

PROMISE OF RAIN

Gail Morgan

A rich blend of reminiscence and discovery, disillusionment and hope, this is a startling new novel by a young Australian. Set in the worlds of childhood and adulthood, in the suffocating environs of the Sydney suburbs and the beautiful but forbidding Australian desert, it traces the life of Lucy Stapleton, idealist and dreamer. At seven her world is centred on school, the dusty convent at which nuns and pupils dream of sanctity and play with tyranny and acceptance, and on home, where her parents' slow war of attrition helps shape dreams of a different kind. Free, finally, to make her own future, Lucy travels to the very heart of the country, to a teaching job at Alice Springs. It is here that she meets Titus, half Aborigine, whose race and history, and love, force a tragic

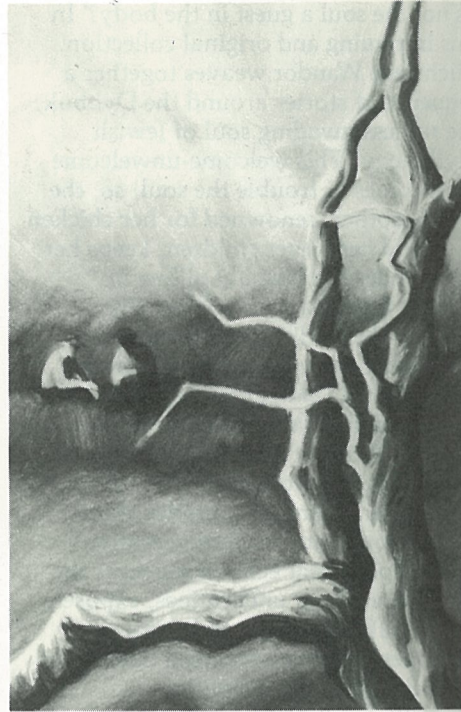


Illustration by Hilary Phillips



Gail Morgan

confrontation with their shared cultural heritage — and with each other. This wonderfully perceptive novel, funny and shocking by turn, evokes the forces which both enrich and impair the life of a young woman growing up in post-war Australia.

Gail Morgan teaches English to immigrants in Sydney and has written poetry and plays. *Promise of Rain* is her first novel.

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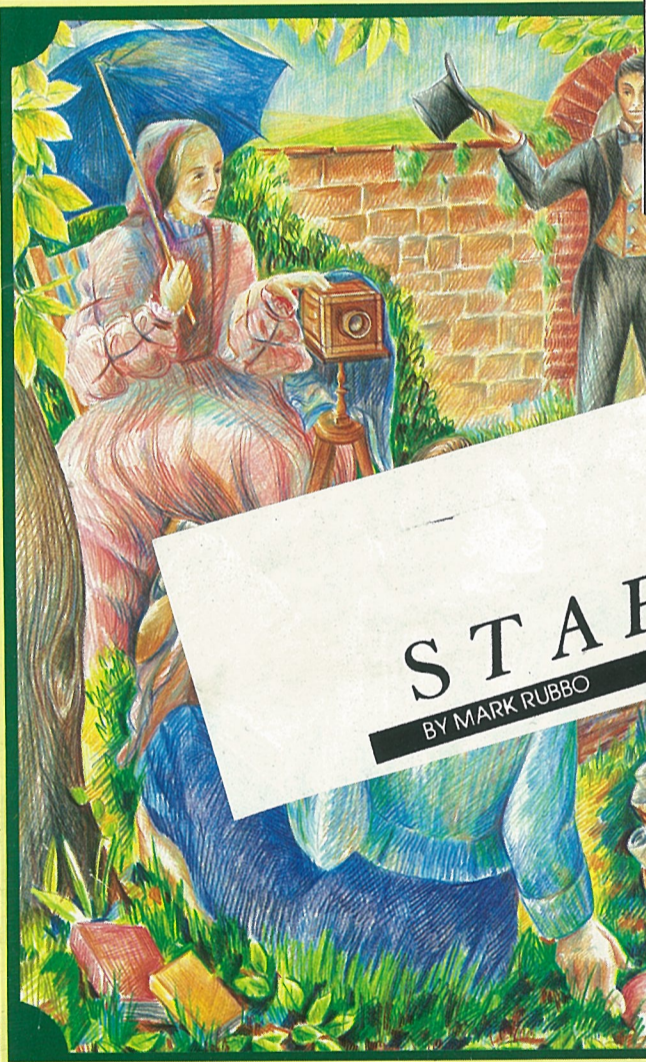
STARTERS & WRITERS

BY MARK RUBBO

ENGLISH PUBLISHERS. Virago Press, are publishing a growing number of Australian writers. Their Australian authors now include Christina Stead, Marjorie Barnard Eldershaw, Dorothy Hewett and Henry Handel Richardson. Australian books that will be published in the next six months include a first novel by Sydney poet Gail Morgan, a reprint of Marjorie Barnard's *Persimmon Tree* and *The Little Company* by Eleanor Dark. If you would like to know more about Australian Viragos write to Ms Margaret Armstrong, Virago Press, Cnr Bridge Road Jersey St, Hornsby, 2077 and she will put you on Virago's quarterly mailing list.

2 Australian Book Review, September, 1985

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