



## 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

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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 war-ravaged 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:**

#### **Ronald Ralph:**

Information is provisions for folks to get better life, information nowadays can get by anyone at everywhere. The information can be a information or any news even a problem. What people must be consider any time those information which is within the former life are challenging be find than now's taking seriously which one is appropriate to believe or which one often the resource are convinced. If you have the unstable resource then you buy it as your main information you will have huge disadvantage for you. All those possibilities will not happen throughout you if you take *The Illusion of Separateness: A Novel* as the daily resource information.

#### **Karen Nash:**

The actual book *The Illusion of Separateness: A Novel* will bring one to the new experience of reading a book. The author style to clarify the idea is very unique. In case you try to find new book to learn, this book very suited to you. The book *The Illusion of Separateness: A Novel* is much recommended to you to study. You can also get the e-book from official web site, so you can easier to read the book.

#### **Terrance Bartholomew:**

People live in this new moment of lifestyle always make an effort to and must have the spare time or they will get great deal of stress from both day to day life and work. So , once we ask do people have time, we will say absolutely without a doubt. People is human not just a robot. Then we ask again, what kind of activity are there when the spare time coming to a person of course your answer will certainly unlimited right. Then do you try this one, reading ebooks. It can be your alternative throughout spending your spare time, the book you have read will be *The Illusion of Separateness: A Novel*.

#### **Nancy Byrom:**

Playing with family in the park, coming to see the marine world or hanging out with friends is thing that usually you might have done when you have spare time, after that why you don't try issue that really opposite from that. 1 activity that make you not feeling tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you are ride on and with addition info. Even you love *The Illusion of Separateness: A Novel*, it is possible to enjoy

both. It is very good combination right, you still need to miss it? What kind of hangout type is it? Oh can happen its mind hangout people. What? Still don't have it, oh come on its referred to as reading friends.

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