

Others Were Emeralds

author: Lang Leav

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Synopsis

author	Lang Leav
readBy	Shiromi Arserio
inLanguage	english

“Others Were Emeralds” kept me on the edge of my seat from beginning to end. With lyrical and moving prose, Lang tells a stunning tale of love, loss, and the true power of friendship. A deep, beautiful novel.” — Etaf Rum, *New York Times* bestselling author of *A Woman is No Man*

Internationally acclaimed poet Lang Leav’s debut adult novel combines her poetical lyricism and emotional acumen to create an enthralling coming of age narrative set against the backdrop of anti-Asian sentiment sweeping Australia in the late 90s. A stirring portrayal of guilt, loss, and memory, *Others Were Emeralds* explores the inherent danger of allowing our misconceptions to shape our reality.

What comes first, the photograph or the memory?

The daughter of Cambodian refugees, Ai grew up in the small Australian town of Whitlam populated by Asian immigrants who once fled war-torn countries to rebuild their shattered lives. It is now the late '90s and despite their parents' harrowing past, Ai and her tightknit group of school friends: charismatic Brigitte, sweet, endearing Bowie, shy, inscrutable Tin, and politically minded Syng, lead seemingly ordinary lives, far removed from the unimaginable horrors suffered by their parents.

But that carefree innocence is shattered in their last year of school when Ai and her friends encounter a pair of racist men whose cruel acts of intimidation spiral into senseless violence. Grappling with the magnitude of her grief at such a young age, Ai leaves Whitlam for college before her trauma has a chance to fully resolve.

In her second year of college Ai suffers a mental health crisis, driving her back home to Whitlam, a place she swore never to return. There, she reconnects with those she left behind and together they are compelled to look back on the tragedy that shaped their adolescence and examine the role they may have unwittingly played.

Reader's comments

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