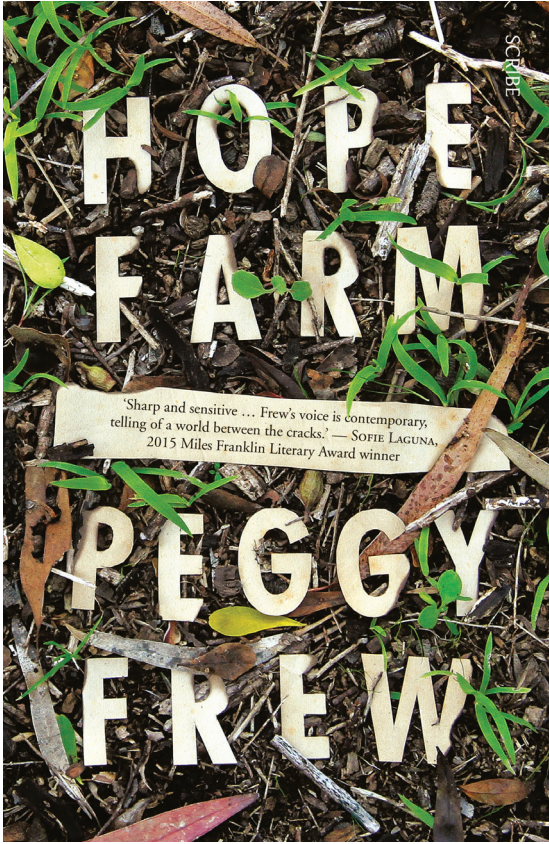


Hope Farm

PEGGY FREW



BOOK DETAILS

Format: Paperback
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AUTHOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Peggy Frew's debut novel, *House of Sticks*, won the 2010 Victorian Premier's Literary Award for an unpublished manuscript. Her story 'Home Visit' won *The Age* short story competition in 2008. She has been published in *New Australian Stories 2*, *Kill Your Darlings*, and *Meanjin*. Peggy is also a member of the critically acclaimed and award-winning Melbourne band Art of Fighting.

It is the winter of 1985. Hope Farm sticks out of the ragged landscape like a decaying tooth, its weatherboard walls sagging into the undergrowth. Silver's mother, Ishtar, has fallen for the charismatic Miller, and the three of them have moved to the rural hippie commune to make a new start.

At Hope, Silver finds unexpected friendship and, at last, a place to call home. But it is also here that, at just thirteen, she is thrust into an unrelenting adult world — and the walls begin to come tumbling down, with deadly consequences.

Hope Farm is the masterful second novel from award-winning author Peggy Frew, and is a devastatingly beautiful story about the broken bonds of childhood, and the enduring cost of holding back the truth.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. *Hope Farm* is a novel about how the secrets of the past can influence the future. On page 2, Silver says that what happened at Hope Farm, 'wasn't anyone's fault, in the end'. Do you agree?
2. What mistakes does Ishtar make along the way, and how does she learn from or correct these mistakes? Do you have any or much sympathy for her?
3. What does The Path offer Ishtar when she joins? How does her relationship with The Path change over time?
4. On page 38, Silver says of Ishtar that, to the residents of Hope Farm, 'she must have appeared free — or at least closer to what they thought freedom was than they were.' Discuss the ways in which the idea of freedom is examined in *Hope Farm*.
5. *Hope Farm* explores the relationship between a mother and daughter. Do you think Ishtar made the right decision to keep Silver? She felt an abortion wasn't an option for her when she became pregnant. How do you think things might have turned out for her had she been able to get one?

REVIEWS

‘Peggy Frew’s novel, *Hope Farm*, tells an original tale, drawing into the body of Australian literary fiction, a world between the cracks. Peggy’s voice is contemporary, her observations sharp and sensitive. *Hope Farm* describes the cycle of loss and damage when there are no boundaries to protect us.’

SOFIE LAGUNA, AUTHOR OF *THE EYE OF THE SHEEP*, 2015 MILES FRANKLIN LITERARY AWARD WINNER

‘Peggy Frew is an amazing writer and *Hope Farm* is a great novel that captures the pleasures and difficulties of being both a parent and of being a child.’

CHRIS WOMERSLEY, AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR OF *CAIRO* AND *BEREFT*

‘Frew’s deceptively slow-burn tale of a teenage girl — adrift, bewildered, seeking solidity — moves inexorably to its climax, laying bare a certain darkness at the heart of the alternative lifestyle. But it’s the tale of a survivor, too.’

LUKE DAVIES, AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR OF *CANDY*

6. One of the few upsides to Silver’s time at Hope Farm is the freedom she has to roam in the bush, a place she develops a special attachment to. Are there any other positive aspects to a childhood like Silver’s, do you think?
7. Ishtar and Silver have a very distant relationship by the time they arrive at Hope Farm. At what point do you think Ishtar withdrew from Silver? Do you think it was a good thing that Silver found her mother’s notebook? Does understanding necessarily make forgiveness easier?
8. Men are a powerful driving force behind Ishtar’s behaviour, her connections to place, and her feelings of self-worth. What is it she hopes, perhaps unwittingly, that each man will be able to provide her? She has a power over them, but is ultimately always dissatisfied. Why?
9. Silver felt that Dan offered her and her mother a chance of a better life. Do you think it was unfair of Ishtar to leave him? What impact do you think this had on Ishtar and Silver’s relationship?
10. What do you imagine happens following the end of the novel? What do you think the future holds for Silver? Will she ever fully recover from her childhood experiences?



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