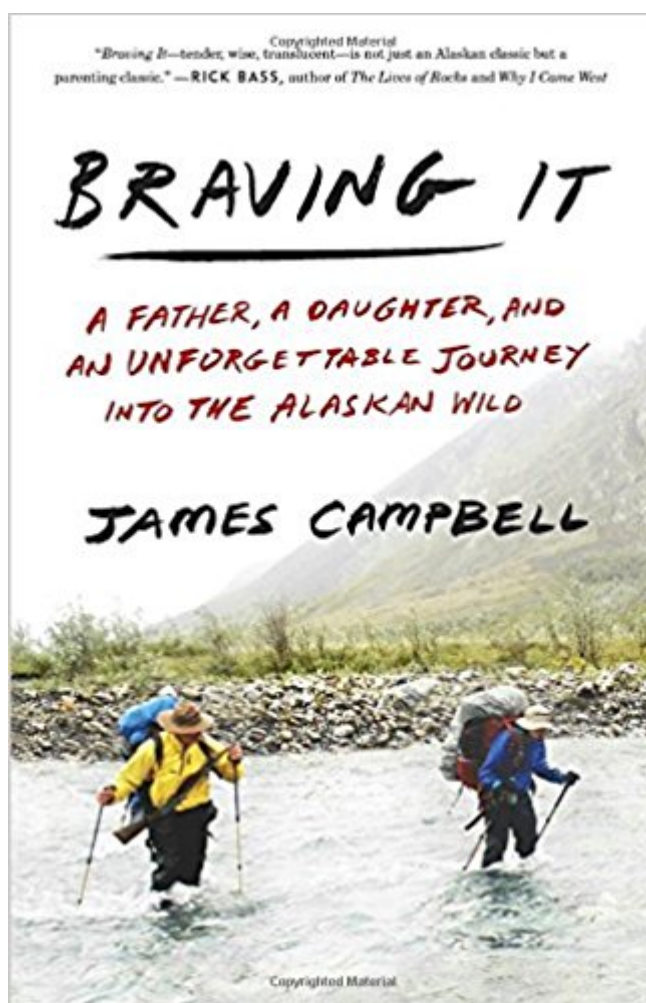


The book was found

Braving It: A Father, A Daughter, And An Unforgettable Journey Into The Alaskan Wild



Synopsis

The powerful and affirming story of a father's journey with his teenage daughter to the far reaches of Alaska — Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, home to only a handful of people, is a harsh and lonely place. So when James Campbell's cousin Heimo Korth asked him to spend a summer building a cabin in the rugged Interior, Campbell hesitated about inviting his fifteen-year-old daughter, Aidan, to join him: Would she be able to withstand clouds of mosquitoes, the threat of grizzlies, bathing in an ice-cold river, and hours of grueling labor peeling and hauling logs? But once there, Aidan embraced the wild. She even agreed to return a few months later to help the Korths work their traplines and hunt for caribou and moose. Despite windchills of 50 degrees below zero, father and daughter ventured out daily to track, hunt, and trap. Under the supervision of Edna, Heimo's Yupik Eskimo wife, Aidan grew more confident in the woods. Campbell knew that in traditional Eskimo cultures, some daughters earned a rite of passage usually reserved for young men. So he decided to take Aidan back to Alaska one final time before she left home. It would be their third and most ambitious trip, backpacking over Alaska's Brooks Range to the headwaters of the mighty Hulahula River, where they would assemble a folding canoe and paddle to the Arctic Ocean. The journey would test them, and their relationship, in one of the planet's most remote places: a land of wolves, musk oxen, Dall sheep, golden eagles, and polar bears. At turns poignant and humorous, *Braving It* is an ode to America's disappearing wilderness and a profound meditation on what it means for a child to grow up — and a parent to finally, fully let go.

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Customer Reviews

Finalist for the Banff Mountain Book Competition "Adventure Travel" One of the reasons we read books like *Braving It* [is] to experience what we may never have the particular courage to and share the terror and thrills of those who do. And Aidan is exceptional, choosing to ditch friends and devices in order to rough it. It is invigorating to meet a young woman hellbent on self-sufficiency, to watch her twist the head off a just-shot caribou and bop around the campsite, bear bells jingling around her neck. Mr. Campbell has set his daughter on the hero's journey and offered her the inviolable obligation of the parent: to show his child that she needs to save her own life and that she can.

"The Wall Street Journal" Campbell's prose captures both the difficulties and pleasures on offer in the extreme wild... Parents who enjoy Campbell's adventures vicariously might find themselves contemplating their own family outing.

"Richmond Times Dispatch" James Campbell describes his trips to Alaska, where father and daughter faced off with grizzlies, battled clouds of mosquitos, capsized in a freezing river and pushed the bond between them to its limits.

"National Geographic" *Braving It* is a detailed portrayal of terrain so harsh it would give any seasoned outdoorsman pause, complete with grizzlies, brushes with hypothermia, and a growing bond that is honest, hard-earned, and touching.

"Men's Journal" Campbell, through his descriptions and thoughtful reflection, brings to life the Arctic's great beauty, expanse and values as a wilderness and testing ground a 'final frontier' for a certain kind of seeker.

Braving It is a smart, insightful book that should be read by fathers and daughters everywhere and by anyone who looks to wild country as part of the geography of hope.

"Alaska Dispatch News" A touching and riveting true story of hope and adventure.

"Alaska Beyond" [Campbell's] daughter, Aidan, [is] worthy of a book-length tribute. *Braving It* [is] as much about parenting as it is about adventure, though in Campbell's book the two concepts are often inseparable.

"Isthmus" With humor and honesty, Campbell brings readers along for the adventure, which is full of swarms of hungry mosquitoes, the fear of grizzly bears, and the push-pull relationship between a teenage girl and her father. Campbell expertly blends facts on the flora, fauna, and general life in the Alaskan bush with his reflections on being middle-aged, with many adventurous years behind him, as opposed to his daughter, whose quest for adventure has only just begun. Informative, humorous, and full of a love of nature.

"Kirkus Reviews" A delightful and sometimes harrowing tale of the Alaskan bush.

"Shelf Awareness" Some parents will doubtless think the adventure James Campbell took his daughter on was irresponsibly dangerous or just plain crazy. But as a father myself, I'm in envious awe of the bold decision he made and the clarity with which he made it. As *Braving It* poignantly demonstrates, there is no better teacher than deep wilderness. Here is the essence of good writing and good parenting, too.

"Hampton

Sides, author of *In the Kingdom of Ice* — *Braving It*, the book, is a metaphor for the wilderness — “the call of the wild” that James Campbell evokes in this masterfully told story. Every time I set the book down, I pondered the lessons learned, and couldn’t wait for my next sojourn into its pages. When it ended, I longed for the adventure to continue and pined for the beauty of Alaska. So I picked it up and read it again, savoring every page.

• Eric Blehm, author of *The Last Season*, *Fearless*, and *Legend* — *Braving It* “tender, wise, translucent” is not just an Alaskan classic, but a parenting classic. I read it with great fondness, hunger, and a deep satisfaction.

• Rick Bass, author of *The Lives of Rocks* and *Why I Came West* — “This is a guide book for the heart, step-by-step instructions on how to fall in love with Alaska — the hard work and fear, the thrilling adventure and awe. Along the way, we are given an honest and touching portrait of a middle-aged man coming to terms with his own limitations even as he learns to set his adolescent daughter free from the confines of childhood. A wonderful book for any mental traveler who has yearned to experience Alaska.”

• Eowyn Ivey, author of *The Snow Child* — “Any of us who’ve watched daughters grow up to be strong and capable in the backcountry will delight in this book — it’s a wonderful new world in many ways!”

• Bill McKibben, author of *The End of Nature* and *Wandering Home* — “In this wonderful book, James Campbell and his teenage daughter set off on a great adventure to one of the most beautiful, and often perilous, places on earth — the Arctic wilderness of Alaska. They face many challenges — whitewater rapids, grizzly bears, bone-numbing cold — but none as daunting for Campbell as guiding his daughter across the great divide between childhood and maturity. Set against a primal landscape of mountains and fast-flowing rivers, *Braving It* is as simple and powerful as any fairy tale.”

• John Hildebrand, author of *Reading the River* and *The Heart of Things* — “As a father of daughters and lover of adventure, I found *Braving It* to be spot on — riveting, profound, open-eyed, and deeply touching. Campbell’s struggle to understand and measure up to the stark and stunning Alaskan wilderness and, more importantly, to his teenage daughter — to find his place in the lives of both — becomes our struggle, too. A must-read for every striving parent and every teen striving to understand his or her parents.”

• Dean King, author of *Skeletons on the Zahara* and *The Feud* — “*Braving It* is a beautiful and original book, an antidote to the screenification of modern life. As a father enters the country of middle age, and a daughter edges toward adulthood, they share an epic Alaskan adventure. Among the dangers they encounter is an unexpected one: fleeting time. Countering this is the gift the father gives the daughter and the writer gives the reader: the gift of the elemental now, of moments of wind, fire, water, snow, beauty. And of equally primal moments of human love and connection.”

• David Gessner, author of *All the Wild that Remains: Edward*

Abbey, Wallace Stegner and the American West

• "Self your idea of a good time is hordes of mosquitoes and wind chills of 50 below, you are not your average dad. And if you invite your teenage daughter to enjoy these with you and she says yes, she may not be your average daughter. This is a great story of what it means to love, trust and test your kids."

• "Lenore Skenazy, author of *Free-Range Kids*

• "Braving It is a book full of hope. At a time when we are concerned with ravages upon the environment, this story explores the wonder and unspoiled beauty of the Alaskan wild. And at a time when our youth are consumed with technology, social media, and a sense of entitlement, we read about a teenage girl who not only chooses to venture into the wilderness, but relishes the experience. This book gives me hope for our landscape and our youth."

• "Larry Beck, San Diego State University professor and author of *Moving Beyond Treeline*

• "Rarely has a book captured so well the unknown wilderness of parenting, of what it is to be a teenager and what it is for a father to learn to trust. *Braving It* is also a kind of guide to stepping outside one's comfort zone. A must-read for anyone trying to understand the father-daughter bond and anyone who loves wildness."

• "Melissa Arnot, mountaineer

• "*Braving It* is part call to adventure, part coming of age story, and part celebration of family. A thoroughly engaging and thought-provoking read."

• "Daniel L. Dustin, Professor of Outdoor Recreation, University of Utah

From the Hardcover edition.

JAMES CAMPBELL is the author of *The Final Frontiersman* and *The Ghost Mountain Boys*. He has written for *Outside* magazine, *National Geographic Adventure*, *Men's Journal*, *Audubon*, and many other publications.

The Hubs read this book after having read *The Final Frontiersman*, which he said was awesome! He enjoyed reading both books and has loaned them to his friends who want to read them. After hearing his opinions of the book(s), I would highly recommend this book and James Campbell's other book...*The Final Frontiersman* for truly enjoyable reading.

It's been a few months since I've read this so forgive me for lacking in details, but emotionally this stuck me pretty deep as the story resonated with me as the father of a little girl, as someone who is raising her in the wild as much as possible and as a lover of the 49th state. Wonderful story of adventure, parenthood and father-daughter bonding. I read it on my Kindle but I am buying a hardback for the bookshelf because I will read this again as my daughter gets older.

Great read, but I love the Alaskan wilderness. The growth of the teenage daughter/father relationship was particularly enjoyable for me, so even if you don't like "that awe", give this book a try.

This book really spoke to me, as a father of two girls, a lover of nature, and a fellow Madisonian who lives in the country. I salute James storytelling prowess and his amazing skills as a parent to raise his girls with such adventure and love of life itself. I share this same calling for "fernweh", but haven't realized it to the extent he has, but was able to be inspired through James book. Well written and exciting, I highly recommend this book.

One felt the danger implicit in navigating the Hulahula River while braving quickly weather-changing patterns within minutes. Mr. Campbell's daughter, Aiden, held her own with three men as company as her confidence and maturity grew before her father's eyes. A very enjoyable read. The love between father and daughter in the middle of real danger came through, as did the father's need to stretch his perception of Aiden's transition from a chrysalis into the more confident, mature, adventure seeking traveler of a butterfly.

Loved the casual imagery and the easy story telling. Having seen some of the recent reality shows about Alaska, this book intrigued me. I went so far as to watch the first documentary about their cousins Heimo and Edna. After having seen a review of this book I knew I had to read it. It did not disappoint. I recommend this to those who love the outdoors, especially kayaking and canoeing and those interested in adventuring. At last, a good story about a young woman.

I read this book after reading The Frontiersman. The story was just as captivating as I had hoped. I highly recommend this book.

Highly recommend. If you are an outdoor enthusiast or a parent there are life lessons on every page. Well written, couldn't put the book down as I wanted to know what happened next. Would have loved to see a few more pictures but I realize there wasn't always an opportunity to whip out a camera..

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