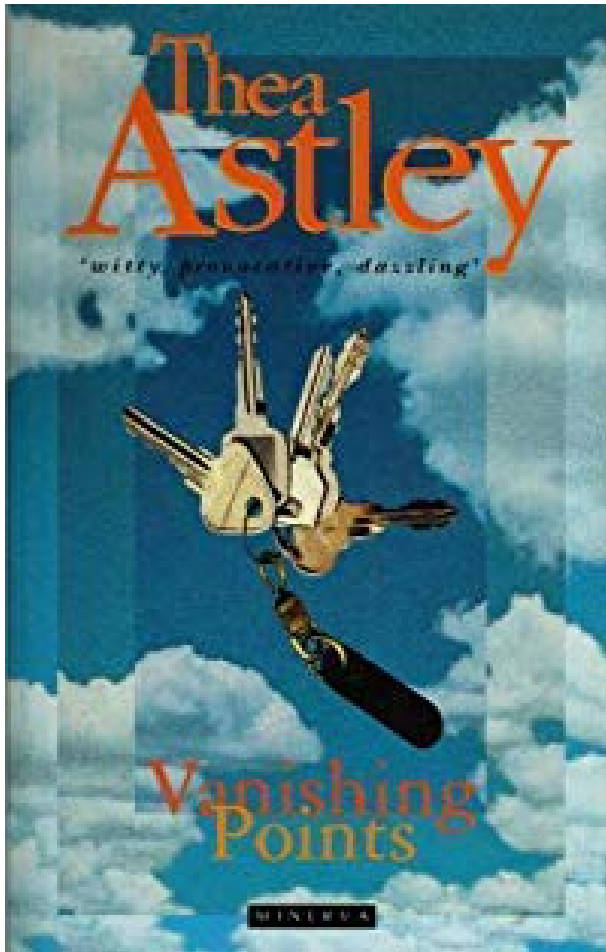


Vanishing Points



Genre:	Fiction
Author:	Thea Astley
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Australia's acclaimed national treasure delivers two slyly linked novellas - *The Genteel Poverty Bus Company* and *Inventing the Weather* - in which "progress" vies unsuccessfully with more feral aspects of an untamed land. When would-be hermit Macintosh Hope, formerly of the Genteel Poverty Bus Company, settles down on a tiny Pacific isle off Australia's coast, he thinks he's found the perfect retreat from the workaday world.

And he has - until neighboring Hummock Island is claimed by developer Clifford Truscott as a tourists' paradise. Thus sparks a confrontation pitting the thuggery of progress against the skills and wit of a lone man who proves uncannily adept at remaining the proverbial thorn in the magnate's side. *Inventing the Weather* finds the same developer's wife fed up and leaving her fatcat husband and their smug, precocious children. Julie Truscott's journey to independence takes her as far as a small mission run by nuns at Bukki Bay. But old ties aren't severed easily, and Clifford soon sets off tremors in the mission community, once he casts a profit-making eye on its enviable spot on the coast. With an unerring sense for language and a shrewd eye for human character and detail, Thea Astley sounds the territory and spirit of her native Gold Coast with the authority of a seasoned denizen of the terrain.