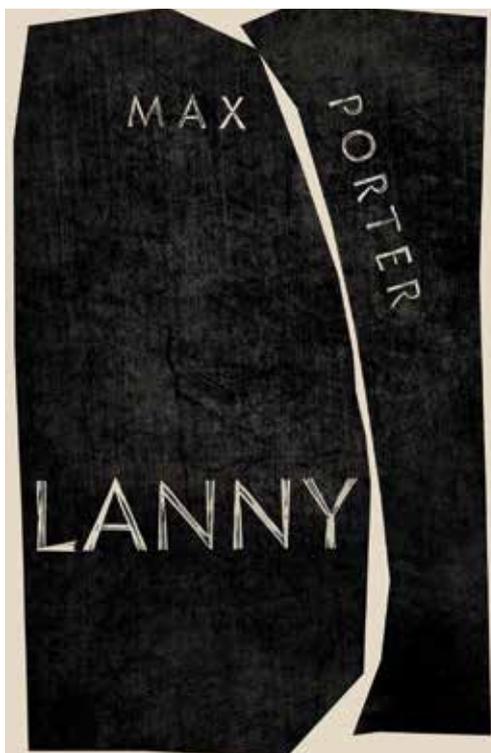




Readers' Guide



Lanny

Max Porter

Faber & Faber

Other novels by Max Porter
Grief is the Thing with Feathers (2015)

thebookerprizes.com

About the author

Max Porter was born in High Wycombe, UK on 27 August 1981. His first novel, *Grief is the Thing with Feathers*, won the *Sunday Times/Peters, Fraser + Dunlop* Young Writer of the Year Award, the International Dylan Thomas Prize, the Europese Literatuurprijs and the BAMB Readers' Award, and was shortlisted for the *Guardian* First Book Award and the Goldsmiths Prize. It has been translated into 27 languages. As an editor, Max Porter worked on Eleanor Catton's Man Booker 2013 winning *The Luminaries* and Han Kang's Man Booker International 2016 winning *The Vegetarian*. He lives in Bath.

About the book

There is a village outside London, no different from many others. Everyday lives conjure a tapestry of fabulism and domesticity. This village belongs to the people who live in it and to the people who lived in it hundreds of years ago. It belongs to England's mysterious past and its confounding present. But it also belongs to Dead Papa Toothwort who has woken from his slumber and is listening, and watching. He is watching Mad Pete the village artist. He is listening to ancient Peggy gossiping at her gate, to families recently moved here and to families dead for generations. Dead Papa Toothwort hears them all as he searches, intently, for his favourite. Looking for the boy. Lanny.

What the judges thought

"Max Porter's poetic and beautifully-crafted book explores the dark violence of folk mythology, creating a haunting parable of contemporary England. The tenderness and purity of the young boy Lanny, the counterpoint of village dialogue and dangerous magic all create an urgent dreamscape. A visual delight as well as a compelling read, *Lanny* is thought-provoking, innovative and moving."

Discussion points

What role does Dead Papa Toothwart play in the narrative?

When Lanny goes missing, the amount of gossip in the village increases. Is the novel critical of this gossip?

Why do you think the author switches the narrative voice between different characters?

Although we hear from various characters, Lanny himself is not a narrator. How do we learn about him from the other characters?

What does fantasy, or magical realism, add to stories in rural setting?

Themed reading

George Saunders *Lincoln in the Bardo*
Zoe Gilbert *Folk*
Ted Hughes *Crow*
Ben Smith *Doggerland*

Useful links

<https://www.maxporter.co.uk/>

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2019/mar/08/lanny-max-porter-review>

<https://www.spectator.co.uk/2019/03/love-death-and-loss-in-a-small-village-lanny-reviewed/>

<https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/books/lanny-by-max-porter-review-the-accessible-follow-up-does-not-disappoint-1.3809909>

<https://www.newstatesman.com/max-porter-lanny-review-grief-feathers>