



# Small Island: A Novel

*Andrea Levy*

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*Small Island* is an international bestseller. It won the Orange Prize for Fiction, The Orange Prize for Fiction: Best of the Best, The Whitbread Novel Award, The Whitbread Book of the Year Award, and the Commonwealth Writers' Prize. It has now been adapted for the screen as a coproduction of the BBC and Masterpiece/WGBH Boston.

Hortense Joseph arrives in London from Jamaica in 1948 with her life in her suitcase, her heart broken, her resolve intact. Her husband, Gilbert Joseph, returns from the war expecting to be received as a hero, but finds his status as a black man in Britain to be second class. His white landlady, Queenie, raised as a farmer's daughter, befriends Gilbert, and later Hortense, with innocence and courage, until the unexpected arrival of her husband, Bernard, who returns from combat with issues of his own to resolve.

Told in these four voices, *Small Island* is a courageous novel of tender emotion and sparkling wit, of crossings taken and passages lost, of shattering compassion and of reckless optimism in the face of insurmountable barriers---in short, an encapsulation of that most American of experiences: the immigrant's life.

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