

Books

The Irresistible Henry House

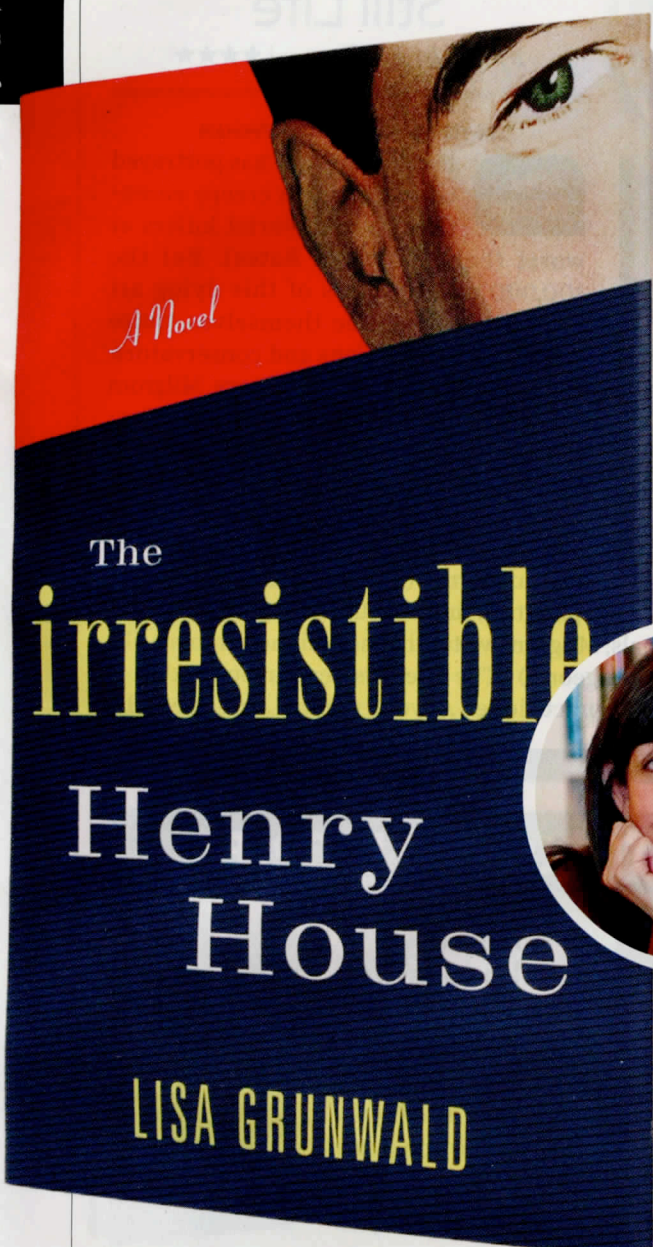
by Lisa Grunwald | ★★★★★

REVIEWED BY KIM HUBBARD

NOVEL

In the first half of the 20th century a number of American universities made a practice of borrowing orphans for years at a time, using them as “practice babies” for home economics students. What were they thinking? Didn’t they know about attachment theory? They didn’t, but Lisa Grunwald does, and when she came across an old photo of one “Baby Domecon” (as in “domestic economics”) on the Cornell University Web site, she decided to create a fictional version. Beginning in the ’40s and following Henry House into adulthood, Grunwald’s fifth novel imagines the long-term effects of having multiple fleeting mothers. Expert at speed-charming, Henry grows into a ladies’ man; raised on loss, he never sticks around long. Yet he’s smart enough to yearn for better. An artist, he lands a job at Disney creating pretend worlds that help him understand what’s missing in his own. His journey flags toward the end, with a stint in London that feels tacked on. But this is a smart, enjoyable read that will leave you with a pleasing thought: Even for guys who just aren’t that into anyone, there’s hope.

“A single orphan with a pack of mothers, Henry started life in a fragrant... fractured world”



GREAT READS

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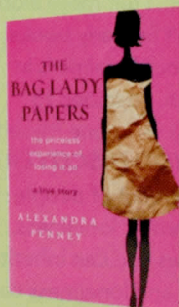
by Jennifer Mascia
A searing memoir by a journalist who discovered the parents she adored were Mob-linked criminals.



NEW IN NONFICTION

THE BAG LADY PAPERS

by Alexandra Penney
Consolation prize for losing a bundle to Bernie Madoff? This ex-Self editor gained a wealth of self-knowledge.



TAMMY WYNETTE

by Jimmy McDonough
The Country Queen’s five marriages, addiction and early death. “Sometimes it’s hard to be a woman,” indeed.

