

HarperCollins acquires Ned Kelly shortlisted thriller from an electric new Australian voice



SYDNEY, 9 November – HarperCollins Publishers Australia is thrilled to announce it has acquired world rights to *The Good Mother*, the debut novel from Ned Kelly Award shortlisted author Rae Cairns, via Jeanne Ryckmans of Cameron’s Management. HarperCollins will publish *The Good Mother* in April 2022, and a second novel from Cairns in 2023.

The Good Mother is the story of Sarah Calhoun, a regular Sydney soccer mum, keeping terrifying secrets from everyone she loves. When two men from Northern Ireland hunt her down, she’s forced to return to Belfast to testify at a murder trial – where her past catches up with her. Caught in the crossfire of an obsessive policeman and a brutal IRA executioner, Sarah faces an impossible choice: lie and allow a killer to run free, or tell the truth and place her children in the line of fire.

With her family and innocent people at risk, Sarah must find the courage to fight for the truth. But righting the wrongs of the past just might cost her

everything...

On the opportunity to publish *The Good Mother*, HarperCollins’ Publisher Roberta Ivers said, ‘This extraordinary debut is a mile a minute powerhouse with twists and turns right to very end – all surprising, all brilliant, and all pointing to Rae Cairns as an exciting talent. This is impressive storytelling – with a high-octane pace, a powerful emotional load and just breathtaking pay-offs that keep on coming. It’s heart-in-mouth stuff as Sarah negotiates the dangerous path of her return to Belfast and confronts ruthless people with brutal agendas who consider life very cheap indeed, and the setting gives us an eye-opening window into ‘The Troubles’, one of the bloodiest eras in Northern Ireland’s history. As Sarah says herself, there’s no soldier who’ll fight harder than a mother to save her son ...’

ABOUT RAE CAIRNS

Rae Cairns is inspired by everyday people facing extraordinary circumstances. *The Good Mother* draws on her background mentoring disadvantaged youth, many of them children of the paramilitaries, in Northern Ireland during the final years of ‘The Troubles’. Rae has also co-managed a crisis refuge for street children, was Program Director for the Sydney Olympic Youth Camp and holds a degree in Performing Arts. She lives in Sydney with her husband and children.

ABOUT HARPERCOLLINS PUBLISHERS

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