



The Love She Left Behind: A Novel

By Amanda Coe

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A bitingly comic exploration of an unforgettably dysfunctional family, from a writer who wields great "comic rhythm" (*The New Yorker*). This ferociously funny family saga journeys into the mysteries of many kinds of love.

England, 1983. A celebrated love story entertains the nation: Patrick, the sexy young playwright, scourge of an enthralled establishment, marries Sara, who has abandoned her two children to fulfill her destiny as Patrick's beautiful, devoted muse. Thirty-five years later, Sara's death leaves Patrick alone in their crumbling house in Cornwall, with his whisky, his writer's block and his undimmed rage against the world. The children Sara left behind, Louise and Nigel, are now adults?with memories, questions and agendas of their own. What was their mother really like? Why did she leave them? What has she left them? And how can Patrick carry on without the love of his life?

As versions of the past collide with realities in the present, Sara's heirs do battle over ownership of this much beloved woman. But the closer Louise and Nigel get to the true story of Sara's great love affair, the greater its mystery. Secrets and lies, scenes and letters: how do any of us piece together the people who made us what we are?

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Editorial Review

Review

“The brilliant *What They Do in the Dark* was always going to be a hard act to follow, but [*The Love She Left Behind*] has once again proved that Coe's a fearless writer, not afraid to linger in the murky, messy corners of her characters' lives.” (Independent)

“Blackly comic...crisply plotted and filled with pleurably sharp observations.” (Guardian)

“Ferociously funny...rings all too painfully true.” (Daily Mail)

“An acutely observed family drama...darkly humorous.” (Sunday Mirror)

“An uncomfortable but brilliantly acute reading of grief, self-interest and the persistence of old wounds.” (Financial Times)

About the Author

Amanda Coe is a screenwriter and filmmaker whose television credits include the British series *Shameless*. She is the author of a collection of stories, *A Whore in the Kitchen*, and the novels *The Love She Left Behind* and *What They Do in the Dark*. She lives in London with her husband and two children.

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