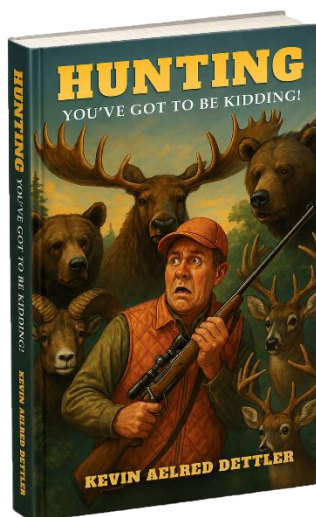


A Rugged, Wry Hunting Memoir About Grit, Obsession, and the Long Road to the North American 29

Review:



Kevin Dettler's *Hunting: You've Got to Be Kidding!* is a candid, humorous, and stamina-driven memoir about the author's ambitious pursuit of the North American 29, one of big-game hunting's most difficult and expensive achievements. The book follows Kevin through years of outdoor pursuit, remote travel, difficult terrain, physical exhaustion, disappointment, surprise, and the repeated absurdities that come with chasing a rare hunting milestone. As the title suggests, this is not a self-serious trophy memoir told only to glorify accomplishment. Instead, Kevin frames the journey with a sense of disbelief, patience, and humor, giving readers the impression of a man who often found himself asking whether the next setback, cost, weather disaster, missed opportunity, or unexpected obstacle could possibly be real.

The strongest element of the book is its authenticity. Kevin writes from experience, and the memoir benefits from the sense that the author has actually endured the discomforts and uncertainties he describes. The pursuit of the North American 29 is not treated as a casual hobby. It is shown as a demanding, costly, time-consuming, and sometimes punishing commitment that requires more than enthusiasm. Readers get a sense of the physical and emotional toll involved: the travel, the waiting, the failed attempts, the environmental conditions, the financial sacrifice, and the determination needed to keep going when common sense might suggest quitting. For readers interested in hunting, big-game culture, outdoor adventure, and personal quests, this book offers a grounded insider's perspective.

Kevin's humor is another asset. Outdoor memoirs can easily become repetitive if they rely only on hunt descriptions, animal lists, and success stories. Here, the recurring "you've got to be kidding" idea gives the book a conversational personality. The author seems willing to acknowledge the ridiculous, frustrating, and unpredictable parts of the journey, which makes the narrative more human. The humor softens the bravado that sometimes weighs down hunting

memoirs and allows Kevin to come across as persistent rather than arrogant. He is proud of the quest, but he does not appear blind to its absurdities. That self-awareness helps the book.

The faith element also gives the memoir a more personal dimension. Kevin's reflections on God, perseverance, patience, and endurance suggest that the journey is not only about collecting or registering species. It is also about testing character. The book appears to ask what kind of person continues after disappointment, what kind of faith is required when plans collapse, and what a lifelong goal costs emotionally and spiritually. This gives the memoir more weight than a simple hunting log. Its best moments likely occur when the author connects the outdoor challenge to larger themes of discipline, gratitude, humility, and persistence.

However, the book's appeal is naturally limited by its subject matter. Readers who are not interested in hunting, big-game culture, or trophy-based outdoor achievements may struggle to connect with the premise, especially if they are uncomfortable with hunting as a sport. The memoir may also face resistance from readers who prefer conservation-centered nature writing or broader adventure memoirs with less emphasis on harvesting animals. Kevin's audience is therefore specific: hunters, outdoorsmen, Safari Club International followers, readers interested in the North American 29, and those who enjoy faith-inflected accounts of personal endurance.

Structurally, the book may also risk repetition if the chronological hunt-by-hunt format is not carefully paced. A quest involving 29 species across many locations naturally creates a long sequence of trips, obstacles, and outcomes. While that structure makes sense for documenting the achievement, it can become predictable unless each chapter offers a distinct emotional, humorous, or reflective turn. The book's strongest path is not merely to recount what was hunted and where, but to show how each experience changed the author. When the memoir emphasizes growth, humility, and hard-earned perspective, it becomes more accessible. When it leans too heavily on technical hunting details, it may narrow its readership.

Still, *Hunting: You've Got to Be Kidding!* succeeds as a rugged and sincere account of a demanding life goal. Kevin's voice appears straightforward, good-humored, and grounded in real experience. The book's combination of outdoor adventure, personal sacrifice, faith, and comic frustration gives it more personality than a standard hunting record. It is bluntly not a book for everyone, but it does not need to be. For its intended audience, it offers exactly what many hunting

readers appreciate: authentic field experience, perseverance, a rare achievement, and the humility to laugh when the wilderness refuses to cooperate.

Comment and Suggestion:

Kevin's memoir has strong niche appeal and should be marketed directly to hunting communities, outdoor adventure readers, Safari Club International audiences, sportsmen's groups, conservation-minded hunters, and readers interested in personal challenge memoirs. The book would benefit from promotional positioning that highlights not only the North American 29 achievement, but also the humor and faith-based perseverance behind the journey. If future editions or companion material are developed, adding maps, photographs, species checklists, short "lessons learned" sections, or behind-the-scenes reflections could strengthen the book's value for hunting readers. The author's best marketing angle is not merely "I completed the North American 29," but "Here is what it cost, taught, tested, and revealed."

Professional Review Summary:

A plainspoken and entertaining hunting memoir, *Hunting: You've Got to Be Kidding!* follows Kevin's grueling pursuit of the North American 29 with humor, faith, and hard-earned perspective. The book's appeal will be strongest among hunters and outdoor-adventure readers, while non-hunting audiences may find the subject matter too specialized. Still, Kevin's authenticity, persistence, and self-aware humor give the memoir a rugged charm.

Recommended: Yes — especially for hunters, outdoor memoir readers, big-game enthusiasts, and readers drawn to stories of perseverance, faith, and demanding personal quests.

Book Title: *Hunting: You've Got to Be Kidding!*

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Submission From: Armani J. Klein

Firm: New Life Creatives Media LLC

Email Address: armani@newlifecreativesmediaproduction.com

Posted to Public: No

Score: 8.4 / 10

Recommended: Yes, 100%

Overall Rating: ★★★★★

