

'For anyone thinking of becoming a Scout, go for it, come and join the big adventure.' BEAR GRYLLS



## The main title "SURVIVAL SQUAD" is rendered in a large, bold, blue font with a distressed, splattered texture. The letters are set against a circular graphic that looks like a compass or a clock face, with a compass rose in the center. The background of the entire cover is a dynamic scene of two kayakers in orange gear navigating turbulent white water rapids. The water is splashing and churning, creating a sense of intense action and adventure.

WHITE WATER

JONATHAN ROCK



# Contents

Cover  
About the Book  
Title Page  
Dedication  
A message from Bear Grylls

Chapter 1  
Chapter 2  
Chapter 3  
Chapter 4  
Chapter 5  
Chapter 6  
Chapter 7  
Chapter 8  
Chapter 9  
Chapter 10  
Chapter 11  
Chapter 12  
Chapter 13  
Chapter 14  
Chapter 15  
Chapter 16  
Chapter 17

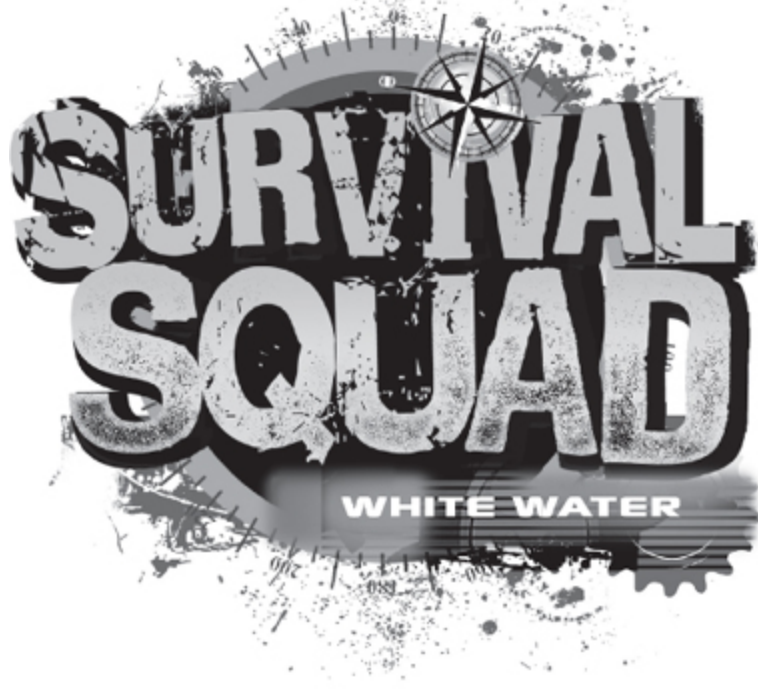
The Tiger Patrol's Diary  
About the Author  
Also by Jonathan Rock  
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## About the Book

There's a reason they're known as the Survival Squad . . .

A white-water expedition for Tiger Patrol takes a turn for the worse when the water level rises. It's the patrol's most exciting adventure yet, and they have only their training and skill to rely on.

[www.scouts.org.uk](http://www.scouts.org.uk)



**JONATHAN ROCK**

**RHCP DIGITAL**

*With thanks to Paul May*

## A MESSAGE FROM BEAR GRYLLS, CHIEF SCOUT



*Tiger Patrol is a team of intrepid Scouts who look out for each other no matter what challenge they face.*

*They've made a promise to do their best and this means picking up skills like navigation, planning, fire lighting and first aid. From moors and woodlands to river rapids, Tiger Patrol is willing to give anything a go - as long as they stay safe.*

*Scouting is full of great adventures, but you'll only make the most of them if you give everything you've got. You'll need to be alert, committed, trust your friends and never be too proud to ask for help.*

*Maybe you're already a Scout. If so - be inspired by Tiger Patrol. If you're thinking about joining, then go for it. I did, and I've never looked back.*

*Are you up for the challenge?*

Bear.

# CHAPTER 1

A LONE KAYAKER paddled swiftly down a turbulent river. Brown water foamed white where it was forced between giant rocks, and its tremendous power hurled the tiny yellow kayak about like a toy, threatening to obliterate the paddler. His blue helmet frequently disappeared beneath the churning currents, but he never once stopped paddling.

‘How cool is that?’ exclaimed Priya, her dark brown eyes glued to the screen. ‘Is that really what we’re going to be doing?’

Julie, Assistant Scout Leader of the 6th Matfield Scout Troop, hit the PAUSE button on her laptop, and the image on the screen froze. A wide smile split Julie’s suntanned face and her eyes sparkled. ‘I do hope not,’ she said with a laugh. ‘I know you think you’re ready for anything, Priya, but this is a big river in spate and you’re watching an experienced kayaker there.’

Sitting with Priya were the other members of Tiger Patrol. In two weeks’ time they would be setting off for their summer camp in the north, and kayaking was going to be a big part of the trip. Connor Sutcliff, the Tigers’ Patrol Leader, had been watching the video with intense concentration in his blue eyes. He was almost sure he recognized the kayaker . . .

Rick, their Scout Leader, was standing with Julie. He was tall and muscular, with a weather-beaten face and close-cropped grey hair. He glanced at the frozen image. ‘Go on then,’ he said to Julie. ‘You’d better show them the rest of it.’



On the screen the kayaker spun into action. Suddenly the little boat was facing the wrong way. It was flung onto its side by the power of the water, and then the whole screen was filled with swirling foam.

'Awesome!' breathed Andy Mackenzie, a tall boy with longish brown hair who was sitting behind Priya. 'That's been filmed with a helmet cam. This is incredible footage!'

Andy was a passionate photographer and moviemaker and he had filmed many of Tiger Patrol's exploits during the past year.

'Maybe you could get a camera like that and film us,' suggested Abby, Andy's best friend and neighbour. A strand of her long hair had escaped from her ponytail and she pushed it back behind her ear. 'That would be so cool.'

'I can't afford it,' Andy replied. 'I only wish I could! Hey, look at that!'

Now they were seeing the view from another camera, positioned high above the raging river. The camera zoomed out and panned round to the right.

'No!' gasped the small dark-haired boy beside Connor. 'I don't believe it! They must be crazy!'

Toby was the Tigers' Assistant Patrol Leader. Toby threw himself into almost every activity with enthusiasm and determination, but Connor knew that he hadn't really enjoyed their first experience of kayaking in the local swimming pool, although he had worked as hard as any of them.

The camera now showed a massive waterfall. Across the whole width of the river, water was thundering down into a seething rocky cauldron of spray, foam and tumbled water. Even through the small loudspeakers attached to Julie's computer, the noise sounded tremendous. The kayaker was about fifty metres from the waterfall now, paddling hard. Suddenly the view changed, and they were looking through the helmet camera again, seeing what he was seeing.

‘Oh, wow!’ exclaimed Priya, eyes shining. ‘He’s really going to do it!’

The kayak flipped over the edge and the camera was blotted out by white spray. The film cut back to the view from the bank and they saw the kayak plunge vertically into the maelstrom below. Connor held his breath, and he realized that the others were doing the same. There was another cut to the kayaker’s point of view, and they were looking at rushing water, the flash of a paddle, spinning silhouettes of dark pine trees. Then, from above, they saw the bottom of an upturned kayak, the blade of a paddle digging into the rushing torrent – and miraculously the kayak was upright again and heading off downstream as the paddler somehow found time to punch the air in triumph.

The assembled Scouts let out a cheer, and Connor could contain himself no longer. ‘It’s you, Rick, isn’t it?’ he said. ‘I saw your face, just for a second.’

Rick laughed. ‘Well spotted,’ he said. ‘I thought my face was under water most of the time. It certainly felt like it!’

‘And can we do something like that?’ demanded Priya. ‘I mean, not kayak over a waterfall, but will we be paddling on white water?’

Rick smiled at her. ‘We’ll see how you get on,’ he said. ‘After last week’s session at the pool, I think we might have to concentrate on teaching you all to paddle in a straight line first.’

There was some laughter at this, but Connor noticed a few embarrassed-looking faces as he glanced around at the rest of the Troop.

‘You don’t need to worry,’ Rick told them. ‘Don’t forget that you have excellent kayak instructors.’

The Scouts laughed. Rick and Julie were the instructors in question, and Connor knew that they really were very good.

‘Believe it or not, I was terrified of water when I first got into a kayak,’ Rick continued. ‘So there’s hope for you all. By the time our camp is over you’ll all be old hands, but remember, this camp isn’t just about kayaking. We’ll be hill walking on one of the days, and gorge-walking on another, so there’ll be plenty of variety. Now, off you go and change into your scruffs. I’m hoping that most of you will get your Survival Skills Badge on this trip. If you can’t even cook with a frying pan, you’ll find it very tricky cooking over an open fire with no utensils, so we’ll make sure you can all fry sausages and eggs at least!’

‘I don’t know how Rick could do that,’ said Toby as he and Jay tended the Tigers’ fire in the altar that was set up on the patch of grass behind Scout HQ. ‘It looked seriously scary. And he was right: I *still* can’t paddle in a straight line!’

‘You’ll soon learn,’ said Jay. He had joined the Scouts just a year ago, at the same time as Priya, and although he had been a reluctant Scout at first, he had soon become firm friends with Toby. ‘You’re getting good at falling in anyway,’ he added, laughing.

‘Ha, ha,’ muttered Toby gloomily. ‘I sink. That’s what worries me.’

‘It’s’cos you’re so thin,’ Jay told him. ‘But you do float really, or you would if you didn’t keep fighting the water all the time. I’ve never seen anyone splash as much as you do.’

‘You’ll be wearing a buoyancy aid,’ said Priya, appearing beside them with a pack of sausages and a box of eggs. ‘You heard what Rick said. They wouldn’t be taking us kayaking if we couldn’t do it.’

‘That’s just it,’ Toby replied. ‘I don’t want to mess up. Part of the camp is going to be a three-day expedition in kayaks, and if I can’t improve, then they might not let me go.’

‘You’ll be fine. Tell him, Abby.’

'Of course you will,' said Abby, placing the frying pan on the grille and pouring in a little oil. As she looked up at Toby, her hand slipped, and some of the oil slopped over the side of the pan. There was a brief flicker of flame before Abby removed the pan from the heat.

'Hey, Survival Squad,' called Sajiv, the Panthers' Patrol Leader, 'don't set yourselves on fire!'

'At least we've got a fire,' retorted Abby. 'All *you've* got is smoke!' She was looking at the Panthers' fire, which had nearly gone out. 'Serves them right,' she went on. 'I wish we'd never been given that stupid nickname. They all love it when we get something wrong.'

'No, they don't,' said Connor reasonably. 'They love winding you up, Abby, that's all.'

'Because it's so easy,' added Andy.

'But you can see why they might be jealous,' said Priya. 'We do seem to have more excitement than anyone else.'

'Lost in the mist,' said Jay.

'Stuck on a cliff . . .'

'Riding in a helicopter . . .'

'Catching rustlers . . .'

They were all talking at once as they remembered the incredible adventures they'd had in the course of the year. 'We weren't actually lost,' said Toby.

'It just felt like it,' replied Priya, remembering how scared she'd been on her first expedition.

'How about we just ensure that we don't make any more mistakes,' Connor said, laughing. 'Like letting our *own* fire go out, for instance!'

Abby spun round again with a cry, only to see the sausages sizzling happily over a perfect fire. She looked back and found the other five Tigers grinning broadly at her.

'I told you,' laughed Andy. 'Winding you up is just too easy. I think it's time to add the eggs. I'm starving!'

Two weeks later the Tigers were eating again, but now the smell of pine woods was all around them, and a river rushed past not ten metres from the grassy platform where they had pitched their tents. Between the trees Connor could see the blue outlines of distant mountains. Their summer camp had begun.

'My mouth is on fire,' said Andy as the Tigers sat on an old tree trunk beside the river. He spoke loudly and Connor saw the white cable of his iPod headphones snaking up under his long brown hair as his head nodded in time to the music.

'I know,' agreed Toby, taking a swig from his water bottle. 'That was the hottest chilli I've ever eaten.'

'Hot?' Priya looked astonished. She also looked incredibly cool, even though she claimed the cargo pants and T-shirt were her oldest, scruffiest clothes. 'You're kidding, right?' she continued. 'I wish I'd brought a bottle of chilli sauce with me. You haven't got one in your bag, have you, Toby?'

Toby's enormous rucksack was legendary. It often contained the most surprising things and was always incredibly heavy. 'No,' he replied. 'But I wish I'd packed a fire extinguisher for my mouth! I can't believe you don't think it's hot.'

The 6th Matfield were sharing the campsite with several other Scout Troops. They had arrived a few hours earlier after a long, stuffy journey in three minibuses, all heavily loaded with camping equipment and towing trailers loaded with kayaks. As well as Rick and Julie they had several other helpers with them. There were two Explorer Scouts, Martina and Gary, as well as Connor's dad and Usha, a rock-climbing friend of Julie's who had driven the minibus the Tigers had travelled in.

The campsite extended through a series of clearings in the trees, and the Tigers had all agreed that their own spot was easily the best: it was right beside the river.



'Why don't we explore along the bank?' Toby suggested. 'It might take our minds off the pain.'

'You're all so sad,' scoffed Priya. 'I'll get my parents to invite you round for a meal. After you've eaten my mum's food you'll never think anything is hot ever again!'

They got to their feet, but as they set off along the path, they saw a group of kayakers speeding along the river towards them, paddles flashing. 'They're Sea Scouts,' said Toby, who had spotted the logo on the kayaks.

'They can certainly handle those kayaks,' said Connor admiringly.

The Tigers stopped and watched as the Sea Scouts brought their kayaks expertly up to the bank and helped each other to climb out.

'Can we give you a hand?' Connor offered as they started to haul their boats out of the water.

'No, thanks, we're cool.' The boy who spoke seemed to be the leader. He crouched by his boat and lifted it easily. Moments later all ten boats were on the bank. 'We're the Otter Patrol and some of the Seals,' the boy said, removing his helmet to reveal dark, very wet hair. 'We're from the Welland Bay Sea Scouts. I'm Max.'

Connor introduced himself and the other Tigers. Toby saw the Sea Scouts glancing at the Matfield kayaks, and suddenly he found himself viewing them through an outsider's eyes. He had to admit, they did look very old and battered.

'So where are you going?' Max asked.

'We have to do some more training,' Abby told him, casting an envious glance at the kayaks behind him. 'Then we're going on an expedition downriver. We'll be camping for two nights on the way. It's the first time we've done anything like this in kayaks.'

'Really?' A slim Scout removed her helmet and shook water out of her fair hair. 'You'll have a great time. There's

nothing better than kayaking. We came for the white water upstream. Are those yours?’

‘Yes,’ said Abby, a little defensively. ‘They’re a bit old, but they’ve been on lots of expeditions.’

‘You’re right,’ said the girl, flashing them a smile. ‘They’re cool. See you around maybe.’

With that, the Sea Scouts picked up their gleaming kayaks in a well-drilled routine and headed off across the grass, leaving the Tigers staring after them.

‘She thought it was tame, what we’ll be doing,’ said Abby. ‘She was too polite to say, but you could see it in her eyes.’

‘I don’t think so,’ said Connor, watching the girl disappear between the trees. ‘I thought she was OK. And we don’t have to worry about a thing. Whatever Rick and Julie have planned for us, it definitely won’t be tame. You all saw Rick in that kayak. He loves excitement. And I’m absolutely certain that’s what we’re going to get!’