



The Wild Inside

Christine Carbo

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A haunting crime novel set in Glacier National Park about a man who finds himself at odds with the dark heart of the wild—and the even darker heart of human nature.

It was a clear night in Glacier National Park. Fourteen-year-old Ted Systeard and his father were camping beneath the rugged peaks and starlit skies when something unimaginable happened: a grizzly bear attacked Ted's father and dragged him to his death.

Now, twenty years later, as Special Agent for the Department of the Interior, Ted gets called back to investigate a crime that mirrors the horror of that night. Except this time, the victim was tied to a tree before the mauling. Ted teams up with one of the park officers—a man named Monty, whose pleasant exterior masks an all-too-vivid knowledge of the hazardous terrain surrounding them. Residents of the area turn out to be suspicious of outsiders and less than forthcoming. Their intimate connection to the wild forces them to confront nature, and their fellow man, with equal measures of reverence and ruthlessness.

As the case progresses with no clear answers, more than human life is at stake—including that of the majestic creature responsible for the attack. Ted's search for the truth ends up leading him deeper into the wilderness than he ever imagined, on the trail of a killer, until he reaches a shocking and unexpected personal conclusion.

As intriguing and alluring as bestselling crime novels by C.J. Box, Louise Penny, and William Kent Krueger, as atmospheric and evocative as the nature writing of John Krakauer and Cheryl Strayed, *The Wild Inside* is a gripping debut novel about the perilous, unforgiving intersection between man and nature.

The Wild Inside Details

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From Reader Review The Wild Inside for online ebook

Caitlin says

Is anyone else suspicious about the number of reviews that include the phrase "debut novel" in the first sentence? I'm very surprised by the high number of good reviews for this book. It is not well written. The dialogue and characters are incredibly cliché and for a book about murder and bear maulings, it really drags. The book has a strong premise—an investigator returns to the national park where his father was mauled and killed by a grizzly bear to solve a similar murder—but it just completely falls down in execution. I felt like I was reading a very poor rendition of an episode of *Justified* (no disrespect to that show, it is far more nuanced and articulate than this book). The author spends a lot of time explaining the feelings and interior life of our main character with half-baked metaphors and stale sentiments, while also over-writing the action—i.e., instead of "he got in the car," she'll write "he headed down the driveway on his way to get in the car, then got in." Could have used a good strong edit.

Donna says

I liked this book. It is the debut novel of this author. That was impressive because she didn't pull at any of my pet peeves. This was an evenly paced story that moved along. The MC was very personable and had a great back story. He was creatively thought out. The ending was tied up neatly, if that is a must for you. So overall, 3 stars. I will keep a look out for this author in the future.

Linda says

This book seemed to check all the boxes for me: nature, wildlife, national parks, and mysteries. There aren't enough books in that genre for me.

I'll let others summarize the plotline. It held my interest because of its multi-layered dynamics. Everyone had a heavy backstory. It makes one think of the immense weight we carry within from the impact of earlier life situations. We never quite broker the opportunity to set it all down.

Christine Carbo has really done her research from all aspects. I did find the number of characters to be a bit off-putting. Carbo's story is splayed out like an outstretched hand never giving away any of its secrets until the end. That's why I didn't have the feel for a "suspense" novel. There didn't seem to be the build-up that was expected except for the character of Ted. It was more of a study of human nature and untangling it from its grip on all situations within.

It is my hope that Carbo will follow the character of Ted in her next offering. It would make a great series with an abundance of story opportunities as wide as Glacier National Park.

Randi says

I enjoyed this book for the dark chilling atmosphere, rich inner dialogue, and beautiful natural setting of Glacier National Park. It still took me longer to finish than I'd have liked, which now occurs to me as a funny similarity to the detective's slow pace in actually solving the case. (which was not just due to my sluggish reading of it since his slow solving pace was also observed by others in the book)

The only thing that could have made this book awesome was if the leading character was a woman instead. The book was written by one and some of the character's observations just seemed to me at times that it could easily have been from a woman's perspective. I wonder why the author chose to make the character a man? Was it just easier? This made me feel a kind of loss for a potentially super interesting avenue to explore: how a woman would handle such a male dominated position as a homicide detective in national parks.

I also wonder how dark Montana really is. The book says that near Glacier there are four seasons: almost winter, winter, still winter, and road construction. Minus the road construction, it sounds perfection to me. also, the "endless grey throughout so many months of the year." YES.

One of my favorite descriptive scenes:

"I continued having trouble sleeping and would often find myself lying awake in the chilled cabin, the tip of my nose cold and the covers pulled high. I could hear every sound Glacier had to offer: the wind caught in the fireplace fluke, an owl screeching, the scuffling sound of deer hooves crossing through fallen leaves, an intermittent high whistle of a cow-elk call or a lower, deeper, bull-elk bugle, a train passing by in West Glacier and an occasional honk of a vehicle from Highway 2 in the distance."

Shanna K says

Please don't waste your precious time on this book. I'm honestly not sure how it has received so many good reviews. I thought it poorly written and there were several spelling and grammar errors. The characters were not well developed and everything about them was cliché. The author used way too many adjectives to describe every single thing, including the mundane. Around chapter 8 I couldn't stand it anymore so I skipped several chapters ahead to find out the ending. Surprisingly, I found that I hadn't missed much. As soon as I found "who did it" I stopped reading the book and deleted it from my Kindle. Good riddance.

Deb says

Ted Systead is a detective working for the Department of the Interior. His agency is called into to aid the national park rangers and local police when homicide occurs in a park. His current case takes him back to Glacier National Park, a place he both loves and fears. As a young teenager he and his father went camping. Ted was traumatized when his father is mauled to death during the night by a grizzly bear. His investigation into another grizzly involved death brings his deepest fears to the surface, threatening his objectivity. The plot was compelling, and the attention to setting details created a vivid picture of the park. I liked the complexity of the main character, and the development of the relationship between Ted and his temporary

partner. I am looking forward to the next book in the series!

Annet says

This is just the book for me, I love Glacier, have camped there several times...and... met with grizzly bears during hikes... scary.

But Glacier is just a beautiful, wild park.

Li'l Owl says

Wow! A brilliant debut novel!

I don't ordinarily use the description for a book in writing my reviews but this is such an original story line and setting that I can't describe it any better than the books given introduction. So I'll start with that.

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Well, that about sums it up.

Christine Carbo has written a brilliant, spellbinding, and chilling debut that left me completely breathless and awestruck!

I love Glacier National Park's police officer Monty Harris! I've already started *Mortal Fall*, the second book in this series!

Highly recommended!

Debbie says

This was definitely a great debut novel. I really couldn't believe that it was a debut. The main character talked about cases in the past that he had handled and I seriously thought it was a sequel to a series.

The writing is awesome with a lot of emotion from Ted coming to light. Especially as he was a forest ranger working in forests where there are Grizzlies. This is certainly true dependent on the fact his father was killed by one.

I thought the story was pretty good for the most part but there were several times when the author kept letting us into his head that I think slowed down the pace too much. The ending where Ted worked things out in his mind I thought was a weird way to end a mystery book, but it actually worked for me.

This was a gruesome crime and there were several instances of gut wrenching crimes that the victim committed, so be prepared for that. I'm talking cruelty to animals, so beware of that. It wasn't enough to have me wrenching, but it did make me dislike the victim even more.

This was a very well written book with great character development and a suspect who you will never guess did it.

Thanks Atria and Net Galley for this free e-galley in exchange for an honest review. I truly enjoyed it and definitely recommend it.

Perri says

I love the writing for this atmospheric mystery set in Glacier Natl Park. The pace seems realistic in that things don't happen quickly and require painstaking detective work, false leads, interviewing and follow-up. So, it's not a thriller page-turner, but I was lulled in by the characters, especially the introspective detective, and enchanted by the lonely, empty feel of the wilderness of Montana in the off season.

?Susan? says

A special agent is sent to the area in Montana, where he grew up as a boy, to solve a murder mystery set in the woods of Glacier National Park. The key players either don't remember him or are unaware of a tragedy he suffered there as a boy. He must find a killer while trying to deal with his old demons, who are again rearing their ugly heads. For me Christine Carbo's caliber of writing is somewhere below C. J. Box but way above Nevada Barr, parts of the story felt like fill. Many suspects kept me guessing but R.C. Bray's narrative was the hero.

James Thane says

The Wild Inside is an excellent debut novel with a unique and very sympathetic protagonist.

As a fourteen-year-old boy in the Fall of 1987, Ted Systeard went camping with his father in Glacier National Park in northwestern Montana. While the two of them slept that night, a large grizzly bear attacked their tent, dragged Systeard's father away and mauled him to death. Fortunately, the bear did not return to attack Ted, but the boy, though physically safe, was very badly traumatized by the episode.

Twenty years later, Ted Systeard is still haunted by the events of that night. He now lives in Denver and works as a Special Agent for the Department of the Interior, investigating crimes that occur in the national park system. But when he's assigned to lead a death investigation in Glacier National Park, he's forced to confront not only a complex criminal case, but the personal demons he still harbors inside as well.

The victim of the crime is a low-life meth addict named Victor Lance. Lance was found duct-taped to a tree in the park and shot. While he was still alive and unable to defend himself, a grizzly bear found him and finished off the job that the killer had left undone.

The fact that the death was so horrific, that it occurred in Glacier, and that a grizzly was involved, all hit a bit too close to home for Systeard, and at times seem to compromise his ability to function effectively. He's also hampered by a lack of evidence, by uncooperative witnesses, and by a park supervisor who's more concerned about avoiding bad publicity than he is in assisting the investigation. But Systeard forges ahead, determined to see justice done, no matter the personal and other obstacles that confront him.

Carbo, who lives in Whitefish, Montana, obviously knows the park, the surrounding area and the people of the region very well. She's at her best in describing the great scenic beauty of the park as well as the small and sometimes not-so-scenic communities that surround it. Many of the people of the area are loners, suspicious of outsiders, and are especially wary of federal authorities. Sad to say, there *is* an ongoing problem with meth and other drugs in northwestern Montana, and Carbo doesn't shy away from showing us the toll that drug abuse is taking on these people and their communities. The end result is a gripping story that explores both the wilderness of the natural world and that of the human psyche. Readers will finish the book looking forward eagerly to Carbo's next effort.

Wendy says

I thoroughly enjoyed listening to "The Wild Inside", the 1st book in Christine Carbo's Glacier Mystery series.

Jennifer says

Nothing wrong with this book- I'm just not into detective-type crime novels. Too many books, too little time

to read something that doesn't captivate you.

If you like crime novels, check this one out though. Complex male lead with a tragic history that is coming back to haunt him in his current case. Kinda wish I liked this genre more!

Regina says

This is a great debut novel. I will be watching this author! A more fleshed out review closer to release date. But if you enjoy thrillers in wild/natural settings, then this book is for you.
