

Introducing *Threat* by Julia Webb



About Julia's Poetry:

The poems in *Threat* train their eagle-eyes on life at the margins, and on family, love, loss, belonging and not belonging. They are not afraid to visit the uncomfortable places where true humanity resides. Its narratives of both past and present tread a fine line between fantasy and reality – these are the lives we have led, the lives we could have led, or the lives we are leading still. Forensically detailed and disturbing, the dark and sometimes brutal undertow of small-town existence seeps to the surface of these unsettling poems.

“Threat is a powerful and unsettling telling of how it feels to be a girl living in small town whose surfaces are seethed with graffiti, and home life bristles with disquiet... Julia Webb’s voice here is magical realism at its most gritty, full of loss and longing.” – **Helen Ivory**

“Threat knows how closely love and loss, comedy and tragedy, violence and sexuality can be bound together within the tight confines of a poem.” - **Andrew McMillan**

Julia was born and raised in rural Norfolk and now lives in Norwich. Her first poetry collection *Bird Sisters* was published by Nine Arches in 2016.

Read about how and why Julia wrote her poem ‘Bus Station Toilets’ here:

<https://ninearchespress.blogspot.com/2019/05/in-conversation-julia-webb.html>

Discover this striking two minute poem film of ‘Lightening Up’:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=leoOuBafSrY>

Key poems to read:

Dates

Kettle

She was a biscuit barrel or barrel shaped at least

We is in the bank

because my home town has a hand between its legs

carport

The Doll

Your mother is landlady of the dead house

All the Women

Discussion points:

- Which poems did you find the most memorable on first reading, and why?
- What do you think is the one key theme of the book?
- What kind of language does the poet use, and what kind of effect does it have on the reader or listener?
- How does the title of the book, *Threat*, make you reflect on the poems inside?
- Would you recommend this book, and would you share it with someone who maybe hasn't read or enjoyed a poetry book before? If so, which poem would you choose to share with them to convince them they might enjoy it?

Suggested activities for reading groups:

- Split off into groups of two, and find a space in order to take time to read each other a poem from the book. Discuss why you choose your poem, and share your reaction to the poem your partner chooses.
- Read one of the longer poems from this book in the round – reading a line each and going around the group.
- Choose a favourite word, line or stanza (verse) each, and share it with the group.