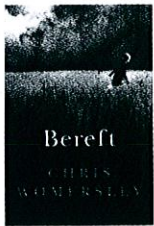


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What fascinated Goya, Hemingway and Manet might be less a sympathetic magic from time immemorial – something that reminds us of our origins – than a perverse metaphor for sex.



Bereft

Chris Womersley
Scribe, \$32.95

In the town of Flint, beyond Bathurst, old mine shafts are a threat to the unwary. But a man like Quinn Walker, returned from the Great War, is more in danger of falling down the well of memory. It was always believed that he had killed his younger sister, horribly murdered on a stormy night 10 years earlier. Why then return to almost certain judgment? Quinn is not the murderer, of course. In this compelling allegorical narrative, Quinn becomes an angel of the avenging kind. There are visions in this ruined country and horrors wholly appropriate to an apocalyptic time of war and, following it, the more lethal Spanish influenza. It seems entirely possible that God might have left His imperfect creatures to their own dark devices. As in *The Low Road*, Womersley succeeds in reinventing the Australian landscape.



**Bullfighting:
A Troubled History**

Elisabeth Hardouin-Fugier
Reaktion \$59.95

You could make the romantic connection with the magically evocative painted bulls in the caves of Lascaux or imagine a continuum between the funeral games of the Colosseum and the modern-day holiday slaughter in the Roman amphitheatre at Nîmes. What fascinated Goya, Hemingway and Manet might be less a sympathetic magic from time immemorial – something that reminds us of our origins – than a perverse metaphor for sex. You don't have to be Freud to read into all that stabbing and the excitement on the faces of the spectators. Hardouin-Fugier's lavishly illustrated survey of tauromachy and its awful fascination is not for the squeamish. Most of us, you suspect, do not wish to dwell on what happens to these unlucky bulls before their fiery end.



the upside of
irrationality
THE UNEXPECTED BENEFITS OF
BEING LOGICALLY IRRATIONAL
DAN ARIELY

The Upside of Irrationality

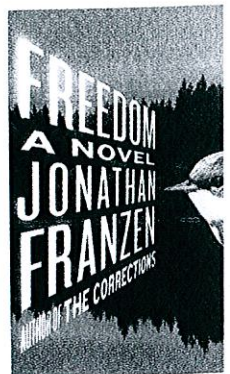
Dan Ariely
HarperCollins \$35

Dan Ariely is an expert in behavioural economics. This seems to mean he spends his time putting people through hoops in order to test such propositions as, 'Do incentive bonuses work?' Apparently they don't. It turns out that those excessive bonuses CEOs enjoy raise performance anxiety to a level where the subject freezes. Or alternatively, they push the exec away from altruism and into the realm of greed. It is the same with the value of labour. The carrot of the pay packet in a materialist world should be the ultimate incentive. Well, no. We all crave meaning and purpose, it seems. Ariely knows all this because he has experimented on people as though they were lab rats. So what *is* the upside of irrationality? Possibly that we persist in believing we all have a purpose or that there is such a thing as true love.

Freedom

Jonathan Franzen
Fourth Estate, \$32.99

The author had been sp domestic arrangem us squirming for di Berglunds, Patty an Patty was an ace ba as well because she relationships. Patty acquires a female st disastrous year at c Walter, who is best aspiring rock'n'roll Patty but, as will sc situations, Patty is



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