



THE CUBA PRESS  
NOVELLA SERIES 02

# I WISH, I WISH

## ZIRK VAN DEN BERG

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RRP \$25 • 110 × 175mm • 178pp • novella

### SELLING POINTS

- Winner of WA Hofmeyr Prize & KykNet-Rapport awards for fiction
- A darkly comic but ultimately uplifting tale
- Speculative fiction elements
- A 'big little book' – short but thematically rich

**ZIRK VAN DEN BERG** is a New Zealand author who has published award-winning writing in Afrikaans and English. His crime novel *Nobody Dies* was named one of the top five thrillers by *The New Zealand Herald* in 2004. Since 2013, he has published a further five books in South Africa and translated many more. His short fiction has been widely anthologised.

Born in Namibia, Zirk moved to New Zealand in 1998. He lives in Auckland and works as a freelance business writer.

### PREVIOUS ENGLISH TITLES

*No-Brainer* (Say Books NZ)

*Nobody Dies* (Random House NZ)

*Parts Unknown* (Kwela SA)

*Half of One Thing* (Penguin SA)

As a mortician, Seb has mastered the art of making the dead resemble the living. He's embalmed countless corpses, unpacked organs, reset bones and made up pallid faces for their final viewing. If he's honest, he prefers the company of the deceased – no surprises and nobody to witness his inadequacy. But they don't make for great work stories – nothing for his teenage children to look up to or to attract the waning interest of his wife.

It looks like another humdrum day at White Lily Funerals when Seb meets Gabe, a dying boy unusually interested in caskets, who forces the mortician to rearrange the pieces of his life and shows him that magic doesn't have to be just a wish.

A darkly comic tale with a tender heart, *I Wish, I Wish* was awarded the prestigious WA Hofmeyr Prize and the KykNET-Rapport awards for fiction and best filmable book.

“ Even though half the characters are on Seb's slab or already in a coffin, this beautifully written novel is a sharp-eyed, unsentimental tribute to the power of hope. ”  
– *Stephen Stratford*



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