



# Proof of Identity

By Neil Powell

Carcanet Press Ltd. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Proof of Identity, Neil Powell, Neil Powell's seventh Carcanet collection explores the deep roots of identity: family histories we inherit, memories we carry, the casual decisions and wrong turnings that add up to make us who we are. 'Do you mean to say you've married / an apprentice fitter and come all this way?' an official asks the poet's grandmother who, trusting to luck, emigrates to a new life in South Africa after the First World War. An ironic and grateful presence, Powell observes the lives that he inherits. Perspectives shift with time: an old photograph shows his mother 'more beautiful and happier than I remember her', his father 'looking for once the statesman he should have been'. At the heart of the book is a compelling narrative based on a journal kept by Powell's grandmother of her life in South Africa: a feckless husband, a 483-mile trek with horse and covered wagon, violence and poverty. There's also a shorter, teasingly fictional narrative and a sequence about the life of a grand piano. Other poems deal with childhood, leaving home and first love; a park in Kent and a wood in...



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