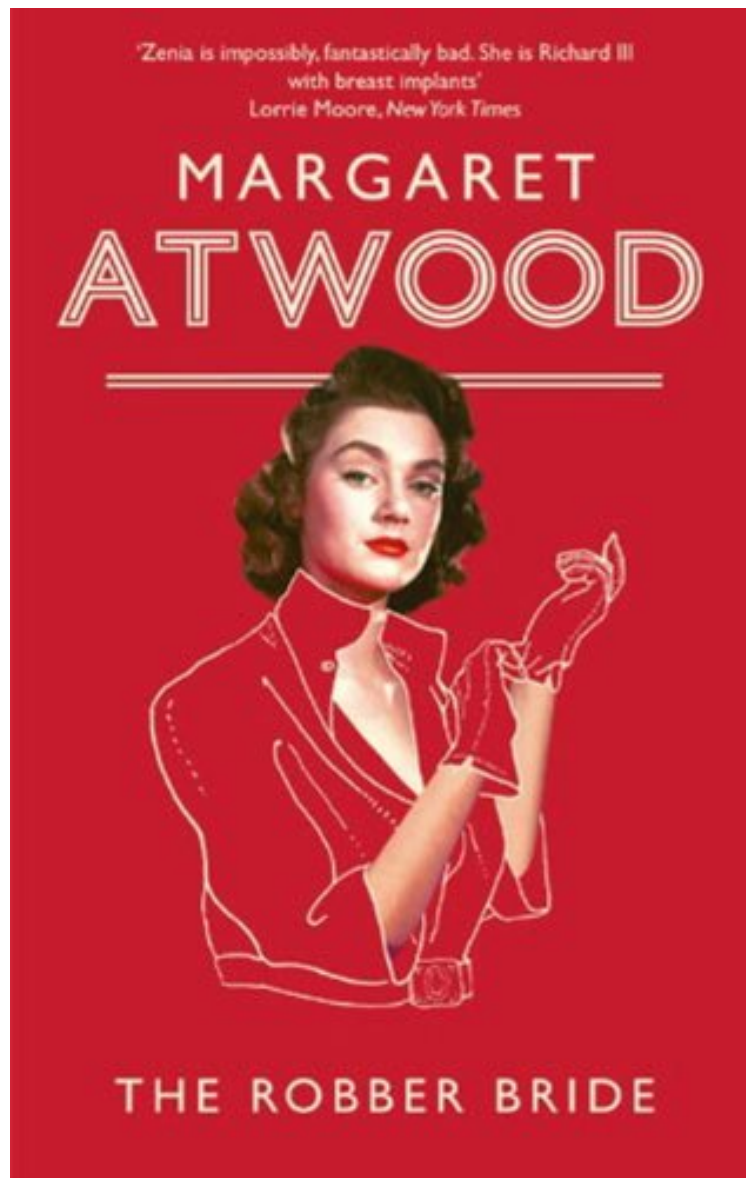


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Von Margaret Atwood
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Von Margaret Atwood : The Robber Bride: Includes the short story 'I Dream of Zenia with the Bright Red Teeth' (English Edition) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all

praised *The Robber Bride*: Includes the short story 'I Dream of Zenia with the Bright Red Teeth' (English Edition):

Kurzbeschreibung By the author of *The Handmaid's Tale* and *Alias Grace* Zenia is beautiful, smart and greedy, by turns manipulative and vulnerable, needy and ruthless; a man's dream and a woman's nightmare. She is also dead. Just to make sure Tony, Roz and Charis are there for the funeral. But five years on, as the three women share an indulgent, sisterly lunch, the unthinkable happens; 'with waves of ill will flowing out of her like cosmic radiation', Zenia is back... From *Publishers Weekly* The author of *Cat's Eye* depicts a femme fatale's malevolent role in the lives of three women; a seven-week PW bestseller. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. From *Kirkus* sAntonia (Tony), Karen (Charis), and Roz are three 50-ish Toronto friends, pals since college, all of whom have had to negotiate (and none too well) the treacheries of another friend, Zenia--someone who in the past has stolen a significant man from each of the others. But Zenia, they are led relievedly to understand, has been dead for some years--blown up in a Beirut bomb blast; they had carefully attended, together, her memorial service to make doubly sure. Yet why does the very selfsame Zenia now appear across the room one afternoon at a restaurant where the three women are lunching? It creates turmoil. Tony--a college military historian with a milquetoasty composer husband and an annoying tic of spelling words backwards; doggedly hippie Charis, New Age-y survivor of incest, and lover of a US draft-dodger; and Roz, power-businesswoman despite herself, wife of a sad-sack philanderer--all of the massed trio views Zenia not only as a communal threat, but as a chastening, changeable contrast to the courses of their own lives. Atwood (*Wilderness Tips*, 1991; *Cat's Eye*, 1989, etc.) does a professionally tidy job with the outline of this social comedy, but apart from some poetic turbocharging around Charis's memories of abuse, plus a nice capture of modern manners most of the time, the book lacks luster: it could be a more brittle, smarter Rona Jaffe novel. Atwood seems to want to make the three unlikely friends both representative of their age, place, and times--but also not: the flaky names and square-peg lifestyles argue for an individualism none of the women quite achieves. And Zenia, the fox among these chickens, is utterly cloudy, a trope instead of a character. Amusing sometimes, but flogged and padded--hardly one of Atwood's better efforts. -- Copyright 1993, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.