

Two sisters who live in New York City with their widowed mother meet a young man called "Bear" who has a secret mission connected to the unsolved murder of a Catholic priest.

Parents of younger readers might want to know:

WARNING: SPOILERS

There is rather intense violence in the climax of this book which might catch some readers unaware, as the beginning is rather uneventful.

Also, there is a scene in Chapter 11 that parents might want to read before giving this book to a younger child. Basically, if you think your child can handle chapter 11, I think she can handle the book.

In chapter 11, one of the heroines goes to the prom with a guy who's kind of "iffy". He tricks her into going into a bedroom alone with him. She realizes what's going on, and she gets out of it in a very clever way, but basically this scene is an attempted date rape that is circumvented. My husband read this book out loud to our family a few years ago, and afterwards I quizzed my eight year old about that scene. "What did you think about that scene?" she answered, "You should never go into a bedroom alone with a boy!" "Right answer!" I said.

As this is a mystery/suspense book, it contains menace and intense situation, which culminates in violence at the climax. There is a gunfight, several fistfights, as well as an offstage torture scene which is overheard.

After offering her life in exchange for a prisoner, one heroine willingly allows herself to be suffocated with a plastic bag, but she is rescued before she dies. This can be disturbing for some readers.

Although there are several references to the details of the murder of a priest which occurred in the past, no characters die in this book.

This book has appeared as an audio drama on Catholic family radio stations (it won the 2009 Sonic Society Award for Best Audio Drama), and many families have listened to it together on CD, which makes me believe that the content above is portrayed ambiguously enough for general family reading. But that's only a guess.

The Author Recommends this Book: for ages 14 and older