



## TEEN SERVICES COMMUNITY SERVICE TEEN BOOK REVIEW

### *The Explorer* By Katherine Rundell Reviewed by Ali Chaudhry

**Name:** Ali Chaudhry

**Grade:** 8th

**Book Title:** The Explorer

**Author:** Katherine Rundell

**Number of Pages:** 324

**Rating (on a scale of 1-5):** 5/5

#### **Character List:**

- **Fred** - Fred is a tall, 14 year old from England who is the main protagonist. His mother died when he was young and his dad has always been stern after her death. Fred had always wanted to be an explorer and has read many books and stories about secret cities and lost explorers. He never thought that his fantasy would be a reality so soon when his plane crashes in the Amazon.
- **Lila** - Lila is a teen who lives in Brazil. She was on the plane with Fred when it crashed in the Amazon. Lila was going to Manaus to then go on a boat to England to see her grandma. Both of Lila's parents are scientists and Lila wants to follow in their footsteps and be a veterinarian. She already has a vast knowledge of animals.
- **Max** - Max is Lila's little brother and is only five years old. He tries to be like his sister but cannot seem to be as brave as her. Max is scared that he won't see his mother ever again and tries his hardest to help in the group's quest to get home to their families.
- **Con** - Con is another girl who crashed in the Amazon with Fred, Lila and Max. Con comes from a relatively wealthy family in England and has no desire to be marching around in the Amazon with a crowd of kids she has never seen before in her life.
- **The Explorer** - The Explorer is the real enigma of the story. When the kids meet him, they are not exactly welcomed warmly - not if you call being threatened with a knife welcoming. He is a man who crashed down in the Amazon many years ago. He tries to preserve the forest and his identity; the kids don't even know his real name.

#### **Review:**

The Explorer has an incredible character base. The characters are engaging and draw you into their past. You really want to know the backstory of each and every one of them, especially The Explorer. They all have their own personality and outlook on situations. This makes every situation a climactic one. The characters are the reason people read books, and this book has nailed the character advancement. Also, having a mystery character like The Explorer is superb. It adds a little more reason to continue binge reading just to find out who he is. The plot has a solid and straightforward objective: get back home. But, of course, it isn't that simple. Having a straightforward objective is usually dull and the author did a wonderful job of making sure it was everything but dull. Katherine Rundell also did a marvelous job of creating an environment that is a copy and paste of the real Amazon rainforest. The rivers are so realistic that you can

smell it. The description is exceptional; the vibrancy of the setting makes it a whole new world that you create with your own little changes that make it your own. This is truly first-class writing at its finest and greatest, and deserves more credit than it gets. It may be one of the best descriptive writing of modern writing. *The Explorer* is up there with great novels like J.R.R Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* and Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games*.

It all starts with Fred on a small airplane with three other passengers: Max, Lila and Con. All of a sudden, the pilot blacks out and the plane crashes in the Amazon Rainforest. The only survivors are Fred, Max, Lila and Con. After stumbling around the Campsite, they find a place to stay for the night with comfort compared to the rough natural terrain. Soon after that, the group has to use creative ways to survive, like crushing bugs and eating them to get nutrients and making makeshift water filters to drink clean water. Soon they start to make a raft to explore and find a way to get to civilization. After finding a honeybee nest with lots of honey, they find a map that may be the most crucial piece in the jigsaw to get back home. They have some rough times, where some of them get really hurt. There were also bonding times and times where they realized some of the bigger problems. Throughout this story, you really see all the characters evolve into amazing people in their journey to get home.