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Big Game (FunJungle)



Synopsis

Teddy Fitzroy returns as FunJungle's resident zoo sleuth when a rhinoceros is at risk in *Big Game*, a companion to *Belly Up* and *Poached* which Kirkus Reviews called a "æthrill-ride of a mystery." When someone takes aim at Rhonda Rhino, FunJungle's pregnant (and endangered) Asian greater one-horned rhinoceros, the zoo steps up security measures in order to protect this rare animal and her baby. But the extra security isn't enough "someone is still getting too close for comfort. Teddy and company start to suspect that whoever is after Rhonda is really after her horn, which is worth a lot of money on the black market. For the first time ever, the head of the zoo enlists Teddy for help "for once, he doesn't have to sneak around in order to investigate" and the results are even more wacky, and even more dangerous, than ever before.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 740 (What's this?)

Series: FunJungle

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Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars See all reviews (38 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #11,573 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #20 in Books > Children's Books > Animals > Zoos #128 in Books > Children's Books > Mysteries & Detectives #787 in Books > Children's Books > Action & Adventure

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

Thoughts: I have been reading Stuart Gibbs' *Spy School* series for quite a while now, but only recently heard of the *FunJungle* series. Since Stuart Gibbs is one of my favorite authors, I decided it would be a crime to not read his other books. I picked up this book, firstly because it was a *FunJungle* book, and secondly because it's Stuart Gibbs' latest book (Oscar and I always read and review our interviewed authors' latest books). I immediately was thrust into Teddy's world, and I

couldn't turn my eyes away. I always love mysteries, as long as they're the type that are action-packed, mind-boggling, and suspenseful. Big Game is definitely those three things, and so much more. I loved every one of the characters in this book. They were all developed, and at times so ridiculously silly that I honestly couldn't take them seriously (Marge.) But that's what I love about this book - it's like a weird mix of some wacky Roald Dahl characters, Percy Jackson, and mystery. The writing was enjoyable, suspenseful, and (of course) hilarious. There was an amazing twist at the end, and the story kept the reader on their toes the whole times. Overall, probably one of my favorite mysteries I've ever read.

This is another gem in the Funjungle series. Someone is after Rhonda the Rhino! She has been shot at from a distance and everyone at Funjungle wants to find the perpetrator and ensure the safety of the rhinos (who are very endangered due to some mumbo jumbo about their horns being medicinal, which is blatantly false). Teddy Fitzroy, the hero of our Funjungle series is put on the case by the owner, JJ McCracken, to help find this terrible person and bring them to justice. Meanwhile, someone is throwing garbage cans through shop windows after hours and making off with baked goods, ice cream and 25 pounds of candy. Teddy is now also investigating this crime to clear his name for Large Marge, who work's security in the park and is determined to get Teddy for his vagrant behavior because he is such a bad apple (also bogus). Teddy and his friend Summer, JJ's daughter, find evidence that the shooter is someone inside Funjungle and they must find out who it is before the rhino's horns are removed in an attempt to "save them" from this nefarious person. I do enjoy a good mystery and one set inside a zoo is even better. What made this book such fun is the interactions Teddy and his parents (a primatologist and wildlife photographer both employed by the zoo) have with all the creatures. The included information the author has at the end of the novel about the devastation of the rhino population is also interesting and very sad at the same time. This is another great book from the Funjungle series and I eagerly await new releases. I must also mention this is great as a stand alone (you don't have to read the other two to enjoy this book) but I am sure you will want to seek the other two, Poached and Belly Up, if you read this one. While there is implied violence with the shooting, there is nothing here that would scare younger readers and is definitely a suitable chapter book for bedtime reading.

It's a cold morning in February when a gun goes off somewhere on the grounds of FunJungle. The immediate result is an elephant stampede, but security quickly determines that someone has shot at Rhonda Rhino. She is about to give birth to a baby, so this is doubly

worrisome. Worse yet, the angle of the bullet makes it look like the shot came from inside the park. Twelve-year-old Teddy Fitzroy has already solved two cases in the park, but he is flattered when J. J. McCracken, the park's extremely rich owner, asks him to investigate. Even better, that means he gets to work with J. J.'s daughter Summer. But can they find the shooter before he strikes again? And can Teddy avoid security guard Large Marge who is still determined to arrest Teddy for anything she thinks she can make stick? Before we go any further, I should issue a spoiler warning. No, I'm not going to spoil anything, but this book does spoil the previous book in the series, so be sure you've read that book before you read this one. However, since these books are so wonderful, that's not a problem at all. While I have enjoyed all of Stuart's books, this series holds a special place in my heart since it was the first one I read, and I love the giant zoo setting. It was wonderful to be back and visit the characters once again. They are all well-developed, and it was interesting to see them and their relationships grow in this book. With how things ended, I'm very anxious to see what happens to them in future books. The plot was wonderfully constructed. As things came together at the end, I was impressed with the set up for the events much earlier in the book. I figured out the solution as Teddy did, and everything fell into perfect place. There were some great twists and at least one heart pounding scene before we reached that ending as well. Plus there's the humor. Most of it comes at Large Marge's expense, but I enjoyed those scenes as well. Sadly, the premise for this book, the value of rhinoceros's horns and the poaching that goes on because of that, is an all too real issue. This issue is addressed over the course of the novel without ever once slowing down the pace of the plot. A note from the author at the end tells us all how we can learn more and help. If you are looking for a fast paced mystery, you've come to the right place. The intended middle grade audience will enjoy it, and any adult who is looking for a great mystery will enjoy it as well.

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