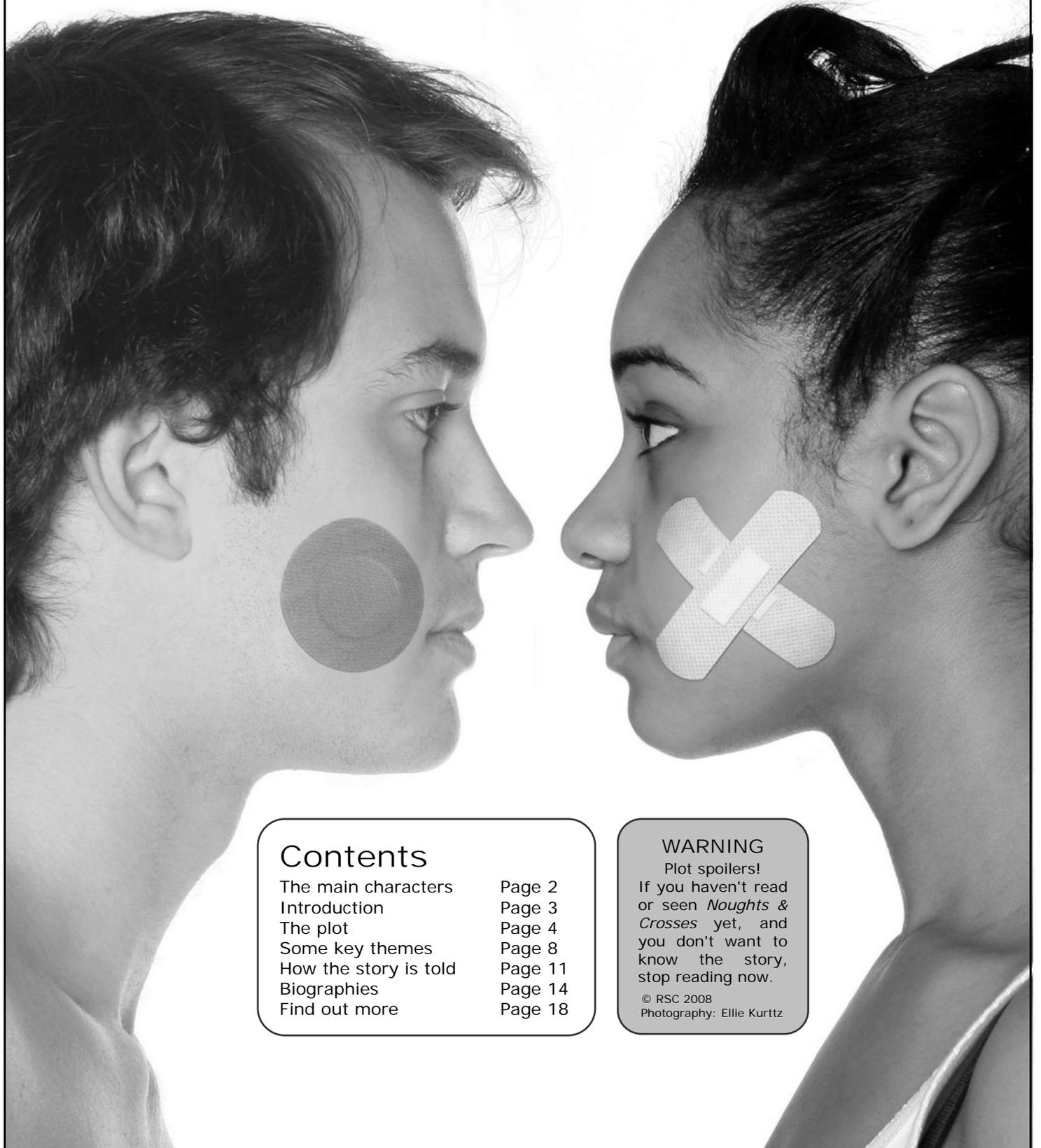


Information Pack



Contents

The main characters	Page 2
Introduction	Page 3
The plot	Page 4
Some key themes	Page 8
How the story is told	Page 11
Biographies	Page 14
Find out more	Page 18

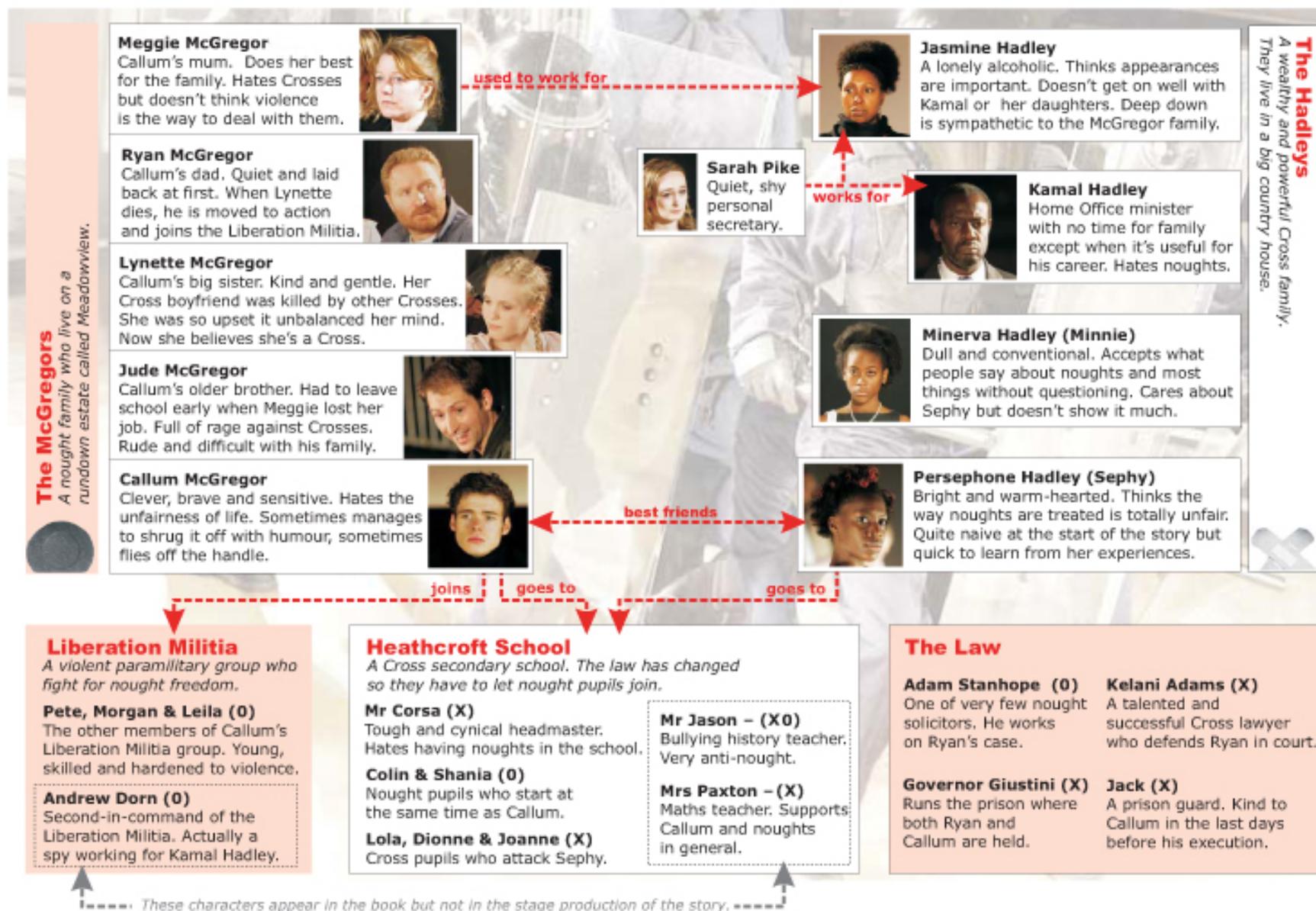
WARNING

Plot spoilers!
If you haven't read
or seen *Noughts &
Crosses* yet, and
you don't want to
know the story,
stop reading now.

© RSC 2008
Photography: Ellie Kurtz

NOUGHTS & CROSSES

The main characters



Introduction

The information in this pack is based on the novel *Noughts & Crosses* by Malorie Blackman. The book has been adapted for the stage by Dominic Cooke. There are some differences between the novel and the stage version but this pack will give you a good understanding of both. We have kept Malorie's convention of capitalising 'Cross' but not 'nought'.

The RSC production, directed by Dominic, plays in Stratford until 2 February 2008, and then tours the UK until 5 April 2008.

The Story

Noughts & Crosses tells the story of two young people: a girl called Sephy and a boy called Callum. Callum is a nought – he's white, from a poor family and lives on a rough estate. Sephy is a Cross – she's black, from a wealthy, powerful family and lives in a grand country house with a private beach.

The story takes place in world very similar to our own, apart from the massive split between noughts and Crosses. Crosses are the ruling class and noughts struggle against prejudice, poverty and low status.

It's almost unheard of for a Cross to be friends with a nought, but Sephy and Callum are very close and eventually become lovers. Even so, Callum sometimes feels Sephy doesn't understand the prejudice he faces. Sephy is frustrated that Callum doesn't realise how hard she tries to understand and that she has her own problems with her cold, snobbish family.

Callum's dad and brother get involved with a nought terrorist organisation. Callum initially hates the violence but after his sister dies and his dad is killed in prison, he turns terrorist too. He hardens himself to the violence but when he is involved in kidnapping Sephy, he realises that he should never have joined the organisation.

Despite Sephy and Callum's love for each other, there's no place in their society for a nought and a Cross who want to be together. The story ends with Sephy pregnant with Callum's child and Callum being executed for terrorism.

The plot

Prologue

Callum and Sephy are playing happily in the garden at the Hadleys' house. Indoors, their mothers Meggie and Jasmine are chatting in the kitchen. Kamal Hadley comes in. He suspects Jasmine is having an affair. Meggie doesn't realise she's meant to be covering up for Jasmine and accidentally reveals Jasmine's been lying to Kamal. Jasmine's furious and that evening Meggie gets a phone call – she's been sacked.

Three years later...

Callum starts at Heathcroft High, a prestigious secondary school. Noughts have only just been allowed to go to Cross schools. Callum is put into the same year as Sephy, even though he's 15 and she's only 13.

On the first day of term, Cross protestors try to stop Callum and the other nought pupils getting into school by blocking the entrance and throwing stones. Sephy tries to stop the violence. She yells at the crowd, and gets so worked up she uses the word 'blanker' – an offensive term for a Nought. Callum can't believe she's said this and is hurt and upset.

Throughout the school, Crosses are hostile to noughts. Sephy wants to show she's not like other Crosses and at lunchtime she chooses to sit with the noughts. The deputy head orders her to move to another table but she refuses. Callum doesn't react when Sephy gets dragged off to see the head. At the beach that evening, they argue.

Most Cross pupils don't like the way Sephy openly supports the noughts. Three older girls beat Sephy up so badly that she has to stay off school for a week.

The turning

Callum tries to visit Sephy but Mrs Hadley won't let him in. Sephy comes back to school thinking Callum doesn't care about what happened to her.

The picnic

Callum and Sephy remember a day out at Celebration Park. On the train, two Cross policemen accused Callum – the only Nought in first class – of stealing his ticket. Sephy stepped in and told them that if they had a problem they should speak to her father about it. The policemen backed off but Callum was left feeling humiliated.

The plot

Breakdown

Lynette has been acting strangely for some time. Jude is bullying her. Ryan tells him to stop and explains that three years earlier Lynette had a Cross boyfriend called Jed. They were attacked by a group of nought men and left for dead. Lynette was so upset she's been in a dream-world ever since where she refuses to believe she is a nought.

In a history class, Callum asks why Mr Jason doesn't teach about any nought scientists or inventors. Mr Jason sends Callum to the headmaster's office.

Lynette goes for a walk and doesn't come back. Two policemen come and tell the family Lynette was run down by a bus. She leaves Callum a note saying she has killed herself.

The Hadley's marriage is breaking down. Mrs Hadley overdoses on wine and sleeping pills. Sephy and Minerva take her to hospital.

After Lynette's funeral, Sephy comes to the wake at the McGregor's house. She is met with hostility and Jude tells her to leave.

The split

Callum wants to tell Sephy the truth about Lynette's death. Callum plans to meet Sephy at the Dundale Shopping Centre. When Jude warns him not to go, Callum suspects there must be a Liberation Militia plot to bomb the Dundale. Callum manages to get Sephy out just before the bomb goes off. Seven people are killed.

Meggie realises Ryan and Jude were involved in the bombing and says she wants them out of the house. Callum's upset and runs to the beach. He meets Sephy there. She's drunk and hopeless. Callum tells her to stop drinking. They argue but end up kissing.

Callum, Meggie and Ryan are arrested. Ryan tells the police he was the bomber. He wants to protect Jude, who is on the run. Someone anonymously pays the top Cross lawyer Kelani Adams to defend Ryan at his trial. Callum thinks it must be Sephy.

Callum is suspended from school till after the trial. He knows he'll never go back.

The plot

The trial

Ryan pleads not guilty. Callum and Sephy are both called as witnesses and Kelani Adams makes a good defence but the jury finds Ryan guilty. He's sentenced to be hanged.

The way it is

Sephy is taken to the execution by her parents. At the last minute Ryan's sentence is changed to life imprisonment and the hanging is called off. Back at home, Sephy has a blazing row with her mother about being taken to the hanging. Jasmine says there was no choice and tells Sephy she paid for Ryan's lawyers. Sephy tells her mother that she thinks of her as a selfish alcoholic.

In the middle of the night, Callum climbs the drainpipe to Sephy's bedroom. He's angry with Sephy – and all Crosses – but finally has to admit that they both still care about each other. Callum and Sephy lie down on the bed, kissing and holding each other, and fall asleep.

Ryan is killed trying to escape from prison. It seems likely he was deliberately trying to kill himself by climbing an electric fence. Callum's wasting time in a burger bar when Jude appears and invites him to join the Liberation Militia. Callum agrees and goes home to pack.

Sephy sends Callum a letter asking him to run away with her. By the time Callum receives the letter, it's too late and Sephy has left for boarding school in another part of the country.

The hostage

A couple of years later, Callum is an active member of the Liberation Militia. Sephy returns from boarding school where she was part of a pro-nought activist group.

With Jude's help, Callum's Militia group kidnaps Sephy. Callum tries to tell himself that Sephy's just another Cross prisoner but he can't. They end up making love and Callum helps Sephy escape.

The plot

The confession

Callum, Jude and another kidnapper are on the run. They agree to split up and meet again in six months' time.

Callum hears on the news that Sephy is pregnant. He goes straight to Sephy's house and they meet at night in the rose garden. Callum has time to tell Sephy he loves her and how pleased he is about the baby before he's arrested.

Decisions

Kamal goes to see Callum in prison. He says he'll get Callum out of prison within ten years if Sephy has an abortion. Back at home, Kamal offers Sephy the same deal. Both Sephy and Callum decide that the right choice is to let the baby live even though it means Callum will die.

Losing my religion

Callum is playing cards with his guard, Jack. They're waiting for Callum's execution. Jack tells him Sephy tried to visit but wasn't allowed in. Callum gives Jack a letter for Sephy, which Jack promises to deliver. Callum is led out to the gallows. The executioner puts a hood over Callum's head. Callum hears Sephy calling out, "I love you" and barely has time to answer before the platform drops.

Birth announcements

Sephy and Callum's daughter is born. Sephy calls her Callie Rose.

Some key themes

Racism and prejudice

One of the most obvious themes of *Noughts & Crosses* is racism. Crosses are black, wealthy and powerful. Noughts are white, do poorly-paid jobs if they can get a job at all, and have far fewer chances to do well in life. Crosses look down on noughts as a completely inferior group.

In the UK today, there is a white majority and a minority of people from non-white ethnic groups. We tend to think of racism as a problem mainly experienced by non-whites and something dished out by the white majority.

In *Noughts & Crosses*, this society is turned on its head. It's a powerful, wealthy, black ruling class who are discriminating against the whites. By making this switch, Blackman makes it easier for white people to imagine what it's like to experience racism, and for everyone to think about the unfairness that prejudice creates.

To make the racism in the book completely convincing Malorie Blackman includes several things in the book that have also happened in the real world. You don't need to know about these to understand the story of *Noughts & Crosses* but if you realise people really are capable of behaving like this, it makes the story even more chilling.

Divided society

From the 1940s to the 1990s, South Africa was ruled by a system called apartheid. Blacks and whites lived separate lives. The whites were the ruling class and generally lived in comfort while black people lived in poverty.

In Northern Ireland for most of the twentieth century, Protestants were the ruling class and Catholics were generally worse off, with less political power and a lower standard of living.

Slavery

In the USA, white landowners used black slaves to work their farms until the 1860s. Even after slavery was abolished black people often continued to work on the farms in the southern states, in bad conditions and for poor wages, or as servants or manual labourers. Even now, 150 years later, black communities in the USA are often worse off than white communities. The story of *Noughts & Crosses* is set at a time when people can still remember noughts being slaves.

Some key themes

Racism and prejudice (continued)

All-white schools

Up until 1954 in many areas of the USA there were separate schools for black children and white children. This was finally made illegal in 1954. Schools quickly opened their doors to black children but there was a lot of resentment. At one school in Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1957, there was a full-blown riot when black pupils tried to enter the school – it was quite similar to the events described in Chapter 5.

Campaigning for civil rights

There were two main leaders of the campaign for racial equality in the USA in the 1960s. Their names were Martin Luther King and Malcolm X. Martin Luther King believed in peaceful protest and gradual change. Malcolm X believed that the injustices in American society were so bad that it was OK to use violence.

These two viewpoints are reflected in the book – in an argument between Meggie and Ryan in Chapter 28, Meggie supports the peaceful methods of 'Alex Luther' while Ryan thinks the 'General' who leads the Liberation Militia is more likely to get results. At boarding school towards the end of the book, Sephy is part of a non-violent campaigning group at the same time that Callum is getting involved with the Liberation Militia.

IRA bombing in Manchester

In 1996 the IRA (an armed Catholic group fighting for independence for Northern Ireland) bombed Manchester city centre. A shopping centre called the Arndale was seriously damaged in the explosion. It's a similar scenario to the bombing of the Dundale centre in Chapter 49.

Identity

Callum and Sephy are able to be friends because they see each other as individuals, not just 'a nought' and 'a Cross'. In their friendship with each other, they're able to set aside the prejudice most people in their world feel.

Both characters become more mature as the book progresses and in part this is thanks to giving up the labels that they grew up with – nought or Cross, McGregor or Hadley, rich girl or Meadowview boy – and making their own choices.

Some key themes

Violent or peaceful protest?

The book looks at the different ways people react to situations that they believe are wrong. Some turn to violence and some don't.

Some characters, like Callum's mum or Jasmine Hadley, can see that life is unfair but are afraid that trying to do something about it will be pointless, or lead to more problems. Some try to work out a peaceful solution to the problem, as Sephy does when she joins a political group at her boarding school. Some, like Ryan, Jude and Callum, turn to violence.

The book shows the down-sides of choosing violence very clearly - through the effects the Dundale Centre bombing has on the McGregor family, and the misery caused to both Callum and Sephy when he gets involved in the Liberation Army.

However, the book also makes you think about why people turn to violence in the first place. Ryan joins the Liberation Army because he wants revenge for Lynette's death. Somebody like Jude can't get an education or a job, so turns to violence as the only way he can see of improving his situation. Callum joins because he feels isolated and angry and the Liberation Army at least gives him the feeling that he's doing something.

So although the book doesn't support violence it does suggest that people without any political power may feel forced to use it to make themselves heard.

Love and friendship

The relationship between Callum and Sephy is opposite to the relationship between most noughts and Crosses. Their friendship is warm and intense, and despite occasional arguments and the problems they face, they stay close right until the end.

When Kamal Hadley asks Sephy to choose between keeping her baby and saving Callum from being hanged there's a huge contrast between the warmth of Sephy's feelings for Callum and Kamal's cold self-interest.

Callum and Sephy represent an ideal relationship in a world that's very far from ideal. The fact it doesn't work out only goes to show how wrong that world is.

How the story is told

Malorie Blackman's writing style

The written style is clean-cut and direct. Blackman doesn't waste time on long fancy descriptions of people or places. Rather than dwelling on description, we mainly hear about events and feelings. This helps the story move quickly, with a strong emotional impact.

The story is told in the words of Sephy and Callum. Their words are very natural – they speak a lot like real teenagers. This makes the book easy to read, and also very convincing. You can believe that you're hearing the inner thoughts of two real young people.

A lot of writers tell their stories from the point of view of a narrator – somebody who isn't actually a character in the story but knows all about what happened and how the characters felt. *Noughts & Crosses* is different because we hear the story from the point of view of the main characters, as though they were writing a diary. It makes you feel very close to Sephy and Callum, as though you've really got to know them and are hearing the story at first hand.

The main characters – Sephy and Callum

The feel of Sephy and Callum's sections is different. Malorie Blackman has given them different voices.

Sephy sounds quite young at the beginning of the book. She uses a lot of exclamation marks and she dwells on the way events make her feel. Towards the end of the book her voice is calmer and more mature.

Callum comes across as older and more experienced from the beginning. He shows more awareness of other people's feelings. He tends to react to problems with bitter humour. Although his voice does mature as the story progresses, it doesn't change as much as Sephy's.

Sephy and Callum have a lot in common. Both are bright, confident and strong-willed. Both have strong feelings: for each other and about fairness and equality. The differences between them are due to their background.

Sephy has grown up in a privileged and sheltered home. She's naïve and optimistic and expects life will work out well.

Callum has grown up seeing his parents, brother and sister facing all sorts of problems. His experience has taught him that however hard he tries in life, it will be difficult for him to succeed. He's more cautious and pessimistic than Sephy.

How the story is told

The world of *Noughts & Crosses*

In *Noughts and Crosses*, Malorie Blackman has created a world that is very similar to our own. Young people watch TV, go to burger bars and go to the shops. We know that Callum lives on an estate called Meadowview and there's more than one estate called Meadowview in the UK. She doesn't go into too much detail though – for example we never find out the name of the town where Sephy and Callum live.

The general similarity helps make the book believable. It makes us more open to the idea that something like this could happen in our own world, or even our own town – or maybe does already in a less obvious way.

Names and labels

In the game of noughts and crosses, two sides are permanently set against each other. By calling the book *Noughts & Crosses*, Blackman is telling us that it's about a conflict.

As you read, you are constantly being reminded that Crosses are the more powerful group in this conflict – Cross always gets a capital 'C' but nought never does. The visual representation – O and X - tells us something too. An X is a powerful mark. It can be used to show something is wrong, to mark a vote on a ballot paper, or to represent the cross in Christianity. A nought is an empty circle that literally means 'nothing', that has no value. The nicknames the two sides have for each other – blanks and daggers – have similar meanings. A blank is also a nothing, or a failure. A dagger is a lethal weapon.

Using these labels instead of 'black' and 'white' is one of the ways Malorie Blackman is able to tell a story that looks at racism and prejudice in general, without pinning it down to one particular time and place.

How the story is told

Echoes of *Romeo and Juliet*

The story of *Noughts & Crosses* is very similar to the play *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare. It tells one of the oldest – and saddest – love stories of all time. If you can spot the similarities, it makes the love-story part of *Noughts & Crosses* even more poignant.

Callum and Sephy's world is split into noughts and Crosses. Romeo and Juliet are from two families, the Capulets and the Montagues, who are involved in a long-running and bloody feud. Both couples are teenagers.

When Romeo falls in love with Juliet, the only way he can see her is to climb up to her balcony late at night – just as Callum climbs up to Sephy's room when he wants to see her the night after Ryan's near-execution.

Romeo and Juliet are secretly married and spend one night together before Romeo has to leave at dawn. Juliet's nurse covers up for them – just like Sarah covers up for Sephy when she realises Callum has stayed over.

Callum is sentenced to death for his terrorist activity; Romeo is exiled for killing a Capulet.

While Romeo's in exile, a friendly priest comes up with an elaborate plot to get Romeo and Juliet back together. He sends Romeo a letter explaining that Juliet's going to fake her death, then run away to live with Romeo. The letter never arrives. When Sephy sends Callum a letter he opens it too late and misses his chance to run away with her.

Romeo comes to Verona believing Juliet is actually dead and kills himself. Juliet wakes from a drugged sleep to find she's lying next to Romeo's dead body and kills herself too. In *Noughts & Crosses* only Callum dies, but it's just as sad as the *Romeo and Juliet* ending.

Malorie Blackman says that she wasn't deliberately trying to make her story similar; the similarities just appeared as the story unfolded (see 'Author Q&A' on page 15). *Romeo and Juliet* is one of the most famous stories ever told. It's not surprising that it would have an influence on a writer working today even though it was written over 400 years ago. Shakespeare was working under the influence of other writers too. *The Tragicall Historie of Romeus and Juliet* by Arthur Brooke, published in 1562, tells a very similar story to Shakespeare's play. Brooke's poem was based on *Of Two Lovers* by Pierre Boiastau, and this was based on even earlier stories from Italy.

Storytellers have always made their stories through a combination of borrowing and imagination, and Malorie Blackman is part of this tradition.

Biography – Malorie Blackman

Malorie Blackman grew up in Peckham in south London, where she went to Honor Oak Grammar School. She did well at school, where her favourite subject was English. When she left school, she trained as a computer programmer. She is also a trained actor.

Although she had always written for pleasure it wasn't until she had been working in computers for several years that she started trying to get her work published. Her first book to be published was *Not so stupid!* in 1990. Since then she has written over 50 books for children and young people, including *Pig-Heart Boy*, *Whizziwig* and *Hacker*. *Noughts and Crosses* was first published in 2001. The other novels in the trilogy, *Knife Edge* and *Checkmate* came out in 2004 and 2006.



She is married and has one daughter.

For more information about Malorie Blackman see her website,

www.malorieblackman.co.uk

Biography – Dominic Cooke

Noughts & Crosses was adapted for the stage and directed by former RSC Associate Director Dominic Cooke.

Now Artistic Director of the Royal Court Theatre, Dominic's most recent RSC productions include *Pericles* and *The Winter's Tale*, part of the Complete Works Festival, and *The Crucible* for which he won the 2007 Olivier Awards for Best Revival and Best Director. He has previously adapted and directed *Arabian Nights* for the Young Vic Theatre.



About Malorie Blackman

An interview with the author

This is an edited extract from an interview with Malorie Blackman at the first stage of the rehearsal process of *Noughts & Crosses* in July 2007.

How do you feel about having *Noughts & Crosses* adapted for the stage?

To be honest, my great love is theatre. I did try acting for a while. It was very good for me because before, I was very shy and it brought me out! We did improvisations, for example, and the teacher would say, "OK friends – who wants to go next?" and we all had to do it. It taught me I could do it without dying! But my heart would be going nineteen-to-the-dozen.

What was good about it was the teacher, at the end of the course, said, "You came up with some very good scenarios for the improvisations. Maybe you should start writing these down." Because I've always loved writing, from the time I was a kid, and it just never occurred to me to actually write for publication. But I thought, "I'd be better writing, I'd be better suited to that". And that's how it came about – that's how the idea got planted. And here I am seventeen years later!

Do you think it's important for young people to realise you can make a living being creative?

I wrote a book called *Whizziwig* that was on the telly for a while. I remember when I was going into a school, one of the boys put his hand up, a black boy, and he said, "So you wrote *Whizziwig*?" and I said, "Yes" "It was on television then you wrote the book?"

I said, "I wrote the book *then* it was on television"

"So you wrote *Whizziwig*?" And you could see he thought, "Well if she can do it..." I didn't have that when I was at school, I didn't know of any black writers and so forth, and that's why it's important to me to go into schools and say, you know, "If I can do it..."

How have you been involved in Dominic Cooke's adaptation process?

It's the first time I've been involved in this particular kind of process – I've only ever done one theatre play before, and I wrote it, so it was slightly different from having someone else adapt. It's interesting watching those characters coming to life and watching them read through. I'd read the script beforehand. I kept saying to Dominic, "I don't expect it to be the book." With the best will in the world, you can't film or adapt the whole book. It's interesting to see the things he left in and the things he cut out, and we were having a discussion over lunch about the things he's going to put back in and the thing he's going to take out.

About Malorie Blackman

You said one of your passions is theatre, but it doesn't reach as many people as film does. Is this stage version going to reach the sort of people you want it to reach?

Well I hope so... The thing about the theatre, I think, is that you can totally get lost in it, because it's like you're seeing the characters and you can almost react to them in a way that doesn't happen on film. I'm not saying that film can't get to you on an emotional level - but I do think there is something about live performance. I remember the first time I ever saw an opera was when I was at my junior school. It was magical. We all just sat there and said, "Wow". I remember being really terrified of this witch, and the two children... You could really understand what was going on, the menace in it.

I remember again as a kid, I think I was about thirteen, and we had a group coming to our school doing the Salem witch trials. They split us into groups, and it ended up with everyone accusing everyone else of being a witch. And I remember jumping up and saying, "This is silly, you're going to hang everybody," and getting so involved, it was so real! And then when the man said at the end, "This actually happened and it was in Massachusetts..." Then I remember we were so shocked, and it really drove it home in a way that just watching a film wouldn't because we were involved in it.

I suppose it affects my writing, because I do tend to write lots of dialogue and I do tend to go straight into the plot, for which some people have criticised me, but that's just the way I write. If you're looking for 15 pages on a sunset then you're not going to find it in one of my books, I'm afraid!

***Noughts & Crosses* is likened to *Romeo and Juliet* but you only noticed this after you'd written it. Where do your influences and ideas come from?**

You just have to keep your eyes and ears open. When I go to schools, one of the questions I can guarantee I'm going to be asked is, "Where do you get your ideas from?" Like there's some kind of shop for ideas! I say you have to keep your eyes and ears open, and if you do that, ideas come from anywhere and everywhere. I'm never short of ideas. I'm short of time to do something with all of them!

I think sometimes it's very daunting to say, "Come up with something brand new". There are only supposed to be about seven ideas in the whole of fiction writing - take one and the fact that you're doing your own thing with it is what's going to make it unique and interesting. You don't have to feel you need to come up with something that nobody's ever done before because it's very unlikely to happen.

About Malorie Blackman

For a long time when I was reading the book I kept forgetting that the characters were supposed to have black or white skin. I kept seeing them as sort of Northern Irish actually...

It's funny you should say that because I've had so many letters from Ireland where the colour thing has just gone straight over their heads and in the letter they say, "You're talking about Protestants and Catholics aren't you?" And I love that. And I had a letter, for example, from a girl in Spain yesterday, "Are you talking about the Basque separatists?" And people take what they need from it. And that's why deliberately, I think there's only once in the book where I mention colour as black or white. It's always noughts and Crosses or blanks or daggers.

I hint at things but it's only explicitly said once. And in the book I did really want to play with people's pre-conceptions. So I wanted people to think Callum, being the poor one, is going to be black, and Sephy, being the rich one, is going to be white and then turning it on its head. And it's interesting again because a lot of people have said, "When I started reading it I thought Callum was black," and I thought that's exactly what I wanted you to think! Which again is why I didn't mention the colour.

Even though *Nought & Crosses* and *Romeo and Juliet* end sadly, why do you think people still like these tragic stories so much?

I think people tend to like stories that really make them laugh or cry. With *Noughts & Crosses*, the characters became so real to me and I always think that if they become real to me then I hope they'll become real to other people. And again from the letters I've had, there are so many comments like, "Why did Sephy do this? Why did Callum do that? Why did you make them do that?" And I think I didn't make them do anything, this is what they did and I'm just writing it down!

Find out more

Websites

For a review of *Noughts & Crosses* and to find out what other readers have to say about it, look at:

teenagefiction.wordpress.com/2006/12/21/noughts-and-crosses-by-malorie-blackman

For introductions to the Troubles in Northern Ireland and the history of slavery, look at the guides on the BBC Newsround website: news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/hi/guides

For information about the US civil rights movement try this site:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/education/bitesize/higher/history/usa/postwar_rev.shtml

You could also search online for more information on the inventors and explorers mentioned in the history lesson in Chapter 30 of *Noughts and Crosses*.

Books

Noughts & Crosses is the first book in a series. The other parts are *An Eye for an Eye* (a short story), *Knife Edge* and *Checkmate*, all published by Corgi.

The playscript is published by Nick Hern Books.

Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare. There are plenty of versions with explanations of the more difficult language, for example: Cambridge, Oxford, CGP.

To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee (1960) tells a story about racism and prejudice through the eyes of a young white girl growing up in the American deep south.

Films

Romeo and Juliet (1996) Directed by Baz Luhrmann and starring Leonardo DiCaprio and Claire Danes. A stylish and romantic version of the Shakespeare play.

West Side Story (1961) The film version of a musical by Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Sondheim. The story is based on *Romeo and Juliet*, but set in twentieth century New York.

Both these films are much more frivolous than *Noughts and Crosses* but it's interesting to compare the way the basic story is told.

Credits

Noughts & Crosses Cast

Charles Abomeli	Jack
Davinia Anderson	Dionne
Doreene Blackstock	Kelani Adams
Daniel Bowers	Peter
Michelle Butterly	Meggie
Louise Callaghan	Lynette
Christopher Daley	Colin
Tyrone Huggins	Kamal
Tracy Ifeachor	Minerva
Richard Madden	Callum
Jo Martin	Jasmine
Phil McKee	Ryan
Jenny Ogilvie	Sarah Pike
Clarence Smith	Reporter
Ony Uhiara	Sephy
Freddy White	Jude

Noughts & Crosses Creative Team

Director	Dominic Cooke
Designer	Kandis Cook
Lighting	Wolfgang Göbbel
Sound	Christopher Shutt
Music	Gary Yershon
Fight Director	Terry King
Movement	Liz Ranken
Asst Director	Rae McKen

Background pack

Written by Taissa Csáky.
Design & layout by Taissa Csáky
and Suzanne Worthington.
Photography by Ellie Kurttz