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Bad Cats Bad

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~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

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This bumper collection contains no new departures, unless you count the joyously jaded assaults on targets as various as pianists --- 'Hear the pianists practising their scales/ Alongside which all noise pollution pales' --- and swans --- 'I speak not in jest/ For there's no denying/ That swans are at their best/ On stage, when dying'. In fact, there is much here that he has done before and, in some cases, better. But there is still plenty to enjoy for children of junior and lower secondary age from a poet of this calibre. His observation is as sharp as ever, 'I polish my grandfather's trousers/ (At the knees where he likes them to shine)'; his work play as inventive, 'food prices can be gastronomic'; and his notions as barmy, 'Went to the cinema/ Friday./ Tried to leave before/ the end./ Couldn't get out./ It was a cling film.' Occasionally, too, that disturbing, dark McGough poem that taps into a deeper emotional vein: 'From year to year I hear it grow/ the unrelenting list of GO./ That bossy word that rhymes with NO/ Still can hurt. The going pains./ Go/ Go now/ Why don't you just go.'

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