



# I Smile Back

By Amy Koppelman

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"Koppelman explores with ruthless honesty a woman come undone."—*Bookslut*

"Koppelman mostly writes from inside Laney's disillusioned mind, ricocheting between the quotidian details of wife and motherhood and big-picture musings, forming exquisite stand-alone tone poems."—*Elle*

Now a major motion picture starring Sarah Silverman in her dramatic-acting debut, and Josh Charles, *I Smile Back* tells the affecting tale of Laney Brooks, a mother and wife on a self-destructive streak. She takes the drugs she wants, sleeps with the men she wants, disappears when she wants. Lurking beneath Laney's seemingly composed surface is the impulse to follow in her father's footsteps, to leave and topple her family's balance in the process.

The film adaptation of *I Smile Back* premiered at the 2015 Sundance Film Festival in the prestigious US Dramatic competition. Silverman's affecting dramatic turn in the lead role has garnered praise in film trade reviews as "tremendous," "terrific," and "awards worthy," and will inspire an onslaught of attention upon the film's national theatrical release.

**Amy Koppelman** is a graduate of Columbia's MFA program. Her writing has appeared in the *New York Observer* and *Lilith*. She lives in New York City with her husband and two children, and is the author of the novels *A Mouthful of Air* and *I Smile Back*. She adapted the screenplay for the film from her own novel.

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## I Smile Back By Amy Koppelman Bibliography

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## Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

This crushing novel by the author of *A Mouthful of Air* is a shocking portrait of suburban ennui gone horribly awry. Laney Brooks, approaching middle age in Short Hills, N.J., appears to have it all: doting husband, two beautiful children, the big house with a kidney-shaped pool. But beneath the facade of upper-middle-class perfection, Laney's life descends into a chasm of indiscriminate sex and drug and alcohol abuse.

Koppelman's prose style is understated and crackling; each sentence is laden with a foreboding sense of menace, whether she's describing a sunny Florida resort or the back alley of a seedy strip mall. Laney's self-debasement can be a bit over-the-top at times, but like a crime scene or a flaming car wreck, it becomes impossible not to stare. (*Dec.*)

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From [Booklist](#)

Laney, beautiful, married with two children and a seemingly fine suburban life, feels only impending doom shadowing her and everyone else's life. She finishes many sentences in her mind with "and then you die," and comes to know that "nothing bad needs to happen for her to feel sad." So she misbehaves: drinks too much, uses drugs, and sleeps around. Her husband, ever patient, copes and sends her to rehab, but nothing connects or fills the hole left by her father's abandonment long ago. She always expects failure and loss.

Koppelman has visited this area before with a more sympathetic character in *A Mouthful of Air* (2003).

Koppelman's writing is expressive and nuanced, so the reader recognizes Laney's pain, but doesn't feel it. And perhaps that is the point. Her separation from everyone, even the reader, is her strongest characteristic. Her aloneness gives her the distance she both wants and fears. Therefore this potent novel is captivating in the way watching a car wreck might be. It is not easy or comfortable or for the faint of heart. --Danise Hoover

About the Author

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**From reader reviews:**

**William Vogt:**

Have you spare time for a day? What do you do when you have much more or little spare time? Sure, you can choose the suitable activity intended for spend your time. Any person spent their spare time to take a wander, shopping, or went to the particular Mall. How about open or maybe read a book titled *I Smile Back*? Maybe it is to be best activity for you. You already know beside you can spend your time with the favorite's book, you can more intelligent than before. Do you agree with its opinion or you have other opinion?

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