



Embracing the Razor

John Upton

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Tender poems on the death of his wife, witty Philip Larkin apercus, meditations on the spiritual need of Australians for Europe, hard-eyed satire as a political fixer dismisses as out-of-date the instruments of torture in the Tower of London: John Upton's range is broad and his poetic skills accomplished. There's also wit, along with rollicking humour and love of the absurd, with jealous Othello transposed into Sydney's posh Eastern Suburbs, and a defrocked priest with a gambling habit sacked and clerking at the TAB. "Sickness, grief, witnessing the coming of death, love, travelling, they might never have had so much dignity granted them. The voice of these poems barely lifts above a whisper but punches great holes in the psyche all the same. If these four-o'clock-in-the-morning words do finally touch us, with some sense of a soul, we must be grateful Mr. Upton went without his sleep for us." - Kevin Brophy "Here is the easy fluency of a master craftsman, but one creating works so real, often so raw, that one scarcely notices. Upton walks towards "the certainty of a ruin" with a deft insouciance. This vibrant first book of poetry from John Upton starts with a palpable grief, ranges across a spectrum of characters and moments towards a delightfully deft travelogue followed by playful rhymes. Every poem illuminates, creates a moment in time flawlessly preserved." - Les Wicks



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