are faced with the question, not only of whether the original promise can be kept, but whether it was a flawed promise all along. Where do you stand?
9. What character did you find most interesting? Is there anyone you wish we had gotten to learn more about?
10. What did you think of the author’s writing style? Did you like the use of multiple perspectives and time jumps, or would you have preferred something more linear?



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About the Author

Damon Galgut was born in Pretoria. His 2003 novel *The Good Doctor* won the Commonwealth Writers Prize (Africa Region) and was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize. *In a Strange Room* (Europa, 2010) was also shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize. In 2021, Galgut won the Booker Prize for *The Promise* (Europa, 2021). In 2013, Galgut was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Letters. He lives in Cape Town, South Africa.

Via Europa Editions (<https://www.europaeditions.com/author/90/damon-galgut>)

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