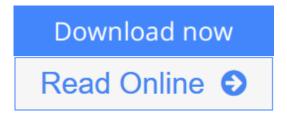


The Illusion of Separateness: A Novel

By Simon Van Booy



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In *The Illusion of Separateness*, award-winning author Simon Van Booy tells a harrowing and enchanting story of how one man's act of mercy during World War II changed the lives of strangers, and how they each discover the astonishing truth of their connection.

Whether they are pursued by Nazi soldiers, old age, shame, deformity, disease, or regret, the characters in this utterly compelling novel discover in their, darkest moments of fear and isolation that they are not alone, that they were never alone, that every human being is a link in an unseen chain.

The Illusion of Separateness intertwines the stories of unique and compelling characters who—through seemingly random acts of selflessness—discover the vital parts they have played in each other's lives.



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The Illusion of Separateness: A Novel By Simon Van Booy Bibliography

Sales Rank: #114931 in eBooks
Published on: 2013-06-11
Released on: 2013-06-11
Format: Kindle eBook

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Editorial Review

From Booklist

Lives connect across continents and decades in the aftermath of two soldiers crossing paths in a field in warravaged France in 1944. American John Bray, whose B-24 was shot down, is trying to reach the border despite his injuries when he encounters a German soldier—later named, for the author he's reading, Victor Hugo—who is the only survivor of his recently-strafed unit. Short chapters, jumbled in chronology and setting, each focus on one of a number of characters, among them, Bray, Hugo, a caretaker at a retirement home for actors, a blind museum curator, and a prominent film director. The result is a collage that becomes clearer as the book proceeds until finally all the pieces click into place. In spare prose, Van Booy portrays the connections forged by love or simply coincidence among seemingly separate lives in even the most desperate situations and illustrates how even the smallest kindnesses may reverberate through time. This short and deceptively simple novel, which affords the pleasure of discovering its well-wrought patterns, is likely to grow in stature as it lingers in memory. --Michele Leber

Review

"The uncanny beauty of Van Booy's prose, and his ability to knife straight to the depths of a character's heart, fill a reader with wonder....There are so many wonderful sentences in this book, a reviewer groans for want of room to list them." (*San Francisco Chronicle*)

"Masterful prose....From minimalistic sentences he wrings out maximum impact, stripping away artifice and elaboration in favor of stark, emotional clarity and honesty." (*Boston Globe*)

"His writing is consciously poetic and at times aphoristic, and he deftly portrays his characters' raw emotions." (Wall Street Journal)

"Van Booy writes like Hemingway but with more heart. It's a gorgeous story about people whose lives are connected all because of a baby who is saved during World War II. Warning: don't read this in public, or you might sob in front of strangers." (New Hampshire Public Radio)

"World War II flashbacks, random acts of kindness, and the amazing thing that happens when seemingly disparate story lines come full circle." (*Daily Candy*)

"Using restraint and a subtle dose of foreshadowing, Van Booy expertly entangles these disparate lives; but it's what he leaves out that captures the imagination. Full of clever staccato sentences bookended by snippets of inner monologue -- obvious, but ripe with meaning, the writing is what makes this remarkable book soar." (*Publishers Weekly* (starred review))

"A spare, elliptical story of human connection, framed by the horror of World War II....The story snaps together beautifully. A brilliant if elusive novel that shows how a single act can echo through time." (*Library Journal*)

"This short and deceptively simple novel, which affords the pleasure of discovering its well-wrought patterns, is likely to grow in stature as it lingers in memory." (*Booklist*)

From the Back Cover

The characters in Simon Van Booy's *The Illusion of Separateness* discover at their darkest moments of fear and isolation that they are not alone, that they were never alone, that every human being is a link in a chain we cannot see. This gripping novel—inspired by true events—tells the interwoven stories of a deformed German infantryman; a lonely British film director; a young, blind museum curator; two Jewish American newlyweds separated by war; and a caretaker at a retirement home for actors in Santa Monica. They move through the same world but fail to perceive their connections until, through seemingly random acts of selflessness, a veil is lifted to reveal the vital parts they have played in one another's lives, and the illusion of their separateness.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Paul Howard:

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Drew Dube:

Reading can called head hangout, why? Because when you find yourself reading a book specially book entitled The Illusion of Separateness: A Novel your thoughts will drift away trough every dimension, wandering in most aspect that maybe unfamiliar for but surely can become your mind friends. Imaging just about every word written in a publication then become one form conclusion and explanation that will maybe you never get previous to. The The Illusion of Separateness: A Novel giving you an additional experience more than blown away your thoughts but also giving you useful information for your better life in this particular era. So now let us demonstrate the relaxing pattern this is your body and mind is going to be pleased when you are finished looking at it, like winning a sport. Do you want to try this extraordinary paying spare time activity?

Margaret Pace:

The Illusion of Separateness: A Novel can be one of your basic books that are good idea. Most of us recommend that straight away because this publication has good vocabulary that can increase your knowledge in vocab, easy to understand, bit entertaining however delivering the information. The article author giving his/her effort that will put every word into pleasure arrangement in writing The Illusion of Separateness: A Novel nevertheless doesn't forget the main position, giving the reader the hottest as well as based confirm resource facts that maybe you can be certainly one of it. This great information can drawn you into brand-new stage of crucial imagining.

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