



Gold: A Novel

By Chris Cleave

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Building on the tradition of *Little Bee*, Chris Cleave again writes with elegance, humor, and passion about friendship, marriage, parenthood, tragedy, and redemption.

What would you sacrifice for the people you love?

KATE AND ZOE met at nineteen when they both made the cut for the national training program in track cycling—a sport that demands intense focus, blinding exertion, and unwavering commitment. They are built to exploit the barest physical and psychological edge over equally skilled rivals, all of whom are fighting for the last one tenth of a second that separates triumph from despair.

Now at thirty-two, the women are facing their last and biggest race: the 2012 Olympics. Each wants desperately to win gold, and each has more than a medal to lose.

Kate is the more naturally gifted, but the demands of her life have a tendency to slow her down. Her eight-year-old daughter Sophie dreams of the Death Star and of battling alongside the Rebels as evil white blood cells ravage her personal galaxy—she is fighting a recurrence of the leukemia that nearly killed her three years ago. Sophie doesn't want to stand in the way of her mum's Olympic dreams, but each day the dark forces of the universe seem to be massing against her.

Devoted and self-sacrificing Kate knows her daughter is fragile, but at the height of her last frenzied months of training, might she be blind to the most terrible prognosis?

Intense, aloof Zoe has always hovered on the periphery of real human companionship, and her compulsive need to win at any cost has more than once threatened her friendship with Kate—and her own sanity. Will she allow her obsession, and the advantage she has over a harried, anguished mother, to sever the bond they have shared for more than a decade?

Echoing the adrenaline-fueled rush of a race around the Velodrome track, *Gold* is a triumph of superbly paced, heart-in-throat storytelling. With great humanity

and glorious prose, Chris Cleave examines the values that lie at the heart of our most intimate relationships, and the choices we make when lives are at stake and everything is on the line.

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Gold: A Novel By Chris Cleave Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Amazon Best Books of the Month, July 2012: Kate and Zoe, the central characters in Chris Cleave's fast-paced and poignant *Gold*, are classic frenemies. Professional cyclists who have been training with--and competing against--each other for almost 15 years, they have one career-defining difference: Zoe will do anything to win, but there are lines Kate refuses to cross. Cleave jumps back and forth in time as they prepare for their final Olympics, showing how the two athletes met and unveiling all the ways in which they are inextricably linked. They share a coach, Tom (who clearly has a favorite); Kate's husband, Jack, has a long history with both women; and Kate and Jack's daughter, Sophie, binds them all together. While cycling is the focus of the plot, the heart of *Gold* is the sacrifice we make for our families. --*Caley Anderson*

Review

The #1 IndieNext Pick for July

An Instant *New York Times* bestseller

One of *Marie Claire's* "Favorite Reads"

A *DailyBeast/Newsweek* Book Club Pick

A *Martha Stewart Living* Book Club Pick

A *USA Today* Books Pick

"A heartstring-tugger with an adrenaline-fueled plot from the bestselling author of *Little Bee*." (People)

"Cleave's great gift is his ability to write moving fiction that also provides original, contemporary insights. . . . *Gold* is a real winner of a novel." (USA Today)

"Cleave again displays a remarkable aptitude for rendering female characters with startling realism, one of the strengths of his previous novels (particularly 2009's *Little Bee*). He conjures Sophie's traumatized yet resilient young mind as deftly as he does the complex interior narratives of high-strung Zoe and the more philosophical Kate. . . . In these breathless portrayals of sport and spirit, *Gold* illuminates the stories of courage, loss, and commitment that are behind each of the seemingly invincible Olympians we root for every four years." (Elle)

"If Olympic medals were awarded for dramatic stories about what drives athletes to compete and succeed, Cleave would easily ascend the podium. *Gold* does for sport racing what Jon Krakauer's *Into the Wild* did for high-risk adventure: It demystifies its allure, giving readers an inside track on a certain type of compulsive mindset. But *Gold* is also about time, ambition and love, three life forces continuously jockeying for supremacy. Novels, like racing, depend on careful pacing, and Cleave calibrates his performance with the skill of a real pro, carefully ratcheting up the intensity as he finesses curves and heads into his final laps. . . . Cleave spins a doozy of a plot, with enough drama and sentiment to sustain a soap opera. His characters are humanized by their struggle with their personal demons With *Gold*, Cleave unleashes megawatts of power in yet another triumphant dash toward literary success." (NPR)

"*Gold* wins a medal for impressive timing: Chris Cleave's adrenalized novel—which breathlessly tracks the complicated friendship and furious competition between two speed cyclists, Kate and Zoe, as they train for a fictional London 2012 Olympics—arrives just a month before the opening of the actual London 2012 Olympics. . . . As Cleave demonstrated in his best-seller *Little Bee*, he is a full-hearted writer." (Entertainment Weekly)

“Emotionally arresting (and exquisitely timed) . . . Cleave shines when he focuses on the cyclists’ sacrifices, including training sessions in which they push themselves to the brink of blacking out . . . Cleave’s fine novel will give you an appreciation for all that London’s Olympians have gone through as you watch them contort their bodies, leap for the heavens or pedal round and round and round.” (Sports Illustrated)

“Chris Cleave’s latest novel lives and breathes, sweats and suffers at the harrowing place where ambition collides with sacrifice. That it arrives on the eve of the 2012 Olympic Games in London is perfect timing on the part of Cleave and publisher Simon & Schuster, but *Gold* would be first class anytime, anywhere. It’s an adrenaline-fueled drama about winning and losing, in the velodrome and daily existence, an explosive exploration of the cost of success and the way sports competition can spill unhappily into life. It will force you to reconsider the definition of “victory,” and it will leave you breathless . . . Cleave proves again that if writing were an Olympic sport, he’d be vying for a medal.”—*Miami Herald*

“Cleave has the extremely rare power of making you smile with lively language and clever observations while he is thoroughly, irreparably breaking your heart.”—*Newsday* (NY)

“In *Gold*, as with his previous work, Cleave writes with tremendous heart, displaying a keen eye for life’s absurdities, sorrows, and triumphs. The story is riveting, the characters unforgettable. *Gold* has everything you could ask for in a story: adrenaline-soaked racing, wretchedly human decisions, laugh-out-loud moments and quietly heartbreaking ones.”—*Bookpage*

“Chris Cleave is a writer who goes for your throat and doesn't let go. . . . The rivalry that powers the book is the competition between the closely matched Kate and Zoe, which takes place on and off the course. That they also develop a friendship, uneasy and fraught but still real, is a testament to Kate's generosity, as well as Cleave's talent as a writer. He writes women, particularly wounded women, with great empathy and skill.”—*The Oregonian*

“Moving and compelling . . . The millions of readers of *Little Bee* can attest that despite the delicacy of his prose, Cleave doesn't deal in half measures or subtle strokes—he goes straight for the heartstrings. Every page of *Gold* is drenched with an urgency of feeling that generates the same emotional pleasure as a great moment in sports, where we simultaneously witness triumph and failure in the starkest, most dramatic terms. . . . *Gold* will likely resonate most with readers for the way it unveils the ordinariness surrounding the extraordinary.” —*Nashville Scene*

“Cleave goes for the gold and brings it home in his thrillingly written and emotionally rewarding novel about the world of professional cycling. . . . Cleave expertly cycles through the characters’ tangled past and present, charting their ever-shifting dynamic as ultra-competitive Zoe and Kate are forced to decide whether winning means more to them than friendship . . . Cleave likewise pulls out all the stops getting inside the hearts and minds of his engagingly complex characters. The race scenes have true visceral intensity, leaving the reader feeling breathless . . . From start to finish, this is a truly Olympic-level literary achievement.”—*Publishers Weekly* (boxed starred review)

“Cleave’s latest novel demonstrates the determination of three extraordinary athletes in a story about true sacrifice. . . . [Their lives are] so intertwined, so complex, that the outcome is sure to be a surprise. Close on the heels of his international best seller *Little Bee*, British author Cleave has written another story so riveting that it is impossible to put down.”—*Library Journal* (starred review)

? “Readers galvanized by best-selling Cleave’s previous politically scorching novels (*Little Bee*, 2009) will be surprised by his foray into the world of Olympic bicycle racing until they discern just how

psychologically gripping a tale this is . . . Spanning the Athens, Beijing, and looming London 2012 Olympics, Cleave's brilliantly plotted, nail-biting, and emotional tale dramatizes the anguish and triumphs of ambition and sacrifice, fame and heartbreak to celebrate the true gold of love."—**Booklist (starred review)**

"Cleave is an acutely intelligent wordsmith. Some of the sentences cut so deep you want to scream out in pain and recognition . . . This is an inspirational and moving novel in so many ways, and everyone should read it." (The Times (UK))

About the Author

Chris Cleave is the author of *Everyone Brave is Forgiven*, *Gold Incendiary*, and the #1 *New York Times* bestseller *Little Bee*. He lives with his wife and three children in London, England. Visit him at ChrisCleave.com or on Twitter @ChrisCleave.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Benjamin Ward:

Spent a free time to be fun activity to try and do! A lot of people spent their spare time with their family, or their particular friends. Usually they undertaking activity like watching television, about to beach, or picnic within the park. They actually doing same thing every week. Do you feel it? Do you need to something different to fill your current free time/ holiday? Can be reading a book could be option to fill your cost-free time/ holiday. The first thing you ask may be what kinds of publication that you should read. If you want to attempt look for book, may be the e-book untitled Gold: A Novel can be great book to read. May be it may be best activity to you.

William Pak:

Your reading sixth sense will not betray anyone, why because this Gold: A Novel reserve written by well-known writer who really knows well how to make book that could be understand by anyone who also read the book. Written inside good manner for you, still dripping wet every ideas and composing skill only for eliminate your own hunger then you still skepticism Gold: A Novel as good book but not only by the cover but also with the content. This is one guide that can break don't ascertain book by its protect, so do you still needing one more sixth sense to pick this specific!/? Oh come on your studying sixth sense already told you so why you have to listening to an additional sixth sense.

Pamela Dodge:

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Andre Barrett:

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