*Stranger from Across the Sea*

Regina McBride ISBN: tk

FICTION $27.99; $36.00 CAN

Green City Books | Adult Trade/Hardcover Spring 2024

Bound | Release: 4/12/24 | On Sale: 5/14/24

Ann. 1st print 30k

Carton 32 | Trim 5.5 x 8.25 | UPC EAN:

300 pp

Editorial Highlights

Original Publisher: Green City Books

**Keynote:**

Set against the backdrop of the Civil War between northern and southern Ireland, a story about an enduring friendship between two young women that is both tragic and transcendent.

**Description:**

In 1973, sixteen-year-old Violet O’Halloran travels from New York to Ireland with her mother to spend a summer month with her grandmother in the tiny village of Castlemacross. When her grandmother dies suddenly, Violet’s mother, overwhelmed with new responsibilities, leaves her temporarily with the nuns at a convent school in the north, empty during the summer, except for Indira Sharma, a blind girl from India, with whom Violet forms an intense bond. Both are strangers to Ireland and both have embattled relationships with their Irish mothers. Indira confides in Violet that she is in a romantic relationship with her cousin, whom she affectionately calls *Ishta Devta*, which means Favorite Deity in Sanskrit. When Indira discovers a devastating family secret, she tries to share it with Violet but is prevented from doing so. Violet worries that a figure she sees one night walking alone on the beach in the distance, is Indira. The tide at that hour is high and Indira drowns.

Thirteen years later Violet meets an Irishman, Emmett Fitzroy, at a party in New York City and, after becoming romantically involved with him, learns that he was Indira’s cousin (whom she had called *Ishta Devta*). He invites her to spend a few weeks by herself at his old Anglo Irish house overlooking the north channel of the Irish Sea. When she arrives, she is warned by the caretaker not to go to the water-damaged third floor, which has been left unrepaired for over a decade. There Violet discovers a repository of family secrets- including the shocking revelation that Indira had once tried to share with her. The novel explores place, displacement and exile, and ways in which the personal and the political are inseparable.

**Author Bio**

Regina McBride is the author of three novels, each published by Simon and Schuster, one Young Adult novel, published by Random House, one book of poetry, and most recently a memoir, *Ghost Songs*, published by Tin House. She is the recipient of fellowships from the NEA and NYFA, and teaches fiction writing at Hunter College in New York City. Her first novel, *The Nature of Water and Air*, was a Barnes and Noble Discover Great New Writers Book, A Borders Original Voices Selection, and a Booksense pick (Independent Book Stores Award). It was optioned for a film.

**Praise for Regina McBride**

Ghost Songs (memoir)

**“What makes this book so original is the almost uncanny way McBride’s narrative blurs the edges between a tortured past and a confusing present.** She dares to hope that a half-formed ghost she sees at the foot of her bed is an amalgam of both of her parents, no longer separate―their unconstrained spirit as fluid and searching as her own.”— **Oprah.com, Editor’s Pick**  
  
“This memoir of survival is even more about reinvention than reflecting on the past. ***Harrowing, sincere, and unforgettable.****”* ***—Booklist,* STARRED REVIEW**  
“Harrowing yet beautiful, [Ghost Songs] is not only an exploration of the interplay between memory and imagination. It is also an eloquent meditation on the painful burdens of the past that parents bequeath their children. **A wrenchingly lyrical memoir of family and tragedy.” —*Kirkus***  
  
“Dubbed a literary Maeve Binchy by an LJ reviewer for her affecting, lyrical fiction (e.g., The Nature of Water and Air), **McBride will make you sit up straight with this startling memoir**, grounded in singular sorrow: her parents committed suicide one after the other when she was only sixteen. McBride’s subsequent hunt for comfort and belonging took her from New York City to New Mexico to Ireland, where she reconnected with her roots and the gorgeous Irish lore that informs her writing. Yet she still had to contend with the painful recognition that Catholicism regards suicides as unpardonable sin.” **—Barbara Hoffert, *Library Journal***  
“Book groups will find much to discuss [...] in this **beautifully rendered work**.” **—*Library Journal*, STARRED REVIEW)**“In her elegiac first memoir, Regina McBride delves deep into the psycho-spiritual explanations for a haunting, less concerned with whether or not specters are real than with why some see them in the first place.” **—*The Village Voice***  
“In Regina McBride’s Ghost Songs, there is a mysterious alchemy at play. With a subtle hand, McBride transforms personal horror into poetic myth. In writing this story that happened to her in real time, she creates a book that feels timeless. **I was under its spell from word one.**” **—Alice Sebold, author of *Lucky***  
  
**“[A] soul-wrenching memoir.** A powerful depiction of a teenager understanding the complexity of newfound adult responsibility, poverty, and her parents’ identity, while coming to terms with the trauma of loss and her encounters with the miraculous.” **—*Publishers Weekly***  
“[McBride’s] journey toward recovery takes her from New York to the desert of New Mexico and finally to the shores of Ireland, where she is able to reconcile the events that happened to her and to her parents. The magnitude of the author’s grief is at times overwhelming; there’s an unerring sense of distress and disorder. By the end of the book, we’ve pieced together her life―I felt an odd, poignant sense of calm with her when, in the final pages, she sits in a café in Dublin.” **(*The Paris Review*, Editor’s Pick)**  
  
“As a child Regina McBride’s life was shattered several times over as the adults around her disappeared. Now in glittering, vivid prose she pieces that life together again and allows the reader to follow her in an extraordinary account of love, tragedy, and recovery. Ghost Songs carries us to the heart of grief, and beyond.” **(Margot Livesey, author of *The Flight of Gemma Harding*)**  
**“Regina McBride’s lyrical, beautiful writing is all the more astounding when paired with its subject matter**. . . . Unflinching, yet tender, McBride’s memoir is a moving tribute to the realities of one’s past and how they shape our present.” **—*Read It Forward***  
  
“It’s a wonder to me that after reading this book of such intense pain and deep sorrow that I felt―and know I’ll continue to feel―peace and hope. Regina McBride has written a beautiful memoir in which ghosts―individual and compound―can, like the living, be transformed from that which we fear to that which we might accept and love.”   
***—*Michael Thomas, author *of Man Gone Down)***“In Ghost Songs, Regina McBride embarks on a brave journey, around Ireland and into the heart of familial loss. Each stop is vividly rendered and gracefully observed. This is a **beautiful memoir,** as deft and wise as it is elementally sad.” —Alexandra Styron, author of *Reading My Father*

“A lyrical and evocative story full of longing and remembrance, that might leave you with the desire to savor it a second time.” —M. Christina Penn, ***ELLE.com***  
  
“A rare ghost story that isn’t fiction.” **—*Vulture*, Best Fall Entertainment**

**An ELLE Magazine Reader’s Prize Selection, November 2016**

**A Brooklyn Magazine Best Book of Fall 2016**

**Glamour Magazine Best Book of Fall 2016**

**The Nature of Water and Air**

***Barnes and Noble Discover Great New Writer’s Award*  
*Border’s Original Voices Selection*  
*A Pick of the Independent Booksellers***

“In her first novel, Regina McBride writes in a shimmering and hypnotic prose style… The story builds like a fugue. *The Nature of Water and Air* has an urgent melancholy about it- it casts an undeniable spell.”  
—*The New York Times Book Review*  
  
"With its brooding Irish backdrop, lyrical language, and shrouded secrets, *The Nature of Water and Air* is a modern myth. Bottom Line: This saga casts a spell.”  
—*People Magazine*   
  
“Finely wrought and deeply felt, the novel is a work of supercharged imagination, in which the presence of sea spirits, ghosts, and the dire workings of fate contribute to an atmosphere of brooding mystery.”  
—*Publisher’s Weekly*

“Lyrical and sad, infused with fascinating folklore and the chill of the Irish landscape. A literary Maeve Binchy.”  
—*Library Journal*

“A fine debut, unsettling and magical.”  
—*Kirkus Reviews*

“What distinguishes *The Nature of Water and Air*… is the precision of the language, and the haunting power of the narrative.”  
—*Edna O’Brien*

“*The Nature of Water and Air* is an astoundingly rich and lyrical novel about mothers and daughters, secrets and delusions, and the salve of love.”  
—*Tillie Olsen*

“Magical, mythic, and haunting, *The Nature of Water and Air* is a story of terrible loss and defiant resilience, like the story of the Irish people. Filled with mystery and music, it is an astounding piece of storytelling that combines the dense lyricism of great poetry with the unflinching clarity of great prose.”  
—*Peter Quinn*

“McBride artfully evokes the brilliant beauty and the strange, brooding darkness that so often dwell together within the Irish soul.”  
—*Thomas Moran*

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| **The Marriage Bed**  “Propelled by a consuming passion for character, language, and place… *The Marriage Bed* is mixed with lusty doses of religion, art and sexuality.” —*Elle magazine*  “Subtle and textured. . . explores the tides that bind and break in motherhood and marriage.” —*Dallas Morning News*  “An intense and dramatic story that calls out to the reader like the enchanting Irish Sea. . . Beautifully written and difficult to put down, this work will appeal to many readers—not just those interested in things Irish. It stands on its own as fine writing, and should bring McBride new readers.” —*Library Journal*  “McBride has created an eerie, compelling tale of pained love, in which the Irish settling is integral and never exotic.” —*Booklist*  “Haunting and otherworldly… the author has explored extraordinary depths in her depiction of human nature.” —*BookView Ireland* |
| “Reading *The Marriage Bed* felt like reading one of the great classics: I was enraptured, transported, and fully aware of the fact that I was in the hands of a writer who really knows what she’s doing.” —Elizabeth Berg  “Regina McBride carries us across the sea and into her character’s lives with pure poetry. Any modern woman will recognize Deirdre’s journey to reconcile her past and present.” —Jodi Picoult  “Set in a mystical, misty Ireland, a place where ancient magic shimmers and ululates just below the thin patina of the modern; a place where, in the style of Niall Williams, strange things happen. [McBride’s] parents—second-generation New York Irish—always romanticized the land in which they had never set foot, and she, influenced by their passion, traveled to Ireland after finishing college, before returning to New York to work and write. At a guess, what she found in your actual Ireland could not efface the heightened reality of her exiled parents’ distant dreaming.”  —*The Guardian* |

**The Land of Women**

“Serious attention to detail and rhythmic prose connect what’s felt on the skin with what stirs the soul.”  
—*Elle*

“[Regina McBride] reminds us of all those things we depend upon Irish writers to remind us of: where we came from, how closely the body is tied to the earth, and what the uses of passion might be.”  
—*Los Angeles Times Book Review*

“A story of love and betrayal… Fiona tells the story of her strange and magical relationship with her mother… Irish folklore [adds] more enchantment to an already intriguing tale.”  
—*Library Journal*

“Regina McBride evokes the splendors of landscapes and the exquisite textures of daily life in prose that adds luster and resonance to this book’s vivid, compelling story.  
—Maureen Dezell, author of Irish America: Coming into Clover

**The Fire Opal**

Junior Library Guild Award

“A compelling, addictive read. Filled with fantastic creatures and hair-raising adventure, the mystical, imaginative tale should appeal to fantasy fans of all ages.”  
—*VOYA*

“McBride wraps a traditional quest in Celtic clothing, with a message that love can be nurturing and healing, or *obsessive and unhealthy.”  
—Booklist*

“Will appeal to dedicated fantasy fans.”  
—*School Library Journal*

“Irish history and legends; shape-shifting; romance; mystery; all these intertwine in this eerie tale… Regina McBride is a master storyteller, interweaving the supernatural with the realistic.”  
—*Sacramento Book Review*

“When Maeve sets out on her magical quest, she journeys into a deftly imagined world filled with Mermaids, swan women, ghost souls, and even a Valkyrie.”  
—*Junior Library Guild Monthly*

“McBride draws the reader into a place of true magic, where there are no boundaries separating the real world and the fantastic, only enchanted gateways.”  
—Esther Friesner, author of Nobody’s Princess

Yarrow Field (poetry)

**1990 American Book Series Award**

“Regina McBride’s psychic terrain is the uncanny. She brings a note of pathos and terror, that is new in American poetry, and she handles her startling material without sensationalism. McBride registers deep grief with eloquence and ferocity and an unflinching gaze, as if she were reaching for something beyond language. There’s an unforced strangeness in her mingling of personal history, dream, and myth of the landscape of the Southwest. The risks she takes pay off.”  
—Mark Rudman

“Regina McBride’s work is daring, quick, powerful: her drumming and music calls out from the center-of-the-world room of childhood, ritual, shocked vision. Her intelligence floats, an underwater reverie, full of the light of fairy tales, and the deep sense of experience as the passage of a soul.”  
—Jean Valentine

“Regina McBride’s poems in Yarrow Field have an air of the heart in a dream. Their messages are marvelous and clear. There’s an understanding of the past and “helping spirits” which is profound. The book is a blessing.”  
—Michael Burkard

“McBride’s poetry haunts with living nightmare—the scars of inheritance, the entrapped child longing to be free, the canny adult that knows there is no familial escaped. . Shocking in intensity, her music is in her strength to hear harshness with a lyrical tenderness. Her psychological tangle is tightly wrought from the personal, the surreal, the Jungian collective unconscious, ritual, and myth… [She] resists the temptation to easy transcendence to courageously register deep sorrow for which there is no recovery.”  
—Gayl Teller, Small Press Review

**Selling Points**

This novel will appeal to readers of any Sally Rooney novel, particularly *Beautiful World Where are you* (FSG, September, 2021, ISBN: 978-0374602604; *The Wren, The Wren* by Anne Enright (Norton, September 2023, ISBN: 978-132400568; *Other Birds* by Sarah Addison Allen (Saint Martin’s, August 2022, ISBN: 978-1250019868;*Sorrow and Bliss* by Meg Mason (Harper, February 2021, ISBN: 978-0063049581

**Marketing/Promotion**

Amazon A+ and Amazon Marketing Services

Green City’s publicist will work to secure major review, radio and print attention, and interviews.