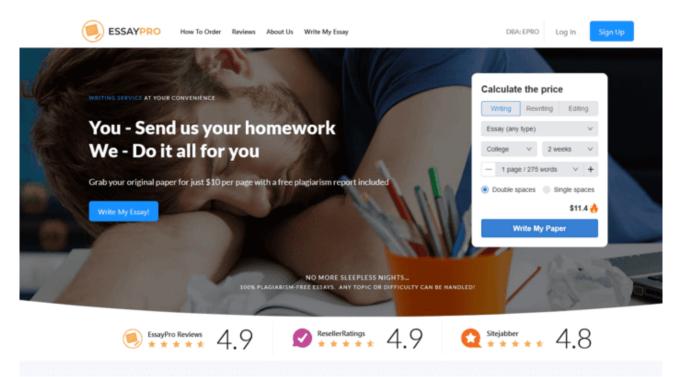
Pity the Bear in Judith Minty's story, Killing the Bear



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Pity the Bear in Judith Minty's story, Killing the Bear Judith Minty's story, "Killing the Bear," is a rather chilling tale about a woman who shoots a bear to death. The story is not merely a simple account of the incident however. It is full of stories and facts about bears, which affect how the reader reacts to the story. In the beginning, the reader expects the bear to be portrayed as a cold-blooded monster who must be killed for the safety of the primary character however this expectation is foiled throughout the story and the reader sees the bear in a very different light. Due to the stories and facts given about bears throughout the story, the reader comes to pity the bear, but most will still acknowledge the necessity of killing him. The beginning of the story seems very quiet and peaceful. It sets up a scene many people would be familiar with. Even the story about the dog is one most people who have ever

owned a house pet would instantly recognize. The woman does seem very vulnerable, however. She is outside in a hammock and the dog seems very little help since "she ended up more his protector than the other way around" (2). The second <u>section</u> sets up frightening images of animals, but they are all in the zoo, so they pose no threat. Yet, this still sustains the reader's original expectation of the bear being a threatening animal. Of all

the zoo animals described, the bear seems the most harmless, yet she is still afraid of it. The reader has not been shown any danger yet, but there is still a sense of something about to happen. The only bear we have seen is a "bundle of clothes by [a] dead tree" (5) in a cage at the zoo.

The third section of the story returns the reader to the calm security, but then quickly sends the tone of the story into a frenzy. These constant tone changes show the reader how strong and resourceful the woman is, but it also shows us how she can be thrown into a panic easily. We come to have little confidence in the main character's ability to react well if a dangerous situation arises.

Throughout the story, "Killing the Bear," the reader is given a number of side notes about bears and the woman's experience with them.

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