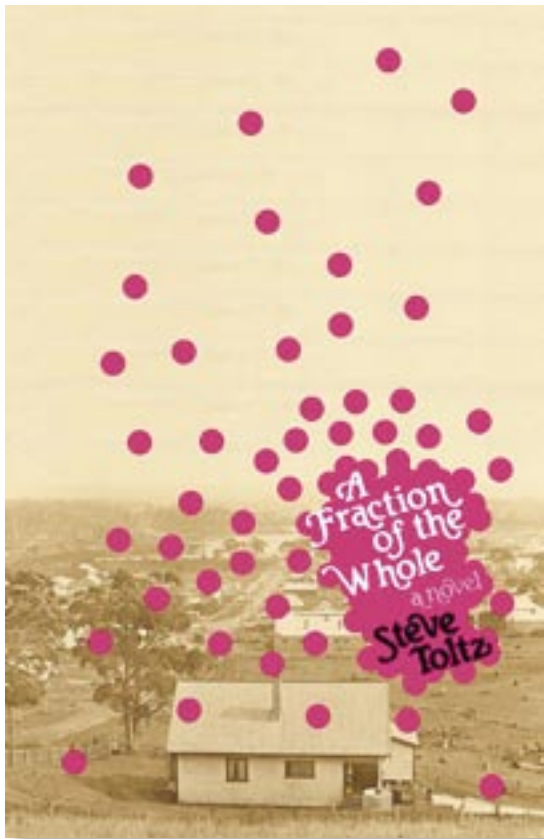




Reader's Guide



A Fraction of the Whole
is Steve Toltz's first book

A Fraction of the Whole by Steve Toltz

Published by Hamish Hamilton
Hardback RRP £17.99

www.themanbookerprize.com

About the author

Steve Toltz was born in Sydney, Australia, and has lived in Montreal, Vancouver, Barcelona and Paris, working primarily as a screenwriter, but also doing stints as a private investigator and an English teacher. *A Fraction of the Whole* is his first book.

A Fraction of the Whole

As he recollects the events that led to his father's demise, Jasper recounts a boyhood of outrageous schemes and shocking discoveries - about his infamous outlaw uncle Terry, his mysteriously absent European mother, and Martin's constant losing battle to make a lasting mark on the world he so disdains. It's a story that takes them from the Australian bush to the cafes of Paris, from the Thai jungle to strip clubs, asylums, labyrinths and criminal lairs, and from the highs of first love to the lows of failed ambition. The result is a rollercoaster ride from obscurity to infamy, and the moving, memorable story of a father and son whose spiritual symmetry transcends all their many shortcomings.

Discussion points

Do you find the relationship between Jasper and his father Martin believable?

Does the layout of the novel on the page affect how you read it?

As he gets older Jasper's narrative voice changes throughout the novel? Is this change of style an effective way to communicate with the reader?

Martin Dean is a philosopher and by contrast his brother Terry is a man of action. To what extent do you feel that Martin's actions and attitudes have been influenced by having an infamous brother?

Do you agree with the reviewers who think *A Fraction of the Whole* is too long and could have been equally effective if it were 200 pages shorter?

Themed reading

Vernon God Little DBC Pierre

Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close

Jonathan Safran Foer

Catcher in the Rye JD Salinger

Useful links

www.themanbookerprize.com

www.hamishhamilton.co.uk

www.guardian.co.uk/books