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The Birth of Love

By Joanna Kavenna

Faber & Faber. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, The Birth of Love, Joanna Kavenna, Vienna 1865: Dr Ignaz Semmelweis has been hounded into a lunatic asylum, ridiculed for his claim that doctors' unwashed hands are the root cause of childbed fever. The deaths of thousands of mothers are on his conscience and his dreams are filled with blood. 2153: humans are birthed and raised in breeding centres, nurtured by strangers and deprived of familial love. Miraculously, a woman conceives, and Prisoner 730004 stands trial for concealing it. London in 2009: Michael Stone's novel about Semmelweis has been published, after years of rejection. But while Michael absorbs his disconcerting success, his estranged mother is dying and asks to see him again. As Michael vacillates, Brigid Hayes, exhausted and uncertain whether she can endure the trials ahead, begins the labour of her second child. This is a beautifully constructed and immensely powerful work about motherhood that is also a story of rebellion, isolation and the damage done by rigid ideologies.



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Reviews

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