



Storm Runners

Roland Smith

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The first in a middle-grade action-adventure series from Roland Smith!

Chase Masters and his father are "storm runners," racing across the country in pursuit of hurricanes, tornadoes, and floods. Anywhere bad weather strikes, they are not far behind. Chase is learning more on the road than he ever would just sitting in a classroom. But when the hurricane of the century hits, he will be tested in ways he never could have imagined.

Storm Runners Details

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Author : Roland Smith

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From Reader Review Storm Runners for online ebook

Anne Hawn Smith says

This is a great book for Middle School students...and even adults! Chase and his dad are storm chasers, but not the weather people. Chase's father is a builder and he goes to places in the path of natural disasters. Chase's mother and little sister were killed in a car accident. After his dad was electrocuted in a storm and recovered after a 2 day coma, he sold his house and bought a trailer and equipment which he moved from one site to another, helping people rebuild.

As a category 5 hurricane bears down on central Florida, his dad leaves him at the Rossi Brothers' Circus winter quarters while he goes to help people prepare for the storm. Chase is fascinated by the circus animals which include a pregnant elephant due any day and an extremely hostile leopard, and especially young Nicole who is in his grade at school. As the storm approaches, the principle inadvisedly sends the students home on school busses. When the hurricane changes it's forecasted direction Chase, Nicole and Rashawn find themselves struggling through the hurricane on foot after the bus is overturned.

Jake says

The Storm Runners by Roland Smith

This book composed of a kid and his dad roaming the country searching for extreme storms. The setting of the book resides North of St. Petersburg, Florida. Personally, I would give this about an 8.5 on a scale of 10 total points. This book is interesting due to Chase Masters, the main character, having his dad being struck by lightning, but thankfully lived, and his Mom and Little Sister being killed in a car accident. Right off the bat seeing his tragic past kind of plays with your emotions and formulates a want to read more, and go deeper. On the other hand, something that isn't appealing is the way Chase Masters has practically no emotion; he always gives flat statements and dull expressions. It brings you to the point where you're wondering what a real person would feel in this situation, because it clearly doesn't state Chase's feelings in the book. This book is action-packed towards the end when Chase finds out that a leopard has been freed from his cage due to Hurricane Emily. At that moment Chase actually does show a little emotion and that is fear. Then it leaves you there dangling with Chase in a state of confusion, fear, and he's almost disoriented. So....until the next book.....

Mary Ann says

"The bus hit the water like a torpedo, pushing Chase's face into the seat frame. He felt a front tooth snap, followed by the coppery taste of blood. Frantically he felt around for his go bag. He'd need the first aid kit and everything else in the bag if they survived the crash..."

- Roland Smith, Storm Runners (ARC, p. 74)

Imagine knowing a Category Five hurricane is barreling toward you and you're trapped inside a school bus

trying to get you home. It's storm-dark, and rain is pelting the bus so hard that you can't see anything outside. Suddenly, the bus is lifted off its wheels and tossed onto its side, then down, down into water. Thirteen-year old Chase Masters knows he's in a life-or-death situation, and he does everything he can to survive this incredible situation. This is a book that will grab young readers, pull them through, and have them begging for the sequel.

Chase Masters and his father have been traveling across the U.S. following major storms and disasters ever since his father survived a lightning strike a year ago. They pursue tornadoes, floods, hurricanes - anywhere that disaster strikes, they'll be there, first offering to help people prepare for the disaster, and then being the first contractors on site to make money as people have to repair their homes. Chase has been trained to be a survivor - he knows what to do in case of emergencies and is prepared. But is he prepared for Hurricane Emily as it barrels down on the west coast of Florida?

If your child likes stories that keep you on the edge of your seat, this might be a great choice. Roland Smith excels at putting you right in the middle of a scene, making you feel every branch that whips past your face in the hurricane force winds. You can feel the crocodile's tail whip out as it takes Chase's legs out from under him, and hear the beast's jaws crash inches from your head. This is certainly a great book to get the adrenaline pumping.

Although it is short and full of action, I would recommend it for students in 4th or 5th grade who are stronger readers, able to keep several storylines in their minds. Smith switches the action from Chase to his father to the local newscaster. This heightens the drama, as Chase struggles for survival and his father searches for him. But the shifting point of view might be confusing to some readers. The biggest problem most readers will face is the cliff-hanger ending. My students are dying to get their hands on the sequel *Storm Runners #2: The Surge*, but it won't be out until September 1, 2011.

Chris says

A nice, quick read, which is exactly what I was looking for. Great book for grades 4–6. After his mother and sister are killed in a car crash and his father almost dies after being struck by lightning, you'd think Chase Masters' life couldn't get more upended than it already is. But his father has suddenly become a storm chaser, pulling Chase out of school and scampering around the country in search of disaster. As the book opens, they're arriving in north Florida ahead of a mega-hurricane called Emily. All of this is just build up for what turns out to be "the storm of the century," which doesn't hit St. Petersburg where Chase's dad has gone, but instead makes landfall farther north, exactly where Chase is staying. The build up to the storm becomes riveting, and once Chase and two brand new schoolmates are trapped on a school bus no kid is going to be able to put this down. While there are definitely a lot of nits an adult could pick, it's a great kids' read. The biggest downer is that I didn't realize this was the first in a series. The book ends on a cliffhanger and we have to wait until September for the next one.

Bdalton says

I listened to the audiobook. The story is about a father (John) and son (Chase) who travel to areas about to be hit by natural disasters (storms). The father offers to help secure buildings in advance of the storm for free. After the storm leaves, grateful storm victims come to him as paying customers to repair their storm

damaged homes. Chase is well prepared to deal with problems and a big one comes his way in the form of Hurricane Emily. Having just arrived in Florida to meet the storm, Chase meets Nicole, her family of little people, and gets introduced to their farm of circus animals. Chase, Nicole, and a girl that they meet on the school bus have to make it to safety by swimming through alligator infested waters, forcing their way through bracing winds, avoiding flying debris, and keeping their eyes out for wild animals. This book ends on a true cliff-hanger. This story will not appeal to those who wish to read a self-contained story. It should appeal to those who like a lot of adventure with their action. A good recommendation for boy reluctant readers.

Mrs. says

Okay I will say right off I was disappointed in this book because.....it is a series and I didn't know it! I didn't, for once, skip ahead to see what the ending would be like and as I neared the end of the book I thought how are they going to package this so quickly here in the end....only to find out it is a series. I think, I wish I would have known that up front and I bet kids will feel the same way too. Looking now in Feb the next book comes out in Aug! That is a long time to wait for me. It was a good read though, I had a hard time picturing a levee and I wonder if kids will too. Much of the action takes place around the levee. I also struggling with believability at times, thought it was a great adventure book. A pretty quick read with short chapters that were titled by the time of day rather than a title so you can follow the sequence of events clearly.

Gwen the Librarian says

I love most of Roland Smith's book and this one had be postponed, so I was especially excited to get the ARC. Here's the thing. This must be the first of a planned series, perhaps like Korman's Dive, because it ends on a total cliffhanger. Like, no resolution whatsoever. So while I was intrigued with the characters and where the story was going, I was so mad I threw the book down. Be warned!

Storm Runners is the story of Chase Masters and his dad who follow natural disasters so that his dad can make money off "helping" people whose homes have been wrecked. As they come into Florida before Hurricane Emily, the two set up camp with a circus family and all of their animals. Chase thinks the "farm" is pretty cool and likes the pretty girl who lives there, but the grandmother has a premonition that the farm will be devastated by the storm - not at all where his dad predicts the storm will go - and Chase is worried. When forced on to a school bus after school in spite of the impending storm and his own knowledge about the danger of buses, Chase must make some decisions about how he and the other kids will survive if the the bus doesn't get them home.

It's a fast-paced, very exciting read with lots of great survival tips involved, but the cliffhanger could turn readers off.

Teri says

[also with the principal not listening and then the bus driver dying...I was just kind of like...0.o really? it seemed a bit much. (hide spoiler)]

Josh Newhouse says

Now this made me angry... Predictable... But a page turner but the ending was so abrupt... I was like wha? The book is thin compared to Smith's usual work, but nowhere on it does it say "book one"... Nothing is really resolved... The question is will students finish it wanting more or frustrated... Hopefully the pb will make it clear this is only the first in a series... But still a little more closure would have been nice.

Oakley says

I believe that this book was okay. The plot was good and the emotions were really told but... I feel like the author didn't really put in their best effort when writing this book. I feel like they only wanted to make money. As I was reading, I felt like I was reading a rushed school essay. I liked it, but I didn't really feel the author's passion. The story made me interested, and I thought the cliffhanger was good. But it felt like it was only to make money from a sequel. I also think that it should have had more about the circus animals that it mentions a lot. overall, I suggest that you read it if you plan on buying all of the books. But if you like more closed ended books, I think this is not for you.

Mari Anne says

I read most of this sitting outside the library waiting for AAA to unlock my car (YES... it was THAT kind of day!) I digress.... Roland Smith writes fantastic books... especially for boys in the 8-12 year old range. He really knows how to weave fantastic stories laced throughout with interesting facts. Very clever trick to feed kids knowledge without them realizing it!

Storm Runners follows Chase and his father. They are a broken family following the tragic death of his mother and sister. His father takes his building skills on the road following natural disasters in order to make a living. Chase is along for the ride and this time they are headed to Florida and the fictional town of Palm Breeze where a hurricane is bearing down.

However... in this book I think he pulled a dirty trick. The author literally ended the plot mid-story and left the reader dangling.... until the sequel comes out. I was almost left gasping at the sheer abruptness of the non-ending, ending and sorely disappointed that I couldn't find out immediately the outcome of the story. I can truly understand setting up a sequel and leaving some plot lines or characters in flux, but the ENTIRE story. Come on! Unfair! Other than that egregious foul this is another wonderfully written and entirely entertaining book by Smith who is fast becoming one of my favorite MG/YA authors!

Paul says

Storm Runners by Roland Smith is a very good book that shows great leadership and courage. The book is about kids named Chase, Nicole, and Rashawn trying to survive a dangerous hurricane called Emily. In the beginning of the book Chase is at Nicole's house, which is almost a zoo, and they are preparing for the

storm. The day after when the storm is predicted to hit, school is still on. Chase gets registered into the school, he goes to class with Nicole. All what they do is watch the news about hurricane Emily. Eventually there is an early release at the school and all the kids have to go home by bus. Chase's survival instinct makes him protest to stay in the school because it is much safer than going on a bus. However, he gives up arguing and gets on the bus with Nicole. Eventually, the bus driver drops off all the kids except, Chase, Nicole, and Rashawn. This where Chase and Nicole meet Rashawn. The bus driver gets lost and the kids are worried if they will be able to get home. Then, everything goes wrong when the bus crashes into a lake in the middle of a category 5 hurricane. The bus driver is dead, so the kids have to survive on their own. In the rest of the book, it is the kids goal of survival and getting to Nicole's house where it is safe.

The title of this book is Storm Runners. The part, Storm, in the title foreshadows when the storm hits. In the beginning the book Chase's dad goes to help people prepare for the storm. Chase is at Nicole's house and they do nothing to prepare. Eventually, when they get to school reports of the storm start to come in. After when the kids have to leave early, "Runners" foreshadows when the Chase, Nicole, and Rashawn are running from the storm to survive. The title is very important in this book.

The point of view in this story is in first person and in Chase's view. This point of view was great for this story so it can show the emotion that Chase is going through. Also, when Rashawn tried to make the jump from the road to another part of the road that fell in the lake. It shows the mystery of what happened and where she went. Then, it showed the panic in Chase and his quick reaction to jump back in the lake with Nicole to save Rashawn. Another example is when Chase was arguing to stay in the school, and not taking the bus home. The point of view showed that he was very serious about it and knew it was right to stay back. However, when no one agreed with him, his emotions were very mad and disappointed. First person was the best for this book.

The mood of the story was intense. This is shown throughout the book after the bus crashed into the lake. After that Chase, Nicole, and Rashawn focused on survival and being safe. Right when the bus went into the lake there were multiple examples of intensity, like when Chase was thinking very fast. First, he checked to see if the bus driver was alive and if they could save him. Unfortunately, he was dead and he could have helped with an adult making decisions because some of the kids decisions were wrong. After Chase went to check on the bus driver, he searched for a first aid kit that had ponchos, food, and bandages. Chase could not find the that either, so everything went wrong for him there. Keep in mind he was underwater and holding his breathe throughout those moments. With this event readers can tell that Chase's adrenaline was rushing through his veins.

An example of foreshadowing in this book was on page 68. In the book it said, "The kids on this bus thought this was an adventure. But Chase knew it was the beginning of what, for some of them, would be the worst night of their lives." It foreshadowed that there was going to be a very dangerous storm. This may impact a reader's understanding because a reader can see if Chase is prepared for the storm. By page 73 Chase, Nicole, and Rashawn were already trying to get out of the sinking bus. Also, Chase was prepared because he always wears a backpack with essential survival supplies. Foreshadowing impacts the reader heavily in this book.

I would recommend this book to 6-8th graders or to anyone looking for a short read. This would be best because this is an easy read and it's fun. If a reader is looking for survival ideas, this book is great for that also. In this book, there many action packed events. When reader finishes this book, they will want to read the next book. There is a total of three books in the series. Overall, I would rate this book a 10/10.

Lantz Kehlmier says

Storm Runners by Roland Smith is a quick read about a boy named Chase Masters and his father and the adventures they encounter when chasing bad weather across the country. This is a action-packed book with Chase facing a new adventure at every turn, including heavy wind and rain, alligators, and a school bus ending up in a lake, just to name a few. The fear of impending danger and sense of adventure fill this book and made it hard to put it down.

One thing Smith did well in the book was the development of the characters, especially Chase whose point of view the book is told from. Chase develops throughout the book and his traits of resourcefulness, courage, and a keen sense of survival are all evident. But you also experience the fear and worry while trying to navigate the adventures he encounters. The reader is really able to connect with both the thrill of the adventure but also the emotion and personalities of the characters. By doing this, Smith keeps the reader engaged and wanting to know what happens to each of the characters.

Another thing Smith did well was keeping the plot of this book suspenseful enough to keep the reading wanting more. Smith's writing was concise and real enough that I really felt like I was on these adventures with Chase. Smith further keeps the reader searching for more by including a climatic moment at the very end of the book, thus setting the reader up to read the second installment in the Storm Runners series.

Susan says

I was very upset when I came to the non-end of this book. I had no idea it was the first in a series. I think if an author is going to write a series, he should at least indicate on the cover that this is the first book in the Storm series, or whatever.

This book is probably written for upper elementary school students--5th or 6th graders. It is about Chase Masters, age 12. His dad chases storms and earns money helping people clean up after storms. Chase and two girls just about drown when their school bus goes off a bridge, and they must find their way home in the hurricane of the century. It's a pretty exciting book, and I think 6th graders would really like it. I just wish it would have come to some closure.

Liz says

SPOILER ALERT:

Chase Masters and his father go to where the next big storm is going to hit. His father and his long time assistant Tomas drive the vehicles they need while 15 year old Chase goes along and enrolls in the nearest school. Chases world changed at the death of his mother and little sister two years ago and then a year ago his father was struck by lightening. After that they hit the road chasing storms to repair and rebuild houses. All three had a special backpack with essential items including a satellite phone. The Storm Runners is the first of three books in the series. In book one Chase's father and Tomas drop him off at what he calls a farm, only for Chase to discover it is a farm for Zoo animals. They head to St. Petersburg FL to where everyone thinks the next hurricane will hit. Chase and Nicole Rossi go to school as planned only Chase tries to explain to the principal that it isn't a good idea to send the few remaining kids home on the three school busses. They

should stay at the school. Of course her husband, a newscaster in St. Petersburg says the hurricane will hit there and sends everyone home.

The hurricane misses St. Petersburg and hits right where Chase said it would, a gut instinct his father told him to follow. It is up to Chase, Nicole and Reshawnda to make it from where there bus was thrown off the road. This first book is all about everyone's journey to make it back to the farm. A harrowing journey by everyone.

The book is short and easy to read, a great read for reluctant readers who will want to read the next book to find out what happens to Chase, Nicole and Reshawnda.
