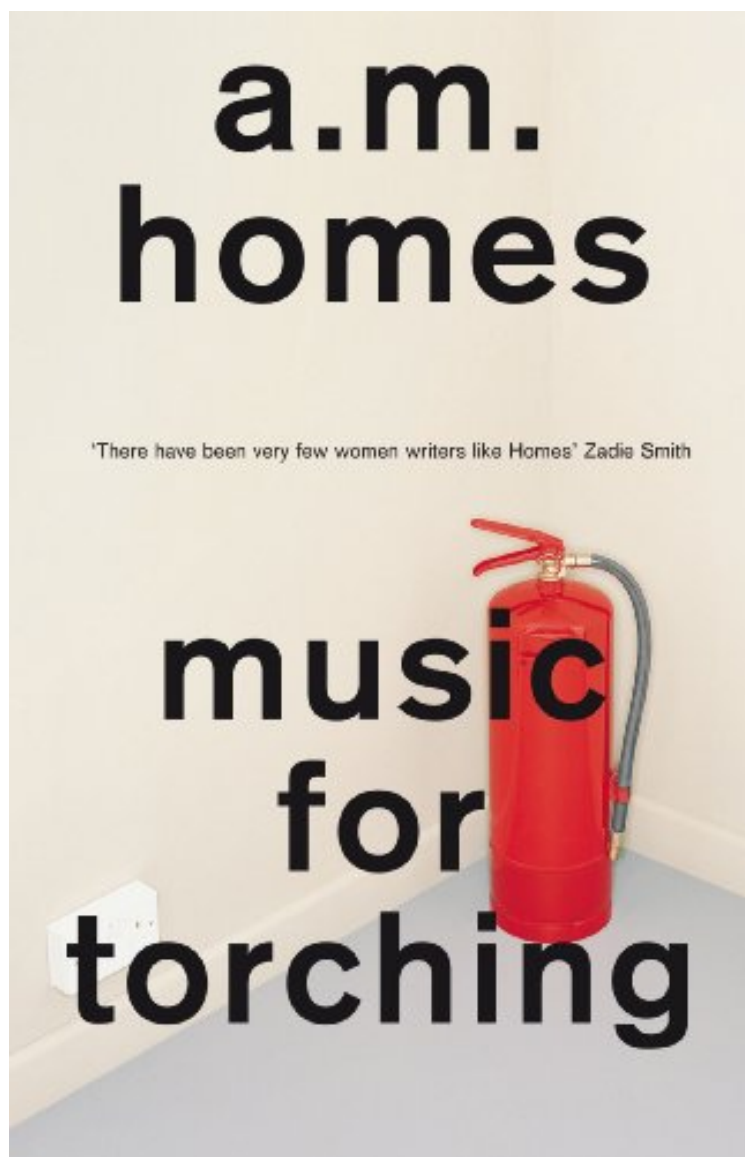


[FREE] Music For Torching

Music For Torching

Von A.M. Homes

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Von A.M. Homes : Music For Torching before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Music For Torching:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen2 von 2 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich.
Suburban insanityVon AmyThis book was "American beauty" for readers. A very captivating book that doesn't let you put it down, even in its oddest senarios. Paul and Elaine, the central couple, have a riveting life that spirals from the

get-go when they smoke crack while the kids are away and sneak a reefer in the basement. It continues its craziness through funny and titillating love affairs with neighbors and prostitutes, an old porno crazed man down the street and a school shooting. Overall, this book is a must-read through all its dysfunctional and reality. Anyone can relate! 1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. I got the joke and kept on reading Von Mark Scarbrough Just as I was finishing it, a friend asked me about this book, and I said, "It's like Lorrie Moore, only darker." No, that's not true. It's more like WHITE NOISE, Delillo's masterpiece. But darker. (The revelations in supermarkets, the apocalyptic men in environmental hazard suits? They're all here.) Yes, I was repelled (somewhat) by the characters. And yes, I laughed out loud anyway. And yes, the joke then went on far too long--which I think was the point, after all: the joke's becoming stale even as I laugh at it. I found the prose breathless--at times, I was irritated by the rabid, present-tense drive to what's next. In fact, in her drive forward, Homes seemed to forget her own plot--right after Paul gets his groin tattoo and complains all day about its hurting, he has a brutal, fisty fight with his wife--and amazingly never seems to worry about the tattoo. OK, so it's a tad sloppy, but I kept reading, on and on. And in the end, I guess that's Homes' mystique. I'm not sure how she does it. Perhaps by being so engaged? Perhaps by never laughing at her own characters? Perhaps by being spot-on in her prophetic stance, a doom-sayer about suburban woes? I don't know--but she's one terrific writer, and I can't wait to read the famed ALICE, which I bought while I was halfway through this one. 0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Homes and the Suburban Gothic Home Von Ein Kunde Homes' work in MUSIC FOR TORCHING is most impressive because it is naked, stripped bare of pretense and precaution. She is perhaps the first writer of her generation, or of her temperament, to retrace the steps of Cheever in order to discover a world so hauntingly honest, and so engagingly perverse. Westchester County has changed a lot since John Cheever explored it in the fifties and sixties, and Homes' version is both familiar and uncannily foreign. The book arises out of Homes' previous stories about Paul and Elaine, "Adults Alone," published in The Safety of Objects (Vintage, 1990), and "Music for Torching" previously published in the New Yorker. They are a couple trapped by very typical circumstances. Married at a reasonably young age, bought a house in the suburbs, they have two young boys who both confuse them and give essential meaning to their lives. They love and hate each other with every given day. They go to dinner parties in the neighborhood and argue about breakfast. This is a couple who, desperate for something new one weekend when their kids are away, decide to smoke crack. And when the thought of cooking dinner one more time is too much to bear, they burn the house down. What we are shown about their lives oscillates between the absurdly comical and the achingly sad. Homes, as a writer, is not interested in celebrating or validating the suburban American experience. She paints a picture of human beings desperate to escape what has been given them. Paul and Elaine struggle in private ways to inch past their limitations and realize a certain freedom that their lives so far have made impossible. But, as evinced in her earlier work, Homes finds confinement and freedom equally terrifying. She draws us into her characters' cage in order to make us complicit in their escape, and culpable for all of the consequences that follow. MUSIC FOR TORCHING is a brilliantly wrought novel, both subtle in its turns of phrase, and brave in what it dares make real. Though the territory may sound familiar at first, Homes attacks almost imperceptibly, chipping away at the comforts a reader searches for until there is nothing to hold onto, and everything to lose.

Kurzbeschreibung Paul and Elaine have two boys and a beautiful home, yet they find themselves thoroughly, inexplicably stuck. Obsessed with 'making things good again', they spin the quiet terrors of family life into a fantastical frenzy that careens well and truly out of control. As A. M. Homes's incendiary novel unfolds, the Kodacolor hues of the American good life become nearly hallucinogenic: from a strange and hilarious encounter on the floor of the pantry with a Stepford Wife neighbour, to a house-cleaning team in space suits, to a hostage situation at the school, Homes lays bare the foundations of marriage and family life and creates characters outrageously flawed, deeply human and entirely believable. deAs Quentin Crisp used to say, "Don't keep up with the Joneses! Drag them down to your level!" This could be the motto of the suburbanites in A M Homes' fourth novel, Music for Torching. Homes has a subtle eye and ear for suburban reality, but beware: she is no mere satirist of what James Joyce called the "muddle crass." Behind each neat, bright lawn, vile lives writhe in darkness. On the surface, Paul and Elaine are conventionally competitive middle-aged, middle-class people with banal yearnings for French doors and a new deck. They have two strapping boys. Their neighbours Pat and George are prodigies of efficient family life. But alone with Elaine, Pat drops the Stepford Wife mask and stages loveless orgies atop the throbbing washer, amid the Downy and Fantastik and Bon Ami. Meanwhile, Paul beds a local wife and a sinister mistress. The nice old man down the street downloads Internet child porn. Local kids join the Boy Scouts and bite off teachers' fingers. It's all about lurid misery and false fronts: a minor character is named Claire Roth, surely alluding to the bitter relationship in Claire Bloom's Leaving a Doll's House and Philip Roth's I Married a Communist. Paul and Elaine first popped up in Homes' collection The Safety of Objects, as a couple having the happiest night of their lives smoking crack while the kids are away. Their happiest night here is when they tip the barbecue and burn their house halfway down. The story proceeds with a nightmare

zombie logic from there, with a funny-scary ironic tone. "Paul notices that the colour of her eye shadow is Fiction, and her lipstick is called Sheer Fraud.... 'What happened to the dining-room table, Elaine? Why'd you chop it to pieces?' he wonders. 'The damage was irreparable,' his wife replies." Homes describes nice people doing not-so-nice deeds in luminous, precise prose far more adeptly than Bret Easton Ellis, as well as Joyce Carol Oates, and occasionally within range of John Updike. But Homes is really the evil spawn of Grace Metalious and Quentin Tarantino. --Tim Appelo.co.uk

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