

# Neecey's Lullaby: A novel

Cris Burks

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The story of a girl tempered in a crucible of abuse and neglect, *Neecey's Lullaby* is a superbly crafted narrative in the spirit of the bestselling novels *Push* and *Bastard Out of Carolina*.

Growing up in Chicago in the 1950s, Neecey once felt that her world was perfect. She was loved and protected by her father, Jesse, and lived in relative comfort with her mother, Ruby, her grandmother, Ma 'Dear, and her siblings. But when Ruby and Jesse's marriage falls apart due to Jesse's cheating ways and Ruby's hot temper, the children are eventually abandoned by their father and end up living in poverty in a housing project.

Ruby plunges into depression and anger, yelling at and hitting her children without warning. Ruby brings shiftless suitors into her home and gives them her body and her time, leaving Neecey to learn on her own how to cook and care for her five younger siblings, some mere babies. Yet despite the trauma, Neecey's love for her sisters and brother, and ultimately herself, helps her find the inner strength to succeed.

Cris Burks has created a poignant portrait of a child who strives to soar above a world of pain.



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