



Cardboard: A woman left for dead

Fiona Place

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Cardboard: A woman left for dead is recognized as one of the most compelling portraits of an eating disorder and an outstanding example of its genre. It is also winner of the National Book Council's Award for New Writers. When we first meet Lucy she cannot understand what is wrong with her. Ashen, thin and with a thready heartbeat, she is finding it increasingly difficult to eat. The tour leader, on a tight schedule, decides she is merely homesick. And lying on her bed she is left to fend for herself. Alone in her tiny hotel room, Lucy wonders what she should do? Is she really sick or just homesick? Reluctantly, she decides to fly to an English speaking country. And to her embarrassment is taken off the plane in a wheelchair. Admitted to intensive care, Lucy is now a 'patient'. And undergoing a range of advised treatments - some harsh and ineffective, others intelligent and insightful - unknowingly enters into a dynamic and powerful struggle over the ownership of her identity, her life story. An astute observer, Lucy invites the reader to make sense of what it means to be 'ill'. To understand why eating has become so impossible. Life so impossible. And as she fleshes out her journey towards a secure, full-bodied and robust recovery demands her distress be understood. Demands it be put into her own words. Her own voice. Exquisitely written and winningly readable this novel will reach out to everyone who has struggled with the big questions: Who am? What do I want? How dangerous are my desires? "A psychological and intellectual tour de force" Liz Ferrier, Advisory Editor, m/c - a journal of media and culture "The complexity of the character Lucy's world is a tour de force of tight thinking and probing insights into the complexity of human behavior . . . she reminds me of Rodion Raskolnikov in Dostoevsky's Crime and Punishment." Michael Bailey, reviewer "One of the best novels ever to be published in Australia" Amanda Lohrey, novelist

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