



by Angelika Waldis  
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Fiction

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## The Dressmaker

### *Die geheimen Leben der Schneiderin*

#### review

Jolie Hansen keeps a dressmaking shop in a small town near Zurich. But as she alters the clothing of her customers, mentally she lets out and takes in bits of their lives too – including that of Walter Fischbacher, who would be rather keen to share hers.

Her own life is neat, organised and desperately empty – she lives alone, her grown-up daughter has a high-flying job in Geneva, her mother is in a nursing home, her brothers and sisters have all gone their different ways – apart from her adored older brother Franz who, aged seventeen, went for a swim in the lake and never came back. His headstone in the cemetery marks an empty grave. But did he really drown?

As Jolie prepares to reunite all her family at a party for her parents' eightieth birthdays, her quest to find out what happened to Franz gains momentum.

Waldis's style is beautifully pared-down and gently humorous and her novel is a delight to read. Jolie does find Franz. But she herself and her development as a character remain centre-stage throughout.

#### press quotes

*'Reading Waldis is a physical experience!'* – Die Weltwoche

## about the author

**Angelika Waldis** was born in Lucerne in 1940. She was a teacher, then studied English and German in Zurich and subsequently worked as a journalist. From 1982 to 1999 she headed the prize-winning magazine for young people, *Spick*. She has been writing fulltime since 2000 and lives in Zurich. She was awarded the coveted Swiss Young Adults' Book Prize for *Tita und Leo*.

### Previous works include:

*Tita und Leo*, 2001; *Tu nicht so. Short stories*, 2004; *Verschwinden. Two Stories*, 2006.

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