

What beauty there is

by Cory Anderson · Language: EN

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Overview

Cory Anderson's "What Beauty There Is" is a harrowing and poignant survival thriller set in the unforgiving Idaho wilderness. The story centers on two brothers, Lyon and Sam Mathers, who are left orphaned and destitute after their mother dies and their father commits suicide. Before his death, their father reveals a hidden stash of money, intended to secure their future. However, this money is also coveted by a dangerous and relentless man, the father of a boy their father killed years ago, who seeks both revenge and the cash. The brothers embark on a desperate journey through the frozen landscape, pursued by this vengeful figure, with their lives and their only hope for survival hanging by a thread.

The narrative explores profound themes of brotherhood, loyalty, and the resilience of the human spirit in the face of unimaginable hardship. As Lyon, the older brother, struggles to protect Sam, a younger boy with special needs, they encounter Brighton Miller, a girl with her own burdens and a complicated connection to their pursuer. Their paths intertwine, leading to an unlikely alliance forged in the crucible of shared danger. The book is a brutal yet beautiful exploration of what it means to survive, to protect those you love, and to find glimmers of hope and connection amidst the bleakest circumstances, all while questioning the true cost of revenge and the nature of justice in a world that often seems devoid of either.

Key Takeaways

- The bond of family and loyalty can be a powerful force for survival, even in the most desperate situations.
- True resilience is found not in avoiding hardship, but in enduring it and finding strength to protect those you love.
- Grief and trauma can manifest in complex ways, shaping decisions and relationships long after the initial loss.
- Even in the harshest environments, unexpected alliances can form, offering crucial support and a sense of belonging.
- The pursuit of revenge often leads to further destruction, trapping both the pursuer and the pursued in a cycle of violence.
- Beauty can be found in unexpected places and moments, even amidst profound suffering and desolation.

- Survival sometimes means letting go of what you thought you needed and embracing a different kind of future.

Chapter Summaries

The Inheritance of Snow

Lyon Mathers and his younger brother, Sam, are left alone after their mother's death and their father's suicide. Their father, Jed, leaves a cryptic message about hidden money meant for their future. Desperate and facing eviction, Lyon unearths the money, unaware that it belongs to a dangerous man who has been seeking it for years, and who is also seeking revenge for Jed's past actions. The harsh Idaho winter closes in, mirroring their bleak circumstances.

The Hunter's Shadow

The brothers' discovery of the money immediately puts them in peril. Isaac Miller, a relentless and vengeful man, begins his pursuit, determined to reclaim what he believes is his and to exact retribution for his son's death at Jed Mathers' hands. Lyon and Sam flee into the unforgiving wilderness, the cold and the constant threat of capture pressing down on them. The chase begins, a deadly game of cat and mouse across the frozen landscape.

Across the Frozen Land

Lyon and Sam endure brutal conditions, battling hunger, frostbite, and exhaustion as they try to outrun Isaac. Lyon's determination to protect Sam, who has special needs, fuels his every move, but their resources dwindle rapidly. The wilderness itself becomes both a refuge and a formidable enemy, testing the limits of their endurance and their fraternal bond. The boys face increasingly desperate choices to survive.

An Unlikely Alliance

Brighton Miller, Isaac's daughter, is introduced. She lives a life of hardship under her father's oppressive control, haunted by her family's past and her brother's death. Her path unexpectedly crosses with Lyon's as he seeks refuge. Initially wary, Brighton recognizes a shared struggle and a common enemy in her father. An uneasy alliance forms between them, driven by a mutual need for survival and escape from Isaac's tyranny.

The Reckoning

The chase culminates in a tense and violent confrontation. Lyon, Sam, and Brighton must use all their wits and strength to evade Isaac, who is closing in with deadly intent. The hidden money becomes a focal point of the struggle, representing both hope and a curse. The climax forces each character to make life-altering decisions, pushing them to their physical and emotional breaking points in a desperate fight for freedom.

What Remains

In the aftermath of the brutal confrontation, the survivors grapple with their losses and the profound changes they have undergone. The money is no longer a factor, but a new kind of future, though uncertain, begins to emerge. Lyon and Brighton find a deep connection forged in shared trauma and resilience. The brothers, forever changed, begin to heal and look towards a future where they can finally find peace and a place to belong, carrying the lessons of their harrowing journey.

Themes

- Brotherhood and loyalty
- Survival and resilience
- Grief and loss
- Poverty and desperation
- Revenge and justice
- Finding beauty in hardship

Notable Quotes

- "What beauty there is in the world, even when it's broken." — A recurring thought of Lyon's, reflecting on finding hope and wonder amidst suffering and the harshness of their lives.
- "The cold was a living thing, a hungry beast with teeth." — Describing the brutal, life-threatening winter conditions in the Idaho wilderness that the brothers must endure.
- "He would not let Sam go. Not ever. Not for anything." — Lyon's internal vow, highlighting his fierce loyalty and protective instinct towards his younger brother, Sam.
- "Some things, once broken, can never be put back together again." — A reflection on the irreversible damage caused by grief, violence, and the loss of innocence.
- "You don't get to choose your family, but you get to choose who you fight for." — A sentiment that resonates with both Lyon and Brighton as they form an alliance against a common threat.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is What beauty there is about?

"What Beauty There Is" is a Young Adult thriller about two orphaned brothers, Lyon and Sam, who are pursued through the Idaho wilderness by a vengeful man after their father's death and the discovery of hidden money. It's a story of survival, brotherhood, and finding hope amidst extreme hardship and danger, with an unlikely alliance forming along the way.

Is What beauty there is worth reading?

Yes, it is highly regarded for its intense plot, vivid setting, and deeply emotional exploration of brotherhood and resilience. Readers praise its raw honesty and the compelling characters, making it a powerful and memorable read for those who appreciate survival stories with profound emotional depth.

How does *What beauty there is* end?

Spoiler: The brothers, with Brighton's help, manage to defeat Isaac Miller in a final, brutal confrontation. The money is lost or destroyed, but they survive. Lyon and Brighton form a deep bond, and the brothers find a path forward, scarred but hopeful, towards a new life, having escaped the cycle of violence and found a different kind of freedom.

Who should read *What beauty there is*?

This book is ideal for readers who enjoy Young Adult thrillers, survival stories, and character-driven narratives. It appeals to those who appreciate intense emotional journeys, themes of family loyalty, and stories set in harsh, beautiful wilderness environments. It's recommended for ages 14 and up due to its mature themes and violence.

How long does it take to read *What beauty there is*?

On average, it takes approximately 5 to 7 hours to read "What Beauty There Is." This estimate can vary based on individual reading speed, but it provides a good general timeframe for completing the novel.