

A Touch of Blue

Tory Christie

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In Tory Christie's novel *A Touch of Blue*, a mysterious new neighbor changes how a girl sees the world and its unusual people.

Celie, the only girl in her fourth-grade class, has only one friend, Junior. But Junior betrays her by hanging out with Rat, who's despicable. When Honey moves into the neighborhood, Celie hopes for a new friendship, even though Honey seems strange. Small and so skinny that her dress looks like it's hanging from a clothesline, Honey is silent, fearful, and obsessed with colors and their names. But when she and Celie are chased by a wolf-dog, Celie learns that Honey is both strong and a fast runner, making her the perfect partner for a summer adventure.

When an unknown animal is spotted in the woods, Junior and Celie dare each other to be the first to find and photograph the elusive creature. The danger is compounded by the need for secrecy and speed: Rat has plans to shoot the animal with his BB gun. The adventure is on, and with Honey and other unexpected helpers at her side, Celie learns the truth about some frightening people, including the wolf-dog's reclusive person. A revelation about Honey's difficult home life represents an additional challenge for Celie; though she's afraid of losing her friend, she plays an essential role in Honey's rescue.

Celie's descriptions are detailed and colorful; with people, her sharp mind is quick to go beyond surface impressions. As the tension rises, Celie learns more about the past that made each person as they are, resulting in additional depth.

A Touch of Blue is an exciting novel in which courageous and committed friends confront difficulties and find whole new worlds opening up to them.

KRISTINE MORRIS (September / October 2023)

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