

# **White Knuckles**

## **TAGLINE**

Scars are permanent.

## **LOGLINE**

Vera Swan, 28, a stuntwoman living on Australia's Gold Coast, returns to her native South Africa after her mother is brutally attacked. Back within her former community of white Afrikaners, now on the fringes of the new South Africa, Vera decides to investigate the crime herself. But she soon discovers that in a patriarchal world making its own rules in the face of a total loss of power, to out one's own brings wrath and intimidation...

## **THE STORY**

VERA SWAN (28), a South African stuntwoman living on Australia's Gold Coast, carries a lot of scars. One night, she receives news that her widowed mother, JUDITH SWANEPOEL (48), has been brutally attacked and left for dead. She flies home for the first time in a decade to nurse her back to health.

For Vera, the trip means a return to everything from which she fled, to the town of Brits, a mining settlement an hour's drive northwest of Johannesburg. But things are not as they once were. Once in power, the white Afrikaners of the region have been relegated to a disenfranchised working class scraping by in the midst of a new black elite.

Judith now lives in what has become a poor white neighbourhood, a cluster of makeshift houses outside the city, a place of little interest to the police that has formed its own set of rules. Joblessness and domestic violence are rife, and where once stood family homes and manicured gardens now lie dilapidated buildings set in a dry, withered landscape of poverty and suspicion. Organised crime has replaced legitimate employment, while patriarchy, paranoia, extortion and gun ownership are everyday realities of this hard life on the fringes of society.

When Vera discovers that her badly injured mother was also raped but was too afraid to press charges, she is determined to find out more. She soon learns that the perpetrator is a young White man she knows, but in order to seek justice she must do so without her mother's consent and against a community that closes ranks to protect its own.

Facing such resistance – along with indifference from local law enforcement unwilling to act – Vera pushes on regardless. But the more she delves, the more she puts herself in danger, uncovering layers of crime, control and suspicion. Facing intimidation and physical threats from within her own extended family, Vera must decide whether to flee the country again or stay behind to take on the male power structures around her to avenge the crime against her mother.

*White Knuckles* is a portrait of white manhood told through the journey of a young woman who must navigate this world. It is about what happens in a community when it is left to its own devices, and the potential for the use of unchecked violence and fear when a previously domineering and formidable group loses its grip on power...