



HELP! A Bear is Eating Me!

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Trapped in a remote Alaskan forest, pinned under his own SUV, gnawed upon by nature's finest predators, Marv Pushkin -- Corporate Warrior, Positive Thinker, Esquire subscriber -- waits impatiently for an ambulance and explains in detail the many reasons why this unfolding tragedy is everyone's fault but his own.

HELP! A Bear is Eating Me! Details

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From Reader Review **HELP! A Bear is Eating Me!** for online ebook

Madeleine says

I have a longstanding marital bias in favor of bears. What started out as affectionate joshing -- that my outwardly imposing and initially intimidating husband is really just a big teddy bear (which I'm sure is exactly the kind of private commentary he wants me spreading around the internets) -- has, over the years, spiraled out of control to the extent that swapping "bear" for any even remotely similar sounds (e.g.: bearriage, libeary, husbearnd, et cetera ad nauseam) is *the* overriding hallmark of our spousal language. So I have a certain fondness for all things ursine, which made me initially wonder how objectively I could read about some self-entitled scumbag raging against a bear whose only sin is curious hunger.

This is an unconventional little book, even by bizarro standards (and it's not even all that bizarre, really, in the sense that William Shatner doesn't make a single appearance, let alone as a dozen simultaneous incarnations). Let's talk about it.

Its narrator, Marv Pushkin, is a designer-drug-addicted yuppie asshole (possibly an ass hole, even) who's trapped under his luxury vehicle. Its antagonists are everyone who isn't Marv, except for maybe Marcia from Product Dialogue, the coworker with whom Marv's carrying on an extramarital affair; chief among those who are making life undeservedly insufferable for Marv is the titular beast (referred to as "Mister Bear" in I'm assuming a decidedly unaffectionate tone) who's intermittently snacking on Our Hero's lower extremities.

That's the entire plot.

And it *works*. By God, does it work.

As Marv prattles on and on and on and on and on *and on and on* about all those who are responsible for his arrival at these most unenviable circumstances -- his mind is clearly a Rolodex of all those who have shown him just a fraction less than the full respect and awe his general mastery of the world commands -- it becomes obvious that this is a man whose identity is built upon the unshakable belief that he is better, smarter, craftier and more deserving of all the best that can have a price tag slapped on it than positively everyone else ever. The world lives to serve Marv and it should smile and wipe his ass for the privilege of playing even a minute role in his existence.

But what also emerges is a backstory that renders Marv sympathetic in a way that made me hate myself a little, first for feeling badly on behalf of such a raging douchenozzle and then for totally writing him off as a terminal jerk without stopping to consider that people like him usually are hiding oceans of personal damage beneath their vile facades. What starts out as a finger-pointing marathon necessitating an entire army of hands slowly yields to the discovery that this guy really had no other choice but to be in love with himself for survival's sake: Marv is his own biggest fan because he'd be crushed under the weight of allowing himself to become his own worst enemy.

It's a pretty neat take on Man vs. Nature, with layers of Man vs. Self slowly peeling away to a surprisingly connected, successful result.

Jason says

5 Stars

HELP! A Bear is Eating Me! is first and foremost a very funny tale about getting what is due to you. This is a short novel that will have you laughing out loud and cringing...not so much from the bear that is eating our protagonists legs, but from the fact the he is such a complete asshole. You know our main character Marv Pushkin, we all know people like him. He is the bad boss that is so full of himself that he cannot see things that are right in front of his face. He is the type 'A' personality that literally thinks the world revolves around themselves . He is a DOUCHE!

HELP! A Bear is Eating Me! is just that, a story about a successful business man a being eaten by a true man-eater. The novel works by being so damn funny. I originally gave this book only 4 stars but changed it because it really stayed with me. I cannot wait for my wife to read it so that I can talk about it.

Here is a little taste of what you will find in this book. No, it is not human flesh and it does not taste like chicken.

“Drugs are just one reason why I could never cast myself as one of those outdoor/nature/environment types. Technology treats me too well. Technology is so much better than nature at everything that nature’s supposedly good at, I just don’t see the point. Who needs scenery when you’ve got special effects? Who needs flora and fauna when you’ve got the Flora Channel and the Fauna Channel, not to mention the Woodland Park Zoo and a talented team of Latin-American landscapers delicately sculpting the front yard of your estate into a shapely oasis, year-round, pest-free? Who needs bracing wind and sea spray when you’ve got four independent climate control zones? Who needs a campfire when you’ve got a George Foreman Grill?”

Christen says

I read this on the way to the airport and then I read more of it at the airport and then I finished it on the airplane. When I have to deal with the TSA, airline personnel and large numbers of my fellow humans, I often experience deeply felt misanthropy. Reading this book complicated that. You see, the narrator of the book is a smug, entitled, dumb, greedy yuppie douche bag who's deeply irritated by the extent to which this getting-trapped-under-an-SUV-and-eaten-by-a-bear thing has fucked up his opportunity to boink his mistress and murder his wife this week. Generally, I feel I am in a very good position to mock and belittle such people, and why not? They make loads more money than I do, and don't get eaten by bears nearly as one would hope.

But as I'm barely able to contain my rage at how damn difficult it is to mail the contraband I forgot to leave at the office to myself (WOULD IT KILL YOU TO OPEN A STORE IN THE AIRPORT SO I CAN SHIP MY POCKET KNIFE TO MYSELF INSTEAD OF HAVING IT CONFISCATED, FEDEX?), as I grumble not just at the indignity of having to remove my shoes to go through security but at the stupidity of the woman in front of me who is NOT AWARE OF THIS REGULATION, as I try to tune out the teenagers behind me whose command of English and their own vocal instruments bears a startling resemblance to that

displayed by Luke Wilson's attorney in *Idiocracy*, I find myself yearning for an iPod and a personal masseuse to make it all go away. Then I remember why I'm at the airport in the first place: I'm traveling to a public relations workshop. I can't laugh at the entitled, misanthropic yuppie douchebag Marv Pushkin because I AM THAT ENTITLED, MISANTHROPIC YUPPIE DOUCHEBAG.

Unlike this novel's narrator, I suspect I would have been overjoyed had a bear appeared on the scene to deliver me from my mortal coil. Instead, Mykle Hansen delivered me from my intensely foul mood with jugular-piercing HILARITY. By the time I touched down in LAX, I was in the best spirits ever -- not just because I drank a lot of gin on the flight, and certainly not because I was in Los Angeles.

Karlyflower *The Vampire Ninja, Luminescent Monster & Wendigo Nerd Goddess of Canada (according to The Hulk)* says

JERK WARNING!

Marv Pushkin, our MC, is a **DICK**, straight up.... not a nice person, AT ALL!!

...but does he deserve to be eaten by a bear?

I loved this story! Recommended and provided by the wonderful karen, *HELP! A Bear is Eating Me!* is a wonderful exploration of the limits of compassion -- mine for Marv -- and the answer to the age old question, If a jerk is being eaten by a bear in the woods of Alaska does anyone give a shit?!

Dangerously funny and deranged :)

Dan Schwent says

While corporate sleazeball Marv Pushkin is on a bear-killing/team-building trip in Alaska, he becomes trapped under his Range Rover and a bear begins eating him. Hilarity ensues.

HELP! A Bear is Eating Me! reads like Jim Thompson's *The Killer Inside Me* if it were written by Christopher Moore and Lou Ford was an ad agency executive rather than a small town sheriff. Making the reader care about a douchebag of Pushkin's caliber is a rough job but Mykle Hansen accomplishes just that. Pushkin's dialogue is priceless and it's clear that he's totally oblivious to the reality of his utter douchebaggery.

Not only is HELP! A Bear is Eating Me! a hilarious tale of an asshole getting what's coming to him, slowly and painfully, it's also a commentary on the inane corporate culture. I could easily see Marv Pushkin being in management where I work.

That's about all I have to say. If you think a corporate scumbag getting eaten by a bear for 120-ish pages is

funny, this is the book for you.

Mykle says

Conflict of interest warning: I ate the author of this book.

Mariel says

I liked *Help! A Bear is eating me!* a lot. I loved that Marv had the same two devils on his polar (bear) same shoulders- both with enormous chips on them. He's an asshole in the best way he could've been. He's the kind of asshole that anyone with sense would know to stay far, far away from (like Scarlett O'hara). Like he admits himself, his climb to the top was made easier by smiling faces waiting to get stepped on. He's not harmless in the grand scheme of things, but definitely not in my personal sphere because, frankly, I know better. Anyway, I was really impressed that Mykle Hansen showed what could've easily been a stereotypical jab at satire of "What's wrong with America" jerk into the opposite of your bumper sticker hate. It's the misery of living in your own asshole mind. The drugs, pain, rage and mind numbingly asshole-y flashbacks of his past and fantasies were like the anxiety you feel in your gut no matter how good you are at thinking about something else. Well done, I say. It really is a good skill to write the cell deep hate on his shallow molecular level and not sound bumper sticker. I hate bumper sticker hate above many things. It's the kind of deliberately missing the point message! and seizing on something most obvious for generic approval. Everyman-jerk Marv may be, but generic he is not. It's not moralizing, or warning or anything but a head trip through a douche bag. (See how the other half lives.)

I identified with the bear 'cause for once the paranoia of the outside space included me. (And I cheered the bear on.) I would have started having fantasies daymares of being inside the bear's head too. (Hell, I'd probably have developed stockholm's syndrome.)

The bear was starvin' for the Marv.

Lance says

HELP! A Bear is Eating Me! Great title! Great book! Wow, look at that! The period key on my keyboard keeps producing exclamation marks instead of periods! WTF* My question mark key makes that asterisk thingy that looks like a puckered asshole! Speaking of assholes, Marv Pushkin, the narrator/protagonist of *Bear*, is an asshole! But that's information that's given on the back of the book, so there's no need to repeat it here, is there* Marv's narrative is misanthropic, misogynistic, condescending, vulgar, and rude! And that's what makes it compelling and funny as shit! At 129 pages, *Bear* is just as long as it needs to be to get the point across and keep the reader entertained! Anything more would have been filler and anything less would have been insufficient! This is one of the few "humorous" books that I have read lately that have actually been funny enough to make me laugh (one of the others is Andersen Prunty's *The Overwhelming Urge*)! I highly recommend checking it out.

David says

Normally I'm not beguiled by first-person narratives, especially when the voice is that of an obnoxious boorish narcissist. Mykle Hansen's **HELP! A Bear is Eating Me!** is an honorable exception. Despite having a protagonist of unparalleled loathsomeness, unblemished by even a hint of concern for others or a scintilla of self-awareness, this book charmed the pants off me. The title is sheer genius, and completely accurate. As the story opens, its truly despicable antihero, Marv Pushkin lies pinned under his all-terrain vehicle somewhere off-road in Alaska. The rest of the 120-page story is structured as an ongoing monolog from Marv to the reader.

If you think about it for a second, you realise that Mykle Hansen set himself a nearly impossible challenge. A first-person narrative in the voice of a complete jerk that still manages to engage the reader is a pretty tall order. I'm happy to report that the author rises to the occasion, magnificently. I read **H! ABiEM!** in a single afternoon. It was hilarious. And written so smoothly that you ask yourself "how did he do that?"

Lying trapped and helpless isn't the only trial Marv has to survive. There's that angry bear whose cub he ran over with his Rover who takes revenge by gnawing off his extremities. He also suffers several hallucinatory visitations, both human and ursine, as he self-medicates to counter the mounting pain. This makes him the quintessential unreliable narrator.

The character of Marv works as a (hilarious) caricature, but the thought does occur that Hansen may have sacrificed the potential for greater emotional impact by making him so relentlessly loathsome. Most readers will be ambivalent on whether to root for the bear or for Marv. Scrooge's four ghostly visitors ultimately cause him to undergo a change of heart. Lear's misadventures in the storm teach him compassion and effect a reconciliation with Cordelia before he dies; Gloucester learns to see more clearly as a result of his blinding. *HELP! A Bear is Eating Me!* is not a story of growth and redemption. But so what? It's brilliantly realised and genuinely funny.

Arthur Graham says

Never before has a book done more to discredit the notion that protagonists should be likable. Marv Pushkin is probably about as irredeemable as characters come, and yet... You can't help but feel a little sorry for the guy. Not because he's in the process of dying a slow, gruesome death, but because, over the course of his ordeal, we come to learn much more about him than he's willing to let on. Through a series of flashbacks and hallucinations, we discover a man so awesomely awful that he actually ends up seeming kinda alright in the end!

Marv of course remains oblivious to it all, allowing his foolishness to ultimately overshadow his greed, narcissism, and generally asshole nature. He's also a lot funnier than Aron Ralston, so at least he's got that going for him.

Just when you find yourself starting to feel a little sympathy for the fucker, however, he effortlessly launches off into previously uncharted realms of douchebaggery. This cycle repeats itself all the way up until the very end, leaving readers to wonder whether being eaten by a bear is really such a terrible fate after all.

Mark Russell says

As a survivor of a horrific bear attack myself, I can vouch for this book's authenticity in its description such a life-changing disaster. First of all, manners, such as not playing with your food, don't appear to be too highly stressed within the bear community. In fact, they love to play with their food. It starts, innocently enough, with a little swat to the ass here, a little nibble on the arm there, but before long, their food-play gets increasingly complex, creative and, dare I say, excruciating.

During my own ordeal, I was repeatedly punched in the face by a male kodiak. I can only surmise that he had caught the scent of my wildberry lifesavers and was merely trying to crack open my skull to get at all the wonderful berries that surely resided within. Failing in that, He then tossed my body prostrate onto the grass and took to steamrolling me. He'd roll over me foot to head, then head to foot, then back again. Tiring of this game, he then threw my shattered corpus into a nearby tree. I landed back first onto a fallen log. There was a branch crossing the log and, my legs no longer useful, I tried to pull myself along the branch to escape any more vicious mauling. The bear saw through my pathetic attempt at escape and ran over to stop me. As he approached my now nearly lifeless body, he accidentally stepped on the opposite end of the branch, which lay propped up over the log, which sent my end of the branch up sharply, catapulting me into the air as if I had been launched from the end of a teeter totter. The bear took great amusement in this and began retrieving me to set me back down onto the branch so that he could again step onto the other end, repeatedly sending my powerless flesh sprawling skyward.

It wasn't long before his joyous howling brought in other bears from the woods and they joined in the fun, taking turns jumping onto the branch and sending my broken body flailing into the air like a ragdoll. One of the other bears had with her another barely alive human victim she had found a few miles over. The bears traded us back and forth like we were packs of cigarettes. Finally, they began propping us up to make it look like we were interacting with each other in what was, by all appearances, a crude production of *A Doll's House* by Henrik Ibsen. Then they made us kiss. After a while they were distracted by a school bus that rolled by on a lonely road at the bottom of the ravine. The bears went to investigate this strange yellow creature and quickly forgot about us, leaving us lying there like forgotten toys in the rain.

Anyway, I'm glad somebody has the guts and the insight to finally delve into the reality of bear attacks and tell it like it is.

Tressa says

4.5 stars

Very funny little book about an elitist Yuppie named Marv Pushkin who gets trapped under his SUV while bear hunting in Alaska with his fat wife, his mistress, and some of his yes-men employees.

Almost every page is lough out loud funny as Marv dopes himself up to handle the pain of being chewed on by Mr. Bear. To keep boredom at bay he goes inside his mind and opens up about his love for his Rover; his love of things and his hatred of nature; the Mexican and his illegal kids who don't detail his car right; his marriage to his fat wife, Edna; his affair with a buxom subordinate; and even the unusual death of his kid brother and father.

The scene where he choreographs spilling liquid bear bait on his wife as she sits on an inflatable couch is hilarious.

Greg says

For years (thousands of them actually) great thinkers have pondered the question, if a total asshole is trapped under something heavy and their legs are being eaten by a bear is that ok, or should we feel sorry for them? Plato in the original manuscripts for his allegory of the cave dealt with his exact problem when the know-it-all shit who had gone out in to the real world came back and got himself trapped under a boulder and a bear started to eat his legs. Plato said it was the danger of leaving the cave, and suggested that it is an Ideal of justice manifested in a lesser form of reality that took the form of the bear eating the know-it-alls legs. This was cut out of *The Republic* by I think Aristotle who in his third ethics book (the one we sadly lost when St. Augustine and his neo-platonist followers went on a wine-drunk spree of destroying manuscripts after a particularly exciting discussion about some ontological proof of God existing) said it is never right for man to be eaten by a bear, because even if the man is an asshole, he is still of more perfect moderation than the bear. This argument went on for years and years and years. Different philosophers saying different things about the rights of the asshole versus the rights of a bear.

But now in 2008 we finally have the book that really gets to the bottom of his primordial philosophical question. Told from point of view of the asshole trapped under an SUV while a bear eats his legs, we are able to judge for ourselves if it is ok for the asshole to be eaten. Should we feel sorry for him? Do we want him to live? Is the bear right? If you found an asshole with his legs sticking out, trapped, under an SUV would you consider eating his legs? These are the kinds of things you can think about while reading this engaging and at times quite funny novel. Or maybe you can think about other things. The great thing about living in this country (or maybe yours too if you aren't living in mine, or maybe not) is that you can think about anything you'd like while reading a novel. Seriously, it's kind of awesome. If you want you can even think about something totally off topic, like say kittens, and what do kittens have to do with the novel your reading, which if it's this one I can assure you not very much on a surface reading, but who knows what you'll find if you're really looking for kittens in a close reading.

So in conclusion, this book is funny and it looks at a very serious ethical problem, and you can think about anything you'd like when you read it, although if you think about other things too much you'll probably miss a lot of what is going on in the book, which could be bad.

karen says

absolutely. lets be honest, this is a book you buy for the cover, initially. but behold: its actually well-written!! this is the most unsympathetic character ive read since dostoevskys the adolescent, but its a hoot, and i didnt want to throw the book even once, which i did with the adolescent. thats a lot of commas to just say - yes - read this book.

this is a p.s. - a customer asked me for a recommendation for someone who liked camus and chuck palahniuk. this is perfectly centered between the existential and the bizarre. thanks, mykle!

Steve Lowe says

This is very funny book, filled with a slew of excellent one-liners that made me chortle. Because it made me laugh, I wanted to like this book more, but there were a couple things that bugged me about it.

1. As the back cover tells me, the main character, Marv Pushkin, is an asshole of the highest order. A drug-abusing, selfish, vain, rude, philandering asshole. I have no problem with that at all, but I was expecting something to change by the end. To set up such a character, and stick him in a situation like this (stuck under a broke down Range Rover in Alaska, a bear eating his legs, slowly dying...) I would think there would be an arc, that he would learn a lesson, develop a new perspective. Grow, change, be in some way different by the end. But that really didn't happen.

2. I felt like the author was doing the old wink-and-nudge too often, especially by the end when Marv goes off on a pro-Capitalism and anti-terrorist screed that just didn't ring true. It made him seem like a caricature, or a cardboard cutout of the 'Ugly American'. Maybe I'm just reading this at the wrong time, maybe I'm being too touchy here, but it feels old and played out. Yeah, I get it, Americans are big, fat, loud, racist, obnoxious assholes who hate the environment and love themselves some guns and gas-guzzling cars and chicks with huge tits. But Marv is little more than a stereotype, and never really developed past that. There were portions where he could have, some intimate details about his life and insight into how he maybe got to be the way he is, but it's too brief and not really explored. And because he doesn't change or grow or develop into more than this stereotype, well, that's what he remains.

The idea here is great, the cover art is awesome, and as previously mentioned, there are some really funny lines in this that definitely made it worth the read.
