

FICTION

The remarkable relationship between a gay man and an African woman

The Third Wedding

TOM LANOYE

Maarten Seebregs is a man of no use. He is dying. His work has been taken away from him. The only things left to him are his painkillers and the memory of his dead lover, up to his own serene and self-elected death. Then he is given the opportunity to make himself useful just one more time. Someone he has never met before offers him a large sum of money to enter into a marriage of convenience with his girlfriend, the African asylum seeker Tamara. Maarten hesitates, but not for long.

A marvellous book, that makes you laugh out loud, shudder, and strikes you dumb

ELSEVIER

The book is an intense tragicomedy, spiced with criticism of the gay movement, the dumbing-down of television, the narrowmindedness of a cool urban neighbourhood, etc. Nothing is safe from Maarten's mockery and Maarten's recollections of his dead lover are very appealing. Lanoye balances between slapstick and drama, journalism and opera. This is also a highly topical novel: physical decline, migration, and racism are topics with a permanent place in the papers. 'The Third Wedding' is a real page-turner, written with great verve, endlessly quotable and extremely enjoyable.

This is a story of flesh and bones, with a feeling for the occasional one-liner and told with some panache by a man saying farewell to his life.

KNACK



AUTHOR



Tom Lanoye (b. 1958) is a literary one-man business, and one of the most popular authors in Flanders and the Netherlands. His theatre work, novels, short stories, novellas, columns, poetry and performances can only be described as exceptional. He established his reputation with the autobiographical coming of age novel *Cardboard Boxes*. His bestselling novel *Speechless* was shortlisted for the most important literary prizes and won the Gouden Uil Readers' Prize. In his magnum opus *The Turntable*, Lanoye places question marks beside important issues concerning the collaborative past of Flanders. In October 2024, Tom Lanoye was awarded the Grand Prize for Literature, a prestigious triennial award recognising authors of significant literary contributions in the Dutch language area. King Philippe and Queen Mathilde of Belgium presented the award at the Royal Palace in Brussels, followed by several speeches and performances. Read the full jury report. Photo © Arthur Los

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TRANSLATION RIGHTS Lotte de Boer -
foreignrights@pbo.nl

TRANSLATION GRANTS Marieke Roels -
marieke@flandersliterature.be, Yannick Geens -

