

# Night in the World by Sharon English

## Book Club Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think the story was told from the perspective of three different characters? What do the shifting points of view add to the story?
2. How did the repeating subtitles, 'the river, the island, the lake,' add to your understanding of the characters and story?
3. Did the novel's portrayal of the natural world within the city prompt you to see the place where you live differently? In what ways?
4. Did Justin's experience of healing in the natural world resonate with any of your own?
5. Both Oliver and Gabe are driven by concern for ecological issues. What do they come to understand differently about the natural world and their desires to protect it?
6. Why does Gabe choose not to share her discovery of the moth with her academic colleagues? What does Gabe's story say about the strengths and limitations science when it comes to our understanding the natural world?
7. Each character experiences conflict with authority: Justin confronts city bureaucracy, Gabe challenges her thesis committee, and Oliver faces blowback from the government and possibly the police. What political comment do their stories make?
8. A major theme or issue for each character in the novel is home: trying to save a home, losing a home, restoring a home, leaving home, and coming home. Why does Justin believe Oliver must let go of his island home project? Is there value in Justin's perspective? What does the novel say about home? Do the characters find themselves at home, in the end?
9. What does *Night in the World* say about people building a connected and nourishing relationship to the natural world?



### SHARON ENGLISH

has written two story collections, *Uncomfortably Numb* and *Zero Gravity*, which was long-listed for the Giller Prize, shortlisted for a ReLit Award, included in the *Globe and Mail's* Best 100 new titles of the year, and recently translated into Serbian. Her fiction and essays have appeared in *Best Canadian Stories*, *Canadian Notes and Queries*, *Dark Matter: Women Witnessing* and *Dark Mountains* in the UK. After decades of living in Toronto, she now makes her home in rural Nova Scotia.

