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Thriller

Coldwater
Diana Gould
Gibraltar Road
978-0-9857838-0-8
(January 15, 2013)

The business of Hollywood can be brutal. Diana Gould's first novel, *Coldwater*, gives readers a glimpse into the high-stakes world of network television, corporate mergers, and Hollywood backroom deals.

Down-on-her-luck heroine Brett Tanager was once in the middle of it all. She was a writer-producer for a hit television show that she developed with her husband. The show, called *Murder Will Out*, was about to go big. She had family, connections, and the attention of the studio executives. But, Tanager also had a drug problem.

Readers are introduced to Tanager as her life spirals out of control and she struggles to escape the consequences of one very big mistake. Just as she is about to despair, Tanager is approached by her estranged stepdaughter for help—though she is asked to keep certain information a secret. Readers follow Tanager as she discovers an even darker side to the business of entertainment—one that involves sex, murder, and the habits of a few privileged elites.

Gould is a former scriptwriter who has written for network and cable. Her experience and insight are on display as Tanager hobnobs with suits, bargains for information with a tell-all blogger, and digs into the secrets of more than one Hollywood power couple.

When the daughter of one of the town's most influential men is found dead, Tanager knows she can't keep entirely quiet. She benefits from the help of two private investigators, both of whom seem to have as much interest in her as they do in the case. Gould keeps the tension high by pitting the investigators against each other, hinting at their own possible involvement in the criminal activity, and preventing Tanager from trusting them completely.

Despite the uncertainty, Tanager has little time to rest. The suspense builds quickly, and Gould effectively manages many narrative threads that branch and intersect as the investigation blossoms. Rich and powerful people are implicated, and everybody has a secret to hide or sell.

Coldwater is well-structured and competently written, and the ending promises a twist. Readers will care about the heroine because she is fighting to save the lives of others, not to mention redeem her own. There are compelling interludes of reflection and heart as Tanager battles her demons and faces her worst fears.

An engaging thriller written by a novelist who knows the business and art of entertainment.

Jennifer Williams