



2020

The Twenty-Ninth Day: Surviving a Grizzly Attack in the Canadian Tundra

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Abbott, Karen (2020) "The Twenty-Ninth Day: Surviving a Grizzly Attack in the Canadian Tundra," *Children's Book and Media Review*. Vol. 41: Iss. 10, Article 28.

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Book Review

The Twenty-Ninth Day: Surviving a Grizzly Attack in the Canadian Tundra

Author

Alex Messenger

Reviewer

Karen Abbott

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Rating

Excellent

Level

Young Adult

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Pages

304

Year

2019

ISBN

9781094091242

Publisher

Blackstone Publishing

When Alex and five friends set off on a canoe trip through the Canadian subarctic, they experience rapids, low food supplies, and amazing scenery. But twenty-nine days in, Alex encounters a bear while on his own. Managing to dodge the bear's initial charges, Alex eventually comes nose-to-nose with it. When the bear bites him, he loses consciousness. He awakens to the knowledge that no help is on the way, and he must make his way back to camp and warn the others. Reunited, Alex and his buddies must determine what is best for him, and the return trip to town is when the adventure really begins.

This autobiography is an enjoyable read that is very descriptive of the beauty and majesty of nature. But it is a harrowing journey, and parts of the attack and details of surgery on the tundra are challenging. As Alex explores his motives and reasoning for the choices he makes at each step in the journey, there is solid exploration of self. For example, walking on the second day, he describes the joy of discovering that he is still alive, and he contributes what he can to the group. This reflection shows Alex's growth as he displays an immense degree of self-control and determination regarding what must be done. The story also shows compassion for the bear, reflecting beliefs about the sanctity of nature. This is a great book for any adventure lover.

*Contains moderate language and moderate violence.