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## **Lizard Larson and the Time Keeper**

Gary Natoli

BookBaby (2024)

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Reviewed by Amanda Caswell for Reader Views (07/2024)

5\*- A must-read for fantasy seekers!

“Lizard Larson and the Time Keeper” by Gary Natoli is an engaging sci-fi adventure featuring a fourteen-year-old girl named Lizard, who discovers a time-stopping power after the tragic loss of her physicist parents. This newfound ability, linked to her parents’ time machine, sets off a chain of events with potentially universe-altering consequences.

The story begins with an apparent terrorist bombing at Grand Central Terminal in New York City, which results in the death of Lizard’s parents. Lizard soon learns she possesses a time-stopping power, a gift that draws the attention of the Director of the Time Management Bureau from the future. Guided by a mysterious figure known as the Time Keeper, Lizard navigates a complex web of allies and enemies, including her parents’ contemporary friend and a future rebel. Together, they must work to prevent the collapse of the universe by resetting the timeline.

Natoli features a compelling and relatable protagonist, Lizard, whose transformation from a grief-stricken teenager to a determined time traveler is skillfully developed, highlighting her growth and resilience. The intriguing plot masterfully intertwines the concept of time travel and its consequences, with the mystery of Lizard’s parents’ work and the Time Management Bureau adding layers of suspense. Natoli’s rich world-building spans diverse timelines, from present-day New York to future dystopias, immersing readers in vivid settings. The book also explores profound themes like loss, responsibility, and ethical dilemmas, adding emotional depth to the fast-paced adventure.

The intricacies of the time travel plot in this novel can sometimes be challenging to follow. Simplifying some of the mechanics or providing clearer explanations would make the story more accessible. Additionally, while Lizard is a well-developed character, some supporting characters could benefit from more depth. Enriching the narrative with more backstory and development for these characters would enhance the overall reading experience.

Natoli’s latest novel is perfect for teens and young adult readers who enjoy science fiction and time travel adventures. Fans of stories with strong, young female protagonists and themes of resilience and responsibility will find this book particularly engaging.

I highly recommend this thrilling sci-fi novel for a number of reasons; it combines adventure, mystery, and emotional depth. Natoli’s well-crafted protagonist, intriguing plot, and rich world-

building make this book a standout in the genre. Despite some complexity in the narrative and a need for more developed supporting characters, the story's strengths ensure a captivating read. This book is a must-read for young sci-fi enthusiasts and anyone who loves a good time travel tale.

In summary, this thought-provoking and entertaining novel will appeal to a wide range of readers. Its blend of adventure, emotional depth, and intricate time travel mechanics make it a unique and memorable addition to young adult science fiction. I really enjoyed reading Gary Natoli's "Lizard Larson and the Time Keeper;" it is one that I would read a second time just to re-live the fascinating story. A page-turner, for sure!