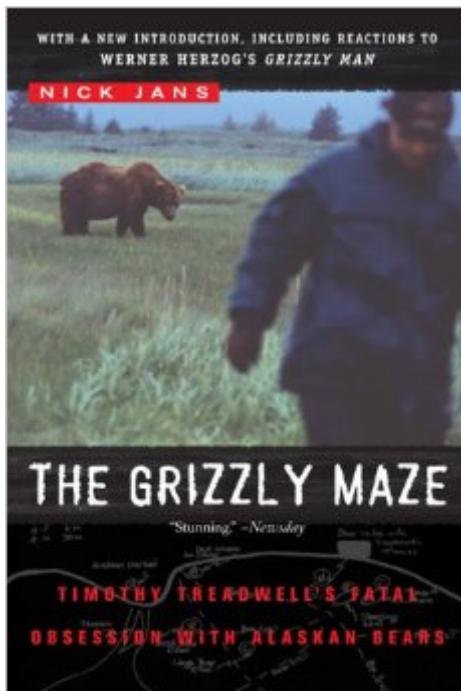


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The Grizzly Maze: Timothy Treadwell's Fatal Obsession With Alaskan Bears



Synopsis

With a new introduction on Werner Herzog's film entitled "The Grizzly Man" Timothy Treadwell, self-styled "bear whisperer" • dared to live among the grizzlies, seeking to overturn the perception of them as dangerously aggressive animals. When he and his girlfriend were mauled in October 2003, it created a media sensation. In "The Grizzly Maze," Nick Jans, a seasoned outdoor writer with a quarter century of experience writing about Alaska and bears, traces Treadwell's rise from unknown waiter in California to celebrity, providing a moving portrait of the man whose controversial ideas and behavior earned him the scorn of hunters, the adoration of animal lovers and the skepticism of naturalists. BACKCOVER: "Intensely imagistic, artfully controlled prose . . . behind the building tension of Treadwell's path to oblivion, a stunning landscape looms." "Newsday

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Customer Reviews

One day in 1999, as I was channel surfing, I came across a documentary on the Discovery Channel entitled "Grizzly Diaries" which was ostensibly about Alaskan bears. Being that I've had a long interest with both Alaska and bears, I stopped my channel surfing to watch the show. I was therefore treated to the stupifying antics of one Timothy Treadwell of Malibu! As I sat there with my mouth agape staring in disbelief at the bizarre, reckless behavior of this effeminate-sounding wanna-be Grizzly Adams, I was saying to myself: "This man is nuts! And he's going to get himself killed!" Thus, when the news came in October 2003 that Treadwell had indeed been killed by a

bear, it sparked an interest to learn more about this man and the events of his death. Nick Jans' book, "The Grizzly Maze," is an entertaining and satisfying reading experience for those interested in Mr. Treadwell. As other reviewers have noted, Jans is a gifted writer and his laid-back, folksy style is a pleasure to read. I finished this book in two days- it's so well written that it makes an already interesting topic even more fascinating. Jans attempts to be as evenhanded as possible with his controversial subject. To many people, especially most Alaskans, Treadwell was a benighted greenie interloper who got his ecological comeuppance for trying to make "nicey-nice" with the bears. To others, Treadwell was a heroic eco-warrior who lived a full passionate life that mundane souls can only dream about. Jans finds truths in both of those viewpoints. Jans finds a lot about Treadwell to admire and, in fact, sees a lot of similarities between himself and Timothy. He clearly admires Treadwell's passion, his drive, his refusal to settle, and, above all, his sheer guts!

I live in Kodiak Alaska and am proud to associate myself and my fellow islanders as good neighbors to the Brown bear. Unfortunately Mr. Treadwell did not feel the same and felt it was appropriate to intrude on these wild but magnificent creatures. This turned out to be a deadly mistake to both human and bear alike. When Timothy Treadwell and his friend, Amie Huguenard were killed in October 2003 at the Katmai National Park most people from Kodiak had no idea who he was. The conservationist and the Park personnel however did. A lot of anger erupted over this incident due to Treadwell's encroachment of the bears and I found myself getting angrier and angrier the more I learned about this man who felt he was a "bear whisperer" when in fact he was self serving and obviously ignorant of the fact that if he was killed the bears would pay the ultimate price. Jans does a fantastic job telling this story. He is a very good writer and the book is an easy read. He is fair and balanced and he goes a long way to put closure of this incident for many people. He tells it all. The good, bad and ugly. He approached his research in a respectful and scientific way. He was able to gain the trust of the locals here (no easy feat) who shared with him their knowledge of bears and the people involved. Jans does a magnificent job telling the story and due to his prior experiences in Alaska he was able to explain much of Treadwell's actions which helped me channel much of the anger I had over this incident into a deeper understanding of Mr. Treadwell's actions. Jans does this the same way Jon Krakauer did with the main character from his best selling book, *Into The Wilds*.

The Grizzly Maze by Nick Jans is an excellent treatment of the life and death of Timothy Treadwell. I have been reading Jans's essays and articles for a long time and have always found his writing to be both thoughtful and thought provoking. In The Grizzly Maze, he delves deeply into

the life of Treadwell to seek to understand Treadwell's "fatal obsession." I lived in Alaska for many years and when I first heard of Treadwell and Huguenard's deaths, my first reaction was, "What do you expect?" And I thought Jans might have a similar attitude - being also a long time Alaskan and a man experienced in the ways of bears. I was wrong about Jans. He wrote with a grudging admiration of the courage Treadwell must have had to survive as long as he did among the bears of Katmai. The book is extensively researched. It seems Jans talked with everyone connected in any way with Treadwell and the investigation of his killing. The chapters dealing with Treadwell and Huguenard's last days and the discovery of their deaths are particularly well done. Jans provides the reader with a gripping moment by moment tale of what might have happened to Timothy and Amie. Although the story culminates in a tragedy - two humans and two bears killed - Jans's wry sense of humor and narrative skill made the read very enjoyable. A few examples -(Reflecting the attitude of the Park Service)"And there's Timothy Treadwell, alone, plunked down at the epicenter of bear town, like he's home on the Barcalounger." "You don't crowd or habituate bears and contaminate your study area by interacting with them. You don't treat them like people in furry suits. You sure as hell don't sing or talk to them." The second half of the book surprised me a bit.

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