



I Knew the Bride

Hugo Williams

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Hugo Williams is rightly cherished for his inimitable fusion of autobiography and irony, and a technical glide that allows his writing to 'slip back to the past as effortlessly as a dreamer' (The Times). *I Knew the Bride* is Williams' eleventh collection of poems, and his first since *West End Final* was shortlisted for both the T. S. Eliot and Forward prizes for poetry in 2009. This new volume bears - and lays bare - those qualities that have become so characteristic of his work: his unflinching survey of his childhood and adult life alike, alighting on moments of vivacity from his upbringing in a theatrical family in the 1940s and 50s (the title poem a touching tribute to his late sister) through to the romantic peaks and pains of his adult years. Straight-talking, self-deprecating and funny, these recklessly accountable inspections are set against a Williams-esk miscellany of day-to-day backdrops that readers have come to treasure: of record collections, kitchen sinks, shopping bicycles, hotels, bedrooms. But *I Knew the Bride* is no mere rehearsal of old lives lived; instead it takes the author and his readers into startling new terrain in a series of brave, painful and profoundly moving poems 'From the Dialysis Ward', in which the author records his own ongoing hospital treatment with a fearless vulnerability that makes this collection of poems a courageous and inspiring read.

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