



Far North

By Will Hobbs

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From the window of the small floatplane, fifteen-year-old Gabe Rogers is getting his first look at Canada's magnificent Northwest Territories with Raymond Providence, his roommate from boarding school. Below is the spectacular Nahanni River -- wall-to-wall whitewater racing between sheer cliffs and plunging over Virginia Falls. The pilot sets the plane down on the lake-like surface of the upper river for a closer look at the thundering falls. Suddenly the engine quits. The only sound is a dull roar downstream, as the Cessna drifts helplessly toward the falls . . .

With the brutal subarctic winter fast approaching, Gabe and Raymond soon find themselves stranded in Deadmen Valley. Trapped in a frozen world of moose, wolves, and bears, two boys from vastly different cultures come to depend on each other for their very survival.

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Far North By Will Hobbs Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Those insatiable fans of *Hatchet* are the likeliest audience for this winter survival tale, which weds its adventure-seeking thrills to education about Dene Indian culture. Fifteen-year-old Gabe, a Texan, enrolls in a boarding school in Canada's Northwest Territories to be near his father, whose love of the wilderness has become infectious. But Gabe gets more than he bargained for when an airplane accident leaves him and his roommate Raymond, a Dene, stranded near the fierce Nahanni River at the start of a long winter. Guided by their fellow survivor Johnny Raven, a Dene elder, Gabe and Raymond learn to hunt beavers, trap rabbits and make snowshoes and mittens from animal hide. More significantly, they learn respect for ancient Dene beliefs. When Raven dies of the cold, the two boys must struggle out of Deadmen Valley on their own. Predictably sentimental, Hobbs's (Beardance) fast-moving tale nonetheless delivers breathless action and an inspiring sense of Canada's vast landscape. Ages 10-up.

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From School Library Journal

Grade 5 Up?From the compelling cover illustration to the terrifying and plausible details, this survival adventure clearly demonstrates the author's love for and familiarity with the northern wilderness. Gabe, 15, formerly of San Antonio, enrolls in a boarding school in Canada's Northwest Territories to be closer to his father, an oil field worker. Gabe's likable but depressed roommate, Raymond, is an Athapascan Indian. A map helps readers follow along as circumstances involving a plane crash leave the teens and Johnny Raven, an elder from Raymond's village, stranded with minimal supplies as winter hardens. The plotting is fast paced and action filled as the teens' cultures clash, and as they struggle against the cold, blizzards, isolation, starvation, injury, a wolverine, grizzly bear, and Johnny's death before finally reaching safety. The weakest elements of the book may be the sermonlike "testament" the boys find in Johnny's pocket after his death, and the thread of mythic raven lore that is mentioned, then given up before becoming a major element again. Quibbles aside, with echoes as old as Jean Craighead George's classic *My Side of the Mountain* (Dutton, 1988) and reverberations from Paulsen and Phleger, this satisfying tale will engage YAs' hearts and minds.?Joel Shoemaker, Southeast Jr. High School, Iowa City, IA

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From Scientific American

After their plane and its pilot plunge over a thundering falls, 15-year-old Gabe, his Dene Indian boarding-school roommate Raymond Providence, and the elderly Indian Johnny Raven are left stranded in the Canadian wilderness. The expected occurs: the wise old man, who speaks little English, calls on his deeply rooted knowledge of the land to keep the tiny group alive, leaving the boys to battle nature alone when he dies. You know Gabe survives, because he's telling the story, and as with many books in this genre, the characters and the plot are subordinated to the setting and action. But Hobbs drafts the events at just the right pace and with extraordinary detail-from setting dead Johnny on fire on a funeral pyre to battling frostbite and bears. What the boys accomplish is standard genre stuff, but thanks to Hobbs' strong, sure hand, it's never dull.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Ernest Baker:

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Micah Stahlman:

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Ana Jimenez:

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