## Writing home



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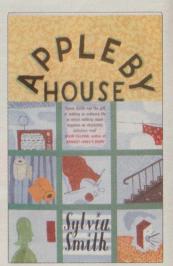


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Smith's debut, the quirky memoir Misadventures, was greeted with a mixture of rapturous praise and bafflement, but everyone agreed it heralded the arrival of a major new talent; she was described as 'the superannuated Bridget Jones'. In Appleby House, Smith cements her reputation with another delightfully deadpan study of everyday life.

The story centres on the 30-something narrator and her life at Appleby House, a nondescript, shabby terrace house in the East End of London which she shares with other 'carefully selected' single girls. Smith's skill lies in writing about familiar, everyday concerns in a highly original way, with a fine attention to detail and a knack for rendering the banal hilarious. Fans of Alan Bennett will warm to Smith's wise, perceptive style.

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## The wayward heiress who's keen as mustard



Laurie Graham has been a columnist for the Daily Telegraph and was also Editor of Cosmopolitan.

From the bestselling author of The Future Homemakers of America comes another extraordinary novel - the warm and hilarious tale of spirited Poppy Minkel.

Despite being heiress to the family mustard fortune, Poppy's chances of netting a husband are hindered by her frizzy hair and sticking-

out ears. Her despairing mother Dora believes that a combination of moral resilience, good manners and Ear Correcting Bandages<sup>TM</sup> offers a glimmer of hope, but the unorthodox Poppy has her own ideas on love, beauty and morality. Following her father's death on the Titanic Polly joins the war effort, and finds a whole new world opening up before her . . .

Poppy's extraordinary life offers a unique and witty perspective on the unfolding 20th century, and provides modern literature with one of its most quirky and lovable heroines.

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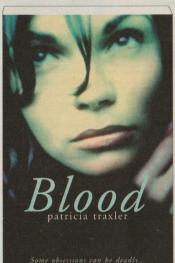


## The Unfortunates LAURIE GRAHAM

6 Graham has wit and insight to match Nick Hornby, and the

entertainment value of Helen Fielding. 9 — Nicolette Jones, Independent

Desire, obsession and death . . .



Shaped by a combination of vividly explicit passions, jealousy and lies, Blood is an exploration of human desire and its twisted alter ego from poet turned debut author Patricia Traxler.

Budding artist Honora 'Norrie' Blume is ecstatic when she is offered a Larkin Fellowship at Radcliff. Intensely involved with her married lover Michael, her scholarship allows her to revel in her artistic sensuality. She begins a beautiful friendship with troubled poet Devi, who immerses herself in Norrie's 'Red Room' project.

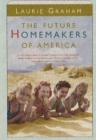
Norrie's only problem is her obsessive neighbour Clara, a Chilean journalist. So when Devi is found brutally murdered, and Norrie makes a terrible discovery in Clara's bedroom, her neighbour's obsessive traits take on a much more sinister vein.

4th Estate Hardback Price £18.99 **QPD Paperback Edition £8.99** 1396498 SAVE £10

6 Stylishly, modishly erotic, thrilling first novel. 9

- Publishers Weekly

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**BUY BOTH BOOKS** RRP £19.99 1398510 **SAVE £9** 



Laurie Graham's star is on the rise – last year's The Future Homemakers of America was highly acclaimed, although I didn't think it was her best book. The Unfortunates, however, is an absolute riot - mustard heiress Poppy Hinkel is one of the most spirited and memorable heroines since Cassandra in I Capture the Castle, and I loved every minute of this book. I shall be giving it to all my friends for Christmas.