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# Night Flight

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~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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Danni is newly arrived in urban England ? it is not named, nor is his country of origin ? but it is strongly signified. He lives with an ?aunty? and is pitched into a school where he doesn?t understand the language, the system or the culture. Using a register that is simple and direct, Michaela Morgan captures Danni?s frustration and fears splendidly. Danni makes a list in his head of all the new things he has learnt, ranging from how to present his schoolwork to eating pie with a knife and fork is correct but eating cake with a knife and fork causes ridicule. He is told that you do not cross bridges before you come to them but this is something he had never thought of doing. How incomprehensible western society can seem to incomers is presented in simple examples like these, but also in more terrifying ones of intimidation and protest against refugees. Stark illustrations by Erika Pál also convey Danni?s bleak world.

Danni finds release in recounting his scarifying journey of escape to an old, sick horse on a city farm visited by his school, but when Midnight dies Danni is devastated. Catharsis is offered in the form of a dream/vision by Danni in which he rides a unicorn, after which he wakes refreshed and better able to cope with his circumstances. This is clearly intended as an empowering element in the story, but it is also rather simplistic and perhaps another more realistic device for drawing the narrative to a close might resonate better with some readers.

Nevertheless, **Night Flight** offers a touching and well-written insight into the life of a young boy adrift in a strange and often threatening world. Introducing the book to children in schools and libraries would be a good way of providing empathy with the predicament of those who arrive on our shores with little or no preparation and often deeply traumatised.

Running Order:

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