



Fifteen Rabbits

Felix Salten

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Hops and his young rabbit friends must face all the triumphs and trials in the first year of life in the woods.

Life is dangerous in the forest, especially for the fifteen young rabbits who are learning to navigate their home. While there are many wonderful things and other animals to get to know - including a deer by the name of Bambi - there are also dangers, and the constant threat of man. In order to thrive, the rabbits must stick together...

Fifteen Rabbits Details

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From Reader Review Fifteen Rabbits for online ebook

Sparky Lurkdragon says

Classic book from the guy who did Bambi. Classic, DEPRESSING AS HELL book from the guy who did Bambi.

Nicole says

Read May 2018

James says

This is a sweet little book but it's also very sad. I'm not sure I would classify it as a children's book because many of the events depicted are simply the harsh realities of living in the wild. Rabbits particularly are at the bottom of the pecking order for they eat no living creature, quite unlike many of their forest companions. Even the birds prey on live worms and insects. And in their naivety, the rabbits don't understand why they are hunted since they hurt no other animals. The book follows the lives of two rabbits in their first year of life, struggling to survive amidst all the unknowns that come their way: being prey for other animals, the cruel harshness of winter, and the ever present danger of "He." This is a beautifully written book, as was "Bambi" also by Felix Salten. The ways in which Mr. Salten describes the difficult passages in the lives of forest animals will bring you joy and sadness at the same time. As simple a book as it is, it is filled with an emotion that often left me breathless at the end of a chapter. One final note.....I found myself wondering if Richard Adams drew any of his understanding of rabbits and their environment from the stories in this book when he wrote "Watership Down." Perhaps I'll write him to find out!

Lola Et La Vie says

The only work by Felix Salten I had read before was Bambi, which has always been one of my favourite books, so I figured it was time to read some of his other books.

Fifteen Rabbits has a similar style to Bambi. It shows the beauty of nature, but also the innate cruelty of it. Like Bambi, its pretty dark at times and it is certainly not a fun bunny book to read to your children. There is a lot of death. It can make you feel sad, but it never gets overly emotional. It is just the way nature works.

I must address the translation. It is not the best. In German the translation for both hare and rabbit is hase. In the translation it refers to our main characters Hops and Plana as rabbits, but to Hops' mother as a hare. Also, the deer in the story are referred to as elk, whilst in fact they would be red deer, as Salten would have been writing about European fauna.

Both Bambi and Faline get a cameo in the book, which was kind of fun.

I feel this story about some rabbits living in a forest throughout the seasons for the first time misses some of the magic of Bambi, but I did enjoy it and I am glad I read it.

Allison says

When I found this book in the community book box on my street, I thought it was a light-hearted children's book about happy bunnies. It is not. Favorite line of dialogue: "'Blood,' piped the weasel, 'blood! Have any of you any idea how delicious it tastes?'"

An enjoyable -- and highly quotable -- read.

Sam says

It wasn't until I started reading this that I realised it was written by the same man that brought Bambi into the world (I still have the emotional scars from those childhood moments!) and once again Salten is not shy about the realities of the natural world and man's ever increasing impact on it. The story, of course, starts on a bright carefree summer's day as 15 young rabbits are foraging in an open glade. Then, all too quickly, reality breaks their bliss and man makes his noisy and deadly entrance. From then on, the young friends have more than each other to compete and battle against as they get to grips with the dangers of the forest and the risk that even the younger members of humanity poises (let's hope many such youngsters have learnt from this). That being said, this is still a heart-warming story as friendships are forged and the young bunnies reach adulthood and discover that there is more to life than fear alone.

Howard says

This is a beautiful little book primarily about the first year of life of a few rabbits. I guess if I counted all the rabbits in the book, I would find there are fifteen. We see the forest, the changing seasons, and all of the wonders of life, including man, through their eyes. The rabbits and other animals in the forest talk. That sounds childish and silly, but it works. They don't talk like we talk, but rather talk as one would expect rabbits would think and converse. The author definately knows nature and has captured the essence of these creatures. The book is full of joy and heartache. Life in the forest is dangerous, especially for rabbits, and the book deals with death in a sobering way. The book is short (only about 200 pages), but it is delightful. Felix Salten wrote one other famous book that we've all heard of - "Bambi - A Life in the Woods." Walt Disney then turned the book into the movie, "Bambi."

Kirsti says

Written by the author of 'Bambi' I knew I'd want to read this new edition as soon as I saw it on the shelves at the bookstore. I adore animal fiction, especially if it's similar to 'The Animals of Farthing Wood' or 'Watership Down'. This had elements of both, although there was very little consistent story about it. There was just life, not really a story, and all the little random events that make up life.

Probably the strangest thing about this book is how little the rabbits seem to resemble rabbits- they slept in a thicket, not underground, and paired off in twos or threes instead of a warren. In fact, they are often referred to as 'hares', but the title says 'Fifteen rabbits' so they have to be rabbits, right? They kind of gave the impression of both. Oh well.

A quick read, but not a children's book unless you want to explain the numerous bunny corpses. Three stars.

Bellarmino says

Very good, I'd like to read the 1930's unrevised version, I only have the 1942 Revised edition. I feel I can detect changes that don't fit the general story, I'll update this when I read the original.

Candi says

"Their destiny as rabbits was written in the expressions they unconsciously assumed. In the care-laden attitudes into which they unintentionally fell, during that rare pause, was expressed all the century-old sorrow of the perpetually hunted."

Fifteen Rabbits by Felix Salten, creator of the beloved Bambi, is not a sweet little story about a bunch of cute bunnies romping in the woods together. Do not read this story to the little ones before bed! Rather, it is a mostly bleak and realistic picture of what it is like to grow up as one of nature's gentler creatures in a world that constantly threatens them with harm from man, the danger of other predators, and the menace of starvation. The story revolves around a group of young rabbits' interactions with one another and their glimpses at the surrounding wildlife, including various birds, pheasants, deer and elk. No animal is safe from man and his weapons; there are many instances of death which are often disturbing and sad.

So, why read this book then? Well, for one, I think the author meant to send an important message regarding man and his mistreatment and misunderstanding of animals. *"They were from two absolutely alien worlds, and there was no bridge from one to the other."* Also, the descriptions of the animals, the woods, the meadow, and even the songs of the birds were quite lovely. The rabbits do experience some carefree moments of happiness and love. There is also a heartwarming scene between a dog and a rabbit, as well as a brief appearance by the now-matured and stately Bambi.

Kelly says

A re-read. I've always appreciated Salten's way of making you feel like the animal. He brings the feelings of what it means to be a rabbit in an often harsh world. Salten deals very much in the realities and fears that rabbits are plagued with. His works bring a sense of empathy towards the smaller creatures we may happen across daily.

Jennifer says

I have a used copy of this book, given to me by my grandfather who passed away in 1992. His name is on a sticker in the inside front cover. Above his name is the statement "THE POETRY OF EARTH IS NEVER DEAD". I cherish this amazing book.

Shelli says

This is an odd little book by the author of Bambi. I think it was first published in 1920. It felt that way while reading it. It took me a long time to get through it even though it was very short. I think because I had a lot of other more exciting reading going on and it's a bit depressing. It was a challenge book, so I'm glad I read it. I'm still trying to figure out the intended audience. Although it is easy reading, the life and death struggle of the rabbits seems very raw. It is basically the story of a bunch of fictional rabbits, told in a real life setting. They way they move and eat and sleep and survive are all as real rabbits would do. The relationships are the only part that is really fictional. The dangers from other animals and humans are what actual rabbits face. I'm sure I will think of this the next time I see a wild rabbit in my yard.
