

READING GUIDE FOR THE NAVY WIFE

The Navy Wife

Can love stay on course?

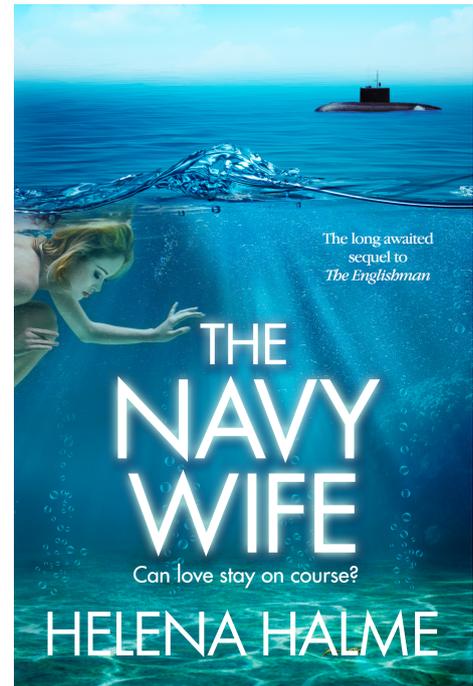
HELENA HALME

Kaisa knows she should be happy.

Marriage to the Englishman, the dashing Navy Officer Peter, was a mere dream when she was a student in Helsinki. But now the newlyweds have bitter rows, which Kaisa regrets each time her husband goes away to sea.

Kaisa needs to do something to change her new life, but she has no idea what.

What she mustn't do is fall for another man...



Helena Halme grew up in Tampere, central Finland, and moved to the UK via Stockholm and Helsinki at the age of 22. She is a former BBC journalist. She has also worked as a magazine editor and a bookseller and, until recently, ran a Finnish/British cultural association in London. Helena currently works as Nordic Ambassador and Publications Editor for the Alliance of Independent Authors.



Since gaining an MA in Creative Writing at Bath Spa University, Helena has published four novels, *The Englishman*, *The Navy Wife*, *Coffee and Vodka*, and *The Red King of Helsinki*, and one novella, *The Finnish Girl*. She is working on the next novel in The Englishman series.

Helena lives in North London with her ex-Navy husband and an old stubborn terrier, called Jerry. She loves Nordic Noir and sings along to Abba songs when no one is around.

Questions for Discussion

General Questions

1. What did you find the most surprising turn of events in the novel?
2. What do you think of the main characters, Kaisa and Peter?
3. How far does the novel reflect the era – the 1980s?
4. Do you think the lives of Navy wives, and those of Royal Navy personnel and their families in general, are well described in the novel?

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About Kaisa and Peter

1. Kaisa's new life in Britain doesn't match her expectations. Do you think this is something she and Peter should have considered more carefully before they decided to marry?
2. Kaisa's internal conflicts can be divided into three main areas: joblessness, doubts about Peter's choice of career, and displacement. Which one do you think is the main reason for her actions?
3. Do you think Kaisa's unhappiness is justified?
4. What do you think about Peter's role in the marriage? Do you think he could have acted differently to prevent Kaisa's relationship with Duncan?
5. What do you think about Duncan? Is he a credible character? What is his motivation?
6. How do you view Kaisa's relationship with the peace protestors? Why do you think Lyn and Kaisa became friends?

How the story is told

1. What do you think about the way the story is told mainly from Kaisa's point of view? Would you have liked to know more about what Peter was thinking?
2. How do you think the casual sexism and the lack of political correctness of the 1980s was described? What about the limited means of communications – the lack of mobile phones and the internet – versus how it is today? Did this come across well in the book?
3. Did you enjoy the twists and turns in the plot? Were you surprised by the ending?
4. Would the story make a good film or TV series? Who would play Kaisa and Peter? Or Duncan?

What Next?

Want to find out how Kaisa's story began?

THE FINNISH GIRL has been described as '*Lolita meets Nordic Noir*'. Pauliina Ståhlberg, Director of The Finnish Institute in London gave it a 5* review: '*The Finnish Girl is wonderfully intimate and honest; the characters feel real and you can almost smell the sea air of Helsinki.*'

Sign up to Helena's Readers Group and receive THE FINNISH GIRL for free! You will also be the first to find out about new releases and exciting book offers.

To sign up visit Helena's webpage on www.helenahalme.com

HAPPY READING!

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