



A Home for Grumbly Bear

Heather Hall

Tyra Schad, Illustrator

FriesenPress

(32pp)

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Through its story about a bear's curiosity, A Home for Grumbly Bear represents values around home, friendship, and adventure.

Perfect for bedtime reading, Heather Hall's picture book *A Home for Grumbly Bear* tracks a curious woodland creature's adventures.

Grumbly Bear is curious about the world beyond his home in the Rocky Mountains. He sees a truck and wonders where it goes. But he's not content just to wonder; he also boards the truck and takes off. He ends up traveling over land and through water before winding up on an island. There, he meets new friends and rethinks his definition of *home*.

Pairing encouragements to seek adventures with the grounded model of Grumbly Bear looking for, and finding, a home community, the book's developments are divergent but conflict-free. Indeed, the islanders are quick to welcome Grumbly Bear, despite his being far larger than a rabbit, mouse, or deer. Thus, Grumbly Bear's decision regarding whether or not he'd like to stay on Saturna Island with his new friends is an unsurprising one. It is also somewhat at odds with much of the book's focus: many pages are devoted to Grumbly Bear's travels to Saturna Island, while his arrival on the island and encounters with those who fast become his friends are rushed through.

Further, though "this is a made-up story," the book draws real-world concerns into its pages, too, noting:

The places in this tale are real. Saturna Island is in the Salish Sea, between what is now called Vancouver Island and the mainland of British Columbia. Since time immemorial this land has belonged to the Coast Salish people, and it's important to respect this heritage and preserve these lands.

Also educational is the book's use of vocabulary-expanding terms like "scrumptious" and "lurched."

Eye-catching illustrations complement Grumbly Bear's travels well; many stand on their own thanks to their narrative details.

In the lighthearted picture book *A Home for Grumbly Bear*, a bear searches for a community and a place to call home.

CAMILLE TINNIN (December 16, 2023)

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