Sigbjørn Skåden

Backwoods Fable

Planterhaug

Genre: Fiction
Category: Novel
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English sample translation available

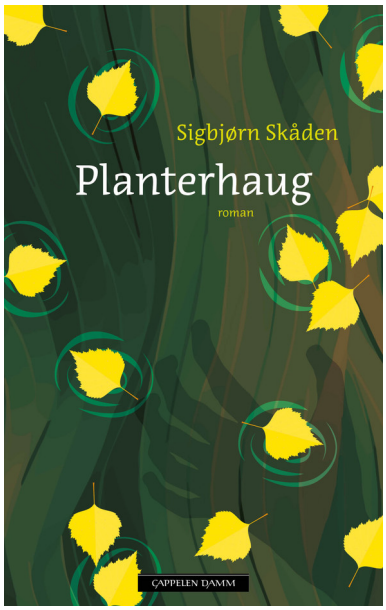
When the old drunkard Nilsen dies in the Norwegianized sami village Planterhaug, once known as Láŋtdievvá, no one suspects anything criminal. Yet, the following autumn Inspector Huuva from the Oslo Criminal Police arrives in the village to investigate the death.

Huuva is determined to uncover the truth about the village and find out about his father's fractured family history. Through his investigation, Huuva discovers that something Evil is haunting in the village, and the case propels him deep into the soul of Planterhaug. But is he truly uncovering new truths, or is he merely treading water in a place where secrets have long been silenced?

Backwoods Fable is a novel about identity, about what it means to be Sami, and about the search to find home – whatever that may be. It is both a deeply serious and deeply humorous novel about nature, culture and belonging.

The book was simultaneously published in Norwegian and in Torne Sámi, under the title *Láŋtdievvá*, both written by Skåden himself.

Winner of the 2026 Nordic Council Literature Prize
Nominated for the 2025 Brage Prize



'Skåden is a poet, it shows. The novel is full of fine, delicate and atmospheric descriptions. [...] a creepy, subtle and remarkable novel with many layers and connections, which perhaps only reveal themselves to the reader after the book is closed.'

Stavanger Aftenblad, 5/6 stars

'Blood, betrayal and chess in Sápmi - *Backwoods Fable* mixes dark Nordic crime and Sami folklore into a meaty and original story with a lot of mystery and even more guts.

Dagsavisen

'Twin Peaks, Troms -
The burlesque and the sorrowful come together into something unlike anything else I've read.'

Photo: Knut Åserud

Sigbjørn Skåden (b. 1976) is a Sámi author who lives in Tromsø. He made his debut in 2004 in the Sámi language with Skuovvadeddjiid gonagas, for which he was nominated for the Nordic Council's Literature Prize. *Watch Over Those Who Sleep* was his first novel in Norwegian, published in 2014. This received rave reviews and The Havmann Prize. He has published both poetry and novels.

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