

The Horses

WILLIAM LANE

On the outskirts of Sydney, a boys' boarding school prides itself on the horses it keeps. David, a gifted working class student, receives a scholarship to attend. At the same time Gregory, a new master, is appointed. Both soon learn, from their different perspectives, that what is said bears little relation to what is done. The school isolates itself from the outside world and over the course of several months of rain, the atmosphere inside the school becomes increasingly lawless and violent. School buildings slip away in floods. Underlying differences between various parties in the school turn into open conflicts, and the school community begins breaking up. These tensions are focussed in the conflict between two masters, Val and Mr C. These two men loathe one another, and both recruit boys in the war of ideas they are waging.

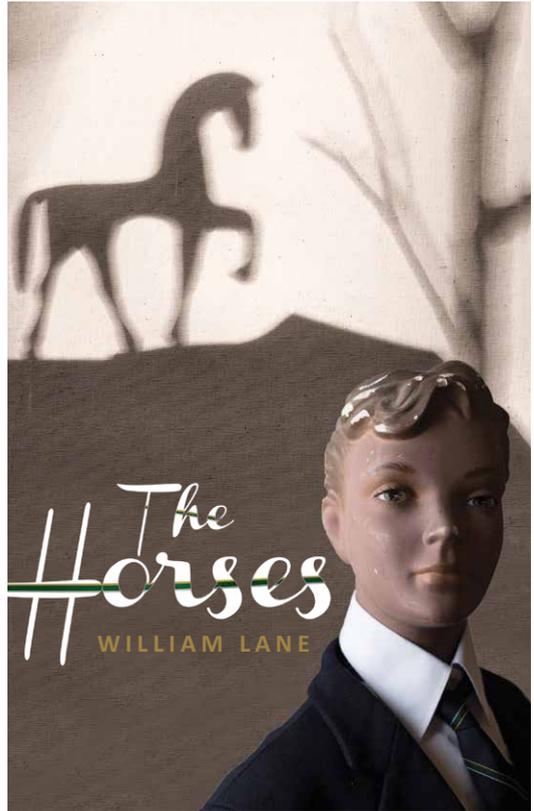
The Horses seems unique in Australian literature, exploring with great subtlety the complex way in which class can perpetuate itself through the education of its children. Reminiscent of J. G. Ballard's *High Rise*, set in an apartment complex designed to isolate its residents from the outside world, and Patrick White's writing in its satirical impulse leavened by compassion for the individual, Lane's new novel is never anything less than startlingly fresh and original.

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THE HORSES IS AN ACRID SATIRE, BUT A STRANGE ONE IN THAT LANE REALISES HOW UNTOUCHED BY SATIRE, LET ALONE SCANDAL, SUCH A PLACE CAN BE ... THIS IS A NOVEL THAT REVELS IN RISKS AND DELIVERS REWARDS OF AN ALTOGETHER LESS CONVENTIONAL KIND

THE AUSTRALIAN



Praise for *The Horses*

A beautifully crafted novel on life in a boarding school, a culture dominated by rules of religion and by horsemanship as a way of training boys to be men. With humour and narrative tension Lane shows how cruelty grows in institutions if they are insulated, their leaders becoming pompous and self-satisfied. *The Horses* superbly illustrates the difficulty of blowing a whistle on such places let alone escaping from them. Stuart Rees, Founder, Sydney Peace Foundation



William Lane lives in the Hunter Valley, NSW, where he is raising three children. He is currently completing a doctorate on the Australian writer, Christina Stead. His first novel *Over the Water* was published to critical acclaim in 2014. His third novel *The Salamanders* will be published by Transit Lounge in 2016. See Forthcoming.