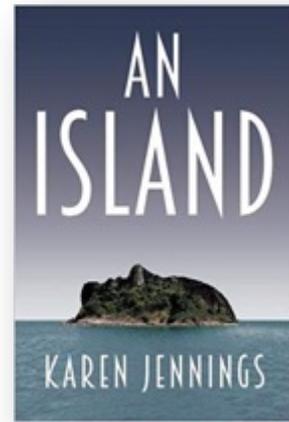


KAREN JENNINGS  
**AN ISLAND**

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**ON THE LONGLIST OF THE BOOKER PRIZE 2021**

The judges wrote:

"An Island concerns itself with lives lived on the margins, through the story of a man who has exiled himself from the known world only to find himself called to the service of others, themselves exiled from the world by cruelty and circumstance. It is on these grounds that this writer deftly constructs a moving, transfixing novel of loss, political upheaval, history, identity, all rendered in majestic and extraordinary prose."

**"A gripping, terrifying and unforgettable story."**

**Elleke Boehmer, Professor of World Literature, Oxford**

Samuel has lived alone for a long time; one morning he finds the sea has brought someone to offer companionship and to threaten his solitude...

A young refugee washes up unconscious on the beach of a small island inhabited by no one but Samuel, an old lighthouse keeper. Unsettled, Samuel is soon swept up in memories of his former life on the mainland: a life that saw his country suffer under colonisers, then fight for independence, only to fall under the rule of a cruel dictator; and he recalls his own part in its history. In this new man's presence he begins to consider, as he did in his youth, what is meant by land and to whom it should belong. To what lengths will a person go in order to ensure that what is theirs will not be taken from them?

A novel about guilt and fear, friendship and rejection; about the meaning of home.

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**KAREN JENNINGS** is a South African author. Her debut novel, *Finding Soutbek*, was shortlisted for the inaugural Etisalat Prize for African Fiction. Her memoir, *Travels with my Father*, was published in 2016, and in 2018 she released her debut poetry collection, *Space Inhabited by Echoes*. Currently living in Brazil, last year Karen completed post-doctoral research at the Federal University of Goiás on the historical relationship between science and literature, with a focus on eusocial insects. Karen works with the mentorship programmes run by Writivism and Short Story Day Africa, both of which promote writing in Africa. Her interests lie in colonialism, historically and in the lasting impact that it has had on the continent of Africa and beyond. She is particularly concerned with the quiet lives of the everyday people who have been mostly forgotten by the politicians, big businesses and the rest of the world. In this way, she strives to give the ordinary a voice that can be heard and appreciated. Karen was a Miles Morland Foundation Scholar while writing this book.

## INTERVIEWS AND PRESS

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