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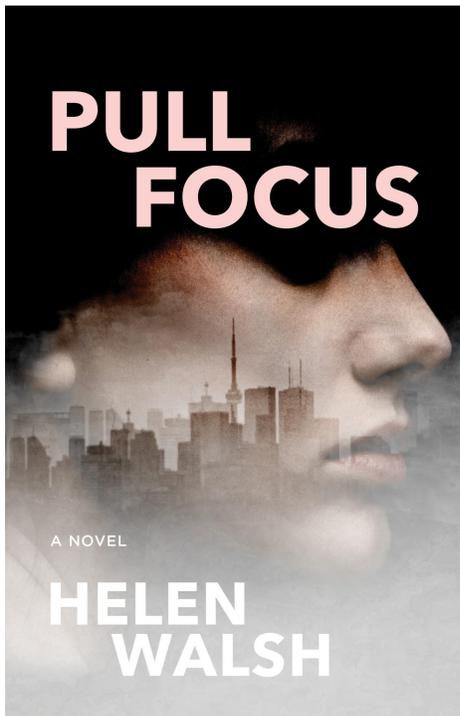
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PULL FOCUS

A Novel

By Helen Walsh

Debut novel from former film producer and founder of Canada's premier literary mentorship program is a modern feminist thriller set at the glittering, cutthroat nexus of culture and commerce



More than three years after the #MeToo movement rocked Hollywood, the issues it brought to the forefront of public consciousness remain as relevant – and pressing – as ever. From the latest crop of harassment allegations concerning A-list celebrities to the ongoing controversy of the pay gap, gender and power inequities in the entertainment industry are nowhere near done and dusted... and continue to ripple out into the culture we consume every single day.

One of Fall 2021's most buzzworthy fiction debuts, ***Pull Focus*** by Helen Walsh brings new dimension, nuance and perspective to the conversation with a taut page-turner set in the playground of the rich, famous and powerful: the international film festival circuit.

Set for release in North America on September 7, 2021 and October 7, 2021 in the U.K. with ECW Press, ***Pull Focus*** centers on Jane Browning – an ambitious thirty-something who has spent her career fighting her way out of working class roots and suddenly finds herself at the top of the food chain. Thrust into the role of acting CEO of the Worldwide Toronto Film Festival after her boss is removed for sexual harassment, ***Pull Focus*** follows Jane through the most dizzying, demanding and dangerous week of her life as the knives come out all around her, and she must juggle professional demands with a personal crisis when her partner, a finance executive, goes missing.

An energetic and thoroughly original thriller with a motley cast of Hollywood power brokers, Russian oil speculators, Chinese propagandists, bold-faced names and a memorable, modern, badass female protagonist readers will empathise with and root for, ***Pull Focus*** offers a backstage pass to a glittering world most of us only ever catch a glimpse of via Page Six.

“Women know that gender and power in the workplace are intrinsically linked,” Walsh said. “In the media & entertainment industry, wealth disparity complicates that dynamic further.”

"It's art – but it's also big business," she continues. "In writing *Pull Focus*, I wanted to explore a protagonist who's determined to succeed despite the vicissitudes she's faced, one who must juggle her passion for justice with her realpolitik pragmatism in a world where meritocracy is a myth and survival is far from guaranteed.

"I hope readers enjoy the wild ride and are left thinking about the complicated trade-offs we all make to chase our dreams."

To promote the Fall 2021 release of *Pull Focus*, Helen Walsh has select availability for interviews and byline article commissions and can speak to a range of topics, including:

- How her background as a former producer in LA and NYC, decades of attending and participating in festivals around the world, and the emergence of the #MeToo movement inspired and informed *Pull Focus*
- The intersection of culture and commerce: an eye-opening look at the bottom-line driven business of art and entertainment, for better and for worse
- Debuting as a novelist in mid-life: why it's never too late to start devoting yourself to your own creative ambitions and dreams
- The forgotten "ism" – classism – and why she chose to explore the realities and subtleties of how it determines one's decisions, choices and attitudes throughout *Pull Focus*
- The timely and timeless feminist themes that sit at the heart of *Pull Focus*

Praise for *Pull Focus*:

"With bated breath, I fell deeper and deeper into the complex and intricate mystery so artfully created by Helen Walsh. Jane's world felt both familiar and unlike one I'd ever seen before. *Pull Focus* is like a shot of adrenaline. With every page, you keep wanting more." – **Deepa Mehta**, film writer and director

"Part *Real Housewives*, part grown-up *Nancy Drew*, *Pull Focus* gleefully skewers all players in the international film scene while deftly unspooling a good old-fashioned thriller. Walsh creates a world of glamorous parties, dirty money and weaponized sex." – **Missy Marston**, author of *The Love Monster*

"In the end, I couldn't put this novel down. *Pull Focus* is a propulsive mystery of financial machinations, international malfeasance, and sexual impropriety, but it starts off deceptively, as a sardonic romp among film festival glitterati. The multi-talented woman at the heart of the whirlwind needs to smooth-talk arts board members, play tough with dangerous scoundrels, and manage all of this in the midst of romantic convulsions." — **Antanas Sileika**, author of *Provisionally Yours*

About the Author:



Helen Walsh is the founder and president of Diaspora Dialogues, Canada's premier literary mentoring organization. Formerly the publisher of the *Literary Review of Canada* and a founding director of Spur, a national festival of politics, arts, and ideas, Walsh previously worked as a film and digital media producer in Los Angeles and New York City. She lives in Toronto, Canada.

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