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*THE ENGLISH AMERICAN has been optioned by Bright Pictures UK;
Larkin to adapt for film.*

The English American

a novel

“Larkin's debut novel takes a comedic but heartfelt look at issues of identity, heredity, and self-acceptance... Pippa is a complex, compelling character... readers will root for her as she uncovers her roots and finds herself.”

--Publisher's Weekly

Born to American parents but adopted by an English family at birth, writer/comedienne Alison Larkin's one-woman show has been acclaimed on both sides of the pond. (“Alison Larkin's autobiographical show offers hugely entertaining reflections on how we become the kind of people we think we are... and the ups and downs of the great Anglo American love affair” Clive Davies, *The Times* (London)). In her hilarious and poignant debut novel, **THE ENGLISH AMERICAN** (Simon & Schuster; November 17, 2009; \$15.00), Larkin draws further from her experiences as an adopted English woman who found her birth parents – and a new homeland – in the United States and turns them into an engaging work of fiction.

Like the author, Larkin's heroine Pippa is adopted into a loving English family and enjoys an idyllic childhood divided between her posh girls boarding school in the pleasant Sussex countryside, and exotic foreign postings. But as much as she loves her parents and her sister, Pippa has often felt like a square peg in a round hole. As scattered and untidy as the rest of the Dunn clan is organized and even-keeled, she has long wondered about her birth parents. At twenty-eight, she finally decides to unlock the door to her past and her present.

With high expectations, Pippa travels to America to meet Billie, her birth mother. She is thrilled to discover that Billie and she share many qualities, both physically and temperamentally. With an outsized personality and an artistic bent, Billie has an insatiable hunger for life and glamorous connections to the art world. Now living outside New York, Billie invites Pippa to rural Georgia to meet the rest of a family that Pippa must admit are a little rough around the edges. She learns that her father Walt, on the other hand, is Southern gentry and a significant behind-the-scenes player inside the Beltway.

Pippa happily settles into her new life, working for Billie for room and board, but before long she starts to feel trapped by her birth mother's clinging need. Her idealized vision of her birth parents is further challenged when she learns that Walt is a political conservative with a bent for shady

ALISON LARKIN

diplomacy. Pippa's romantic life doesn't improve either as she pines for an international banker-cum-painter who seduces her by email and whom she believes is her soul mate. Then by chance, she meets a new man who introduces her to the nightlife at a gay cabaret in the Village. Soon Pippa is reinventing herself as a comic monologist and singer, but she is torn between the jumble of her old and new lives. Being an English American is a lot more complicated than she ever imagined.

Larkin takes no prisoners, poking fun equally at the peculiarities and excesses of English and American culture. Yet, as Pippa's often riotous adventures unfold, her story underscores more serious universal truths about love and family. **THE ENGLISH AMERICAN** is an entertaining and heartfelt exploration of nature vs. nurture and how we come to find our identities – both personal and national – from where we've been and where we choose to go.

About the author:

Alison Larkin was adopted at birth in Washington, D.C. by British parents and raised in England and Africa. After graduating from London University and the Webber Douglas Academy of Dramatic Art, she appeared in classical British theatre. Then she found her birth mother in Tennessee, moved to New York and became a stand-up comic. Within three years she was put under studio development contract by Jim Henson Productions, ABC and CBS, to star in and co-write her own sitcom. She has appeared on Broadway and her wide range of character voices can be heard in movies and cartoons from work by Robert Altman to *The Wonderpets*. Her internationally acclaimed one-woman show, *The English American*, was a highlight of the London Comedy Festival and has been seen in concert performance across the United States. She lives in Northern New Jersey with her husband and two children. For more information, go to www.alisonlarkin.com.

About the book:

THE ENGLISH AMERICAN: A Novel

By Alison Larkin

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Visit the author's website at www.alisonlarkin.com

Visit Simon & Schuster on the web at www.simonandschuster.com

For author photo, jacket photo, and excerpt, visit www.simonandschuster.net

More praise for **THE ENGLISH AMERICAN:**

“Drawn from Larkin's own life, this debut novel—like Pippa herself—is smart, funny, and utterly charming.”
--*Booklist*

“The English American is a funny, charming and poignant book -- the kind that you can't resist reading in a single day.”
--*Chicago Sun Times*

“Alison Larkin has written a book that makes you laugh and cry at the same time. Not only that, *The English American* is a story that you've never read before... You will love it!”
--Gail Parent, Emmy Award winning writer for *Tracey Takes On*, *The Golden Girls*, and *The Carol Burnett Show*

“Alison Larkin has taken her own life experiences and written a book in a clear, authentic voice of the poignant, tender and bittersweet experience of adoption.”
--*The Decree* (The American Adoption Congress's magazine)

“*The English American* takes us on a wild, rollicking ride of reunion through the eyes of an adoptee. Alison Larkin, who has a one woman show also title *The English American*, uses humor and pathos in equal measure. You only need to turn the page to find something that will make you laugh...or cry”
--*Adoptive Families Magazine*

Besides offering interesting insights as to how others may see us, *The English American* has the virtues of a pleasing, fast-moving plot, believable characters (it's semi-autobiographical) and excellent writing by an author in search of her origins.”
-- *Tampa Tribune*