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Tommi Goes Camping

Catherine A. Parvensky Barwell
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Medically minded children and those who worry about what may go wrong in an unfamiliar setting will love Tommi Lance, a young ambulance who delights in rushing the injured to the hospital. In the latest installment of this educational series, Tommi goes camping with his best friend, a girl named Emily Nicole. They set up their tents, then spend their day giving first aid to unfortunate campers. When they meet a little boy who has been stung by a bee, Tommi helps him use his Epi-Pen. “Make sure you always have your Epi-Pen nearby,” Tommi instructs. “It is the only thing that will make you better when you are having an allergic reaction.”

Tommi’s ability to assess medical emergencies comes in handy again when he and Emily Nicole meet a girl who has been bitten by a rattlesnake. Tommi cleans the wound and immobilizes the girl’s leg with a splint before rushing her to the hospital for anti-venom, which he explains is “special medicine so that the poison from the snake wouldn’t make her sick.” Later, Tommi helps a girl who has eaten poisonous berries, a boy with a fishhook stuck in his hand, a man with heat stroke, and a boy whose shirt catches fire while he’s toasting marshmallows.

Tommi’s comments help to reduce the fear factor for timid children by treating each medical emergency as a solvable problem with a happy outcome. Although these injuries sound frightening, the author/illustrator still conveys the fun and adventure of camping. The fishhook in the boy’s hand is barely visible, for example, and Tommi toasts a marshmallow, too, before the fire occurs. His long eyelashes and steady smile reassure readers that everything will be made right in the end.

Barwell’s artistic talent rounds out an impressive resume. Her colorful cartoon illustrations, including a backpack-carrying dog, are detailed and whimsical. She draws on her experience as an emergency medical worker, pediatric nurse, educator, and writer of medical textbooks in writing about Tommi’s adventures. The other titles in this series are *The Adventures of Tommi Lance*, *Tommi’s First Snowfall*, and *Tommi Goes to the Beach*.
ELIZABETH BREAU (December 8, 2006)

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