

LoveReading Reader reviews of The Loney by Andrew Michael Hurley

Below are the complete reviews, written by LoveReading members.

Catherine Bryce

A unique book that covers several genres and is a delight to read.

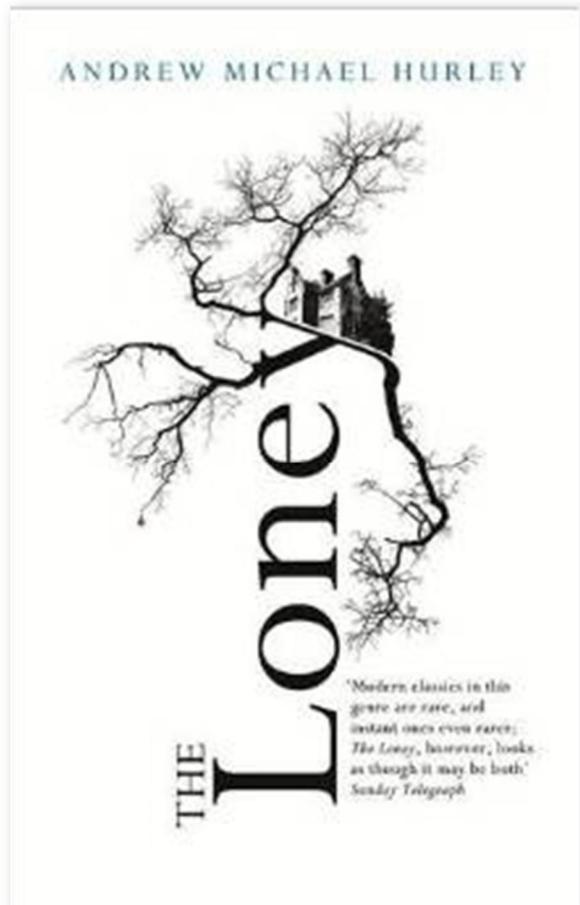
This book is one of those books that once you start you can't put down. The author narrates the reader through the story as if he has written for you and you alone.

The story itself is first class, with suspense, horror, supernatural, thriller, crime being a few of the genres covered. The author describes the relationship with his family, his aunt and uncle, his brother, the old and new priests, the priest's housekeeper and her fiancé and the sub-relationships that have formed within these.

Each character in the book have their own problems/demons to deal with and the author writes as if he is trying to hold everything together and make sense of the world in which he lives while knowing it is out of his hands.

The author's geographical descriptions of the local area in the book are first class and leaves one feeling as if one had actually been there. Damp, dismal and cold weather permeates throughout the book adding to the chilling story itself.

Well written and thoroughly recommended.



Angela Rhodes

I enjoyed the calming story, the way you can see and hear in your head, the characters come alive... Can't wait for the next book!

Set in the 1970s, The Loney follows a group of people on a pilgrimage to Moorings where Mummer, Farther, Mr. and Mrs Belderboss believe there is a magic spring, and Mummer want's Hanny to be cured, because Hanny has never spoken,

The Loney is what it is what the locals called it, and the name stuck, and every Easter Hanny and his family went, only this time it's a little different, as their beloved Father Wilfred the parish priest has passed away, and Father Bernard is there instead.

The Loney is a beautifully written book, about Faith, not just the Religious type, but human Faith, that all of us have inside.

Victoria Emerson

A haunting book about family and faith.

I enjoyed this book. For me it was a slow read which I liked for a change. I think that the story deserved to be read slowly and thought about and not raced through.

The themes contained in the book - faith and family - are dealt with sensitively, as is the relationship between Hanny and his brother.

It is a dark story and you can feel the coldness and isolation of The Loney as you read. I also didn't expect the ending.

A very good book.

Katie Hoare

'The Loney' is a beautifully written story that is told by the narrator who, along with his family, go to a Christian retreat with the Priest, assistant, and others from their church. The current visit is subtly intertwined with a previous to The Loney, which involved the previous priest and family member.

We learn that there is something wrong with the unnamed narrator's brother, who they try to heal at the shrine. We are introduced to the local rogues, who try to frighten the narrator and his brother. However, there are strange things that happen at The Loney and only a few of the characters pick up on the aura

of the place, and to the previous Priest who makes him test his faith.

This book draws you in and engages the reader to find out how the area effects each of the characters, and it is about faith and what people believe in.

Josie Barton

The eponymous Loney of the book's title is a strange and desolate place, filled with ambiguous contrasts and a myriad of unanswered questions.

An uneasy group of Catholic pilgrims head for the remote shrine of Saint Anne on the bleak and windswept Fylde coast. The Moorings is a place where they have stayed before but on this Easter visit the dynamics of the group have been altered and there is an uncomfortable atmosphere which disturbs the shifting balance of those who seek true spiritual comfort.

The Loney is a real slow burner of story, expertly described by an unknown narrator which allows a unique glimpse into the heart of a fractured family. The narrator seeks to protect his older brother, Hanny, whose mental health problem is the main focus of the pilgrimage and the reason why Hanny's troubled parents seek a desperate cure for his disability.

The story is beautifully written and eerily suggestive that something dark and sinister prowls in dark corners, and although the story is set largely in the mid-1970s there is a timeless quality to the narrative which makes the story all the more compelling. Deeply troubling and quite unnerving in places, the story examines the power of spirituality and calls into question the subject of belief and religious fervor.

With more than a hint of the supernatural, this brilliant story conjures perfectly a dark and gloomy place and questions what it truly means to believe in a greater spiritual power.

<http://jaffareadstoo.blogspot.co.uk/>

Linda Davison

This is the story of a young boy and his brother, their devoutly Catholic parents and his mother's desperation for his brother to be 'made well'. As she waits for and expects a miracle the family and a few others visit a place called the Loney on an Easter pilgrimage with the new parish priest. Here they encounter strange happenings and even stranger people.

The story and its odd characters will draw you in and carry you along. Something weird leaps out of the pages and grabs your curiosity and you just have to keep reading. Out of all the strange incidents few, if any, are really explained but you are still left with an uncomfortable impression of the horrors which have probably taken place.

It's strange and mysterious, funny, sad and frightening but overall it is a very well written, easy to read story that will appeal to all sorts of different readers and should be top of everyone's reading pile.

Edel Waugh

The Loney is a place where one family makes a yearly Easter pilgrimage, two children, one of them mute, six adults, and a priest. This place is a dark and rather depressing place to spend anyone's holiday but the family seem to really look forward to their holidays there, where religion and hope are strongly present on their trip. Things are not quite as they seem here, there is a much darker element to the story that is not really talked about but merely hinted at.

*It is quite unnerving and I ended up going back over what I read to see if I really did understand what had just happened. **The horror here is subtle which is what makes it so unnerving, surprising, and impossible to put down. I recommend this to fans of 'The Woman In Black' or similar stories. It is guaranteed to cause you unease.***

<http://www.edelwaugh.blogspot.com>

Fiona Rothery

The Loney is a wonderful novel about faith and the love and bond between two brothers, Hanny is mute and is fiercely protected by his brother, nicknamed Tonto, who narrates the story.

The story involves a deeply religious family and community. The Mummer of the family holds and controls them all with her strong beliefs and allegiance to God and the late priest, Father Wilfred. The family and the congregation live strictly by traditional beliefs, values and rituals. Mummer is compelled to use her faith in God to visit a shrine at Easter time in the belief that the holy waters there will heal Hanny so he is able to speak. The family and friends go on a pilgrimage to Moorings and on this trip lead by the new priest, Father Bernard, the characters emotions, vulnerability and fear of things outside their safe community are uncovered and surrounded by strange events. The Loney is the

remote coastal area between the houses of Moorings and Coldbarrow. It is desolate and dangerous and I feel it is intended to represent the waste land between good and evil.

I really liked the comparison between the traditional, obsessively religious Father Wilfred and his replacement, the more realistic and practical Father Bernard who is placed for 'taking the congregation out into the wider world'.

After I had read this novel I felt compelled to read it again to uncover the deeper layers of its meaning and mystery.

Richard Coe

The prose is very eloquent. Do keep reading as the story twists and turns especially in the last 100 pages or so. Recommended and 4 out of 5.

The book is all about a group of church friends from London who go on a pilgrimage to a place in Northern England called The Loney, a strange nowhere between the Wyre and the Lune in Lancashire. The Loney is dull, featureless, and dangerous, a dead mouth of a bay that fills/empties twice a day and make Coldbarrow, a desolate spit of land a mile off the coast into an island.

The group had visited The Loney before and decided to visit again over Easter staying at a strange house called Moorings, once the home of a taxidermist. Mrs Smith believed The Loney was special and was convinced Saint Anne's shrine could cure Hanny of his muteness.

Sue Broom

A haunting story - a sense of foreboding builds up gradually, fuelled by wonderfully atmospheric description of the landscape and buildings - highly recommended.

A creepy, haunting story, narrated by the now middle-aged (and I think unnamed) younger brother, it tells of events in his childhood and during one particular life-changing summer. His older brother was born with learning and communication difficulties, causing his staunchly Catholic mother to focus her considerable energy on creating the right conditions for him to be cured by a miracle, culminating in a pilgrimage to an abandoned shrine on a desolate stretch of the Lancashire coast. A sense of foreboding builds up gradually, fuelled by wonderfully atmospheric description of the landscape and buildings,

and sinister characters lurking about. In the spirit of the best mystery writing, what actually happens is not always clear.

The author is strong on Catholic rites and beliefs, and there is much criticism of some practices and practitioners, notably the old schoolmaster priest, but the negative view is redeemed by the humanity and kindness of the new priest. We are invited to consider the different ways in which people believe in God and express their faith. The story is not unremittingly bleak - there are touches of wry humour, especially in the narrator's interaction with his brother and in his commentary on his companions' behaviour and interpretation of events. I found it fascinating and would recommend heartily.