

Whistle

Martin Figura's riveting sequence of poems about his childhood, his father killing his mother, and the consequences of that upon the whole family is remarkable for the story he doesn't tell, as much as for the story he does. Exercising a humanising restraint, delicately balanced, these poems are an attempt to excise memory, to fill in some of the missing gaps, but the sense one is left with most of all is absence and loss. Moving, brave unsentimental, Whistle doesn't blow the whistle on the family. Instead it rather heartbreakingly tries to piece together the fragments of a life, shattered by murder. Sometimes lyrical, rarely angry, often tender, Figura's soul mate throughout is the understanding and watchful eye of the camera: 'One day I shall hold them with white gloves,/carefully brush away the dust and look/through their shadows and fingerprints. **Jackie Kay**