



Parodies put the original in shade

» LINDA MORRIS

Publishers are billing the book as “agricultural erotica”. Trailing in the wake of *Fifty Shades of Grey*, an Australian “lust in the dust” short story collection has been launched.

The satirically named *Fifty Bales of Hay* features amorous truckies, rodeo clowns, shearers and stockmen, opportunistic trysts on ride-on mowers, hanky-panky in the dairy, orgasms in the saddle and lusty women experiencing the “dry spell” of divorce, widowhood or separation.

The short stories are by the Tasmanian farmer and writer Rachael Treasure, who admits she is “more likely to be found in bed with a thesaurus than with an actual bloke”.

Fifty Bales has been rushed into stores for Christmas, just as the *Fifty Shades of Grey* trilogy has been trumped by a Wimpy Kid’s quest for old-fashioned romance and Jamie Oliver’s recipes for time poor cooks.

One independent bookseller, Jon Page, reports selling a lone copy of the *Fifty Shades of Grey* trilogy in the Christmas lead-up.

“For us [*Fifty Shades of Grey*] has

completely died off, but what is working is the parody books,” says Mr Page of Pages & Pages Mosman. “We have *Fifty Sheds of Grey* and we’ve just got in *Fifty Shades of Chicken*, which is a proper cookbook on how to stuff and truss a chicken.”

Other parodies include *Fifty Shades of Alice in Wonderland* and *50 Shades of Grey Matter*.

Dymocks reports Jamie Oliver’s *15 Minute Meals* are close to double that of *A Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Third Wheel*, its next biggest seller.

In death, there is still lots of love for the Australian author Bryce Courtenay, whose *Jack of Diamonds* is leading Dymocks’ fiction sales.

The title *Fifty Bales of Hay* comes from Treasure’s short story in which the owner of a strawberry farm finds rapture with a blond delivery lad with “naughty but nice eyes”.

The sex is explicit and consensual, if conventional, and unlike the tortured *Fifty Shades*’ Christian Grey its bucks are swaggering no-nonsense types who prefer beer to vintage champagne, and whose “gear sticks” are not for finding reverse.