



## Search Party: Stories of Rescue

*Valerie Trueblood*

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### **Search Party: Stories of Rescue** Valerie Trueblood

In the epigraph to this volume, Penelope Fitzgerald tells us: “If a story begins with finding, it must end with searching,” and so we discover each story here to follow the arc of a search, just as each also contains a rescue. What is immediately apparent is that it will be impossible to guess the form this rescue will take or even who it is who’ll require it.

Instead, the astonishingly talented Valerie Trueblood has imbued each story with its own depth and mystery, so rescue comes as a surprise to the reader, who is in intimate sympathy for the soul in extremity. And these are diverse characters whose fates, in lesser hands, might be thought of as hopeless: the fired cop turned security guard, the stolid, 19-year-old nurses’ aide who will not be going to art school, the cynical radio producer who is dying of breast cancer and on a plane on her way to Lourdes.

In these thirteen stories linked by a common transcendent human genius, the writing is confident and clear and original, and often drop-dead stunning, as if the stories are being told by the most casually eloquent among us.

### **Search Party: Stories of Rescue Details**

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Author : Valerie Trueblood

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## From Reader Review Search Party: Stories of Rescue for online ebook

### Julia says

I was lucky enough to receive a copy of this book via a competition on good reads

I thought the book sounded great but unfortunately I struggled to get into it, I have stopped for now but plan to go back to it as the description of the book really did sound good

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### Susan Rukeyser says

My review of this wonderful collection appears at Necessary Fiction: <http://necessaryfiction.com/reviews/S...>

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### Matt says

I'd somehow never heard of Trueblood before reading this collection, but now I am definitely interested in reading more. This collection took me about five times as long to get through as I would have guessed, but by the end I didn't want it to end, even though I think I understood it as little at the start as I did at the end.

I think T is usually seen as a novelist, which maybe is why these stories seem constructed almost out of continents of prose, like she's shaping these larger stories that don't so much emanate out of a single incident, which is the way I usually think of a short story, as much as these come out of a key, climactic moment in her character's lives. So to make this come together, we'll go back and forth with flashbacks, we'll see things from the point of view of different characters, we'll hear stories that sometimes reveal character, we'll lose track, just a little, of whose story is really the important one here and sometimes characters from other stories will pass like unmarked ships sailing under foreign flags.... And in the best of the stories, these pieces will all come together at the end to really create a deep, organic sense of knowledge, maybe even wisdom.

It's a tricky method, and it did require me, at least, to be open to reading these stories differently than I usually would, but when it worked, like with the (very short) story of the policeman who shoots a dog or the very sad title story, it's kind of amazing. In other stories, like one about a home health care worker for an artist, the stories close with a click that I'd usually like but which here felt disingenuous.

These, then, are distinctive stories, and I really liked them for that. I don't know if I read more like these that my appreciation would be deepened or these stories would be made to seem commonplace. But I guess I'll take that risk; if you haven't read Trueblood, I think this is a pretty rewarding place to start.

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### Kathy says

SEARCH PARTY is my favorite of Valerie Trueblood's books because she really draws in the reader to the stories of people's lives, what connects us, why we all need a little rescue sometimes. There are moments when I read her writing and a gasp escapes me because a paragraph will reach deep into a common

experience for all of us and the author has expressed it with ice-clear clarity. And I find myself loving some of her characters, such as Abby, the Virginia woman who was "stolen" as a girl or Mary Ann who pays dearly for a strange and abusive boyfriend. Trueblood never explicates, she always just reveals and never the whole person- after all, who ever knows a whole person? Whatever your age, if you have been jolted around by life a bit, you will identify with the people and their stories created by this amazing writer. But her collection is a finely simmered stew, not fast food. Vacuous and impatient readers need not apply

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## **Brooke says**

### **I received a free copy of this book through Goodreads First Reads giveaway!**

I read about 70 pages and then stopped, something that is very unlike me. I normally finish every book I pick up, whether it takes me 3 days or 3 months to get through. This book just really wasn't worth my time. The first 30 pages were torture to get through - there would be rambling paragraphs that made no sense even after I reread them. There's paragraphs of tangents that don't fit into the stories. And the stories didn't make much sense themselves or had a point in my opinion. Past that though, this book's biggest problem is that I didn't like a single character. I didn't care at all what happened because the author doesn't create a bond between the reader and the characters. I think that's why it was so easy for me to put this book down - I didn't care about what happened to the characters and wasn't going to waste my time finding out.

Maybe, MAYBE I'll pick this book up in the (far) future since I really hate not finish books but that seems unlikely.

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## **Jade King says**

I enjoyed this book :)

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## **Siobhan Fallon says**

Wow, Valerie Trueblood does it again, her latest short story collection, SEARCH PARTY, is remarkable. One of the best collections I have read in a long time, maybe ever (though her last, MARRY OR BURN, was right up there as well). The one word that I think sums up the collection best is "vast"-- each story is a world complete in itself.

A woman who was abducted during the Depression watches a film of her life, mortified at the things she revealed about herself to the director, and the abduction becomes only a small and shadowy part of her story. A woman tries to find a nice way to fire her receptionist and instead finds herself trying to wrangle her way into the girl's odd life and family (with their pet llama). A famous poet remembers the teacher who tried, and failed, to save him and his sister from his abusive mother. A realtor hides his children in the houses he shows to prospective tenants.

All so different, all so wonderful.

Trueblood is writing some of the best American fiction out there. Don't miss this.

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## Kate says

I'm not a huge fan of short stories, but this got good reviews. Though there were 2 stories in particular I wasn't fond of, overall, I really enjoyed them. Particularly the longer ones - where there was more story, character development, plot.

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## Kelly says

I started reading this book months upon months ago, but I'm a multiple-books-at-a-time reader, and something usually ends up falling by the wayside. Sometimes it's because the book doesn't hold my interest, sometimes it's because something shiny comes along, and sometimes it's just a wrong-place-wrong-time sort of thing. I'm not sure what took me so long with this one...probably a combination of the last two. I remember reading "The Finding," the first story in Search Party, and being pleasantly surprised by it. I read the next few stories and sort of drifted away from the book; when I picked it up again, I couldn't believe I'd waited so long to read something so wonderful.

Search Party is a remarkably strong collection of stories. I enjoy short fiction but, as I mentioned in my review of Lorrie Moore's *Bark*, I think some of the recent stuff is highly overrated. Not this collection, though. "The Magic Pebble" and "The Stabbed Boy" just about broke my heart with their bits of tragedy; "The Blue Grotto," a tale of a babysitter whose overnight charge has a 105-degree fever and requires a trip to the ER, terrified me; "Later or Never" (about a caretaker) and "Street of Dreams" (about a father shepherding his homeless family) were poignant vignettes; and the opening of "Who Is He That Will Harm You" reveals its events, little by little, until the full scene pops startlingly into your mind's eye.

The main disappointment for me was the final -- and titular -- tale. At 45 pages, it creates a slowly-dragging finish to what is otherwise a smooth-moving collection. It's not a bad story, but it keeps adding new elements just when you think it's going to wrap things up. This was the only story in the book during which I found myself flipping ahead -- multiple times -- to see how much I had left. Don't let that one downfall steer you away from this book, though, because you'd be missing out.

All in all: One of the better story collections I've read recently. I still haven't decided whether to send my copy to a friend or not. I want to share it but also feel like keeping it for myself, which is high praise.

Note: I received a review copy of this book via NetGalley.

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