



2015

### The Impossible Rescue: The True Story of an Amazing Arctic Adventure

Tessa McMillan

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# Book Review

**Title:** The Impossible Rescue: The True Story of an Amazing Arctic Adventure

**Author:** Martin W. Sandler

**Reviewer:** Tessa McMillan

**Publisher:** Candlewick Press

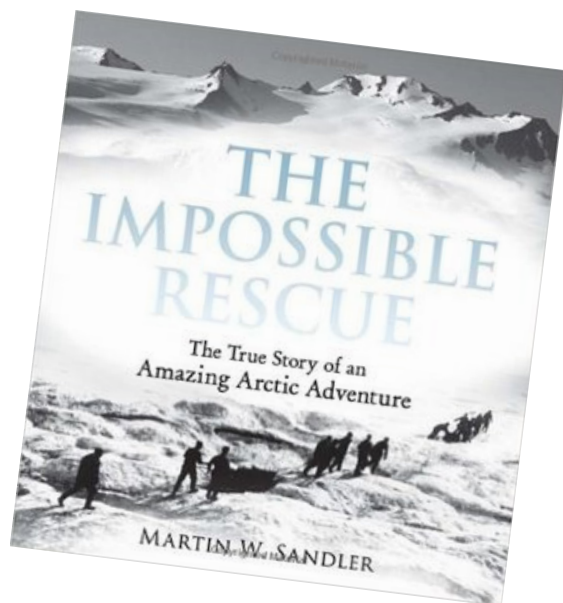
**Publication Year:** 2012

**ISBN:** 9780763650803

**Number of Pages:** 163

**Interest Level:** Outstanding

**Rating:** Intermediate, Young Adult



## Review

In September 1897, eight whaling ships get iced-in just off the northern coast of Alaska. Word spreads to the White House of the plight awaiting the 265 marooned whalers. President William McKinley orders the captain of the *Bear*, a ship in the Revenue Cutter Service, to send three officers overland to gather reindeer herds and drive the animals 1,000 miles to the whalers' location near Point Barrow, Alaska. Three men are chosen for the mission: First Lieutenant David Jarvis oversees the Overland Relief Expedition, along with Dr. Samuel Call, and Second Lieutenant Ellsworth Bertholf. The icy ocean conditions cause the *Bear* to land the men 500 miles off course. But with fate of the 265 whalers in their hands, Jarvis, Call, and Bertholf make the treacherous 1,500 mile trek, obtain the needed reindeer, and arrive at Point Barrow all within three and a half months.

*The Impossible Rescue* is a hidden historical treasure. Sandler recreates the true story in suspenseful detail quoting several of the men who aided the stranded whalers. Adding to their words, Sandler exhibits original photographs of the indigenous people and locations Jarvis, Call, and Bertholf encountered on their journey. Many photographs were actually taken by Dr. Call. Sandler also provides maps pinpointing the routes taken by Jarvis, Call, Bertholf, and the *Bear* and the locations of the icebound whaling ships. Near the end of the book, Sandler gives a timeline of the Overland Relief Expedition and includes the fate of the people involved. Both the story and book's structure will coax any reader to rush on with Jarvis, Call, and Bertholf as they plow forward through snow, wind, and ice to save the 265 men. Appropriate for ages 10 and up.