



## Rust & Stardust

*T. Greenwood*

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**Rust & Stardust** T. Greenwood

Camden, NJ, 1948.

When 11 year-old Sally Horner steals a notebook from the local Woolworth's, she has no way of knowing that 52 year-old Frank LaSalle, fresh out of prison, is watching her, preparing to make his move. Accosting her outside the store, Frank convinces Sally that he's an FBI agent who can have her arrested in a minute—unless she does as he says.

This chilling novel traces the next two harrowing years as Frank mentally and physically assaults Sally while the two of them travel westward from Camden to San Jose, forever altering not only her life, but the lives of her family, friends, and those she meets along the way.

## Rust & Stardust Details

Date : Published August 7th 2018 by St. Martin's Press

ISBN :

Author : T. Greenwood

Format : Kindle Edition 368 pages

Genre : Historical, Historical Fiction, Fiction, Crime, True Crime

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## From Reader Review Rust & Stardust for online ebook

### Kendall says

Happy Pub day to this beauty!!! Put this on your radar everyone!! <3 <3.

Rust & Stardust... where do I begin? Oh my gosh 5 huge gut wrenching and beautiful stars!!

Oh my goodness did I cry on this book.... this book was so amazing!

This is my first book that I've read by Greenwood and I honestly am not sure why?! I have 2 others sitting on my kindle and am going to get to them like NOW :).

Greenwood tells a disturbing and heart-breaking story of Sally Horner and her abductor Frank LaSalle. The novel starts off in 1948 with Sally stealing a notebook from Woolworth's in order to impress her friends. Sally is approached by a man outside the store, claiming to be an FBI agent who says he is going to save Sally from prison due to her stealing. For the next two years, Sally is taken across multiple state lines with her captor, Frank LaSalle, and the heart-ache that accompanies Sally through her childhood.

Greenwood's words flow so beautifully across the pages that you can't help but get lost in the world of Sally and her family. The story alternates between Sally, her mother Ella, sister Susan, brother-in-law Al, and all the other people whose lives were touched by Sally throughout her journey.

I do have to warn you... this novel touches on some serious issues of child abuse (including physical, sexual, and emotional). This novel actually reminded me a little bit of the dark but beautiful book "All the Ugly and Wonderful Things" by Bryn Greenwood.

In all the darkness to this novel.. there is also so so much beauty. This is going on my top reads for 2018. I can't recommend this enough and am telling you to pre-order this one. I will be buying a hardcover when the book comes out in August of 2018.

Greenwood you got me with that ending.... I couldn't hold it together.. tears were flowing my friends. I feel like my heart is broken :(.

A HUGE thank you to St. Martins Press, Netgalley, and T. Greenwood for an advanced arc in exchange for my honest review.

Published to GR: 2/25/18

Publication date: 8/7/2018

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### Jennifer ~ TarHeelReader says

**5 sensitive stars to Rust & Stardust! ? ? ? ? ?** And Happy Publication Day!

Even though I knew this would be a heart-rending book, I trusted Greenwood to write in a respectful way without being sensationalistically graphic, and somehow, even knowing the devastating ending ahead of time, there were peeks of hope that kept this from being an overwhelmingly bleak book.

In Camden, New Jersey in 1948, 11-year old Sally Horner is desperate to be seen and have friendships, to be part of the group. In order to be initiated into a group of girls, she is told she has to steal a notebook from Woolworth's. Frank LaSalle, a seedy and convicted felon recently released from prison, catches her in the act and misleadingly portrays himself as an FBI worker.

What follows is the two tragic years Sally spends with LaSalle, as they travel cross country, and he repeatedly abuses her.

Even though I knew how it would unfold because it is a story based on true events, at each step, I was hoping, practically pleading, for a different outcome for Sally. There are opportunities for help and near misses, and each time, I kept hoping.

T. Greenwood uses a deft and sensitive hand along with beautiful writing to paint this somber story with respect to Sally Horner and her family and to give them a voice in these disheartening and devastating events. The Author's Note is not to be missed and shows the heart of the author.

Thank you to St. Martin's Press for the advance review copy. All opinions are my own.

My reviews can also be found on my blog: [www.jennifertarheelreader.com](http://www.jennifertarheelreader.com)

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### **Jenny says**

Upfront. First thing - I am recommending this book. It is a well developed story about a horrible event. But it is a difficult read. Sadness, anger, depression, impatience become the readers constant companions during this reading.

T. Greenwood calmly and clearly chronicles a child abduction. Step by step we are led through the events that wrest a young girl from her home to life on the road with a drunken pedophile. Each step could have turned out differently. This is the "gut wrenchingness" of this book. If Only rides along from New Jersey to California.

The individuals we meet along the way are fully developed characters. This is part of the beauty of this novel. We like some. We admire some. We hate some. Some bring us to tears while others raise our blood pressure.

I will not ruin the book for future readers by disclosing the ending. I will call the ending most satisfying and poignant. I received an advance copy of this book from Netgalley. My review is unbiased and completely my own. #netgalkey #rustandstardust

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### **Debra says**

4.5 stars

Rust & Stardust is based on the real-life kidnapping of 11-year-old Sally Horner, and her kidnapper, in 1948 whose story inspired Vladimir Nabokov to write his controversial and iconic book, *Lolita*.

After a dare from a group of girls, 11-year-old Sally Horner attempted to steal a notebook from a Woolworths. She was stopped by a man who claimed to be an FBI agent and that she was under arrest. She

had no way of knowing that this man was not an FBI agent but an ex-convict by the name of Frank LaSalle who was recently released from prison. He tells Sally if she does not cooperate, she will be in jail, so she does as he says.

The Author then takes us through the two years in which Frank LaSalle mentally, physically and sexually abuses Sally. The two of them travel from place to place, moving on when people begin to get suspicious of this single father and his "daughter". Along the way, Sally meets people who are kind to her and who suspect the truth. Frank always seems to be one step ahead and keeps them moving so he is not caught. Sally's mother initially believed that Sally was going on vacation with a friend (she walked her to the bus station and left her with LaSalle!) but soon, the authorities were called in and the real authorities began a search for Sally.

This book lets us into Sally's life and we see her fear, her doubt, her loathing, her anger, her resentment, her hope, her strength. She was taken in a time when people were perhaps more trusting, the internet did not exist, Amber alerts did not exist, the harsh realities of depravity were not widely discussed, and children were not warned about pedophiles and teachers were not trained on detecting abuse.

This is not a happy book. It is sad and heartbreak. It is a story about pain, about loss, about innocence lost, about fear, about pain, about abduction, about abuse, about hope and finding home. This book is extremely well written and captivating. I thought the Author did a wonderful and thoughtful job telling the story with such a sensitive subject.

The Author's note at the end was very poignant and educational. I love books that cause me to think and feel and boy did I do a lot of thinking and feeling while reading this book. I believe the Author showed tact and caring while telling this girl's (and her family's) story.

I received a copy of this book from St. Martin's Press and NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

See more of my reviews at [www.openbookpost.com](http://www.openbookpost.com)

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### **Kristin (KC) - Traveling Sister says**

**:::5 Stars:::**

**It ain't easy being queasy...**

Despite (and maybe because of) the fact that I spent the *entirety* of this harrowing journey staggering on the brink of both vomit and tears, only to be pulled under into an abysmal sea of sadness, I cannot give this book anything less than the five shiny stars it deserves.

**RUST & STARDUST** is a fictional rendering of the real-life abduction of **Sally Horner**—an eleven year old child from New Jersey who was kidnapped by a manipulative monster of a man and held captive for two gruesome years.

Although the basic structure of this story is largely factual, this is not a biography and is widely embellished with friendships and daily occurrences. But the very real Sally lurks behind these pages, the truth of her story awoken and stretching gently around these words.

As one would expect, the content is beyond difficult to read and overflowing with potential emotional triggers, namely physical and mental abuse, so some readers should take caution.

However, this author shows the utmost respect for the tragedy endured by sparing readers any graphic detail and using a delicate hand to highlight even the darkest corners of this plot. It was a saving grace--one I normally don't require, but in the case of a child I do not need, nor can I stomach, explicit details. The restraint was merciful and appreciated, and I don't at all feel it weakened or underplayed the depths of what Sally went through.

This isn't a story meant to be enjoyed, but one that has to be **told** and begs to be *heard*.

**And what I heard most was this :**

"We should do something..."  
"We gotta do something..."  
"God, somebody's got to do something..."  
"We need to do something about this..."  
"Somebody's gotta do something..."  
"God, please do something..."

**DO SOMETHING**—words spoken repeatedly, and scattered throughout these pages by Sally's family members, acquaintances, teachers, and even strangers, yet (with the exception of some) too many seemed to do nothing when it came down to it.

For me, this was an eyeopening example of how, despite our good intentions, many of us will turn a blind eye and continue on with our lives because it is not "our" tragedy, it's *theirs*.

We separate ourselves from the pain of others so it doesn't touch us, and then we tell ourselves it's ok, but it is not. Especially when a child is involved.

**But the flip side was also conveyed:** people who go above and beyond to help. Quiet heroes who have no clue how their single selfless act will continue to inspire goodness in small but steady ripples.

We hear from various characters, each touched directly or indirectly by Sally's tragedy, and we see how they're *also* scarred with its permanent marks.

Sally's pain effected me on a level I willed it not to reach and I didn't want to let this story in. I wanted to remain detached, but I couldn't.

Admittedly, there were moments I wanted to throw in the towel from the overwhelming sadness and from being so painfully disturbed, but the line between fiction and reality began to blur, and closing the book began to feel a lot like turning my back on a little girl who had already been through enough of that.

Despite her torment, Sally remained a **warrior**, and the least I could do was read her story. And as much as my heart broke, I'm so very glad I did.

Greenwood's prose is graceful and eloquent, and just so achingly beautiful I could have cried from her unique arrangement of words alone. She masters the art of storytelling to an unfathomable degree, and here's some solid proof:

*"The world was a terrifying and dangerous place, a world that could convince you to offer up your own child to the devil without even thinking twice."*

*"How sad it is that grief has a shelf life ... It's only fresh and raw for so long before it begins to spoil. And soon enough, it will be replaced by a newer, brighter heartache—the old one discarded and eventually forgotten."*

*"She curled herself into a ball and imagined she was made not of bones but of sticks. Twigs. Gnarled and brittle limbs broken off from their roots. She and the tumbleweeds were no different, both at the whim of a terrible wind."*

*"Poor Sally, this moonfaced girl with dull hair and pale eyes; so plump and earnest. So eager to please. What would become of this girl?"*

Before this read, I had never heard of Sally Horner. And now I will never forget her.

#### **Book Stats:**

- ? **Genre/Category:** Fiction
- ? **Characters:** Pained and unbearably broken
- ? **Plot:** A young girl abducted and abused struggles to find a way back home. Various trigger warnings
- ? **Writing:** Delicate, sparing readers of graphic detail. Beautiful prose
- ? **POV:** 3rd Person Perspective: multiple characters
- ? **Cliffhanger:** None. Standalone

*\*Traveling Friends Read\**

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#### **(Bern) Mom to 2 Posh Lil Divas says**

? *"The world was a terrifying and dangerous place, a world that could convince you to offer up your own child to the devil without even thinking twice."* ??

**Rust & Stardust** is based on the 1948 kidnapping of 11 yr. old Sally Horner by Frank LaSalle. This story was heartbreaking for me to read as my youngest daughter is 11 yrs. old. Even knowing that this was a work of fiction I couldn't read about Sally's years with her captor and not feel it emotionally. It gutted me, imagining what horrors this girl must have endured at the hands of this vile pedophile.

In T. Greenwood's work of historical fiction we are given her imagined renderings of the years Sally spent on the road with her captor. The events were fictional dramatizations, the relationships constructions of her imagination - this is not true crime & it never claims to be. Honestly, as I was reading I wished the whole thing were fictional and that it had never happened to little Sally. This poor lonely girl walked into a Woolworth's to steal something on a dare/initiation from a group of girls she desperately wanted to accept her. Little did she know that there was an ex-con & pedophile watching her who saw his perfect opportunity. Sally was young, gullible and vulnerable. Frank was despicable and preyed on her innocence.

This book is not an easy, light hearted read. Yet, Greenwood did add elements of hope to balance out the despair. I enjoyed the elements of hope and love she sprinkled into the book with the people that helped and came to love Sally along the way - Lena, Ruth & Sister Mary Katherine. I couldn't help but hope that the real

Sally had some of that in her life during her ordeal.

It was beyond frustrating to read how Frank LaSalle always seemed to keep a step ahead of the law. I kept asking myself, how can no one see there is something wrong between them? Why won't Sally say anything? Yet, this really happened and he truly did get away with it for 2 years. So as implausible as some of the scenarios might have seemed - reality is sometimes just as farfetched isn't it? The mental manipulation, threats and physical harm victims are forced to endure in essence make them too afraid to flee or ask for help.

The book unfolds via various characters' point of views. We see first hand not only what Sally endures but also the devastation that her kidnapping causes her family. I found the book to be captivating and I spent quite a bit of time googling the real kidnapping so that I could relate what I was reading to what actually occurred. I'm not sure if that was a good or bad thing as it made the book seem all the more real. I was having trouble holding it together at various points while reading.

**While the book was heart wrenching and even disturbing at times it was also undeniably moving.** I was wholeheartedly invested in Sally and wanted nothing more than to be able to save her myself. Even knowing the outcome (I googled the case remember!) I couldn't put the book down - I had to finish it and see it through.

One last note that I have to mention - that pin & red ribbon on the cover - it isn't just meant to be eye catching. Once you read the book, you will see it is a meaningful symbol. It broke my heart! I absolutely love the symbolism of the cover. This is definitely a book that will remain with me for a long time.

*Thank you to T. Greenwood, St. Martin's Press & NetGalley for providing an advance copy in exchange for my honest thoughts.*

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### **Kaceey - Traveling Sister says**

Where do I even begin to review a book as emotionally wrenching as this. I was left numb, speechless and just downright heavy-hearted when I reached the end. A true tragedy, and...innocence lost.

Sally is a young girl growing up with her mother Ella in Camden, New Jersey. All she wants is a good friend. More precisely, to be one of a group of girls she admired and watched become "Blood Sisters."

At this point most readers, myself included, would probably fore-see something quite terrible heading Sally's way. Oh yes! And the cruel joke of an initiation from the "Blood Sisters" sets off an avalanche of events that leaves poor Sally taken away from everyone she knows and loves and thrust into a world of unimaginable terror.

This book is based on the true case of Sally Horner. As the author states in her acknowledgment at the end of the book, this is not a biography or a true crime novel. It is *fiction* based on true events.

I devoured this in one day. It's so hard to put down as you are completely absorbed into this emotional journey with Sally. Be prepared for the onslaught of emotions. Anger, sadness, love and heartbreak. You cannot read this book and come away untouched by its powerful realism.

There are a number of vivid events in this book that may be difficult for some readers, but the author handled it extremely well without going into any unnecessary details.

I highly recommend this book if you are looking for something to touch you and remind you of life's true value.

A Traveling Friends read!?

For this review and more Traveling Friends reviews please visit: <https://twosisterslostinacoulee.com/2...>

Thank you to NetGalley, St. Martin's Press and T. Greenwood for an ARC to read in exchange for an honest review.

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### **karen says**

NOW AVAILABLE!!!

my monster roots are showing again. i am in the lonesome minority with this book, which has moved everyone but me to tears and praise. don't get me wrong, i did not *dislike* it, but 1) i ~~never~~ rarely cry at books, and 2) my tastes run darker than this book.

"but...it's about the kidnapping and abuse of sally horner, the 11-year-old girl nabokov wrote that book about. is that not dark???"

yes, that's true. and while the subject matter is horrifying, the treatment of it is not. the use of the third person POV is part of it; the reader is already somewhat distanced from the situation, and the horrors are further diffused by employing *multiple* third-person POVs throughout the novel, where the shape of the story isn't "these are the things happening to this little girl right now," but "these are the ways in which a girl going missing affects those who knew her." short answer, mostly guilt.

the actual abuse scenes are mostly written *around*, so it is less horrific than it could be (for the reader), and sally manages to find small moments of comfort and companionship as she's being dragged across the country by her abductor.

my biggest takeaway from this (because it feels weird to say 'the thing i most *enjoyed*') were the specifics of the real-life case, about which i knew nothing before reading this. although many many scenes were invented for narrative impact, the things that i believe were factual are surprising - that her mother handed her over to this man, that he allowed her to attend school(s) on their way across the country without her escaping or asking for help, and her ultimate fate (which i accidentally learned when i was just a few pages from encountering it in the book - oops).

the ease with which sally was manipulated by this man is horrifying and frustrating and makes you want to grab a time travel machine and create a million NO! GO! TELL! PSAs all over the past, and the one-after-another ways she was let down by well-intentioned, would-be rescuers (although i believe they were all apocryphal) are even more frustrating.

i just never felt drawn into this book, and while that's probably a relief for most readers, considering the

subject matter, it didn't work for me. I already read at an emotional reserve because of my robot sensibilities, so it doesn't bother me to look tragedy in the eye, and I tend to prefer overkill and melodrama to tasteful restraint.

I'm glad I read it, because I do think it is going to be a big deal book and a popular choice for book clubs. It held my interest and made me more inclined to read *The Real Lolita: The Kidnapping of Sally Horner* and the Novel that Scandalized the World when it comes out in September, and any book that leads you to another book is a winner in my eyes.

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3.5 still-solidifying stars...

review to come.

come to my blog!

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## Deanna says

My reviews can also be seen at: <https://deesradreadsandreviews.wordpress.com>

From the blurb, I read that this was the true crime story that inspired, **Vladimir Nabokov's "Lolita"**.

***But this is not a true-crime story in the traditional sense.*** I was eager to get started but had no idea what to expect. All I knew was that the book was based on a true story. I had to stop myself from Googling as I read. I wanted to wait until I was finished before I searched for anything about the actual crime.

An excellent read! I was hooked right from the start!

### Camden, New Jersey (June 1948)

11 year-old Sally Horner is an inquisitive and happy child. She loves learning and even loves going to school, but she has a hard time fitting in. One day she sees the girls at school doing a blood sisters oath. Sally would do anything to be a part of that group. The girls know that Sally wants to be friends with them. They tell her she can be part of the group IF she steals something from Woolworth's. Sally is hesitant but she follows through, slipping a five-cent black marble composition notebook into her sweater and hurries to leave the store. ***Sally doesn't realize that stealing that notebook will change her life forever.***

52-year-old Frank LaSalle is just out of prison. He sees Sally steal the notebook and decides to make his move. He claims to be FBI and tells Sally she'll do as he says ...unless she wants to be arrested and taken to jail. Terrified, Sally does as he asks.

The chapters alternate between Sally and many other characters. We read about Sally's time with LaSalle, the places they lived, and the people Sally came in contact with. There are chapters from Sally's mother, sister, and brother-in-law's point of view. They all struggle with guilt, anger, and blame. So many things could have changed the outcome of this story.

***"But the even greater mystery, she thought, was Sally herself. What on earth would have made her agree***

***to go with him, this fiend?"***

This is an extremely chilling, emotional, and heartbreakng story that had me by the throat. I had to take a break now and then, but it wasn't long before I picked the book back up again.

***"While the series of events and the settings in which they occur mirror history"***, this is a work of fiction. *She dreamed herself into Sally's life.* Events were dramatized, relationships constructed, the sequence of events changed.

Though disturbing at times, this was a brilliantly written and intense read that had me Googling for hours once I finished the book. I am really looking forward to reading more from this author.

I'd like to thank St. Martin's books for giving me the opportunity to read this book in exchange for my honest review.

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### **Melissa says**

Despite the eye-catching cover and the author's lyrical style, this is not a pretty read. In fact, this riveting rendering of the true-crime abduction of a young girl ripped my heart to shreds. The thought-provoking nature of the story, the all too real feelings it incites and the beauty of the author's writing make this one I have to recommend.

If, like me, you haven't found the time to read *Lolita*—a novel some have labeled iconic, controversial or even a classic—you might not know it was the actual true-crime abduction of an 11-year-old girl by a pedophile that fueled Vladimir Nabokov's inspiration. Intrigued by Nabokov's muse of sorts and the actual abduction, T. Greenwood gives that innocent young girl and her family a voice in *this* fictional novel, using her imagination to fill the voids the unknowns inhabit and adding heart and hope with the creation of her own characters.

This is Florence **Sally Horner's** story—or a sizable chunk of it, anyway.

I think it's safe to say, at one time or another, we've all experienced the aching need to belong. Sometimes trying to form a connection with a group of peers—whether they're worthy or not—leads us to do things we know in our hearts is wrong. Sally Horner lands herself in a conundrum one afternoon in Woolworth's: steal something to prove her loyalty to a group of girls or risk the new friendships she's so desperate for.

Caught red-handed with a composition book down the front of her shirt ?and abandoned by those so-called friends, a manipulative stranger seizes the opportunity to exploit Sally's naivety. Frank La Salle's level of trickery and her trusting nature make the narrative all too easy.

What adds even more heartbreak to the situation is the role Sally's own mother plays, falling prey to the con-man herself. Choking on grief from the suicide of her husband, she's too easily persuaded to allow her daughter to be chaperoned to the Jersey shore by a complete stranger. Or even worse, made to believe for the first few months that Sally is not only happily enjoying the beach, but reluctant to leave.

Subjected to physical, mental and sexual abuse at the hands of Frank La Salle, it's not easy to stomach Sally's reality. T. Greenwood delivers her harrowing account of Sally's life on the road with an unwavering

intensity. Through alternating perspectives, she not only explores the young girl's feelings, but the havoc guilt and regret wreaks on *everyone* close to the situation.

**This poor girl can't catch a break.** A set of near misses, dashed hopes and the people unwilling to go that extra step had my blood boiling in frustration. I wanted nothing more than to be able to save Sally—to give her the gumption and strength to run, damn the consequences.

I don't think you can escape the desire to learn more about **Florence Sally Horner** and the actual events that took place back in 1948, so prepare to do some research when you turn that final page or maybe you won't even be able to wait that long.

Kudos to T. Greenwood for shining a bright light on the young girl who lost so much and for not twisting this into something it could never be, a *love* story.

\*\*\**Thank you to St. Martin's Press for providing a copy in exchange for my honest thoughts.*\*\*\*

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### **Christina - Traveling Sister says**

**5, \*rolls up podium, pulls down screen, powers up projector, starts powerpoint presentation\* now let me tell you about a magnificent literary masterpiece stars!!!**

I think I could've stabbed myself in the eye with a fork and it would've hurt less than this book.

Ok, all jokes aside - this isn't a funny book at all. It's heartbreaking and left me feeling empty and stunned but in awe of Greenwood and her ability in her craft. This is easily the newest member of my favorites shelf and any reader with an appreciation for story telling would do well to pick this up.

This is a work of historical fiction based off of the real case of Sally Horner and her abductor Frank LaSalle. After her abduction, LaSalle keeps Sally captive convincing her he is an FBI agent and dragging her all over the country as he evades the real FBI for 2 years. Needless to say, but to note for future readers - it's rare that old, creepy men kidnap young girls for reasons that aren't disturbing and traumatizing. These scenes are handled with the utmost care by Greenwood but could be triggering for some readers.

**Susan woke up that September morning and felt a distinct chill run like ice water down her back. Her first waking thought was of Sally. This is how she'd woken every morning for over a year now. Not with the soft ascent from the depths of a dream but with the sharp bite, that cold blade of the truth. This is the cruelty of grief. The way it gathers strength in the night, blooming again and again and again. There was nothing she could do to combat it other than allow its icy fingers to dig in and then to move on.**

Greenwoods command of language is nothing short of awe inspiring. For such a terribly heart-wrenching story the beauty of Greenwoods writing skill really shines through. We're given multiple POVs throughout, most notably that of Sally, her mother Ella, her sister and brother-in-law Susan and Al and unlikely friends she makes during her captivity. It was an incredibly clever way to show that while the saying is that it takes a village to raise a child - that same village is also irrevocably changed when tragedy strikes.

I was incredibly emotionally invested in this story and following the last line on the last page I delved into

further research into the truth behind this work of fiction. I highly suggest *not* looking into the case if you're unfamiliar with it prior to reading it only if you're interested in being surprised by the ending. It feels crass to call anything in this book a "twist" but it took me by surprise and while I thought my heart had no more room to crumble, apparently I was mistaken.

**How sad was it that grief had a shelf life, he thought. It's only fresh and raw for so long before it begins to spoil. And soon enough, it would be replaced by a newer, brighter heartache - the old one discarded and eventually forgotten.**

The entire read was very visceral and raw for me. I'd think in most forms of art (and this **is** a work of art) the goal is to make those interacting with your piece *feel something*. I can tell you, this book is steeped in emotion. I was left enormously impressed with Greenwood and I look forward to reading further works by her. For such a heartbreak story, Greenwood honored Sally with this retelling and brought beauty to something so horrendous I wouldn't have thought it possible.

I finished this with the Traveling Friends and it seems we have all fallen into the same coulee (which, this is the first time this has happened). It's rare that books live up to the hype, but I'll let all readers know - this absolutely lives up to the reviews. I am one smitten kitten this now gets to sit on my bookshelf.

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### **Mary Beth \*Traveling Sister\* says**

Sally Horner is under peer pressure because she wants to join her friends club and they want her to steal something from the local Woolworths store in Camden, New Jersey. This happened in the 1940's. She decides to steal a composition notebook and doesn't realize that Frank LaSalle is watching her. He was released from prison. Sally is only eleven years old and he abducts Sally, convincing her that he is a F.B.I agent, and can have her arrested in a minute, unless she does what he says.

This is based on the real life story that inspired Vladimir Nabokov to finish *Lolita*.

This is every parents nightmare and it is a heartbreak novel. Frank LaSalle is a monster. Sally doesn't want anyone to know that she is kidnapped, and keeps secrets, because she is in fear that something worst could happen to her, and her family.

This is such a heartbreak novel based on a true story that is every parents nightmare. Some true stories don't have a happily after. Even though this wasn't a happy story, I loved it. This is a historical novel and I am loving them more and more. It was a very suspenseful book.

I thought the author did a really excellent job on her characters. Sally was very naive but she also was a smart girl for her age. The author did a great job on Sally's emotions and actions. Sally led a tragic life. My heart went out to Sally and her family.

It was very difficult to read at times and I don't think this story will leave me anytime soon after reading it. It was a little dark and disturbing.

I thought it was very well written and it flowed so well. I read *Where I Lost Her* and thought that book was outstanding and I thought this one was done, just as good as that book. This one is a must read. I want to read all of her books. If you haven't read any of this authors books, go ahead and read one. It will give you an

awesome reading experience.

I want to thank NetGalley, St. Martin's Press and T. Greenwood for the copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

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## **jewels [Books Bejeweled] says**

### **FIVE SHATTERING STARS**

I love great literature that moves you. You know? I mean isn't that why we read? I want to be moved to cry, moved to think, moved to care. 2018 has been a banner blue ribbon year for the psychological suspense novel and now we have a crowning jewel of a book that crosses all the genres.

Rust & Stardust is unusual. If you've read any reviews, you've heard already this a sad story. Yes, it is absolutely heartbreaking. I can't even describe how much your soul will ache. BUT it's also suspenseful, historically relevant and fascinating. Rust & Stardust is not a true-crime book in the traditional sense. This crime of a young girl's kidnapping in 1948 was headline making at the time and was the inspiration for Nabokov's *Lolita*. (A fact that nauseates me. Remind me to check how many stars I gave that classic tale.)

I had a vague familiarity with Sally Horner's name, but that's all I knew when I began reading. I resisted every impulse to google, and I'm pleased to announce that in this case, I did abstain. I had no idea how the story would end and the suspense propelled me forward like a slingshot. I rarely put this book down. Sally crawled into my heart and I felt like I understood her. I cared about her—what's going on, is she going to escape now? I was thinking about Sally constantly. And it's been a long time since I had a book do that to me. Thank you, T. Greenwood, for this passionate reading experience!

I would describe this book as a cross between *The Grapes of Wrath* and *THE CHANGELING* movie starring Angelina Jolie. I know the time periods are a little off between these beautiful works of art, but the important thing IS the time period. It's the omnipresent lens that we view the story through and acts as much a pivotal character as anything else in the novel. There was a pervasive, deep societal innocence back then. Way before child molesters, mass shootings, and sex traffickers became our daily news. Sally was purely an innocent child, but also her mother, friends, teachers, even the police pushed back their doubts. "This could not be what it looked like." "This does not happen in America". In small ways, they all unknowingly contributed to the crime as much as Frank LaSalle, the deviant, corrupted everything he touched.

Rust & Stardust has all the atmospheric setting and attention to detail that Steinbeck, himself, was able to conjure on the page as the Okies trudged through the dust to California. Between the short, beautifully written chapters, Sally's abduction unfolds as seen by all the different characters involved. While you are very fearful for poor Sally, it is her family's story of guilt, bitterness and loss that will shatter your heart.

**FIVE STARS. I HIGHLY recommend Rust & Stardust.** You will be hooked after the first few pages. I promise. Yes, there are some triggers for sensitive readers. However, Greenwood tackles the subject matter in such a consciously delicate manner that the story of Sally's life comes across as nothing less than poignant, authentic and human. **And SERIOUSLY!! Don't google until you finish the book!!!!**

*Many thanks to the sweet people over at St. Martin's Press for sending me an early copy to read and review. All opinions are strictly my own.*

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## **Susanne Strong says**

5 Amazing & Heart-Wrenching Stars.

Rust & Stardust is a devastating novel based on the real life of Sally Horner, who at the tender age of eleven years old, was abducted by a man named Frank La Salle, who tricked her by claiming to be an FBI agent.

This is a rip your heart out novel that makes your breath catch in your throat and tears fill your eyes time and again.

On a dare from girls at school, Sally Horner attempts to steal a composition notebook from Woolworth's and is caught by a man who claim to be an FBI agent. The man states that she must do as he tells her, or she will be arrested and taken to jail. Sally obeys as he is utterly convincing, especially to an eleven-year old, who is naive and trusting and she is in desperate need of attention. Sally's mother Ella, has been overwhelmed ever since her husband died - thus when Frank La Salle, posing as the father of Sally's school friend offers to take Sally off her hands for the summer, Ella doesn't question it, not even when weeks and then months go by. Not when she gets letters from Sally stating how much fun she's having. Ella has no idea it's a ruse. Only when Sally's older sister Susan and her husband Al start questioning things does Ella begin to worry. Thank goodness for Sally they did. Turns out Sally didn't leave of her own accord - yet by the time it's discovered, Sally and her abductor Frank, have fled.

Time and again - La Salle is two steps ahead. People notice that something seems amiss and yet, they do nothing. Perhaps a sign of the times or an issue with people not wanting to get involved, the effects are devastating. As you can imagine, Frank La Salle is not a nice man and unfortunately, Sally struggles in more ways than one. For two years she has feelings of guilt, anger, and complete and utter sadness and the depths of those feelings filled my soul. There were a few characters who were shining stars here. They are etched on my heart. One is Ruth, a woman who befriends Sally. Another is Al, Sally's brother-in-law, who never gave up on the possibility of finding her. His heart is filled with solid gold.

**Rust & Stardust broke me. Throat tight, cries escaping. This is not a book for the faint of heart. Though it dealt with a difficult subject, based on a true story, the details were handled extremely delicately. For that, I was extremely grateful.**

I didn't realize that it was based on a true story until I read the author's note and then googled more about Sally Horner's story. This novel read like fiction - it was flowy, beautiful, heartbreakingly poignant. T. Greenwood did a phenomenal job and I am in awe of her writing style.

This was a Traveling Friends read. Reading this with a group garnered incredible heartfelt discussions and really aided in my ability to get through this truly beautiful, yet incredibly hard to read novel. Thank you friends.

Thank you to NetGalley, St. Martin's Press and T. Greenwood for an ARC of this novel in exchange for an honest review.

Published on NetGalley, Goodreads and Twitter on 8.18.18.

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## **Holly B says**

4.5

Had to finish, had to know

I'm not going to have the words to describe how heart-broken I was the WHOLE time I was reading this book. The writing flowed so perfectly, I couldn't pull myself away from the story. I adored the little girl, Sally and was terrified for her. I wanted to hear her voice, this was her voice.

Based on the true kidnapping of 11-year-old Florence "Sally" Horner by the 52-year-old monster, Frank LaSalle. I did some research after I finished this novel and was able to read some newspaper articles and see some photographs of Sally.

When this abduction occurred in 1958, there were no cameras to help detectives or cell phones to trace children. It took police two years to catch up with this monster that had Sally. She endured much, but her voice is heard in this story. Awareness of sexual predators is much greater today, but sadly they do exist.

I'm glad to have met Sally through this story, although my heart is forever broken. The story was just so flawless and engaging that I finished it in two days. I couldn't put it down. I had to find out how it would end.

Thank you to St. Martin's Press for my Advanced Reading Copy.

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