

# **The Scandalous Life of Sasha Torte**

**By Lesley Truffle**

**Harper Collins Publishers, Aus (413pp)**

**Publisher's Synopsis:** In the winter of 1912 on the wild West Coast of Tasmania, Wolfftown's most notorious heiress and murderess, Sasha Torte, tells the tale of spectacular downfall. *The Scandalous Life of Sasha Torte* is a wild romp of dastardly deeds, intrepid protagonists, dark villains, wild gangs, luxurious hotels, mouth-watering treats...and murder.

**Review:** The novel is written in the very loose form of a diary in which Sasha directly addresses the reader. It starts while she is imprisoned for a murder she maintains she didn't commit and takes us on a journey through her life from childhood to her present predicament and then beyond.

It is in essence a picaresque style of writing, with rollicking yarns and bigger than life characters who live in a larger than life world. The characters are lightly drawn and in some ways two dimensional. But that doesn't matter because it suits the plot and style of writing. Even though the story opens with the consequences of a crime and takes us full circle it is really the adventures in between that are at the heart of the story. If you love the kind of writing that takes a journey through many countries and escapades with a likeable main character, then you will love this book. If you are after a focussed crime novel, it may disappoint. It is full of cooking, whimsy, ghosts and magic; and above all the main character of Sasha Torte.

I did skip some of the descriptions of place. They started out well but became a distraction.

I have to comment on the names: with a name like Truffle, I'm hoping the author had some fun writing this book, because it is a light rollick for the reader.