

“The watercooler book of the year” —*Harper’s Bazaar* on *Still Waters*

Camilla Noli
BROKEN FENCES

2 September 2009, Hachette Australia, \$24.99 original paperback

A note from Camilla Noli:



“These quotes appeared on a popular online parenting chatroom, and are all from mothers talking about themselves and their children:

‘If all else fails, we do have a toilet. One flush and the problem is gone, right? Or am I thinking of goldfish?’

‘I feel like my heart is heavy.’

*‘Nobody ever told me I would worry about them **this** much.’*

In cyberspace, no-one need know your name so mothers can be honest, revealing their anxieties, the boredom of their day, their fears for their children, their all-consuming fatigue... or even their occasional dark desire to flush their children away like goldfish.

When I began writing my first novel *Still Waters* almost eight years ago, a story told from the point of view of a woman who uses the power of her motherhood in catastrophic ways, I felt as if I was writing out of *my* experiences and *my* fears. I was afraid that people would judge me for daring to enter the head of, and trying to fully understand, a mother who is at best ambivalent and at worst, evil; for exploring what was my deepest fear: that a mother, *any* mother, could be capable of harming her child. I didn’t realise until it was published, when women began sharing their stories with me, that the novel tapped into the fears of so many other mothers as well.

Since *Still Waters* was published in April 2008 I have heard many, many stories from women whose experiences have been less than rosy, women for whom the transition into motherhood wasn’t easy. I believe that mothers want to talk honestly about all the experiences of mothering, good and bad; they just are so rarely given the opportunity and the permission to do so.

Where *Still Waters* centred upon a mother who perhaps didn’t love her children enough, my new novel *Broken Fences* examines boundary issues; is it possible for a mother to love her children too much? How much freedom is enough? Does ‘helicopter parenting’ have a negative effect on our kids? Again, I’m finding that many parents share these concerns and I hope that *Broken Fences* will result in yet more women sharing their stories with me. As long as we keep talking and, in the process, dispelling the myth that motherhood is the easiest and most natural thing in the world, we avoid setting women up to fail. As mothers we have power over our children; it’s just that sometimes we need to be allowed to admit that using that power scares us, and to know that we’re not alone in feeling that way.”

Camilla Noli is available for interview and commission

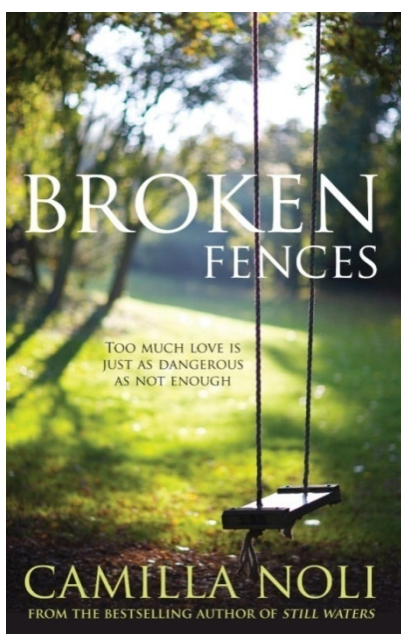
Pto:-

Camilla Noli

BROKEN FENCES

2 September 2009, Hachette Australia, \$24.99 original paperback

Camilla Noli, author of 2008's *Still Waters*, revisits her theme of suburban menace in a heart-stopping new story exploring what happens when a parent loves a child too much.



Clair lives a seemingly idyllic life in a leafy, prosperous suburb. She has worked hard to create the perfect world for her husband and two children, dedicating herself to being the best wife and mother she can be – cooking wholesome and delicious meals, entertaining the family's many friends, volunteering at the local school and contributing to her community. Clair knows from experience how harsh the world can be for children and is determined to hold the big, bad world at bay for as long as she can. Her plan works... until a new family arrives in the area.

The first time she sees Chelsea, Clair decides instantly that she is a spoiled only child with the potential to disrupt the ordered calm that she has created. But Clair can have no way of knowing exactly how bad things will get. A tragic accident that she interprets as something far more sinister appears to provide the proof she needs that children need a firm hand, and a strict parent. But Clair's over-reaction to the accident only causes her kids to rebel and, the tighter she holds on to the reins, the less control she seems to exert.

As Clair slowly loses her vice-like grip on her children's lives and, with it, the power to control what happens to them, she begins to struggle with reality. Teetering on the edge of madness, Clair will do anything to protect her family... even at the risk of destroying their lives.

Praise for *Still Waters*:

"The watercooler book of the year... a chilling page-turner."—*Harper's Bazaar*

"Not only is the subject matter harrowing but the voice is cool and seductive, leading us inevitably to places we don't want to go; and yet, once there, unable to resist reading on. This psychological thriller is all the more terrifying because it touches on feelings common to more of us than we care to admit."—*The Age*

"Noli's debut novel is uncomfortably hypnotic. It's got a creepy, dreamlike quality that draws you in even when all you want to do is look away. It's a novel that holds up the most horrifying mirror of motherhood and dares you to contradict what you see... That's what makes *Still Waters* so shocking: you know this woman."—*Who Weekly*

"One of the most confronting novels of 2008."—*The Canberra Times*

*** Camilla Noli is available for interview ***

Camilla Noli lives on the Central Coast of New South Wales with her husband and two children. Rights to her debut novel *Still Waters* were sold around the world.

For details: Emma Noble at Orion, 02-8248 0849 or emma.noble@hachette.com.au

