



The Rescuers

Margery Sharp , Garth Williams (Illustrator)

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The mice in this story created the widely respected Prisoners' Aid Society of Mice. The task of this benevolent society is to befriend human prisoners in their cells, and perform daring rescue bids. As this story opens, the Chairwoman of the Society is proposing the rescue of a Norwegian poet who is being held in grim conditions in the Black Castle.

The Rescuers Details

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Markku Kesti says

Tämän viikon raivonnut keskustelu sukupuolineutraaleista ammattinimikkeistä sopii mainiosti tämän kirjan lukemisen viitekehykseksi. Iloisen ja viattoman viisikymmentäluvun kirjassa naisilla on mystisiä kodinhoitamis- ja pyykkäysvaistoja ja muutenkin tasa-arvo on ajanut kirjan kirjoittamista seuranneina vuosikymmeninä ohi oikealta vasemmalta ja vähän päältäkin. Toisaalta tarina on aika viehko ja herttaisesti kerrottu. Urheat hiiret lähtevät rohkeasutta vaativalle pelastusretkelle pelastaakseen norjalaisen runoilijan joka on heitetty karuimpaan tyrmään mitä maa päällään kantaa. Oikein söpöä. Kolme tähteä pois arvosanasta sovinismin ja luutuneiden aatteiden takia. ja koska kyseessä ei ole halpa disneyjäljitelma, niin pyöristetään arvosana vielä ylöspäin neljään tähteentä.

Bethany says

I haven't read any "Rescuers" books for years. Actually, I forgot about them for a while. But happily, we are now reunited! This book is very different from the Disney film of the same name which is hardly surprising. In a nutshell, the plot is Bernard, Bianca and Norwegian mouse, Nils must rescue a Norwegian poet who is prisoner in The Black Castle. *dun dun DUN* But what made me laugh was, when they finally rescue the poet he does not find it strange in the least that three mice have come to rescue him because "...he was a poet. *It is the gift of all poets to find the commonplace astonishing, and the astonishing quite natural.*" And the author said this later at least one more time to show the difference between the poet and a typical prisoner. "He was a poet so therefore..." That made me laugh.

I had forgotten how much I love rotund, big-hearted Bernard. If I had ever had more than one male pet mouse I would have named him Bernard. (The only male mouse we ever had was a mistake. Ha... ha. But, that's another story. We did, on the other hand, name a mouse after Bianca!)

Nick Jones says

I'd put off reading this book despite owning it for a while, due entirely to my dislike of the inexplicably popular Disney film that was allegedly based on this story. Imagine my surprise to find that it's a decent heist story featuring a group of mice attempting to break a Norwegian poet out of a high security (for the time) prison. The mice are actually somewhat engaging characters, and the backdrop of what is essentially a mouse MI6 freeing the unjustly imprisoned is an interesting idea.

Moral of the story: Disney ruins everything, always read the book instead of watching their adaptions.

Rebecca McNutt says

I remember seeing *The Rescuers* film en français back when I was in the third grade, but it took me until now to read the book. Yeah, I know what you're thinking, why am I reading a kids' book? Well, when it comes to

great stories, I think you can be any age to read them. This one, a classic by Margery Sharp (she also wrote Something Light, another of my favorites), tells the story of a group of mice who decide to risk their lives in order to save a child. It's a story similar to The Rats of NIMH or Felidae, one sort of dark but still with wonderful characters and a brilliant ending. :)

Emily says

Romancing the Stone--with mice!

I've read this book many times over the years, starting as a second or third grader. It is so much better than the Disney animated movie that was "based" on it. It's such a shame that it has been allowed to go out of print. I suspect it has languished because after the movie was made, people who hadn't read the book assumed that it must be as lackluster as the movie. I would classify The Rescuers as adventure, but it is first-class storytelling on all fronts, fully succeeding in the aspects of drama, romance, and humor as well. The romantic friendship between Miss Bianca and Bernard is charming. The illustrations by Garth Williams are an integral part of the reading experience.

Grace says

As a big ole Disney fan, I picked this up because of how much I loved the film.

It is much more subdued than the film but also more interesting in the way the mice work together and get around.

It is very sweet and the story pootles along nicely.

While I wouldn't put it up there with other children's classics like Black Beauty, it is an enjoyable and gentle read.

Anu Korpinen says

Margery Sharp kirjoitti Pelastuspartion seikkailuista peräti yhdeksän kirjaan, ja Disneykin teki hiirulaisten seikkailuista omat versionsa, mutta suomeksi näitä kirjoja on taidettu julkaisa ainoastaan kaksi. (Korjatkaa jos olen väärässä.)

Kirja kuuluu lapsuuteni lukemistoon. Honkajoen kirjaston kappaleessa on vielä vanha pahvinen lainauskortti tallessa, ja siihen on merkitty viisi lainausta. Lainausnumeroista kolme näyttää olevan omani, joten olen tätäkin kirjaan aika tiuhaan lukenut.

Lapsille kirjoitettu tarina on viehättävä ja jännittävä. Vankein Apu-yhdistys värvää kolme urheaa hiirtä pelastamaan Norjalaisen runoilijan pelottavasta Mustan linnan vankilasta. Matkassa on monta mutkaa ja paljon onnekkaita sattumia.

Nyt aikuisena kirjaan uudestaan lukissa juonessa huomaa monia aukkoja, esimerkiksi pelastuspuuhan motiivi jää vähän köykäiseksi, koska runoilijasta ei kerrota edes vangitsemisen syytä, eikä sitä onko hänet vangittu väärin perustein vai ei. Toisaalta oikeusmurha-teema olisi tehnyt jännästä kirjasta ehkä liiankin synkän ja ahdistavan. Tällaisena kirja sopii mainiosti ääneen luettavaksi. Garth Williamsin kuvitus on ihana.

Drew Graham says

Miss Bianca enjoys her plush existence, living in her Porcelain Pagoda as the pampered pet of the Ambassador's son. But when word reaches the Prisoners' Aid Society that a Norwegian poet is locked up in the dreadful Black Castle, Madam Chairwoman knows that Miss Bianca's international connections and social savvy are just the thing to help free the prisoner. With the aid of the pantry mouse Bernard and the Norwegian sailor mouse Nils, Miss Bianca heads to the Black Castle to face dangers great and small in the name of their noble cause.

My Disney source material readthrough has led me to *The Rescuers*, and it appears that while there are two movies based on these characters and several books in the series, none of them were adapted exactly into either of the films. It was still fun and interesting to read the inspiration for the films and get to know the characters as Margery Sharp originally envisioned them. This story was simple but well fleshed-out, and the society of mice is amusing and actually makes sense (even though it never really says *where* they live or how they work internationally). I'm still not sure whether or not the poet belonged in prison, or what he did to get there in the first place (apart from the assertion that "he's a poet"), but the point of this story was the mice anyway. Miss Bianca is a charming little character, refined and quite self-assured, but also just the slightest bit vulnerable. Bernard is loyal and devotedly attached to Miss Bianca, and Nils provides an energetic element as the third in the trio. The threats they faced seemed fitting for the setting and scope, and although things worked out a little conveniently, it was fun to see how it all played out. There was a simplicity and something poetic about how this was written, which was refreshing compared to current children's literature.

As for the illustrations, as much as it pains me to speak ill of Garth Williams, I just don't understand why he feels the need to make every living creature look like every bit of them is covered with shaggy hair. Let the mice tails and the humans' noses have some smooth lines! I promise it will be okay.

Disney didn't really take many cues from this book for either of its Rescuers movies, but this was a quick, refreshing read. It's a fun premise for a book series, and it was good to discover the original Bernard and Miss Bianca.

Tiffany Reisz says

3.5 Pretty darn adorable. Knocked off one star for being rude about cats. ;)

Eileen says

I would put this in the "fun and mostly harmless" category of children's books. It's certainly better written than quite a few of them, with nice sharp prose and a lot of sly humor. There's some underlying unspoken context -- this book obviously came out of a post-WWII awareness of imprisonment -- but not enough to make it either incomprehensible or unduly terrifying to kids reading it. And the adults reading this along with a kid can get some enjoyment out of it too.

Of the three rescuers, the first, Miss Bianca -- a very pampered pet mouse, depicted as upper-class and a

"lady" -- is probably the most well-rounded. At first, the other mice think she needs to be protected, both for class and gender-based reasons, but she proves to be quite capable when faced with actually needing to accomplish things. The second rescuer, Nils, is mostly characterized as "Norwegian," which I found odd. He wears boots. He speaks Norwegian. He likes to sail. And that's it. The third rescuer, Bernard, is a working-class pantry mouse who is a little infatuated with Miss Bianca, and thus willing to put himself into danger. And so, at the request of the mouse Prisoners' Aid Society, the three of them go infiltrate the notorious Black Prison and break out a Norwegian poet prisoner. Has the prisoner actually done anything wrong? Who knows. But they break him out nonetheless, and are hailed as heroes when they get back to what appears to be London. Medals for everyone!

There's definitely some class and gender stuff happening here, so that's something to be aware of before you give a kid this book, but other than that? Sure.

Cheryl says

I thought that I had read this as a child, but none of it seemed familiar. The illustrations are fantastic, of course. The story is almost pure adventure... no world-building (so much doesn't make sense) and the characters are more superficial than I had expected. I won't bother to look for any sequels... but I do wonder if, maybe, it's one of those that I read all those years ago.

Lacey Louwagie says

Although I wasn't particularly keen to read this book (and its sequel) for my Year in Disney Movies project, I found myself pleasantly surprised.

This is written in that perfect children's classic, read-aloud way -- except, unlike many middle-grade authors, Margery Sharp has the discipline not to headhop, instead breaking character perspectives into short sections within chapters. It inserts funny commentary or asides that add to an overall tone of warmth, dignity, and importance without ever wandering too far from the story or characters.

Like all books I end up falling unexpectedly in love with, it is the characters that do it for me in this book. I love the portrayal of Bernard as a humble "pantry mouse" who nevertheless manages to capture the heart of the genteel house pet, Bianca. I like that Bianca's sheltered existence and wealth do not make her snobbish, even as she is sometimes baffled by the things she encounters outside her "porcelain pagoda." And I love that, rather than get distracted by the half-baked plot of rescuing a Norwegian prisoner (I never did figure out why this particular prisoner was worthy of rescue but not the others?), the book focuses instead on the relationships between the three very different mice -- Bernard, Bianca, and the coarse pirate, Nils, and the way they have to learn to live and work together in close quarters and under dangerous circumstances. Despite the overall warm and cozy tone of the book, stark moments of darkness keep it from ever becoming too saccharine -- such as the bones of prisoners the mice encounter on the way to the Black Castle, or a cat's almost sexual pleasure in tormenting Miss Bianca.

These are the most human mice I have ever met, and I'm glad this project pushed me to ride across the Norwegian countryside in the back of a prison supply wagon and cross treacherous waters guided by a map covered with bonnets with them.

Carrie Poppy says

Three stars for writing, four stars for plot, 500 stars for illustrations.

Jeremy Hurd-McKenney says

It's probably my fault for not doing my research, but I was expecting a novel of high-speed chases through swamps and a teddy bear with a diamond hidden in its stomach. Instead I got a group of mice breaking into a castle (what year is it?) to rescue a Norwegian poet. Hmm...

On top of it, Sharp is clearly deep in her own little world, but she is either a terrible writer or on drugs, because much of the book is incomprehensible, especially at the beginning.

The illustrations were cute.

Kate says

Well, it was written in 1959 so I guess that explains the parts where Miss Bianca has "domestic instincts" (as all women do) enough to find the pantry, and can't possibly be left alone as all she's got is her charm, and it's totally acceptable to think that beautiful women shouldn't have to do anything but be beautiful, just sit there and be pampered and beautiful. I mean, she's obviously very brave and caring, but she's still the lady and her two male companions (and she herself sometimes) act as though she always needs protecting and she can't do the stuff they do, like jumping through a grate...they're all mice, there's no other reason for her to not be able to also jump through the grate except that she's a lady, so the manly mice have to jump through first and then catch her in their handkerchief. Eva Gabor's Miss Bianca from the movie version was way cooler...though the dude mice around her were kind of gross and leery and "a woman on a mission? HOW NOVEL" she was completely confident in her own abilities and never apologized for being a lady.

Other than that, this book is pretty charming and lovely.
