

"The Summer of the Bear" by Leigh A. Arrathoon is an exciting coming-of-age novel about the Anishinabeg Indians and the fur traders around Lake Michigan. It is the first book in the series of young Kevin Murphy's adventures written by award-winning author, Leigh A. Arrathoon.

Leigh Arrathoon has thoroughly researched the Michigan area and the culture of the Anishinabeg and draws the reader into an exciting and dangerous new world. Kevin and his best friend, Brock along with the French-Canadian boy, Jean-Baptiste set out on a canoe and camping expedition in wild country and come face to face with an evil bearwalker, after witnessing a mysterious murder committed by the bearwalker. The evil bearwalker uses special medicine and traditional magic to hurt and destroy other people.

Later in a thrilling incident the boys encounter a real live brown bear. The boys are out alone in the wild untamed country, where it is easy to get lost, and in a brave action Kevin saves Jean-Pierre's life after he is severely mauled by the bear. The boys are forced to measure up to the danger they run into and to reach greater maturity and self-reliance.

The boys take part in the complicated and sometimes scary rituals of the Anishinabeg Indians, and learn about their survival skills and how to make the special food that the Anishinabeg traditionally enjoy.

The Anishinabeg people have very special names which Arrathoon explains and which is part of her meticulous research.

Altogether the book transports the reader into the very special world of the canoe Voyageurs of the Fur Trade and the wildlife in this territory.

I look forward to reading more of young Kevin Murphy's adventures with his friend Brock. "The Eagle from the Dawn" is the next book in the series.