

The GIRL IN THE ORPHANAGE

ROBERT BARCLAY

A SEARCH FOR JUSTICE AND THE LONGING FOR PEACE.

Katy's world is shattered. Her husband, Simon, has been murdered in a remote Cambodian border village.

What was he doing there?

Unable to sleep in peaceful Melbourne, Katy seeks solace in Simon's study: A remembered smell, a half-read book, something. What she finds is an unfinished manuscript, called *Chavy's Story*, hinting at Simon's secretive work. It tells the harrowing story of a young village girl trafficked for sex.

Katy travels to Cambodia in search of answers. The riddles buried in the pages of *Chavy's Story* unmask a forgotten horror from Katy's childhood.

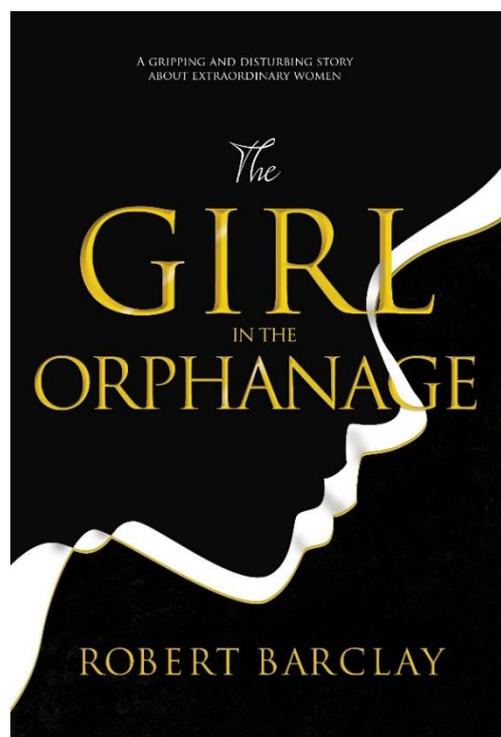
***Chavy's Story* will change Katy's life forever...**

"Masterful and gripping, as if the author anticipates everything we as readers will demand and he delivers...Exceptional follow on to The Diary of Katy Yehonala..." Kelly, Indiebook Reviewer



AUTHOR BIO

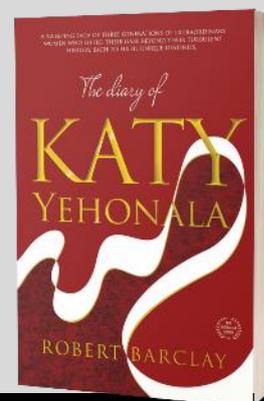
Robert Barclay grew up in a picturesque English village, a 1000-year history engraved on tombstones and birth records in its Norman Church. Fate intervened when the family migrated to Australia in 1965 and seduced by the sea voyage, he yearned to see the world. During the Vietnam War, he found himself in the murky waterways of The Mekong Delta dismantling booby traps. The inspiration for his writing and charity work comes first-hand from the war-ravaged villages and the children affected by the inhumanity of adults.



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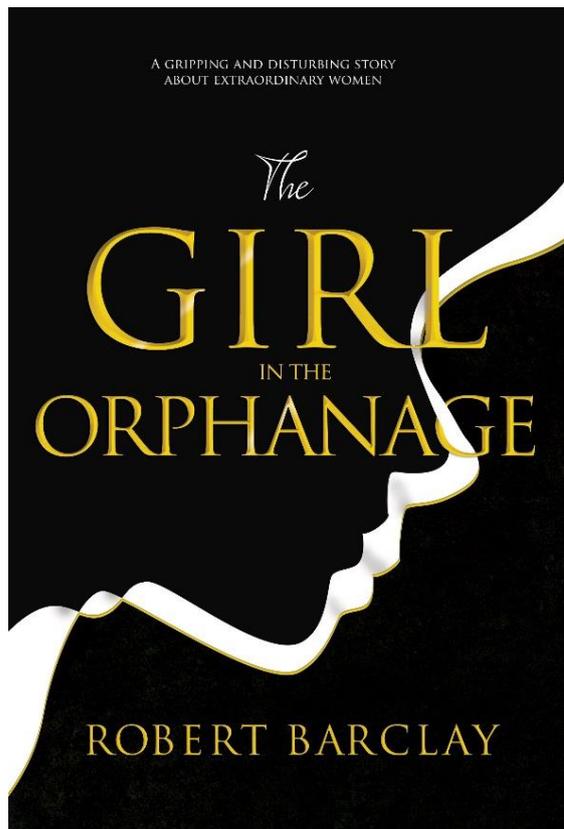
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ROBERT BARCLAY



A CONVERSATION WITH THE AUTHOR

WHY DID YOU WRITE 'THE GIRL IN THE ORPHANAGE'? WHAT WERE YOUR INSPIRATIONS?

In the 1970s, two of the world's greatest catastrophes were happening. They took place on Australia's doorstep and went by unnoticed for most people. The first, China's Cultural Revolution and famine, killed more people than World War 1.

The second happened in Cambodia, that magical land of the gentle Khmer people. The world continued with its distractions while this fairy-tale country was ravaged under the brutal hand of Pol Pot, and two million Khmer men, women, and children, plus a couple of Australians as it happened, were executed in the Killing Fields or perished from starvation, disease, and overwork. Unlike China, Cambodia remains one of the poorest countries on Earth. Adding to its woes, or because of them, Cambodia became the hub of the most evil industry imaginable, the trafficking of children for sex.

At the time, I was involved in that other 1970s best-seller, the Vietnam War, a country with borders to both China and Cambodia. I saw the Cambodian genocide unfold from my place of work in the labyrinthine waterways of the Mekong Delta. Later, I lived and worked in China. Immersing myself in the histories of these two introverted countries changed my life and set up a charity to do a little to help.

'The Girl in the Orphanage' isn't about the silent calamities of Cambodia or China, but forms a backdrop for part of the story. I wanted to portray Katy and Clara Yehonala, as "universal women," casting aside their cultural millstones from their brutal and cultural past, determined to make a difference, and honour the humanity we all share. They would evoke personal memories of similar challenges we have all experienced, and either overcome or faced being overwhelmed by, and to raise an awareness of a place and an experience we may never encounter ourselves.

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR YOUR FUTURE BOOKS?

My first book introduced the characters, Katy, her mother, Simon, and Clara, to readers. My wish is to create a series of good vs. evil perils for Katy and Clara they are ill-suited to, letting them grow in each book, always within a framework of compelling back-stories of the social evils that exist out of sight of many of us. The women, Katy and Clara, are I believe, a unique "duo" in literature and represent a new wave of empowered, imperfect, seriously flawed Asian women, feeling their way in the world and making a difference.

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