

Miles Franklin Literary Award 2007
Shortlist

Theft: A Love Story

Peter Carey

Knopf (Random House Australia)

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'I don't know if my story is grand enough to be a tragedy, although a lot of shitty stuff did happen. It is certainly a love story but that did not begin until midway through the shitty stuff, by which time I had not only lost my 8-year-old son, but also my house and studio in Sydney where I had once been as famous as a painter could expect in his own backyard...'

So begins Peter Carey's highly charged, recklessly funny new novel. Narrated by artist Butcher Bones and his 'damaged 220 lb brother' Hugh, it recounts their adventures and troubles after Butcher's plummeting prices and spiralling drink problem force them to retreat from Sydney to northern New South Wales. Here the formerly famous artist is reduced to acting as caretaker for his patron and nurse to his idiot-savant brother. Then mysterious American beauty Marlene turns up one stormy night, clad in a pair of Manolo Blahniks. Claiming that the brothers' neighbour owns an original Jacques Liebovitz, she sets in motion a chain of events that could be the making or ruin of them all.

A truly brilliant novel - an act of fantastic writing bravura from Peter Carey, in which he once again displays his extraordinary flair for language - *Theft* is a love poem of a completely unexpected kind. Ranging from the rural wilds of Australia to Manhattan via Sydney and Tokyo and exploring the ideas of art, fraud, responsibility and redemption, this is a dark, thought-provoking and stirring story that will also make you laugh out loud.

About Peter Carey

Peter Carey is the multi-award-winning author of nine novels, plus two highly acclaimed collections of short stories and a memoir, *Wrong About Japan*. His books have won or been short-listed for every major literary award in Australia. He has won the Booker Prize twice - in 2001 for *True History Of The Kelly Gang* and in 1988 for *Oscar And Lucinda*. In 1998 he won the Commonwealth Writers' Prize for *Jack Maggs*, and again in 2001 for *True History Of The Kelly Gang*. Born in Bacchus Marsh, Victoria, Peter Carey now lives in New York.