



by Jürg Schubiger
Jacoby & Stuart
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Children's & Young Adults'

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Everywhere is easy to miss *Überall ist leicht zu verpassen*

review

This is a quietly wonderful little book by a prize-winning children's author, beautifully put together, with gorgeous, archetypal illustrations. Readers will be reminded of Saint-Exupéry's *Little Prince*, perhaps of Toon Tellegen's Dutch animal stories, and even a little of the Moomin books.

A little girl – 1m 40 to be precise – is alone in the world and needs some help. She is on her way to the first story when she meets an English-speaking parrot. She is worried that the parrot is going to follow her into the story, but instead the parrot perches on the railing of a bridge, with its head facing away from her. Would the story have been truer, better or nicer without the parrot?, we are invited to ponder. But there is no time, because the first story has already begun.

In the first story, which explicitly echoes *The Little Prince*, the little girl is alone in the round world, and in need of help. She meets a wolf, who asks her where she is going. Everywhere, says the girl. The wolf coughs: Everywhere is easy to find and easy to miss. They go in search of the strong bull, who may be able to provide some help. The bull can't help, and suggests that she consult the big woman. The woman says everybody needs help, but she hasn't any help herself. A storm approaches. They all ponder the danger they possibly face, but the storm moves on and the sun comes back out. The little girl dries her clothes on the bull's horns. The woman suggests they meet again in a month, on the mountain. The bull says he'll be back

tomorrow anyway. 'Here ends the first story.'

And so they go on, the four of them (and sometimes the parrot), ruminating and quietly helping one another. There is a subtle sense of the little girl growing up, and of the woman moving from being an archetype to a real human being. The book has a circular repetitive quality, allowing the reader to gain some insight into the world each time they pass by. Meaning sometimes seems to be entirely absent, but is sometimes there in the idea that looking is more important than finding, and always present in the sense that being together is better than being alone. This is a wise book for children and adults of all ages.

press quotes

'An amazing text which was beautifully illustrated by Jutta Bauer. It makes sense to compare this to The Little Prince.' – ekz

'A small, wise book that soothes the soul.' – WAZ

about the author

Jürg Schubiger (author) was born in Zurich in 1936 and is a philosopher and psychologist. He has written numerous tales for children as well as novels for adults. He has received a number of awards, among them the Deutscher Jugendliteraturpreis (German Youth Literature Award) and the Hans Christian Andersen Award.

Jutta Bauer (illustrator) was born in Hamburg in 1955 and is one of Germany's best-known and best-loved author-illustrators. She was awarded the Deutscher Jugendliteraturpreis for *Schreimutter* in 2001. In 2009, she received the Deutscher Jugendliteraturpreis for her oeuvre. Her philosophising sheep Selma has become something of a cult figure.

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