



The Blue Hills

Elizabeth Goudge

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A Magical Mystery Tour

Today is Hugh Anthony's birthday party, and he's celebrating with the people he loves best, young and old alike. The day begins with a wish and ends with a revelation as each of the partygoers ventures into an enchanted forest where legend becomes reality and their wildest dreams come true. An innocent birthday picnic becomes the adventure of a lifetime and no one will ever be the same again.

The Blue Hills Details

Date : Published October 1st 1997 by Buccaneer Books (first published 1942)
ISBN : 9780899661001
Author : Elizabeth Goudge
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From Reader Review The Blue Hills for online ebook

Ngdecker says

I loved this book! I had no idea of what it would be like, as it was another one off my shelves. It is a magical tale of two children and a number of adults - adventures and the way they change. It is thoughtful, gently humorous, and very satisfying. Maybe it is a children's book - but it is one I'll keep and reread.

Leah says

The Torminster Saga #3

Ashley Coleman says

Did not realize this was part of a series, as it was loaned to me by a friend who hadn't even finished it. It works as a standalone, but it was only "okay." I feel I need to read the rest of the series before pronouncing my opinion. Perhaps I'm missing out on something?

Michele says

This is a re-reading of one of the Torminster trilogy about Henrietta & Hugh Anthony who live with their grandparents in the cathedral close. Most of the events take place on a single summer day when a large party leaves to go on a picnic to celebrate Hugh Anthony's birthday. I love the way Elizabeth Goudge comfortably entwines the spiritual & down-to-earth aspects of life. Grandfather lectures the stranger who claims there is no paradise, or heaven, but Henrietta gets her dream house, too, rich in satisfying domestic detail, from ornaments in the drawing room to dishes in the kitchen, clothes & accessories & a red-wicker laundry basket in the bathroom to put them in when she wants to change. This dreaming day is one when nearly all the invited guests have adventures, explore secret places & find out about themselves & others. It may be my favorite of the three. The others are Sister of the Angels & City of Bells.

Sue says

A whimsical story, featuring adventure, very old gentlemen, books, underground caves and rivers, and a delightful surprise for a very loving girl.

Henrietta is ten, her adopted brother Hugh Anthony about to celebrate his birthday. However most of the characters in the book are adults, the majority quite elderly. It's a children's book, but I don't know many children nowadays who would appreciate it, other than, perhaps, voracious and eclectic readers of between about nine and twelve.

However, for adults who like Goudge's writing, steeped in history and cathedral culture, it's a pleasant book. It's set entirely in the real world despite some bizarre circumstances and coincidences. I read it in just a

couple of days, and would give it three-and-a-half stars if that were possible.

Claire says

unadulterated joy!

Clare O'Beara says

I read this many years ago but now it is being reissued. At that time I thought it was quite sweet but not very exciting. Henrietta is going to have a birthday picnic but her friends and family all get lost on the way along country lanes. They all have minor adventures and meet, for example, a stray puppy, a man with a heart made of wax bundled up in the coat-tail pocket of his dress coat (yes it was a long time ago) and a cave system just waiting to be explored, which the owner of the property has not done, supposedly because he waited many years to see if someone would turn up to explore with him.

I got *The Last Battle* by CS Lewis at the same time, and thought it a far better adventure. With more interesting characters and yes, a conflict. I suppose it depends on what you want from your books as a young person.

Csilness says

A lovely little fairy tale and they all lived happily ever after. Loved the end!

Found this gem at a used book sale, inscribed by the first owner in 1942. Glad I picked it up!

Saphraneet says

After reading the first sentence in this book--"Once upon a time there was a railway station waiting for a train"--I knew this was going to be a delightful story. Just the unique way Miss Goudge words a simple opening scene brings the reader into a world of whimsy--a wondrous weaving of reality with fine rainbow threads of fantasy. My favorite characters in the book, Grandfather, the Old Man, and Henrietta, all exhibit a child-like vision which endears them to me and keeps the story worthy of thoughtful sighs.

Emily says

Charming old fashioned story with some very gentle magical realism thrown in. The kind of book that calms you down and makes the world a good place again. Traditional "magic of the woods" theme as in *Little White Horse* and books by Lewis, Wynne Jones, and Pratchett when writing for children.

Felicity says

This is a charming children's book written in the 1940s. It has a lovely fairy-tale atmosphere yet the characters are very real. It's Henrietta's brother's birthday and they are going to fox-glove coombe for a picnic. However things take a strange turn on the way and everyone ends up having an adventure. It is well written and finishes with a moral for everyone!

Macklin says

This is one of my favourite books ever and my second favourite Goudge book (after The Little White Horse). I was read this by both my parents many years apart, and both times I loved it.

In this book, magic, legend, and fate are handled with expertise. It reminds me a bit of Into the Woods. All the characters go into the woods and have adventures that make them learn or helps them achieve a certain dream, fulfill a wish. It is an old book, but it is enjoyable and appropriate for all ages.

Leslie says

Like another Goudge title, Linnets and Valerians, this book has stuck with me although I last read it about 30 years ago. I remember descriptions, the sense of place, even 'see' faces as described (the illustrations in my tattered 1972 British paperback are nice, but the words really brought the faces and settings to life).

It's magical in a way that is neither dark or supernatural. It could be nowhere else than Edwardian England, but the history, famous places, or institutions are never mentioned, this is a quiet backwater. It reminded me somewhat of A Midsummer's Night's Dream -- but the dream is on a warm summer afternoon, with that golden haze and the sense of time slowing down for a while.

A book that could be enjoyed -- loved -- at any age.

Tabitha says

4.5 stars :) I love it, but not AS much as I love L & R and LWH!

Stella says

one of the most sweetest and joyous reads i have ever read. this is a dream book for me!

Cindi says

This book was about half-way between a realistic fiction story and a fairy tale. I really enjoyed it. Almost the

entire book happens within a one-day period. A young boy wants his favorite adults to celebrate his birthday by taking a picnic to the Blue Hills. On the way, the different groups go different ways and certain somewhat magical things happen then they all meet up again for the tea party. A really cool idea!

Clara Ellen says

Another magical story by Elizabeth Goudge that imparts spiritual realities! Knowing the real God - who is all love and acceptance and no punishment or judgment - is truly like a fairy tale come true..

Michael Fitzgerald says

I never really cared enough about the characters for the resolution to mean much. Must we have both an "Old Man" and an "Old Gentleman," both nameless? Seems overly convoluted, though plenty of lovely writing and worthwhile themes.

Carissa says

a rather old-fashioned book in which the reader keeps expecting to find out something terrible has happened and in which nothing tragic ever does happen. everyone ends up happy and even those people who experience a bit of discomfort find something to be happy about until life looks better. i waffled between really liking the book and really being irritated that nothing ever really seemed to happen—it tended to be a little too sickly sweet. but other than that, it was truly delightful. one of my favorite quotes was on page 107, "...grandfather did wonder for a moment or two if they had been wise to come. then he put this anxious thought from him; for if you have done a thing you have done it, and it's no good worrying, you have to abide by the consequences whether you like them or not."

Alyssa Bohon says

A delightful, more juvenile read, almost a fairy tale (indeed, it does end with the words "happily ever after"). Loving family, eccentric characters (including a modern equivalent of an evil wizard), woodland adventures, underground escapades and mystery and philosophical reflections sprinkled throughout, with of course, a most happy ending.

One little gem I found in the pages was a list of (likely Goudge's) top 20 books for a young person to read: "Henrietta took books from the shelves with a certainty that quite surprised the Old Gentleman. The Water Babies and Alice in Wonderland, Undine and The Pilgrim's Progress, Jackanapes and Little Women, The Fairchild Family and A Flat Iron for a Farthing, The Back of the North Wind and The Princess and Curdie went into the basket with startling rapidity, followed by Uncle Remus, Hans Christian Andersen's Fairy Tales, The Swiss Family Robinson, Andrew Lang's Blue Fairy Book, his Red One and his Green One, Mary's Meadow, Lob-lie-by-the-Fire, The Wind in the Willows and The Cocky-Olly Bird.

Isn't that enough?' gasped the Old Gentleman.

'Yes, I think that's all,' said Henrietta, counting them.

'You seem to know exactly what is required,' said the Old Gentleman with much respect.

'Yes,' said Henrietta. 'My father and I have often talked it over. We decided that if a person of my age had a

library of twenty books those are just the twenty the person would want.'
