Book # 4: Fish / L.S. Matthews

“My story starts the day my parents told me we must leave our adopted home forever. Because of the soldiers and the drought we barely had enough to eat and we could no longer stay to help people in our village. They journey would prove to be hard and dangerous...”

We had hoped to make it the border before they were closed, but we were too late. Instead we had to climb the mountain and cross a very dangerous part where the war was constantly in the background. I was worried sick, scared, and wondered if any of us would ever be safe again.

The story leaves the location up to the reader. Use your geography skills to figure out what part of the world this happened in. The family is just like any typical family. The reader is reminded that this family could be yours and in such instances as a war what would you do or more importantly how would your family survive? Who would know what happened to your family should they encounter hostilities? This story moves along at a quick pace and is a page turner.

Book #5 Touching Spirit Bear / Ben Mikaelsen

The main character in Touching Spirit Bear, Cole Matthews, is an angry young man. Cole has been stealing and fighting for years. Early in the novel, Cole catches Peter Driscal in a parking lot where a fight ensues and Cole smashes Peter’s head against the sidewalk. Now, Peter may have permanent brain damageand Cole is in deep trouble.

Cole is offered Circle Justice, a system based on First Nation’s traditions that attempts to provide healing for the criminal offender, the victim and the

community. With prison as his only other alternative, Cole plays along. He

says he wants to repent, but in his heart Cole blames his alcoholic mom, his abusive dad, wimpy Peter — everyone but himself — for his situation.

Cole receives a one year banishment to a remote Alaskan island.

 There, he is mauled by the mysterious white bear of First Nations legend. Hideously injured, Cole waits for his death, his thoughts shift from anger to humility. To survive, he must stop blaming others and take responsibility for his life. Rescuers arrive to save Cole’s life but it is the attack of the Spirit Bear that may save his soul.