

# Dystopian high rise

Society



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Dystopian High Rise The novel ' High Rise' written by J. G. Ballard focuses on a massive forty story apartment building that houses thousands of people. Anthony Royal, who is the architect of the apartment, designed the building with shops, a school, swimmingpools, and enough space to accommodate an overwhelming amount of people. Ballard does not write the plot of ' High Rise' in an attempt to illustrate the urban possibilities of modern innovations or future novelties of our evolving world. Ballard expresses how a newly designed building that seems as though it is a well thought out idea of a safe haven can turn into a dystopian underworld.

A dystopian society is the idea of a community of people that live in miserable conditions of life, characterized by disease, pollution, oppression, war, violence, poverty, and the classism of systematicdiscriminationbased on sex, age, or IQ. The tower in the novel houses the vision of a dystopia through the fictional characters depicted, and how the building is the agent that pushes the society within to turn into a felonious world. Through the eyes of medical school lecturer Dr. Robert Laing, we see how minor altercations between floors quickly escalate into anarchy, harsh violence, rape, and murder.

Laing is eventually dragged into the lifestyle of the tower. Since everything for essential living is located within the tower, such as shops and swimming pools, Dr. Laing has no need to leave the building other than going to work. This entrapment in the building of many residents is the cause of this anarchic activity. The building is a small vertical city (Ballard 15). Within the introduction of the novel, Laing states, that even being two miles from the

city, the building that he resides in feels as if the tower were in a different world, in time and as well as space (Ballard 15).

The high-rise in turn becomes an alternate world separating the people living inside from the real city giving them the higher chances of confrontation. What we perceive as development through the creation of a structure that can work independently for the common wellness of society, comes with a price to pay. With all social classism in the world, the High Rise becomes a part of the dreadful tradition. Ballard's dystopia is divided into three classes: upper, middle, and lower class. The upper portion, floors 36 to 40, of the building is where the upper class resides in, this includes the architect Anthony Royal.

The middle class' subdivision, Where Dr. Laing lives, is located from the 10th floor to the 35th floor, from the 10th floor swimming pool to the 35th floor restaurant deck. The swimming pool on floor 10 clearly formed the boundary for everyone under that floor, the lower class residents. The lower class is subjected to faulty maintenance where they go for days without electricity and air conditioning. The residents soon find themselves in a ' Lord of the Flies' state of emergency where the different classes and levels of the tower are at war. Works Cited Ballard, J. G. High Rise. New York: Liveright, 2012. Print.