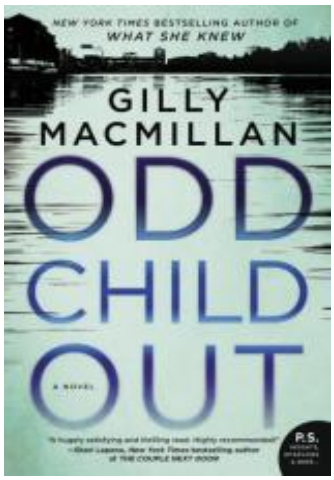
Odd Child Out

by Gilly Macmillan



About the Book

From the *New York Times* bestselling author of WHAT SHE KNEW

How well do you know the people you love?

Best friends Noah Sadler and Abdi Mahad have always been inseparable. But when Noah is found floating unconscious in Bristol's Feeder Canal, Abdi can't --- or won't --- tell anyone what happened.

Just back from a mandatory leave following his last case, Detective Jim Clemo is now assigned to look into this unfortunate accident. But tragedy strikes, and what looked like the simple case of a prank gone wrong soon ignites into a public battle. Noah is British. Abdi is a Somali refugee. And social tensions have been rising rapidly in Bristol. Against this background of fear and fury, two families fight for their sons and for the truth. Neither of them know how far they will have to go, what demons they will have to face, what pain they will have to suffer.

Because the truth hurts.

Discussion Guide

1. ODD CHILD OUT paints a picture of the horrors refugees face in their native countries and the challenges they encounter when entering a new community. Has reading this book given you a new perspective on the struggles of refugees?

2. Even though Noah and Abdi came from entirely different worlds, they eveloped an extremely deep and trusting friendship. What do you think each boy needed from the other that made them so close?

3. Abdi was raised in the UK, yet his Somali heritage plays a strong role in how others perceive him and his actions. Discuss the roles of race, prejudice and privilege during the investigation.

4. The Mahads and the Sadlers each try to protect their son in their own ways. Do you feel their actions were justified? When, if ever, do you think you should cease protecting someone you love?

5. Noah wanted to explore and experience the world before his sickness took him. If you were ill, what would your bucket list be?

6. Edward Sadler knows he isn?t a perfect person. Did your feelings about him change as the novel progressed?

7. Detective Inspector Jim Clemo is tackling his own personal demons when he is brought onto the Noah Sadler case. How do you think Clemo?s personal and professional lives affected each other?

8. Maryam, Nur and Sofia each had secrets to keep about their pasts. Do you think they were right to bury their history as they did, or should they have been more open with Abdi? What would you have done in their situation?

9. The man with the cleft palate is a figure of mystery for most of the novel. Did you suspect who he was? Were you satisfied with his fate at the end of the novel?

10. There are several cases of the media presenting partial or skewed narratives throughout the novel, such as Edward Sadler?s exhibition and Emma Zhang?s article. Do you think the media can ever be completely nonpartisan? Do you think the media has any obligations to its subject when exposing a story?

Author Bio

Gilly Macmillan is the internationally bestselling author of nine novels: WHAT SHE KNEW, THE PERFECT GIRL, ODD CHILD OUT, I KNOW YOU KNOW, THE NANNY, TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, THE LONG WEEKEND, THE MANOR HOUSE and THE BURNING LIBRARY.

A former art historian and photographer, Gilly studied at Bristol University and the Courtauld Institute of Art in London. She lives in Bristol, UK, with her husband and three children.

Her first novel, WHAT SHE KNEW, was a Target pick, a LibraryReads pick, an Indie Next pick, an Edgar award nominee, and an International Thriller Writers award finalist. THE NANNY was a Spring 2020 Richard & Judy WHSmith Book Club pick, and TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH was named one of the best thrillers of 2020 by the *New York Times*.

Gilly?s novels have appeared on the *New York Times*, *Sunday Times*, *Globe & Mail* and *Der Spiegel* bestseller lists and have been translated into 25 languages. She?s been described as "one heck of a good writer" (*Wall Street Journal*) and her novels have been praised as "nuanced, completely addictive" (*People*), "riveting" (*Publishers Weekly*), and "visceral, emotionally charged?heart-wrenchingly well told" (*The Daily Mail*).

Critical Praise

"A hugely satisfying and thrilling read. Highly recommended!"

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