

SECRETS OF  
**BEARHAVEN**



BOOK TWO

MISSION TO  
MOON FARM

K. E. ROCHA



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# 1

Spencer Plain raced down the wooden dock. His eyes were glued to the bear cub in the river. He had to get her out of there, and fast. He could practically hear the clock ticking in his head.

The bear gave a feeble kick, fighting the current that threatened to carry her downriver. Spencer took a flying leap and launched himself off the end of the dock. He plunged into the cold water, kicked back up to the surface, and swam as hard as he could straight at the bear. As soon as Spencer reached the cub, he clamped one arm around her and started back toward shore.

*Thank goodness she's just a cub,* Spencer thought. His muscles were straining. He wasn't sure he'd be able to swim at all if she was any bigger.

Something scratched his arm, his lungs were burning, and sopping wet chestnut-colored fur kept getting in his eyes. Spencer ignored all of it. He couldn't let anything distract him from getting the cub out of the water *now*. He swam as hard as he could until his feet connected with the riverbed. *Almost there!* Spencer pulled the bear through the shallow water, then collapsed on the shore.



“Time!” a voice called from the dock.

Spencer sat up, trying to catch his breath. Beside him, Kate Weaver, his bear cub best friend, popped up to all fours. She gave a huge shake of her fur and drenched Spencer in a fresh coat of river water. She had mastered her drowning act in order to make Spencer’s river rescue training feel more real, but now the training exercise was over. She didn’t have to pretend she was in deep trouble anymore.

“You did *great*, Spencer!” Kate exclaimed. Spencer shook water out of his ear, relieved. Even though he knew Kate hadn’t really been in danger, he always felt better when the exercise was finished and she returned to her playful, enthusiastic self. Kate scooped up a nearby towel in her teeth and swung her head toward Spencer, offering it to him.

“Thanks, Kate.” He took the towel. “I think your BEAR-COM got me again,” he added, showing her the scratch on his arm.

“I’m sorry.” The cub dipped her snout up close to the pink scratch. Her eyes were wide.

Spencer shrugged. He didn’t want Kate to feel bad. “It’s okay. It’s kind of like a battle wound.” He glanced over at the BEAR-COM fastened around her neck, the only sparkly BEAR-COM in Bearhaven. The high-tech device translated the growls of the bears’ language, Ragayo, into English. Kate had decorated her BEAR-COM with pink crystals, and those crystals kept scratching Spencer during river rescues.

It wasn’t like he could ask Kate to take her BEAR-COM off during his training. Without it, they wouldn’t have any way of talking to each other. At least not the way they could now. Kate had taught Spencer a few words in Ragayo, but

without those phrases, and without the BEAR-COM, they wouldn't get very far in these rescue training sessions.

"Don't worry, it's just a scratch." Spencer moved his arm away from Kate's inspection.

"If you say so!" Her enthusiasm returned. "That was your fastest river rescue yet! Right, Aldo?" she called to her older brother, Spencer's training tutor. The much larger black bear was padding down the riverbank toward them. Aldo was carrying Spencer's backpack in his mouth and couldn't answer.

Spencer jumped to his feet and rushed over to take the backpack. He was too excited to hear if he'd broken his river rescue record to wait any longer.

"You're definitely getting faster, Spencer," Aldo answered once he'd released the bag from between his jaws. "That was fifty-eight seconds. Well done."

"You beat your record!" Kate cheered.

"Finally!" Spencer had been training after school all week and up to now hadn't been able to get Kate to shore in under a minute. He couldn't wait to record his new time.

"Finally? I'd say you're a pretty quick learner, little man. And, Kate," Aldo went on, "your bear-in-need-of-rescue performance has gotten too convincing. I almost jumped in to save you myself." The bear nuzzled his little sister playfully.

Kate took a goofy, four-legged bow. "Spencer is training to be an operative, but *I'm* training to star in the next Bearhaven play."

Spencer laughed as he dug around in his backpack, pushing aside his sneakers and T-shirt. He imagined the cub

taking her bow in the middle of a brightly lit stage. The idea was less crazy to him now than it would have been two weeks ago. Two weeks ago, he hadn't even known that Bearhaven, a secret community of rescued bears and their families, existed. Now he was living in it.

Spencer's hand closed around the notebook he'd been searching for. He pulled it out, then grabbed a pen from the backpack's front pocket.

*STORM* was written in big bold letters across the front of Spencer's training notebook. He flipped to the first page, where he and Aldo had outlined the skills Spencer would need to master in order to become an operative. The list was based on exercises Bearhaven's security squad, the Bear Guard, had to do in their own training.

Aldo was a new member of the guard himself, with the silver cuffs on his front legs to prove it. Spencer wouldn't get cuffs when he completed his training, because he wasn't trying to become an actual member of the Bear Guard. He was training so he could become a human operative and get approval to go on bear rescue missions. He'd go with a team of other operatives to save bears from dangerous places and evil people who treated them badly. Then he'd help bring the bears to Bearhaven, following in his parents' footsteps and joining them in the bear rescue work they had been doing for Spencer's whole life. The only thing was: Spencer had no idea about his mom and dad's work until two weeks ago when their disappearance from a bear rescue mission had landed him here.

Spencer tried not to think about the fact that his parents' whereabouts were still a mystery. Everyone kept telling him

Mom and Dad were closer than ever to making it back to Bearhaven. They told him he didn't need to worry. But aside from STORM training and going to school with Kate, there wasn't much that could truly distract him from thinking about his missing parents.

Spencer turned his attention back to his notebook, flipping through it. Each section started with a big bold letter that stood for one part of his training. *S* was for stealth, *T* for tree climbing, *O* for operative communications, *R* for river rescues, and *M* for muscle. He turned back to the *R* section of the notebook and wrote *58 seconds* on the next empty line, along with the date.

"Sun's setting, you two. I have to get to a guard workout soon," Aldo said. "How about you run home, Spencer. Record it in the 'Muscle' section. Kate can set a pace for you."

"Okay. Thanks for—"

"What pace?" Kate interrupted. "Fast, slow, or in the middle?" She always took her part in Spencer's training very seriously. The cub was just as dedicated to Spencer becoming an operative as he was.

"Between in the middle and fast," Aldo answered, giving Kate something to puzzle over for the next few minutes.

Spencer returned his training notebook to his backpack and pulled on his T-shirt. He laced up his sneakers, then got to his feet and slung his backpack over his shoulder. "Hey Aldo, stealth or operative communications tomorrow?"

"Let's give tree climbing another try."

"Oh." Of all the things Spencer did in STORM training, tree climbing was his least favorite.



“On your marks,” Aldo said. Obviously, tomorrow’s training wasn’t up for discussion. Kate rushed over to get into position beside Spencer, her eyes already zeroing in on the path that led into the center of Bearhaven, toward the Weavers’ home.

“Get set.”

Spencer took a deep breath. He didn’t know how Kate would interpret Aldo’s instructions, but he was determined to stay with her, no matter how fast she decided to go.

“GO!” Aldo cried from behind them. Spencer took off running. In the same instant, a chestnut-colored streak of fur flew out ahead of him.

“A little slower! Closer to in the middle!” Aldo yelled, but it was too late. Kate was setting the pace, and that pace was *fast*.