



The Boy: A Novel

By Lara Santoro

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**"Gorgeous, fiercely intelligent, deeply honest, and incredibly entertaining."
---Anne Lamott**

Anna has always been a risk-taker and a free spirit, but now she is raising a young daughter on her own and she has to play it safe. Her twenty-something neighbor with the slow, easy smile is in no way part of Anna's plans. She resists temptation in every way she can, yet Anna is soon drawn into a reckless and obsessive affair.

Provocative, headlong, and utterly compelling, **THE BOY** is the story of a woman on the edge, torn between love and compulsion, desire and duty. Lara Santoro writes in "hypnotic and swiftly paced" prose (Daniel Woodrell) about the hazards of passion and motherhood and about one woman's unthinkable rebellion.

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Editorial Review

From [Booklist](#)

Santoro's second novel (after *Mercy*, 2007), follows one woman's unraveling after an affair with a younger man propels her to reexamine her perspectives on motherhood and her own identity. A former journalist, Anna is now a single mother in her forties. She and her precocious 8-year-old daughter, Eva, are now living in New Mexico after a bitter split with Eva's father, who remains in England. An addition to their household is Espi, Eva's protective caretaker, who has alcohol and gambling problems. The neighbor's 20-year-old son, a college dropout, is inexplicably drawn to Anna, and the two begin an affair. When Eva travels abroad to spend time with her father, "the boy" moves in with Anna, much to the displeasure of seemingly everyone. Things inevitably begin to lurch out of control as the demons of Anna's former life come into play, and her self-involved choices lead to catastrophic events in her life and the lives of those around her. Santoro's fast-paced style aptly conveys Anna's frenetic downward spiral. --Leah Strauss

Review

"Fierce....*The Boy* achieves startling power because of Ms. Santoro's refusal to soften the edges of her riveting main character, who hates and loves at hot-blooded extremes....Ms. Santoro has made her all too human." ---Sam Sacks, *Wall Street Journal*

"*The Boy* unfolds with terse, impressionistic rapidity-like a spare, brutalist modern fairy tale....You can't turn away." ---Ben Dickinson, *Elle*

"I read it in one go, with my heart in my mouth. Witty, compulsive, sensuous, and brutally honest about the price of motherhood."

?**Emma Donoghue, author of *Room***

"Lara Santoro's *The Boy* is both a swift and seductive novel. To experience such brutal beauty is why I read fiction."?**Alice Sebold, author of *The Almost Moon***

"I read this novel in one sitting and was mesmerized, addicted, charmed, jealous. *The Boy* is gorgeous, fiercely intelligent, deeply honest, and incredibly entertaining."?**Anne Lamott, author of *Some Assembly Required***

"*The Boy* is beautifully written, beguiling in its fashion, hypnotic and swiftly paced. Lara Santoro tells a morally complicated and edgy story and doesn't retreat, but stays true to her music. The word brave comes to mind, as does masterful."?**Daniel Woodrell, author of *Winter's Bone***

"Lara Santoro is a brilliant novelist whose vision is fierce and unsparingly clear. *The Boy* is a beautiful, brutally sensuous novel."?**Kate Christensen, author of *The Great Man***

"Lara Santoro drills deep down, to the maelstrom of desire and despair that we cover up with the stories we tell ourselves. Unflinching and passionate, fierce and tender, *The Boy* is both a love story between parents and children, and a coming-of-age story for all women who are old enough to know better. It broke my heart."?**Allegra Huston, author of *Love Child***

About the Author

Lara Santoro spent most of her career as a foreign news correspondent, based primarily in Rome and in

Nairobi working for *Newsweek* and the *Christian Science Monitor*. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Comparative Literature from Smith College, a Master's degree in French Literature from the Sorbonne, and a Master's in Fine Arts from New York University. She was born in Rome, and currently lives in New Mexico. She is the author of one previous novel, *Mercy*.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Markus Walker:

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