### Touching Spirit Bear

**Chapter 1**

Cole Mathews is an angry boy who is being sent from Minneapolis to an island in southern Alaska to be banished. This was the offered alternative to jail. He is very smug. Garvey, his parole officer and Edwin, an Indian Elder who built his shelter, are escorting him. He has to wear his clothes inside out for the first 2 weeks to show humility. He had been sent to the island after beating on a kid who turned him in for a robbery. He then smashed the kid's head into the cement leaving brain damage. He had been sent to many different detention centers, anger management classes and drug rehabs because no one knew what to do with him or how to handle the situation. He felt like everyone pretended to help because they were scared and didn’t know what to do with him. Cole is only 15. His parents always bailed him out. They were high powered and very wealthy. This last time they didn’t bail him out. Cole found out he would be tried as an adult and threw a fit at his parents. His parents are now divorced and would visit him in the center alone. His mom a spineless Barbie doll and his dad a drinker with a temper. Cole had been beaten his whole life. Garvey used to stop by and visit him. He is the one who convinced Cole to do, “Circle of Justice.” It is suppose to heal instead of punish. Garvey tells Cole that, “How you do something is more important than what you do.”

**Chapter 2**

Cole looks through his supplies on the skiff. He scoffs at the idea of doing the homework they sent. He then thinks back on his forced guilty plea so he could go do Circle Justice. It was then that Garvey told him how little he knew of trust. Trust doesn't come from someone being afraid of you. They land on the island and they unload everything into the shack. They say they will be back to check on Cole in a few days. Edwin will then drop off supplies every few weeks. Cole knows he is only playing a game for them. He will escape off the island after they all leave. Cole is upset his shack isn’t by the river. Edwin asks what Cole would do if a bear built his home by the river. Cole said he would kill it. Edwin then told him the bear would do the same to him if his shack was there. They then tell him to be careful of the Devil’s Club on the island, not to eat anything he is unfamiliar with and that whatever he does to the animals will come back to him. Edwin then tells of his coming here when he was lost. He speaks of a white bear, Spirit Bear, that has more pride, dignity, and honor than most people. Garvey then offers Cole to be a keeper of his at.oow. It is a special blanket that has been passed down in his family. He would give it to Cole if he promised to protect it and then pass it on to someone he trusts. He then tells Cole he trusts him.

### Questions

- What do you think is the cause of Cole’s rage and anger?  
- Do our actions define who we are? How?  
- What do you think of the, “Circle of Justice,” idea? Do you think it will work for Cole?  
- “How you do something is more important than what you do.” What does this mean?

### Vocabulary

- omen (3)  
- skiff (3)  
- Wallow (14)  
- Feigned (15)  
- Moseyed (16)  
- brandished (20)
upset that he is being abandoned by people who wanted to get rid of him. His rage builds again and he decides his parents want him locked up and far away. He then remembers feeling this way a different time after he was sent to his cell for not doing his homework. He threw everything and then punched the wall until his knuckles bled. Garvey then came in and asked him if he was still serious about going to Circle of Justice – he doesn’t want to sponsor a loser. He tells him that Cole can’t blame the world for his problems. Life isn’t fair. Cole then goes into a rage, dumping gas on everything – setting the hut and his supplies on fire.

How does Cole’s anger and hatred control him?

Chapter 3
Cole didn’t receive any satisfaction from burning everything. He then recalls Garvey visiting him in his cell. He had told Garvey that he hated everything about his life. His parents didn’t want him and were ashamed. His dad would get drunk and beat him until he was numb and his mom got drunk and pretended she couldn’t remember. Then Garvey had pulled many ingredients from a brown bag he had brought. He had Garvey taste each ingredient individually and then a cake he made from the same ingredient. Garvey then left feeling burdened and Cole threw everything make a huge mess. Cole laughs watching everything burn. He then takes off his clothes and jumps into the water to try and swim to the next island. There he will rest, eat and sleep. When Garvey let Cole know he could do the Circle of Justice, Cole asked who would want to help him. He didn’t think anyone cared. If everyone forgot what had happened to the boy they would just let him go. Garvey then left telling him that forgiving isn’t forgetting.

Chapter 4
Cole continued swimming, realizing that he was still a mile from the island. He then reflects on how he got here. He went through many circles (Healing Circle, Peacemaking Circle, Sentencing Circle, Talking Circle, Community Circle, etc.). In the sentencing Circle his parents showed up separate. His dad in a suit and his mom in a party dress. Peter and his family came in, the judge, for a total of 2 dozen people. The keeper starts the meeting with a prayer and then holds up a feather telling that it represents respect and responsibility. The feather gave people the opportunity to speak. It was passed around as everyone introduced themselves and gave their opinions.

Chapter 5
Cole realizes that even though he has been swimming for a long time the tide has been pulling him back to shore. He turns around and tries to go back to shore, but gets bad leg cramps. Struggling to stay above water he lets the tide takes him back to shore. He is freezing and numb. Waking up in the morning he saw a Spirit bear ¼ of a mile away. As the bear stood motionless, staring in his direction Cole becomes enraged that it isn’t scared of him. Then he decides to seek

How is life not fair?

How is Cole’s anger control him?

How does Cole’s anger and hatred control him?
revenge on whoever decided he should go here. It’s always someone else’s fault with him. The sentencing circle ended with Cole yelling at his father that he beat him.

Chapter 6
Cole and his father continued yelling back and forth until the keeper silenced the group and took the feather back. Cole then talked of his father beating him. He gave the feather to his mom to confirm, but she passed the feather without saying a word. Peter’s lawyer then said that Cole needed to be dealt with so he wouldn’t harm anyone else in the community. Garvey then talked about finding a solution. If one isn’t found, everyone will suffer and everyone will pay. This is a sign that the community and the family is broken. Peter then tells that he wants Cole to feel what it is like to have your head bashed in. The circle is closed with a prayer and everyone begins to leave. Garvey guesses that Cole isn’t really into the circle. Cole finds some coals and starts a small fire. He decides he will try to swim off the island again tomorrow. He then remembers a night when his father beat him as he was yelling him at to stop. It was the only time his mom had come in and told his dad that he was hurting Cole. His dad then threatened to beat his mom too. At a different circle meeting Garvey had offered banishment as an option. After the year of isolation the circle would reevaluate him and see if he still needs to serve jail time. Garvey then tells Cole, “Try manipulating a storm or lying to your hunger. Try cheating the cold.”

Chapter 7
Cole started a fire to keep the mosquitoes away. He watches some orcas and then notices the spirit bear again only 100 yards away. He yells at it and goes to a tree and makes a spear in case it returns. He then finds a half eaten salmon. He cooks it over the fire and falls asleep in the blanket. He wakes in the middle of the night a few times. In the morning when he is ready to leave he sees the spirit bear again. He yells and runs at it, but it doesn’t move. He stops and realizes the bear hasn’t moved. He thinks the bear must be scared since it isn’t moving. Cole continues after it and aims his spear just in case it doesn’t move. 

Chapter 8
Cole flung his spear. No sooner had he done so the bear lunged at him. The bear knocked him over, shoving his face into the dirt. He then picked him up, dragging him. He was then flipped like a rag doll as the bear bit down and cracked his pelvis. The bear clawed his chest, broke his arm and snap his ribs. The bear then grunted and walked away. Cole lay their trying to breathe as blood filled his mouth. The birds were fighting over some of his flesh. Cole is unable to move, he contemplates the idea of death. He wonders if it comes slowly or quickly. He then panics when he thinks that it may not come at all. He realizes that his worst nightmare is being
alone. Cole realizes that the bear’s, Peter’s and his own blood look all the same, but can’t sort out the meaning. Cole then begins to vomit and passes out. He now realizes that being in jail would have given him some control. On the island he was, “powerless, nobody to control, nobody to blame, every action worked against him and hurt him” (73).

**Why is control so important to Cole?**

Why is it about other people’s happiness that causes Cole such desperation and misery? *Often times one may here the phrase, “an eye for an eye.” Cole says he doesn’t owe anyone anything since nobody has ever cared for him. Do you agree with this mindset? Why or why not?*

**During the storm Cole feels as insignificant as a leaf. What does this mean? (78)**

**How is Cole’s question to the baby birds at the end of the chapter significant?**

Cole feels sadness for the first time. Do you think he is healing? *“Yes, death was part of living…”(83) Read this paragraph and ask what they think.*

The author said, “Cole made a simple decision. He wanted to live.” (83)

**What does this mean?**

To be alive was to have choice. The power to choose was real power, not the fake power of making others afraid.” (83)

**How does the ability to choose give us power?**

How do we lose the power to choose?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pg. 74-102</th>
<th>Chapter 9</th>
<th>Cole watches a mom bird feed her young as he becomes more chilled from the rain. He curses the bird and wants to knock the nest down. Cole falls asleep, waking up in the middle of the night to a horrific lightening storm. At this time he sees the spirit bear not 50 feet away. He is filled with terror and rage wondering if the bear will strike. When it disappears again he curses it for being weak. During the storm he realizes how insignificant he is and the inability he really has to control everything. When the storm finally stops he loses consciousness once again. Waking he reflects on everything that happened. The moon reminds him of the circles that Garvey and Edwin spoke of. Then he remembers the baby birds and wonders if they survived. He strains to find them in the dark without success. He then whispers into the night, “Are you okay?”</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 10</td>
<td>Cole continues to lay on the ground in pain unable to move. Insects biting him. He sees the tree and the nest on the ground. He then feels sadness that the little birds died without cause. Then he envies them. They had a home. He wonders about their existence and whether or not it was significant. Cole then thinks about how many times he wanted to run away from home. No one cared. Cole thinks about the circle and begins to understand. He doesn’t think its fair that the birds will soon be eaten and become dirt. “You live, die and rot.” He is okay with dying and turning to dirt. He helps in his death, but had he done anything beneficial while he was alive? At that moment he decides to live. He tries to eat grass, but chokes. Then he finds some worms to eat. He soon turns to other bugs. Cole is swarmed with mosquitoes and horseflies all over his body. He then sees a mouse crawling on his body. It gets to his hand and he catches it. <strong>Chapter 11</strong></td>
<td>After many disgusting attempts and the mouse biting his lips and tongue; Cole manages to crush the mouse skull with his teeth and kill it. He ate it, bones, fur and all. He then notices gulls eating the fish chunks from his vomit. He shooed them and began eating the pieces himself. As it began to rain again he felt energy – life coming back to him. He opens his mouth to let the rain hydrate him. He smears mud on his body to keep the bugs away. The murky water that collects around him he drinks. Spirit Bear then returns not 50 feet from him. He tries to spit at him but misses. The bear lumbers toward him. <strong>Chapter 12</strong></td>
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</table>
spirit bear is standing over him. He puts his hand out and touches it feeling warmth, heartbeat and trust. The bear bends down, nods and leaves without touching Cole.

Cole watches the bear disappear and then notices how beautiful everything is around him. He wonders how much beauty he has destroyed in his life? Cole feels his energy slip, but feels like he can die because he has trusted and been trusted.

Cole then hallucinates. He hears a buzz and then feels seagulls pulling at him. Garvey and Edwin have really found him, wrapping him in a blanket and trying to hydrate him. They put him in a skiff and take off. When they dock he is taken in a van somewhere. Garvey thinks he was knocked unconscious by the tree during the storm. A lady tells him that he has been attacked by a bear. Garvey tells Cole he isn’t okay, but Cole tells him he is okay.

How is life like hanging on the monkey bars?

At the end of the chapter Cole tells Garvey that he is okay. What do you think Cole means? He knows he is badly injured and inches from death.

Cole has to spend the night at a hotel since they couldn’t get a medivac plane until morning. Rosey, the nurse took care of him. She started an IV and gave him some pain medicine. Garvey notices that Cole reaches for the at.oow when he needs another blanket. The nurse talks of Cole’s wounds and Garvey apologizes for getting him into this mess. Cole then tells then it’s his fault. Rosey is worried that Cole won’t survive. Edwin then says that Cole will survive if he can find a reason to live.

Cole sleeps and has a crazy dream. He wakes up panicked and talks to Rosey and Garvey. He asks why they are helping him. Rosey answers and Garvey responds by telling him they are friends. Cole becomes upset because they weren’t friends when he first met Garvey. Garvey then tells him that he helps for himself. He sees a lot of himself in Cole. He had spent 5 years in prison, where his soul was scarred.

Cole says there are people that want to hurt him. Rosey then tells him that those are the people who need his help.

The plane arrives and he is carried to the dock. He recounts his experiences to Garvey and Edwin. Edwin tells him that he didn’t see a spirit bear because they live hundreds of miles away. Garvey tells him that he probably won’t get to come back to the island and that he will still have to deal with his parents and a jail sentence. Cole says it is okay. He says that he is done being mad. Garvey goes to get his things so he can go with him.

While he is alone he pulls the fur out of his pocket. It was white and he realizes that he was not lying. He then decides that his words will be his only proof from now on. He throws the white hair into the water and watches it float away, disappearing into the water. He will keep the Spirit Bear only in his mind and heart.

**Part II Return to Spirit Bear: 6 months later**

**Chapter 13**

Cole shows gratitude for the first time at the hotel. How? What feelings has Cole experienced in the healing process so far?

Rosey makes the comment, “Why live if you can’t help others and make the world a better place?” Do you agree with her?

Rosey tells Cole that a few months will heal his body, but his soul will not heal as quickly. What does she mean? Do you agree?

Cole asks for a medicine that will take away the monsters. Rosey says he is the only one that can do that. What does she mean? (refer to the dream on 106)

Edwin says that, “A person is never done being mad. Anger is a memory never forgotten. You can only tame it.” What do you think?

For an instant Cole wants to prove to Edwin that he has seen a spirit bear. He then decides that he needs to be strong enough to simply
Cole is released from the hospital still trying to recover. His right arm will never fully recover. He has red, puffy scars across his chest. His mom had visited him everyday in the hospital and even agreed to press child abuse charges against his dad. Garvey tells him that it is easier to heal the body than the mind and that he has long roads ahead.

Cole’s mom hugs him for the first time and cries. He assures his mom he will be fine as he crawls into the cop car. He goes back to the detention center into a new cell. His mom and Garvey visit. Garvey asks how he has moved in and tells him that they will meet with the circle again. He thinks he will then have to face trial. Cole then tells Garvey that he wants to visit the island again to see if he can find the spirit bear. He tells Garvey that he is not afraid of the bear. It was just defending itself. His dad beat him because he was mad.

Cole’s mom then apologizes for everything. She recounts when they were first married and happy. They wanted everything to be perfect. When his dad began beating him she started to drink to escape reality. She tells of Cole’s father getting beaten when he was younger too. Cole’s mom has stopped drinking and wants to start over. Cole doubts he will ever get that chance.

Garvey stops by again and says he has a surprise for Cole.

At the circle meeting everyone expresses their disappointment in Cole. They want to give him back to the courts to deal with. Then Edwin walks in and asks to join the circle. Cole then is given the feather to speak. They want him to explain why he shouldn’t be given back to the courts.

Chapter 15

Cole talks of being mad. His mom then says she thinks he has started to change. Garvey agrees similarly. Edwin then demonstrates life by using Cole. They walk across a line in the floor. He talks of slow persistent change and quick abrupt life altering change. He believes Cole has changed. He offers to let Cole return to the island, but must sell his things to pay for supplies and he must build the shelter himself.

Cole spent many days in the center exercising and regaining strength - his right arm still limp. The circle continued to meet without him and Edwin stayed to attend the meetings. Edwin and Garvey then came to him and asked questions about him changing and being better than his dad. Cole eventually gets frustrated and asks them to leave him alone. Garvey then tells him that the courts have released him into their custody. He is going back to the island.

Chapter 16

Back in Alaska, Edwin, Garvey and Cole take the supplies to shore. Edwin and Garvey tell Cole to make a fire, put up a tent and have dinner finished in 2 hours. He contemplates leaving in the boat, but instead starts the fire and is putting up the tent when they return. They ask about dinner and he throws them a hot dog. Garvey then tells the parable of the hot dog. How we make it and what we do with it is the same as our lives. Make of it what you will. Edwin then informs Cole that he took the spark plug because they still didn’t trust Cole. They
saw his potential, but he must earn their trust. Edwin then tells Cole that he must celebrate and discover himself.

**Chapter 17**

Edwin showed Cole how to protect the food and told him that they will dance their feelings the following night. Edwin wakes him up before dawn the next day and takes him hiking through a stream to a small pond. They swim to the other side of the pond and sit on a rock mostly submerged below the water. Edwin then gives Cole a stick. Telling him the right end is happiness and the left end is anger he tells him to snap the anger off. Cole continues snipping parts off the stick until there is barely any stick left. He says that he can’t get rid of his anger. Edwin looks at the sky and asks Cole if it is sunny or stormy. Cole says that it depends on where and how you look. Edwin reminds him that life is what he makes of it. If he focuses on the happiness he will be happy and vice versa. Cole must train himself to look for the good. Everyone has anger and happiness the focus decides how we feel. Cole notices that this makes more sense than what the psychologists and therapists told him. Edwin tells him it is because they think that you can get rid of anger.

**Chapter 18**

They return to camp. Cole made 3 hamburgers, but cooked and ate only one. Edwin then told him to cook for everyone and that it needed to be a celebration. They all danced the whale dance that night. Edwin said the whale is gentle and graceful. Garvey said the whale is powerful and smart. Cole said the whale had no home, like him. That night Cole slept well, only to be awakened before dawn by Edwin to go to the pond once more. They waded into the pool and sat on the rocky ledge. Edwin said they stay until they have a choice between anger and happiness. They then left. Edwin told Cole he would meet his ancestors today. He gave Cole a rock and they began walking up a hill. Edwin said the rock represented his ancestors and the hill his life. Once the rock is at the top it becomes his anger. It is rolled down the hill. Cole laughs about his dizzy ancestors and asks why Edwin keeps telling him what to do. He wants him to stop bossing him around. Edwin thinks they should have stayed in the water longer. They head back to camp.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>What did the stick represent?</th>
<th>Why do you think they did they do the whale dance?</th>
<th>Recount the parable of the rock and hill and its meaning.</th>
<th>Why does Edwin think they should have stayed in the water longer?</th>
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**Chapter 19**

At camp Cole sees a wolf. It is then announced that they will do the wolf dance tonight. Cole works on the shack’s roof that day. That evening he was too tired to make food so he heads to his tent to sleep. Garvey then tells him that they are going to take the shack down tomorrow morning and head back to Minneapolis. Cole then pulls out a chicken casserole to make. They eat in silence. Cole apologizes and they tell him to apologize to himself. He is only betraying his own life. Cole asks about the wolf dance and Edwin and Garvey tell him he can do what he wants. They go to bed and Cole stays up to do the dance. He realizes that a wolf must work with the pack to be most effective. Garvey asks what he has learned. Edwin then tells him that he

<table>
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<tr>
<th>What does Cole learn from his wolf dance?</th>
<th>How does Edwin and Garvey respond when Cole apologizes?</th>
<th>How does Cole’s soak and rock rolling go?</th>
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expects him to soak and carry the rock by himself tomorrow.
The next day he wakes up and soaks. He becomes more in tune with himself knowing that he was learning something he just didn’t know what. He then picked up the rock and walked up the hill. He thought about his life. Each time he stumbled he connected to a time in his life where he had stumbled. As he rolled the rock down the hill he realized how different of a person he had become and could be. His experience with Peter seemed to be in a different lifetime.
Then he saw it – a white shape disappearing into the trees.

**Chapter 20**
Cole goes back to camp and apologizes again. He then talks about getting over his anger by not blaming others. He defends his dad and says he will be okay no matter where he goes. He then adds a door, a window and a lock to his cabin. He asks Edwin and Garvey what they think as he looks on beaming. They then tell him that he will need to keep a clean kitchen and caulk before winter.
Cole makes a spaghetti dinner and tries to make it special with homemade biscuits, the blanket as a tablecloth, a candle and snickers for dessert. Cole then requests that they do the spirit bear dance tonight. They ask if he has seen one and he nods his head. He isn’t scared of the bear. He is scared of being alone.
Cole asks Edwin how he felt when he was first here. Edwin said lonely at first and then peaceful.
They all did spirit bear dances, starting with Cole. He reenacted his first encounters with the spirit bear. Edwin kept coming and going then ending by kneeling before them. Garvey slept, ate, snuck up on them and yelled, “Boo!” He then says that dances don’t have to be serious they can be a fun celebration.
The next day when Cole got up, Edwin and Garvey asked if they could go to the pool with him. They soaked and then carried the rock. On the way back, they joked like old friends. They took down the tent and loaded the skiff. Garvey presented Cole with a hunting knife and compared it to life. It will destroy or heal you. As they get into the boat Cole jokes to put the spark plug back in. Edwin says it has been in for 2 days. They leave and say they will be back in a few days to check on him. He says he will be okay, but he is terrified. If he messes things up this time, there will be no next time.

**Chapter 21**
Cole stayed busy while Edwin and Garvey were gone. When Edwin comes back, Cole has made a bed frame, a table, a chair, a bathroom in the woods and a huge pile of firewood. Edwin didn’t say much. Garvey had gone back to Minneapolis. This time when Edwin left he didn’t feel as lonely. After he had gone, Cole took a walk around the island to think. He found a large piece of white driftwood. He rolled it into the water. He then became angry with himself when he realized he could make a canoe and escape. That night he slept poorly. When he awoke he was too tired to go to the pond so he slept in.
When he got out of bed he began to fashion a
canoe from the log. He became angry with the mosquitoes and swore they would never live to eat at him again. He then began whacking at the log. He chopped until it was cut in half and couldn’t be used as a canoe. Cole felt much better after. He saw some eagles overhead and began to whittle an eagle into the wood. After dinner he did the eagle dance. He pretended to soar on thermals and currents. He wants to stay strong and proud like the eagle. That night he sleeps hard, dreaming about soaring high. The following day he went to the pond and climbed the hill. He felt much better. The next time Edwin came, Cole asked why he had only seen the spirit bear once since returning. Edwin thinks that Cole is now invisible to the spirit bear. Edwin asks if Cole has done his homework. Cole gives his homework and then asks if he has received any mail. Edwin tells him that his mom calls to check on him everyday. His dad never saw a day of prison. He then asks about Peter. Peter is suffering terribly from huge bouts of depression. Edwin then notices the log and asks if Cole made a canoe. Cole comes clean and tells him everything. He then asks about the significance of a totem and if he can carve one. Edwin encourages him to tell his story through a totem. He then speaks of Indian clans and animals and their symbols. Cole tells that he has tried to dance the dance of anger, but it felt fake. Edwin tells him it will happen when it is supposed to.

| Chapter 22 | Edwin leaves and Cole begins to carve. After he carves the eagle he works on a wolf next. He does his morning rituals of pond and a hill hike. He washes his clothes well and tries to be invisible. He tries several times before Edwin returns again. One time a beaver swims very close to him. He tries to grab it and he never sees it again. He had betrayed someone else’s trust. He did the beaver dance that night and started to carve one into his totem. He thinks about the beaver’s persistence, patience and ingenuity. Edwin comes and goes, dropping off supplies. Cole keeps wondering how to become invisible and what the one thing was that he needed to heal. One night he wakes up and knows how to be invisible. What does the beaver teach Cole? What does it mean to be invisible? Cole offers forgiveness at the end of his dance. Where does this fit into his healing process? |
| Chapter 23 | Clearing his mind was the key to being invisible. The next morning he went to the edge of the island. He found a crevice and slid in feeling the rain on his face. Past, present and future seemed to blur together. He became part of the earth and everything in it. When he opened his eyes he saw the spirit bear. He was one with the bear, then it was gone. When he got home he very carefully made spaghetti then stoked the fire so he could do his anger dance. He begins reliving the angry memories, the bear attack and his healing. Almost all of the anger was gone. One tiny ounce welled and he began to beat the tree – his fists bloody and swollen. Then he drops to the |
Chapter 24
In the morning Cole carved his anger dance. He talked of it the next time Edwin visited. He spoke of needing to find more than forgiveness. He hadn’t yet completed his totem. Edwin came less and less and seemed bothered. Cole continued to carve. A seal, raindrop, lightning, a sparrow in a nest and a raven. As fall approached cold set in. Cole continued to soak and climb the hill, but soon had to give them up due to the chill. He stopped seeing the spirit bear and its tracks.

He became very lonely, crying himself to sleep on occasion. He longs for a human to talk to and finds himself growing hoarse. He hears that Peter is growing more depressed and he still is trying to find a way to mend what he has broken. His anger has started to creep up on him again with him not being able to carve his totem, go to soak or carry the rock. He then worries what it will be like to go back to Minneapolis and not have these things to control his anger.

At Christmas he found a small tree and made ornaments from aluminum foil. The next time Edwin returns Cole tells him how lonely he was feeling. Edwin tells him to not drown in self-pity. He then tells Cole that Peter tried to commit suicide. He feels like his life is worthless because people have treated him that way. Cole says that he has apologized, but this doesn’t help Peter. Edwin leaves and he continues to think about Peter. Cole wants Peter to come to the island and feel the same experiences, but he knows Peter’s parents won’t allow this. He then worries about scared Peter must be to want to take his own life. Edwin comes back sooner than usual and asks Cole what he had said he could do to help Peter. He said that now he was listening.

Chapter 25
Cole tells Edwin that Peter should come to the island. Edwin says that that is impossible. Cole says he can’t think of anything else. Cole insists that Edwin try to bring him. Cole then commits to staying on the island longer if it meant healing Peter. Soon Edwin came back with a green fishing boat behind him. Garvey, Peter and his parents had accompanied Edwin. Edwin explains the extent they have gone to have all of this happen. Garvey and Peter will stay with Cole. They gathered around the fire and Cole recounts his experiences on the island. He finishes by saying that he can’t heal until he helps Peter to heal. Peter tells him to leave him alone.

Chapter 26
Cole fixed his favorite meal for everyone. Peter tells everyone that he is not sleeping in here with Cole. The next morning when Cole returns from his soak everyone is waiting for him. The Driscals are saying goodbye. Mr. Driscal takes Cole into the woods and tells him that he will rot in jail if he does anything else to Peter. Everyone leaves but Garvey, Peter and Cole. Cole goes to Peter to give him a Snickers, but Peter just yells for him to stay away. Cole then talks to Garvey. Cole’s mom is doing well and his father has filed a suit to drop the
charges and have custody of Cole. Garvey promises he won’t let it happen. Cole then thanks Garvey for everything he has done. Garvey asks Cole not to give up on Peter. Cole sleeps in a tent and Peter and Garvey sleep in the cabin. In the morning Cole wakes them up to go soak and climb the hill. Garvey convinces Peter to go along to watch. Cole then collects firewood when they get back to camp. Weeks passed and Peter asked the same. One day Peter threw a rock at Cole, then later shoved him into the water. Another day, Peter jumped into the pool, made it half way and turned around. Later, Peter asked if Cole got frozen walking into the pond. Time passed and Peter stayed the same. Cole spend night after night in the freezing, wet tent. One particularly hard day Cole was preparing for a difficult night and Peter invited him into the cabin.

Has Peter done anything on purpose or accident to start his healing?

Weeks passed and Peter asked the same. One day Peter threw a rock at Cole, then later shoved him into the water. Another day, Peter jumped into the pool, made it half way and turned around. Later, Peter asked if Cole got frozen walking into the pond. Time passed and Peter stayed the same. Cole spend night after night in the freezing, wet tent. One particularly hard day Cole was preparing for a difficult night and Peter invited him into the cabin.

What does the mouse teach?

Chapter 27
Cole goes into the cabin. He sleeps on the floor. Cole takes the next few days to get back at Cole. He walks across his sleeping bag in his muddy boots. He even destroyed part of his totem. Cole responds by offering to haul a log back so Cole could make his own totem. When they bring it back, Peter asks what to carve. Cole tells him to carve what he has last seen. Peter had seen a mouse. Cole says he can carve a mouse and do a mouse dance. All animals can teach us something. That night they all dance. Cole learns that mice are persistent and bold. Garvey learns that mice see things others don’t. Peter says he looks like a dork and runs inside. The next morning they both begin carving mice. Cole comments that Peter’s is very realistic. Peter says he knows and that it is better. When they are done Peter asks Cole if he has seen the spirit bear. Cole recounts the fur and having to prove himself because he was a liar. Peter wants to be alone so Cole and Garvey go for a long walk. When they get back Cole is initially angry because Peter is carving on Cole’s totem. Peter had fixed the bear he destroyed. Cole asks Peter if he will teach him to carve. Peter agrees.

Chapter 28
When summer came the pond soak happened daily. One day Peter said that he and Cole could go alone. Peter began to beat on Cole at the pool. He was taunting him to beat him up again. Cole didn’t fight back or run. Peter finally stopped and dropped on the ground sobbing. Cole hugs him and talks of all the things he has done to heal himself. Then Cole notices the spirit bear and Peter sees it for the first time. Peter asks if others will believe what they have seen. Cole says that it doesn’t matter what others believe. They then carve the last space on Cole’s totem into a circle. They call for Garvey and he tells of a circle having to beginning or no end. Everything is one.

What will happen next?