



## **BLACK HARVEST**

BLACK HARVEST is a dramatic, fast moving adventure mystery for older children, set in the magnificent coastal scenery of Ireland. While very much rooted in the modern day, it shifts seamlessly between present and past, evoking startling images of a momentous historical event, the Great Famine in Ireland. More than that, it is a story about belonging – a theme with which children in our target age group - 9 to 13 years - will instantly identify. Through a series of wonderfully scary incidents, the central character finds a family and a history he never dreamed he had.

Eleven-year old Oliver Wright is a clever, cautious boy, who finds it hard to make friends of his own age. Brought up in Boston by loving adoptive parents, Oliver has no real sense of who he is or where he has come from. It takes his sprightly Great Uncle Bernie to invite him on a journey of discovery, to his own native land across the Atlantic. When Uncle Bernie falls ill, shortly before they set off on their big adventure, Oliver determines to make the trip alone.

This summer in Ireland will change Oliver forever. He feels out of sync with his adoptive cousins Tom (14), Hannah (13) and baby Emma Kennedy, but, equally, there are things about him that make them uncomfortable. From the moment they arrive in their holiday cottage, mysterious shadows and sinister events from long ago rear up and impose themselves upon Oliver's mind and imagination, turning the family holiday upside down.

The family is observed from a distance by a solitary old man Donal Morrissey, with whom Oliver strikes up an immediate and instinctive rapport. Donal is desperate to unearth an elusive last detail of his family history, but never could he have imagined that he would be led to the heart-breaking truth by this diffident young American boy.

As dark secrets start to emerge out of the peaty Irish soil, Tom and Hannah are drawn into Oliver's surreal appointment with history. To their growing fear and apprehension, past and present collide and there is no escape from encroaching events. It is only when tormented spirits are laid to rest, that the circle is closed. Donal fits the final piece into the jigsaw of his life and Oliver finds an unexpected sense of place and belonging in the world.

**The script has been developed with support from the MEDIA New Talent Scheme; National Lottery Fund through Northern Ireland Screen; Children's Film & Television Foundation; Pygmalion.**

**Writer:** Theresa Godfrey and John Henderson, based on Ann Pilling's novel

**Director:** John Henderson

**Producers:** Randall Shannon and Brian Kelly

**Executive Producer:** Carlo Dusi

**Cast:** Jim Broadbent

**Budget:** £2m