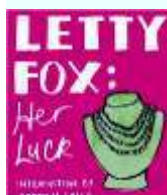




SHORT TAKES

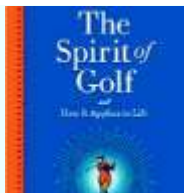


**LETTY FOX:
HER LUCK**
 BY CHRISTINA
 STEAD, MUP,
 RRP \$25

Originally banned in Australia, this classic by Christina Stead (*The Man Who Loved Children*), written in 1946, deserves a fresh generation of readers. Remarkable for its sexual frankness, Stead's sixth novel is a sharp-eyed satire of marriage, female desire and the way society tries to control it.

The story is about New Yorker Letty Fox, from her birth in 1921 to her marriage in 1945. This sprawling novel has many diversions. A richly woven tapestry that feels like bustling life. **CK**

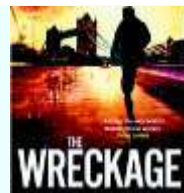
Verdict: female and fabulous!



**THE SPIRIT
OF GOLF**
 BY RICHARD
 ALLEN,
 VICTORY
 BOOKS, RRP
 \$20

You may spot them at the office, in a café or even in a bus queue — strange, almost involuntary gestures give them away. Golfers. While would-be rock stars do air guitar, would-be golf champs swing invisible clubs. It's part of the eternal quest to which all who have fallen victim to the grand old game can relate, part of the sometimes lifelong struggle to come to grips with the game's mysteries. Author Richard Allen's delightful book is subtitled "and How it Applies to Life". Allen finds life lessons in the triumphs and the disasters of the great and the not-so-great. From Old Tom Morris to Tiger, he delivers a rich collection of stories. **JK**

Verdict: bogey-free



**THE
WRECKAGE**
 BY MICHAEL
 ROBOTHAM,
 SPHERE, RRP
 \$33

This political thriller is set in London and Iraq, with plenty of twists and turns in both countries. Former journalist and ghostwriter Robotham takes us on another thrilling ride, and is skilled at weaving together multiple, entangled plotlines — from the big banks of the UK to the violence and corruption of post-war Iraq, and the involvement of government agencies in both. In Baghdad, Pulitzer prize-winning journalist Luca Terracini is investigating multiple large bank robberies and dodgy financial transfers, and in tracing the money he ends up back in London and in the middle of a murder. **KD**

Verdict: fast-paced



**THE WILFUL
EYE**
 EDITED BY
 ISOBELLE
 CARMODY, NAN
 MCNAB, ALLEN
 & UNWIN,
 RRP \$28

I love the premise of this book and its promised sequel. Six fairytales are retold by six Australian authors who have been given the freedom to re-imagine and retell as they desire. The authors include Margo Lanagan, Isobelle Carmody and Martine Murray. It is exciting, sometimes scary (*Catastrophic Disruption of the Head*), and sometimes magnificently rewarding (*One Window*). The first and last stories are awesome. At the end of each story is an afterword, where the author explains how they came to choose their fairytale, the motivation for the story and how it came into being. **RG**

Verdict: Verdict: Gripping



**HOW TO BE A
WOMAN**
 BY CAITLIN
 MORAN,
 EBURY, RRP
 \$29.95

Caitlin Moran has achieved the seemingly impossible: being laugh-out-loud funny while dragging feminism into the 21st century. Not widely known here, Moran was a precocious talent: first book published at 15, at 16 a music journalist, a columnist at *The Times* in London by 18 and 2011 critic and interviewer of the year. She mines her colourful life for laughs as she discusses Brazilian waxes and high heels, abortion, weddings, babies and porn. Smart, gutsy and refreshingly frank as you'd expect from someone who got drunk in a Berlin sex bar with Lady Gaga. Fades towards the end, but great fun getting there. **CH**

Verdict: woman of the year