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Books

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TROPHIES

HEATHER THOMAS

WILLIAM MORROW; 511 PGS.; \$24.95

By DIANE GARRETT

Let's dispense with the obvious question: Is Heather Thomas' first novel any good? Yes. The flaxen-tressed "Fall Guy" star — frequently confused with "TJ Hooker" sidekick Heather Locklear during the early '80s — has penned an engaging yarn about the pampered wives of L.A.'s moneyed elite. "Trophies" picks up where Gigi Levangie Grazer's "Starter Wife" leaves off, gently skewering the preoccupations of women who marry men after they've made it big.

Thomas — a trophy wife herself by dint of her marriage to power attorney Skip Brittenham — writes about these women with a knowing, yet affectionate manner.

Each woman has a backstory and shared pathos about how easily they can be replaced.

The story weaves familiar preoccupations of affluent Angelenos — looks, money, servants — in a plot that revolves around human growth hormone, a drugged massage session and an ethically challenged pol. Lightly satirical tone takes the sting out of occasionally

appalling, and usually excessive, behavior; this caper is all in good fun.

True insiders will be able to further decode the plot — those aware of the scribe's run-ins with environmentalists will no doubt enjoy that subplot — but such knowledge is not necessary for enjoyment, and Thomas never gets that bitchy or condescending. She reserves her most pointed barbs toward the men and women who deserve them most.

Some trophies have a lot of heart under their manicured facades.

