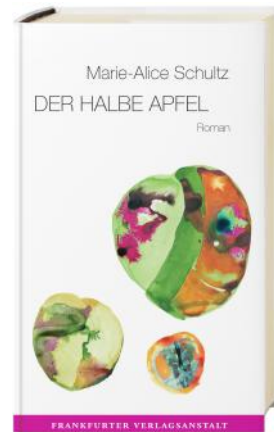




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THE HALF APPLE BY MARIE-ALICE SCHULTZ



Der halbe Apfel
Novel. German.
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»Marie-Alice Schultz writes with great subtlety and arresting accuracy about disappearances. In her crystal-clear view of what is lost and what is added, one always recognizes oneself.« Isabelle Lehn

»Behind every story is a second story that must be told before it can begin to exist.«

What happens when someone leaves – but then returns after seven years? Unannounced, Ben bursts back into Pia's life, and the lives of Vinz, and of Janis, who is his son. Now, suddenly, Janis has two fathers and Pia finds herself wondering why it is that only others can come and go as they wish. Marie-Alice, the narrator, learns the news of her Viennese friends while in Hamburg. There was briefly something with Vinz before, but now there is a new triangle. Marie-Alice is herself a writer and currently in a liminal place: between projects, between plans for the future and the memories of her French mother, who many years ago ate half an apple before she suddenly died. Increasingly, Marie-Alice wonders just what family is, and how responsibility, inheritance, happiness, and identity relate to each other. She begins thinking her way into the lives of her Viennese friends, until something that no one had expected occurs, and one piece of the triangle changes sides.

In *The Half Apple*, Marie-Alice Schultz tells a story of unusual family arrangements and modern life choices, with a playful tone of radical self-interrogation. The novel's way of reversing the roles and points of view of its characters and weaving them into an exciting plot reveals extraordinary literary skill. The author's voice is reminiscent of Rachel Cusk's or Lisa Halliday's indirect self-examinations, but reveals how one can sometimes only find oneself in a roundabout way, in a style all her own.

Marie-Alice Schultz was born in Hamburg in 1980. She studied theater and German language and literature in Berlin, and fine arts in Vienna. In 2016, received a scholarship to the Jürgen Ponto Foundation's writing workshop, and she was a participant in the 20th Klagenfurt Literature Course. For her 2019 debut novel *Mikadowälder*, she was awarded a literature prize by the city of Hamburg. In 2021, she received a working fellowship at the Roger Willemsen Foundation's artist's house. She lives in Hamburg.

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