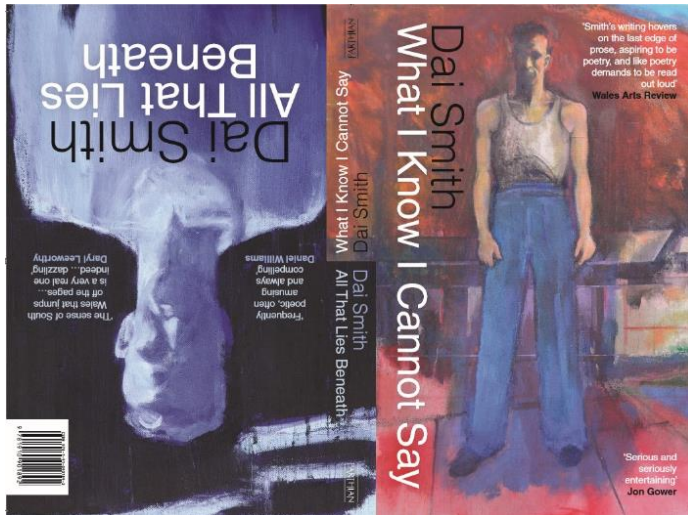


What I Know I Cannot Say / All That Lies Beneath Dai Smith



In *What I Know I Cannot Say / All That Lies Beneath*, Dai Smith combines a novella and a linked section of short stories to create a dazzling fictional synthesis that takes the reader on a tour of the South Wales Valleys during the twentieth century.

Picking up where his 2013 novel *Dream On* left off, *What I Know I Cannot Say* follows the life story of Billy's father, Dai Maddox. When Billy's former partner Bran shows up wanting to record Dai's life story to put together a documentary, Dai looks back on his past, remembering his childhood as a destitute orphan, his work as a collier in the mines and the subsequent drifting between menial jobs, alleviated only by reading and drawing; his enrolment in the British Army and participation in the invasion of Italy during the Second World War; and post-war life under

socialism, when he was back in the pits and married to Billy's mother, Mona. Moving from the heyday of the pre-mechanised coal industry to the present day, *What I Know I Cannot Say* presents a moving and vivid panorama of twentieth-century Wales, brought to life by Smith's meticulous attention to historical detail and distinct gift of invoking the smells, sights and sounds of the past. We find ourselves smelling the cordite of ammunition among the ruins of Cassino in 1943, during the invasion of Italy; the damp coal in the mineshafts; the beer-soaked wood of pub floors; the smell of fresh coffee from a modern percolator. Dai's journey is an emotional and moving one, told in gritty, realistic prose.

All That Lies Beneath is white-knuckle fiction ride: power, sex, money and ambition all twist through the pages as Smith creates a feast of intellectual and physical provocation in stories that send a shudder of fearful recognition directly through to the reader.



Dai Smith is a renowned historian, academic, broadcaster and prolific writer on the arts and cultural issues. He taught History at the universities of Lancaster, Swansea and Cardiff and was awarded a Personal Chair by the University of Wales in 1986. In 1993, Dai joined the BBC as Editor of Radio Wales, and from 1994 to 2000 he was Head of Broadcast at BBC Wales. He is currently Head of the Arts Council of Wales and Raymond Williams Research Chair in the Cultural History of Wales at Swansea University. He has published much non-fiction about the history, culture and literature of his native South Wales, and one other novel, *Dream On* (Parthian, 2013), which is a prequel to *What I Know I Cannot Say*. He is also the editor of the Library of Wales series. Dai currently lives on Barry Island, where he is writing more fiction.

PARTHIAN
Publisher
426 Grove Extension, Swansea
University, Singleton Park,
Swansea SA2 8PP
+44 (0) 1792 606605
rjph91@gmail.com

COMPASS
UK Trade Representation
Great West House, Great West
Road, Brentford, TW8 9DF
+44 (0) 20 8326 5696
sales@compass-dsa.co.uk

CENTRAL BOOKS
UK Distribution
99 Wallis Road, London,
E9 5LN
+44 (0) 845 458 9911
contactus@centralbooks.com

INDEPENDENT PUBLISHERS GROUP
USA Distribution
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orders@ipgbook.com