

BUTTERFLY FISH

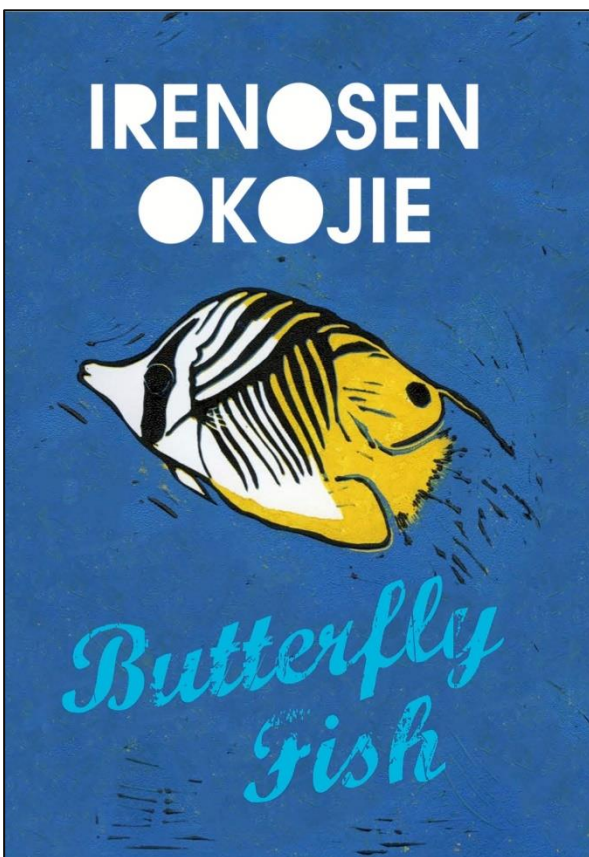
Irenosen Okojie

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'One of the most original and innovative writers to emerge in many a year.' Alex Wheatle MBE

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A fragile outsider living in London, Joy struggles to pull the threads of her life back together after her mother's sudden death. Emptiness consumes her and, needing to fill the gaps of her loss, she finds she is drawn to a unique artefact inherited from her mother – a warrior's head cast in brass that belonged to a king in eighteenth century Benin, Nigeria.

Joy is haunted by a beautiful young woman who appears in her photographs, familiar yet beguilingly distinct, the woman trails her wherever she goes. Joy begins to dream of a different time, a different place. She feels an inexplicable pull towards this mysterious female, and a past revealing itself through clues is scattered in her path. As family secrets come to light, she unearths the ties between her mother, grandfather, the wife of the king, a fearsome warrior, and the brass head's pivotal connection to them all.

Haunting and compelling, *Butterfly Fish* is a richly told story of love and hope; of family secrets, power, political upheaval, loss and coming undone.

IRENOSEN OKOJIE is a writer, curator and Arts Project Manager. She has worked with the Royal Shakespeare Company, the Southbank Centre, and the Caine Prize. Her writing has been featured in the *Guardian* and the *Observer*. Her short stories have been published internationally, including the *Kwani 07* and *Phatitudo*. She was a selected writer by Theatre Royal Stratford East and Writer in Residence for TEDx East End. In 2014, she was the Prize Advocate for the SI Leeds Literary Prize. She is a mentor for the Pen to Print project supported by publisher Constable & Robinson. She lives in east London. *Butterfly Fish* is her first novel.

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