

**NOVEL**

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After You've Gone

Lori Hahnel

After You've Gone is the story of two generations of musicians, a jazz grandmother and a punk granddaughter, who each struggle with balancing life, love, and art in their respective eras. The novel opens in 2007 with Elsa Taggart and her ex-husband watching their son's convocation from Seattle University. Woven from this moment is a series of spirited flashbacks that move convincingly between Elsa and her grandmother Lita. The two women's lives are revealed in a procession of parallel events.

In 1935, Lita, a young woman of gypsy ancestry, develops a passion for playing the guitar and joins a Regina jazz combo. From the first moment that she falls in love with the group's lead singer to the dark moment of his death, Lita's fate is sealed.

Jumping forward in time to 1983, Elsa has become the lead singer/songwriter and guitarist of Speed Queen, a Regina punk band. Her boyfriend Mark Taggart is also in a punk band. In love with the music scene, with each other, and with their new baby, they decide their musical prospects would be better in Seattle than in Regina, a move that will bring about significant changes.

"After You've Gone vibrates with authenticity: two eras, two young women caught up in the giddy thrall of love and music and feckless men." — Lee Kvern, author of *The Matter of Sylvie* and *Seven Ways to Sunday*



Lori Hahnel is the author of two previous fiction titles: *Nothing Sacred* (Thistledown Press, 2009), which was shortlisted for the Alberta Literary Award for fiction, and *Love Minus Zero* (Oberon Press, 2008). Her writing has been published across North America and in the U.K., with credits including CBC Radio, *The Fiddlehead*, *Prairie Fire*, and *Room*.

During the early days of Calgary's punk scene, Hahnel was a founding member of The Virgins, a pop-punk group that carved its place in Calgarian rock history as the city's first all-female band. Hahnel lives in Calgary where she teaches creative writing.

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