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THE RAYBURN AFFAIR

by LAURIE PETROU

THE BOOK

Art, ambition and desire collide when a struggling academic becomes entangled in the marriage and creative life of her literary idol.

By day, Dr Ruth Morgan lectures on 'AI: the new frontier of storytelling' at East Toronto University. By night, she toils away at a collection of short stories, fantasising about a writing career to rival that of the internationally renowned Shelby Rayburn, a literary icon widely hailed as the voice of Ruth's generation of women.

When Shelby and her husband, Oscar, make an appearance at an annual faculty party, Ruth can't believe her luck. The trio instantly hit it off, and an intoxicating intimacy builds between them, underwritten by a simmering sexual tension.

Everything changes when Shelby makes Ruth an offer she can't refuse – one she can't tell anyone about, including Oscar. As boundaries blur and secret alliances form, distrust takes root and threatens to implode it all. Ruth and Shelby need each other, but each has their own agenda when it comes to friendship, love and literary stardom.

LAURIE PETROU (Location: Grimsby, Canada)

LAURIE PETROU is an award-winning author and Professor at Toronto Metropolitan University. She lives in Niagara with her family. *The Rayburn Affair* is her sixth book.



MARKETING & SALES POINTS

Deepening her exploration of female friendships, art and fame, award-winning author Laurie Petrou returns with a campus novel examining what it means to be a creator in an age where notions of authorship, relationships and notoriety have become dangerously undefinable

With a suspenseful, claustrophobic atmosphere that's sure to appeal to fans of dark academia and contemporary litfic, *The Rayburn Affair* is also packed with topical book club themes – from complex relationship dynamics, female ambition and gender politics to creativity and the emerging role of AI. Perfect for readers who enjoyed *Vladimir*, *The Rachel Incident*, *Luster* or *Conversations with Friends*, as well as fans of Jodi Picoult

Stargazer remains a cult favourite on bookstagram and Petrou's novels have been recommended by Taylor Jenkins Reid and reviewed in the *Daily Mail*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Entertainment Weekly* and *Refinery29*, among others

The UK release will be supported by an extensive publicity and marketing campaign across traditional and social media, with ARCs available for book bloggers, endorsers, booksellers and key media from early 2026

North American rights have been sold to House of Anansi and ANZ rights have been sold to Echo, both for publication in September 2026

PRAISE FOR THE RAYBURN AFFAIR

'Dark, fascinating, and utterly fearless, *The Rayburn Affair* reminded me of Julia May Jonas's *Vladimir* in the best possible way... I was unsettled, enthralled and completely transfixed. Petrou writes with razor-sharp insight and lyrical power, marking her as one of our most daring contemporary voices' - **Marissa Stapley, New York Times bestselling author of Lucky**

'An exceptionally evocative and seductive story about the dangerous allure of intimate connection and slippery security of power... Raw, real and riveting, *The Rayburn Affair* should be on everyone's must-read list' - **Samantha M Bailey, internationally bestselling author of Hello, Juliet**

'A dark, sexy tale of infatuation, envy and creative life set within the cloistered walls of an elite university. *The Rayburn Affair* has richly drawn characters, simmering tension and a perfect denouement' - **Robyn Harding, internationally bestselling author of Strangers in the Villa**



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