



## **The Kindness**

by **Polly Samson**

*Bloomsbury, 293pp*

~~£14.99~~ ❀ ~~£12.99~~

In the beginning is grief and loss. Julian is coming to terms with the absence of his daughter, Mira. But

the true centre of this novel is Julian's love affair with Mira's mother, confusingly but significantly named Julia. They met on a hillside, where Julia was exercising her husband's hawk, and in the teeth of disapproval from family and friends they got together and produced their adored child. Julian scores a success with his (all too believable) naff kids' books about dogs, and they assume they have found happiness. But Julia is keeping a certain secret, which only comes out when Mira falls dangerously ill. I can't possibly reveal any more; the twists and revelations here are a vital part of Samson's under-the-skin storytelling. Is deception wrong if it springs from love, or is betrayal always betrayal, irrespective of circumstances? Advice: don't try to guess the outcome, just enjoy the journey.