

AN ACT OF DEFIANCE

a novel by

IRENE SABATINI

THE
INDIGO
PRESS

‘A searing, delightful gem of a book.’

Novuyo Rose Tshuma, author of *House of Stone*

‘An incredible achievement’

Chika Unigwe, author of *On Black Sisters’ Street*

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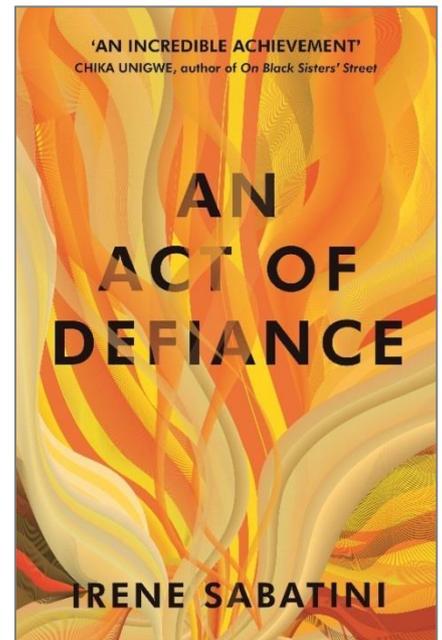
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How can you imagine the future when your story traps you in the past?

Harare, 2000. Gabrielle, a newly qualified lawyer, has been assigned a rape case, a private prosecution brought by the father of a schoolgirl against a rising star in Mugabe’s Zanu-PF party. The case is political and controversial, and it is one Gabrielle hopes will set a new precedent. Moving in the same Harare social circles is Ben, an urbane and charismatic American junior diplomat. He contrasts with her previous lover: the serious and authoritative Giorgio, now living in Columbia. The chemistry is instant, and they begin a tentative love affair.

But Zimbabwe is in turmoil and unspeakable violence is commonplace. White farmers are being attacked and the president’s youth wing is terrorising his political opponents. As The Old Man tightens his grip on power, Gabrielle finds herself under increasing pressure to drop the private prosecution. It is against this backdrop that she and Ben suffer a shocking, prolonged attack which sees their lives splinter across continents and their stories diverge, forcing Gabrielle on a painful journey towards self-realisation.

Irene Sabatini has written an unforgettable novel about love, agency, motherhood and bravery. *An Act of Defiance* shows how the dehumanising effects of political violence can shape and remake a life.



‘Raw, moving and utterly compelling.’

Tendai Huchu, author of *The Hairdresser of Harare*

‘Wonderfully enjoyable and heart-warming’

Bernardine Evaristo on *Peace and Conflict*



IRENE SABATINI spent her childhood in Bulawayo in Zimbabwe. After attending the University of Zimbabwe in Harare, she moved to Colombia, where she worked as a teacher. She has a master’s degree in child development from the Institute of Education at University College London. Irene is the author of two previous novels; her debut novel, *The Boy Next Door*, won the 2010 Orange Award for New Writers. She divides her time between New York, Geneva and Bulawayo.

www.irenesabatini.com

Irene Sabatini is available for events and media appearances and will be visiting the UK for a publication tour in March 2020

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About The Indigo Press

The Indigo Press is an independent publisher of literary fiction and non-fiction. We are partnered with translation rights agency The Marsh Agency and headquartered at the legendary John Murray building in London.

The press is named after the ancient dye, used all over the world. Having once been a luxury product, subject to tariffs and harvested by slaves, indigo is now one of the most democratic colours in the world as the main ingredient of denim, or 'serge de nîmes'. The decolonization - of the mind, body, or country - is a key element of our philosophy.

Guided by a spirit of internationalism, feminism and socialism, we publish books to make you see the world afresh, question your behaviour and beliefs, and imagine a better future.

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About the MILD Group

Founded by CEO Susie Nicklin, MILD brings together a dynamic portfolio of book businesses that includes long-established international rights specialists The Marsh Agency (founded in 1994), publishing house The Indigo Press (founded in 2017), and LiveLit, a thriving year-round programme of events that includes three literary festivals. Each business operates individually whilst sharing expertise across their teams, for an enterprising approach to publishing from acquisition to retail and promotion.

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