



## **Pretty Ugly**

Kirsty Gunn

Rough Trade Books, ISBN 9781914236419,

Pb, 220 pgs, 13 x 17cm

Acqn. 34344

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Contradictions (both real and apparent), oppositions, enigmas, provocations, challenges - this is the kind of material that makes a life, and is the kind of material that, in fiction, one is never quite sure of. With *Pretty Ugly*, Kirsty Gunn reminds us again that she is a master of just such material, presenting ambiguity and complication as the essence of the storyteller's endeavour.

The sheer force of life that Gunn is able to load these stories up with is both testament to her unrivalled skill and an exercise in what she describes as 'reading and writing ugly', in order to pursue the deeper truths that lie at the heart of both the human imagination and human rationality.

So here we have all the strange and seemingly impossible dualities that make up real life-and pretty ugly it can be, as well as beautiful, hopeful, bleak, difficult, exhilarating. But never, ever dull.

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