



Nobody's Jackknife

Ellen McGrath Smith

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With insight, humor, and uncompromising honesty, *Nobody's Jackknife* explores power and powerlessness, violence and tenderness, addiction and love. These poems refuse to separate the mundane from the profound: Rolling Rock beer, the racial coding of baseball players, and a melodic litany of yoga asanas intertwine in this brilliant and compelling collection. In 1960s Pittsburgh, a young girl finds her way to adulthood in a family dominated by a hard-drinking, blue-collar father, brothers who excel at baseball and machismo, and a pervasive but ultimately distant Catholicism. Her mother, unable to rescue her, offers two lifelines: reading and yoga. Using an astonishing array of poetic styles, Ellen McGrath Smith shows a rare gift for subtlety, an expansive intellect, and a sometimes brutal candor in this groundbreaking debut collection.

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