



Alabama Moon

By Watt Key

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Alabama Moon By Watt Key

For as long as ten-year-old Moon can remember, he has lived out in the forest in a shelter with his father. They keep to themselves, their only contact with other human beings an occasional trip to the nearest general store. When Moon's father dies, Moon follows his father's last instructions: to travel to Alaska to find others like themselves. But Moon is soon caught and entangled in a world he doesn't know or understand; he's become property of the government he has been avoiding all his life. As the spirited and resourceful Moon encounters constables, jails, institutions, lawyers, true friends, and true enemies, he adapts his wilderness survival skills and learns to survive in the outside world, and even, perhaps, make his home there. This title has Common Core connections.

Alabama Moon is a 2007 Bank Street - Best Children's Book of the Year.

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Alabama Moon By Watt Key Bibliography

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- Binding: Paperback
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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 6-8—Moon, 10, has spent most of his life in a camouflaged shelter in the forest with his father, a Vietnam veteran who distrusts people and the government. Pap has educated him in both academics and survival skills. His life suddenly changes when the land is sold to a lawyer and his father dies. The lawyer discovers him and, believing what he is doing is best for the child, turns him over to Mr. Gene from the local boys home. When Moon escapes, Mr. Gene alerts the constable, an emotionally unstable bully who becomes obsessed with capturing him. Once at the home, though, Moon makes his first real friends and learns what friendship is all about. Much of the story revolves around multiple chases, captures, and escapes. The ending might be a bit too perfect, but it is a happy one for Moon. The book is well written with a flowing style, plenty of dialogue, and lots of action. The characters are well drawn and three-dimensional, except for the constable—but then, maybe that's all there is to him. Even those who knew him as a child have nothing good to say about him. The language is in keeping with the characters' personalities and the situations. Although Moon is only 10, older readers will also enjoy the book and will better understand the adults' perspectives.—*Nancy P. Reeder, Heathwood Hall Episcopal School, Columbia, SC*

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From [Booklist](#)

Starred Review This excellent novel of survival and adventure begins with the death of young Moon's father, an antigovernment radical who has been living off the land in rural Alabama with Moon for years. Moon has never known any truth but his dad's, and so he tries to continue his father's lifestyle.

Unfortunately, Moon quickly finds himself in the claws of civilization, as personified by a sadistic cop. After a brief stint in jail (a lifetime of hunting and gathering leaves Moon hilariously pleased with the prison food), Moon again lights out for the territories, only to be recaptured and end up in reform school. Of course, no reform school is gonna keep Moon in check. Key's first novel is populated with memorable characters--such as Moon's reform-school buddy's dad, whose life is devoted to drinking and shooting machine guns--and studded with utterly authentic details about rural Alabama and survivalism. Stylistically, the book is perfectly paced, and Moon's narration is thoroughly believable. A terrific choice for reluctant readers and also for fans of Gary Paulsen's Brian novels. *Ilene Cooper*

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Review

"Excellent. A terrific choice for reluctant readers." ?*Booklist, Starred Review*

"An unusual coming-of-age story." ?*The New York Times Book Review*

"A winningly fresh look at life and culture almost never seen in children's books." ?*The Horn Book Magazine*

"Key writes honestly about hunting, trapping and the hardships of survival in this rather unusual coming-of-age story." ?*Kirkus Reviews*

"Well written with a flowing style, plenty of dialogue, and lots of action." ?*School Library Journal*

"Compelling." ?*Voices of Youth Advocates*

“Absorbing.” ?*Publishers Weekly*

“For boys who dream of unfettered life in the great outdoors . . . Moon's a bona fide hero.” ?*The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Bonita Crist:

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Kristine Toomey:

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