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Lob

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Not on Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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Many years ago, drawing on folk tradition, William Mayne wrote a series of stories for younger readers about Hob, an ancient travelling sprite, who, largely invisible, would stay and keep the house safe in return for food and some appreciation. Linda Newbery has tapped the same sources for *Lob*, a little old mischievous tramping Green Man, seen only by those who acknowledge his contribution to the welfare of their gardens, and who, at the opening of the story, lives with Lucy's Grandpa Will. When Grandpa dies, *Lob* moves on, and there are two stories, *Lob's* and *Lucy's*. *Lob* looks for a new home, and Lucy longs for him to find her far away in London, so that, through *Lob*, Grandpa and his joy in growing things will still have a place in her life. It's a lovingly produced book, which follows the seasons: a tale told as much by Pam Smy's black and white line drawings as by Newbery's quiet, bright, clear prose. It is prefaced and interrupted occasionally by short poetic impressions of Hob's own view, intuitions of the deeper power and intoxication of the natural world. The book belongs in that long English tradition of writing for children in which relationships, time and nature are explored through gardens. Newbery adds her own twist to this when, finally, Lucy meets *Lob* in his new home at the London allotment of Cornelius, a blind grandfather who grew up in Jamaica and grows callaloo and bonnet peppers alongside his beans, tomatoes and gooseberries.

Running Order:

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