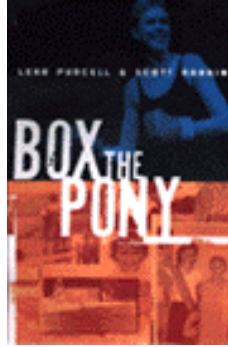


Box the Pony

by Scott Rankin & Leah Purcell

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Box the Pony is the semi-autobiographical story of Leah Purcell — or her alter ego Stephanie — that traces the events of her life growing up on an impoverished Aboriginal mission in Queensland. The youngest of six children and the daughter of a white father and black mother, Stephanie's life is teeming with lively characters. There is her aunt, crippled with arthritis, who teaches her the language of her ancestors, the Wakka Wakka people. There is her mother, who saunters down to the pub for a weekly drinking binge when her dole cheque arrives. But above all there is her pony, Stephanie's vehicle for temporary escape. On her pony Stephanie becomes the high-soaring Blue Crane, both her Aboriginal name and heritage. Despite the poverty, the violence, lack of education and opportunity, Stephanie's spirit is nurtured through the ingenuity, resourcefulness and love of her family. *Box the Pony* contains devastating humour, piercing insight and raw energy and emotion.