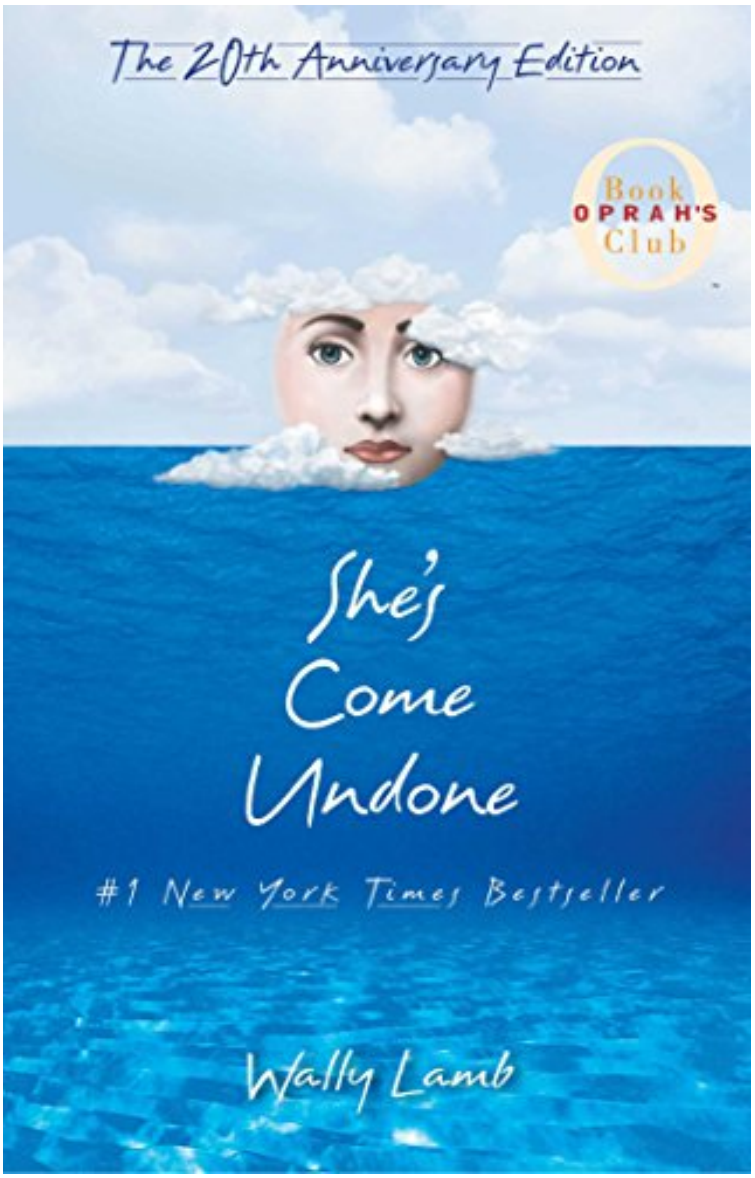
She's Come Undone (Oprah's Book Club) (English Edition)



Par Wally Lamb
*ePub | *DOC | audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF*

Dtails sur le produit Rang parmi les ventes : #147901 dans eBooksPubli le: 2011-04-12Sorti le: 2011-04-12Format: Ebook Kindle

(Online library) She's Come Undone (Oprah's Book Club) (English Edition)

Par Wally Lamb : She's Come Undone (Oprah's Book Club) (English Edition) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised She's Come Undone (Oprah's Book Club) (English Edition):

Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurIn this New York Times bestselling extraordinary coming-of-age odyssey, Wally Lamb invites us to hitch a wild ride on a journey of love, pain, and renewal with the most heartbreakingly comical heroine to come along in years."Mine is a story of craving: an unreliable account of lusts and troubles that began, somehow, in 1956 on the day our free television was delivered. . ." Meet Dolores Price. Shes thirteen, wise-mouthed but wounded, having bid her childhood good-bye. Beached like a whale in front of her bedroom TV, she spends the next few years nourishing herself with the Mallomars, potato chips, and

Pepsi her anxious mother supplies. When she finally rolls into young womanhood at 257 pounds, Dolores is no stronger and life is no kinder. But this time shes determined to rise to the occasion and give herself one more chance before really going belly-up. At once a fragile girl and a hard-edged cynic, so tough to love yet so inimitably lovable, Dolores is as poignantly real as our own imperfections. Shes Come Undone includes a promise: you will never forget Dolores Price.Extrait1 IN ONE OF MY EARLIEST MEMORIES, MY MOTHER AND I ARE ON the front porch of our rented Carter Avenue house watching two delivery men carry our brand-new television set up the steps. Im excited because Ive heard about but never seen television. The men are wearing work clothes the same color as the box theyre hefting between them. Like the crabs at Fishermans Cove, they ascend the cement stairs sideways. Heres the undependable part: my visual memory stubbornly insists that these men are President Eisenhower and Vice President Nixon.Inside the house, the glass-fronted cube is uncrated and lifted high onto its pedestal. Careful, now, my mother says, in spite of herself; she is not the type to tell other people their business, men particularly. We stand watching as the two delivery men do things to the set. Then President Eisenhower says to me, Okay, girlie, twist this button here. My mother nods permission and I approach. Like this, he says, and I feel, simultaneously, his calloused hand on my hand and, between my fingers, the turning plastic knob, like one of the checkers in my fathers checker set. (Sometimes when my fathers voice gets too loud at my mother, I go out to the parlor and put a checker in my mouthsuck it, passing my tongue over the grooved edge.) Now, I hear and feel the machine snap on. Theres a hissing sound, voices inside the box. Dolores, look! my mother says. A star appears at the center of the green glass face. It grows outward and becomes two women at a kitchen table, the owners of the voices. I begin to cry. Who shrank these women? Are they alive? Real? Its 1956; Im four years old. This isnt what Ive expected. The two men and my mother smile at my fright, delight in it. Or else, theyre sympathetic and consoling. My memory of that day is, like television itself, sharp and clear but unreliable.We hadnt bought the set; it was a gift from Mrs. Masicotte, the rich widow who was my fathers boss. My father and Mrs. Masicottes relationship had started the previous spring, when shed hired him to spray-paint several of her huge apartment houses and then wooed him into repainting his own pickup truck in her favorite color, peach, and stenciling the words Masicotte Properties, General Manager on the doors. The gift of the television celebrated my fathers decision.If I reach far back, I can see my father waving to my mother and me and climbing down from his ladder, spray gun in hand, as we arrive with his lunch in our turquoise-and-white car. Daddy reaches the ground and pulls off his face mask. The noise of his chugging orange air compressor is in my throat and legs, the sudden silence when he unplugs it delicious. There are speckles of paint in his hair and ears and eyebrows, but the mask has protected the rest of his face. I look away when his clean mouth talks.We lunch in the grass. My father eats sandwiches stuffed with smelly foods Ma and I refuse to eat: liverwurst, vinegar peppers, Limburger cheese. He drinks hot coffee right from the thermos and his Adams apple moves up and down when he swallows. He talks about she in a way that confuses me; she is either this half-white house of Mrs. Masicottes or the old woman herself.Old. Im almost forty, probably as close now to Mrs. Masicottes age as I am to the age of my parents as they sat on that lawn, laughing and blowing dandelion puffs at me, smoking their shared Pall Mall cigarettes and thinking Mrs. Masicotte was the answer to their futurethat that black-and-white Emerson television set was a gift free and clear of the strings that would begin our familys unraveling.Television watching became my habit, my day. Go out back and play, Dolores. Youll burn that thing up, my mother would warn, passing through the parlor. But my palm against the box felt warm, not hot; soothing, not dangerous like the boy across the street who threw rocks. Sometimes I turned the checker knob as far as it would go and let the volume shake my hand.Ma always stopped her housework for our favorite program, Queen for a Day. We sat together on the sofa, my leg hooked around Mas, and listened to the women whose children were crippled by polio, whose houses had been struck by lightning and death and divorce. The one with the saddest life, the loudest applause, got to trade her troubles for a velvet cape and roses and modern appliances. I clapped along with the studio audiencelongest and hardest for the women who broke down and cried in the middle of their stories. I made my hands sting for these women.My fathers duties as Mrs. Masicottes manager, in addition to painting the outsides and insides of her properties, included answering tenants complaints and collecting their monthly rents. The latter he did on the first Saturday of every month, driving from house to house in Mrs. Masicottes peach-colored Cadillac. By the time I was a first grader, I was declared old enough to accompany him. My job was to ring tenants bells. None seemed happy to see my father and most failed to notice me at all as I peeked past them into their shadowy rooms, inhaling their cooking smells, eavesdropping on their talking TVs.Mrs. Masicotte was a beer drinker who loved to laugh and dance; the package store was one of our

regular Saturday afternoon errands. Case o Rheingold, bottles, my father would tell the clerk, an old man whose name, Cookie, struck me funny. Cookie always offered me a cellophane-wrapped butterscotch candy and, by virtue of Mrs. Masicottes order, a chance to vote for Miss Rheingold at the cardboard ballot box next to his cash register. (Time after time I voted for the same Rheingold girl, whose dark brown hair and red-lipped smile reminded me both of Gisele MacKenzie from Your Hit Parade and my own mother, the best looking of the three.)My father was proud and protective of his own dark good looks. I remember having sometimes to hop around and hold my pee until he was finished with his long grooming behind the pink bathroom door on Carter Avenue. When he emerged, Id stand on the stool amidst the steam and the aroma of uncapped Old Spice, watching my face wobble and drip in the medicine cabinet mirror. Daddy lifted barbells in the cellarbarefoot, wearing his undershirt and yellow bathing suit. Sometimes hed strut around the kitchen afterward, popping his muscle at Ma or picking up the toaster to give his reflection a kiss. Youre not conceited, youre convinced! Ma would joke. Convinced you, all right, didnt I? hed answer, then chase her around the kitchen, snapping the dish towel at her fanny and mine. Ma and I whooped and protested, delighted with his play.After the television came, Daddy brought his barbells upstairs and exercised in front of his favorite programs. Quiz shows were what he liked: The $64,000 Question, Tic Tac Dough, Winner Take All. Sometimes in the middle of his grunting and thrusting hed call out the answers to losing players or, if they blew their chances, swear at them. Well, hed tell my mother, another poor bastard bites the dust, another poor slob gets to stay a working stiff like the rest of us. He hated returning champions and rooted for their defeat. His contempt for them seemed somehow connected to his ability to lift the weights.According to my father, we should have been rich. Money was, in his mind, somehow due us and would have been ours had his simple parents not sold their thirty acres on Fishermans Cove for $3,000 to a Mr. Weiss the month before drowning in the Great Hurricane of 1938. During the Depression, when my father was coming of age, Fishermans Cove had been just marsh grass, wild blueberry bushes, and cabins with outhouses; by the time he went to work for Mrs. Masicotte, it was the cozy residence of millionaires. These included Mr. Weisss son, who lived two driveways down from Mrs. Masicotte and golfed for a living.My father forgave Mrs. Masicotte her wealth because she was generous with itspread it around, as he put it. In those early years, the television was only the first in a stream of presents that included a swing set for me, kitcheny things for my mother (a set of maroon-colored juice glasses, a black ice bucket with brass claw feet), and, for my father, gifts he wore home from the big house on the cove: a houndstooth sports jacket, leather gloves lined in genuine rabbits fur, and my favoritea wristwatch with a Twist-O-Flex band you could bend but not break.Thats it, Jewboy, add another couple thousand to your stash, my father shouted at the TV one night, in the middle of his exercise routine. The $64,000 Question was on; a champion with round eyeglasses and shiny cheeks had just emerged victorious from the Revlon isolation booth.Dont say that, Tony, my mother protested.His eyes jumped from the screen to her. The weights wavered above his head. Dont say what?Ma pointed her chin toward me. I dont want her hearing things like that, she said.Dont say what? he repeated.All right, nothing. Just forget it. Ma left the room. The barbell clanged to the floor, so loudly and surprisingly that my heart heaved in my chest. He followed her into the bedroom.Earlier that week hed brought home from Mrs. Masicottes a thick art tablet and a tiered box of Crayola crayons. Now I opened the clean pad to a middle page and drew the face of a beautiful woman. I gave her long curling eyelashes, red lipstick, burnt sienna-colored hair, a crown. Hello, the woman said to me. My name is Peggy. My favorite color is magenta.Dont you everever!tell me what I can and cannot say in the privacy of my own home, my father shouted from behind their door.Ma kept crying and apologizing.Later, after hed stomped past me and driven away, Ma soaked herself in the tublong past my bedtime, long enough for me to fill up half the pad with Peggys life.She usually shooed me out when I caught her naked, but Daddys anger had left her far away and careless. The ashtray sat on the edge of the tub, filled with stubbed-out Pall Malls; the bathroom was thick with smoke that moved when I moved.See my lady? I said. I meant the drawings as a sort of comfort, but she told me they were nice without really looking.Is Daddy mean? I asked.She took so long to answer that I thought she might not have heard. Sometimes, she said, finally.Her breasts appeared and disappeared at the surface of the soapy water. Id never had the chance to study them before. Her nipples looked like Tootsie Rolls.He gets mean when he feels unhappy.Why does he feel unhappy?Oh she said. Youre too little to understand.She turned abruptly toward me and caught me watching her shiny, wet breasts. Sloshing, she strapped her arms around herself and became, again, my proper mother. Go on, skedaddle, she said. Daddys not mean. What are you talking about?Mrs. Masicottes tenants paid their rents in cash, counting series of twenty-dollar bills into my fathers outstretched hand. On the best Saturdays, after Mrs. Masicottes leather

zip bag was filled with money, Daddy would turn his attention to me. He liked the way television watching had made me a mimic.Im Chiquita Banana and Ive come to say Bananas have to ripen in a certain way Drive your CHEV-rolet Through the U-S.A. Americas the greatest land of all! Over and over, I sang the jingles he liked best. Sometimes we played wild ride on the twisting roads that led out to Fishermans Cove. I sat in the backseat of the car, a sort of junior Mrs. Masicotte, and commanded my father to speed. Okay, maam, you ready, maam? Here we go! Id grab the peach velvet cord strapped across the rear of the front seat rests as Daddy gunned the car around corners and lurched over rises in the road. Feel those blue-blooded shock absorbers, Dolores? We could be sitting in our living room. Or this, which he told me once: This car is ours! I bought this showboat from the old lady. I could smell Mrs. Masicottes perfumy smell embedded in the soft upholstery and knew it wasnt true, even back then when I would fall for almost anythingwhen I thought that, like Lucy and Ricky Ricardo, my parents fights just meant they loved each other in a noisy way.The Saturday errands ended each week at the top of the long driveway on Jefferson Drive, where Mrs. Masicottes white wedding cake of a house looked down on Long Island Sound. We entered through the dark, cool cement garage, the Cadillac doors slamming louder than any before or since. We walked up the stairs and opened the door without knocking. On the other side was Mrs. Masicottes peach-colored kitchen, which made me squint. Mind your manners, now, Daddy never failed to warn me. Say thank you.It was in that kitchen where I waited for Daddy and Mrs. Masicotte to be finished with the weekly business, two rooms away. Though Mrs. Masicotte seemed as indifferent to me as her renters were, she provided richly for me while I waited. On hand were plates of bakery cookies, thick picture books with shiny pages, punch-out paper dolls. My companion during these vigils was Zahra, Mrs. Masicottes fat tan cocker spaniel, who sat at my feet and watched, unblinking, as cookies traveled mercilessly from the plate to my mouth.Mrs. Masicotte and my father laughed and talked loud during their meetings and sometimes played the radio. (Our radio at home was a plastic box; Mrs. Masicottes was a piece of furniture.) Are we going soon? Id ask Daddy whenever he came out to the kitchen to check on me or get them another pair of Rheingolds. A few minutes, was what he always said, no matter how much longer they were going to be.I wanted my father to be at home laughing with Ma on Saturday afternoons, instead of with Mrs. Masicotte, who had yellowy white hair and a fat little body like Zahras. My father called Mrs. Masicotte by her first name, LuAnn; Ma called her, simply, her. Its her, shed tell Daddy whenever the telephone interrupted our dinner.Sometimes, when the meetings dragged on unreasonably or when they laughed too loud in there, I sat and dared myself to do naughty things, then did them. One time I scribbled on all the faces in the expensive storybooks. Another Saturday I waterlogged a sponge and threw it at Zahras face. Regularly, I tantalized the dog with the cookies I made sure stayed just out of her reach. My actionseach of which invited my fathers angershocked and pleased me.I had long hair the year I was in second grade. Mornings before school, my mother combed the snarls out of my ponytail and dosed me with a half teaspoon of Maalox to calm my nervous stomach. My teacher, Mrs. Nelkin, was a screamer. I spent most of the school year trying to be obedientfilling in every blank on every worksheet correctly, silently sliding oaktag word builders across my desktop, talking to no one.Oh, dont worry about that old biddy, my mother advised. Just think about the baby coming instead.My baby brother or sister was due to arrive in February of 1958. When I asked my parents how the baby got inside Ma, they both laughed, and then Daddy told me they had made it with their bodies. I pictured them fully clothed, rubbing furiously against each other, like two sticks making fire.All fall and winter long, I coaxed bottles toward the mouth of my Baby Dawn doll and scrubbed her rubber skin in lukewarm water in the bathroom sink. I wanted a girl and Daddy wanted a boy. Ma didnt care one way or the other, so long as it was healthy. How will it get out? I asked her one day near the end of the wait. Oh, never mind, was all she said. I imagined her lying on a hospital bed, calm and smiling, her huge stomach splitting down the middle like pants.At breakfast time on the morning of the school Valentines Day party, Ma decided to rearrange the silverware drawera task that upset her enough to make her cry.The valentine party turned out to be a fifteen-minute disappointment at the end of the long school day. As it drew to a close and we pulled on our boots and coats and stocking hats, Mrs. Nelkin approached me. She told me to remain at my desk when the dismissal bell rang; my father had telephoned the school to say hed pick me up. I sat in the silence of the empty classroom with my hat and coat on and a stack of valentines in my lap. With the other kids gone, you could hear the scraping sound of the clock hands. Mr. Horvak, the janitor, muttered and swept up the crumbs our party had made and Mrs. Nelkin corrected papers without looking up.It was Grandma Holland from Rhode Islandmy mothers motherwho appeared for me finally at the classroom door. She and Mrs. Nelkin whispered together at the front of the room in a way that made me wonder if they knew each other. Then, in

a sweeter voice than I was used to, Mrs. Nelkin told me I could go home.We didnt go home, though. Grandma led me down the two flights of school stairs and out into a taxicab, which took us to St. Pauls Cathedral. On the way there she told me my mother had had to go to a big hospital in Hartford because of female trouble and that my father had gone with her. Ma would be gone for at least two weeks and she, Grandma, would take care of me. There just wasnt any baby anymore and that was that. We were having creamed dried beef for supper.The churchs stained-glass saints had the same tortured look as the women on Queen for a Day. Grandma took out her kidney-bean rosary and muttered the stations of the cross while I followed her, spilling valentines and accidentally kicking the wooden pews, raising up echoes. The candles we lit sat in maroon cups that reminded me of our juice glasses from Mrs. Masicotte. I wasnt allowed to handle the flame. My job was to drop the coins into the metal box, two dimes for two candles, clink clink.When Daddy came home that night, he lay in my bed with me and read my valentines. He looked up at the ceiling when he talked about Ma. Somehow, he said, she had grown a cord in her stomach along with the baby. (I pictured the backseat cord in Mrs. Masicottes Cadillac.) Just as the baby was coming out, it wrapped the cord around its neck and strangled itself. Himself. A boyAnthony Jr. As my father talked, tears dripped down the side of his face like candle wax. The sight shocked me; until that moment, I had assumed men were as incapable of crying as they were of having babies.I didnt like having Grandma there. She slept on a cot in my room and boiled all our suppers. It was unsanitary, she said, the way Daddy drank right out of the water bottle and then put it back in the Frigidaire. It was shameful that her only granddaughter had reached the age of seven without having been taught to pray. She was sick, she said, of the same old question: when was my mother coming home? She was trying her best.Grandma crocheted as she watched TV, frowning alternately at what was on the screen and what was in her lap. She liked different programs than us. On her favorite, The Edge of Night, a rich woman had secretly killed a man by sticking an ice pick in his neck, but a pretty woman from a poor family was on trial for the murder. Look at Mrs. High and Mighty, Grandma said, her eyes narrowing on the murderess who sat undetected in the courtroom gallery. Shes as guilty as sin.My talent for mimicry came in handy with Grandma. I memorized for her the Ten Commandments and a prayer called Hail Holy Queen, about people gnashing their teeth in a scary place called the Valley of Tears. Wide-eyed, Grandma promised she would see to it that I made my first Holy Communion so that I could wear a beautiful white dress and veil and eat the body of Christ. Every morning she dismissed my fears, arguing that little girls my age were too young to have Maalox and then sending me off unprotected to Mrs. Nelkin.The day before my mother was due at last to come home from the hospital, Daddy gave me permission to miss school. He and I loaded Anthony Jr.s toys and crib and bassinet into the back of the peach pickup and drove to the dump. On the way there he told me our job was to cheer Ma up and not even mention the baby. This struck me as reasonable. It wasnt her fault the baby was dead; it was Anthony Jr.s own stupid fault.Daddy flung the new mint-green furniture onto a pile of old mattresses and empty paint cans and got back into the truck, breathing hard. He drove fast over the rutty dump road and I bounced against the seat and door. Seagulls flew out of our way; people stood up from their garbage to watch us. I looked back at Anthony Jr.s unused things receding quickly from us and understood for the first time the waste of his life.My father drove toward Fishermans Cove.Oh, no, not her again, I complained. How long is this going to take?But instead of turning in at the bottom of the long driveway on Jefferson Drive, Daddy went right past it, then took a different road.He parked at the vacant boat launch. We walked out onto a rickety dock and stood, side by side. The cold spring breeze snapped his nylon windbreaker.See out there? he said. He pointed to the ripply gray water of Long Island Sound. Once when I was a kid about your age, I saw a whale right out past that red buoy. It was headed south and got confused. Stuck in the shallow water.What happened?Nothing bad. Swam around for a couple of hours with everybody looking at it. Then, at high tide, a few of the bigger boats drove in and nudged it back to sea.He sat down on one of the pilings looking sick and sad and I knew he was thinking about Ma and the baby. I wanted badly to cheer him up but singing commercials seemed the wrong thing to do.Daddy, listen, I said. I am the Lord thy God, thou shalt not have strange gods before thee He watched me uneasily as I recited the words of Grandmas Commandments, as big and empty as the Pledge of Allegiance Mrs. Nelkin led each day. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbors wife. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbors goods. He waited for me to finish. Then he told me it was too cold to be out there, to get in the goddamned truck.My mother arrived home, puffy-eyed, her stomach empty under the maternity blouse. The whole house filled up with the smell of carnations from Mrs. Masicotte. What Ma wanted most, she said, was to be left alone.She stayed in her pajamas past spring vacation, smiling absentmindedly at my stories and puppet shows, my television jingles and complaints.

Leave her alone, now, Grandma kept saying. Stop plaguing her. Grandma herself showed no signs of packing.One day at school, Howard Hancin, my seatmate, raised his hand. Up to that moment, Id felt neutral toward Howard, so I was completely unprepared when Mrs. Nelkin asked him what he wanted and he said, Dolores Price is chewing on her word builders. She chews them every single day.The entire class turned to stare.I was about to deny it when I looked down and realized it was absolutely true: the cardboard letters on my desk were bent and misshapen and several were still dark with my saliva. There was, as well, a word builder stuck to the inside of my cheek, even as Mrs. Nelkin approached. I was guilty as sin.She didnt scream. She scarcely raised her voice as she addressed Howard and, by extension, the others in the class and me. I suppose she thinks this is fine and dandy. I suppose she thinks school supplies grow on trees and that Ill just reach up and pick her a new box of them. But I wont, will I, Howard? Shell just have to make do with her shabby ones for the rest of the year. Wont she?Howard didnt answer. Mrs. Nelkin walked back up our row, heels clicking against the waxed wooden floor. She picked up a stick of chalk. The loose skin under her arm rocked back and forth as she wrote. I didnt breathe until I saw that the words said nothing about me.When I got home, I heard my father shouting in my parents bedroom and ran to the safety of the parlor. He was goddamned fed up with this sob-sister business. It was his baby, too, for Christs sweet sake. Enough was enough. The front door slammed and Grandmas footsteps went from the kitchen to my parents room. Ma wailed and wailed; Grandmas voice was a murmur.The television was on; a man in a suit was talking about World War II. I flopped down on the sofa, too exhausted to change the channel.Bombs spilled from the bottom of an airplane, soldiers waved in a parade, and then something scared me in a way Id never quite been scared beforenot even the night Daddy had thrown the barbell. On the screen, skeleton men wearing diapers were trudging up a hill. Their sunken eyes seemed to be looking out at me personally, watching and beckoning me from Grandmas Valley of Tears. I wanted to turn off the TV, but was afraid even to go near it. I waited for the commercial, then locked the bathroom door and sipped Maalox out of the bottle.That night I woke up screaming from a dream in which Mrs. Nelkin took me on a picnic, then calmly and matter-of-factly informed me the sandwiches we were eating contained the flesh of my dead baby brother.Daddy was the first one into my roomwild-haired and stumbling, wearing his underpants right in front of Grandma. She was the second one in. Then Ma. I felt suddenly powerful and excited; I kept screaming.Ma held me and rocked. Shh, now. Easy. Just tell us what it is. Just say it.Its her, I said. I hate her.Hate who, honey? Daddy asked. Who do you hate? He squatted down on his haunches, the better to hear my answer.I had meant Mrs. Nelkin, but changed my mind as I spoke. I reached past him and pointed at Grandma, standing pinch-faced in her brown corduroy robe. Her, I said. I want her to go home.The next day was Saturday. I was watching morning cartoons in the parlor when Ma came out of her bedroom fully dressed and asked me what I wanted for breakfast.Pancakes, I said, as if the last months had been normal ones. Wheres Daddy?Hes driving Grandma back to Rhode Island.Shes gone?My mother nodded. She left while you were still sleeping. She said to tell you good-bye.I could banish Grandma Holland with my newfound power, but not Mrs. Masicotte. Instead, I went each Saturday to her house, thanked her sweetly for her presents, and kept watch.One afternoon, Mrs. Masicotte provided me with a scissors, a Betsy McCall paper-doll book, and the usual plate of sugar cookies. I ate a few of the cookies, teased Zahra with a few more, then set to work punching Betsy away from the cardboard page. I scissored the booklets prettiest outfit and hung it off her front. Look, Zahra! I commanded the cocker spaniel.I carried Betsy over to the stove, turned on the gas jet, and held her in the blue flame. Somehow, I knew that, of all the mischief Id done at Mrs. Masicottes house, this was the worst, the thing that would make my father as angry at me as he could get at Ma. Help me! Betsy pleaded. Her paper clothes caught the flame, browned and buckled. Zahra, help me! Help me!My intention was to shock, or at least entertain, the bloated dog, but when I looked back, she was staring still at the cookies with such intensity that I forgot, for a second, the flame, and burned my thumb and finger.Mine is a story of craving: an unreliable account of lusts and troubles that began, somehow, in 1956 on the day our free television was delivered. Many times each week memory makes me a child again. Just last night I was, once more, in Mrs. Masicottes kitchen, turning from the flaming paper doll to learn from the fat dog Zahra my first lesson in the awful strength of coveting, the power of want.Look, Zahra! Im dying! I moan. Help me! Please!The dogriveted, unblinkingsees only the sugar-crusted cookies. 1992 Wally LambRevue de presseGlamour A heroine to cheer for....This supremely touching journey to adulthood may remind you of The World According to Garp and other sagas of emotional liberation.People There are at least two surprises in store for readers of Lamb's memorable debut novel. One is the author's sex. This male writes so convincingly in the voice of a female, tracing her life from 4 to 40, that you have to keep looking back at the

jacket picture just to make sure. The second surprise is how such a string of trials and tribulations can add up to such a touchingly funny book...The New York Times An ambitious, often stirring and hilarious book.