

# Ian McEwan THE CHILDREN ACT

Fiona Maye is a leading High Court judge who presides over cases in the family court. She is renowned for her fierce intelligence, exactitude, and sensitivity. But her professional success belies private sorrow and domestic strife. There is the lingering regret of her childlessness, and now her marriage of thirty years is in crisis.

At the same time, she is called on to try an urgent case: Adam, a beautiful seventeen-year-old boy, is refusing for religious reasons the medical treatment that could save his life, and his devout parents echo his wishes. Time is running out. Should the secular court overrule sincerely expressed faith? In the course of reaching a decision, Fiona visits Adam in the hospital—an encounter that stirs long-buried feelings in her and powerful new emotions in the boy. Her judgment has momentous consequences for them both.



**Ian McEwan** is the bestselling author of fifteen books, including the novels *Sweet Tooth*; *Solar*, winner of the Bollinger Everyman Wodehouse Prize; *On Chesil Beach*; *Saturday*; *Atonement*, winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award and the W. H. Smith Literary Award; *The Comfort of Strangers* and *Black Dogs*, both short-listed for the Booker Prize; *Amsterdam*, winner of the Booker Prize; and *The Child in Time*, winner of the Whitbread Award; as well as the story collections *First Love*, *Last Rites*, winner of the Somerset Maugham Award, and *In Between the Sheets*.

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