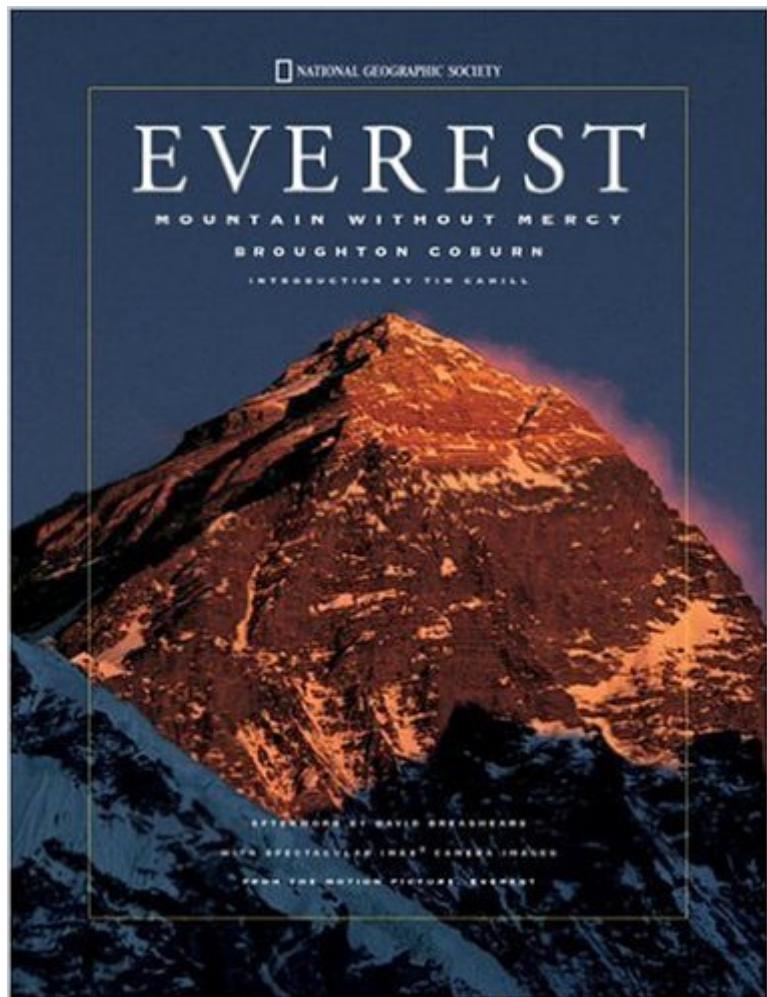


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Everest : Mountain Without Mercy



Synopsis

David Breashears, the first American to scale Everest twice, was a veteran of nine previous Himalayan filmmaking expeditions when he agreed to lead what became his most challenging filmmaking experience. The expedition was organized by large-format motion picture producer MacGillivray Freeman Films and was comprised of an international team of climbers. Their goal was to carry a specially modified 48-pound IMAX motion picture camera to the summit of Everest and return from the top of the world with the first footage ever shot there in this spectacular format. A stunningly illustrated portrait of life and death in a hostile, high-altitude environment where no human can survive for long, Everest invites you to join Breashears, his climbers, and his crew as they make photographic history. Author Broughton Coburn traces each step of the team's progress toward a rendezvous with history - and suddenly you're on the scene of a disaster that riveted the world's attention. Everest incorporates a first-person, on-the-scene account of the most tragic event in the mountain's history: The May 10, 1996, blizzard that claimed eight lives, including two of the world's top climbing expedition leaders. It is a chronicle of the courage and cooperation that resulted in the rescue of several men and women who were trapped on the lethal, windswept slopes. Everest is also a tale of triumph. In a struggle to overcome both the physical and emotional effects of the disaster on Everest, Breashears and his team rise to the challenge of achieving their goal - humbled by the mountain's overwhelming power, yet exhilarated by their own accomplishment.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

While the other accounts of Everest 1996 focus in on Fischer's and Hall's teams, this one focuses in

the the IMAX team. From the looks of it, they were the only moderates on the mountain that season. They positioned themselves for rescue efforts with the Alpine Ascents team. While everyone else was being selfish with supplies and radio's and rescue teams, Brashiers and Viesters were there to give vital oxygen, help climbers from camp 3 and coordinate the helicopter rescue of Weathers and Gao. While the narration may not be the most riviting part of the book, the full page color pictures are. This was a film making trip for the IMAX crew so the pictures they brought back for this book were increadible. They also published Scott Fischer's pictures of summit day. I noticed one picture where Krackauer is sitting in the snow as many climbers are going up the Hillary step. It really brought to life the sceene from "Into thin Air" where he was wanting everyone to hurry up so he could get to his oxygen on the south summit. The short stories in the middle of the book make this the ultimate coffee table book. They read like magazine articles. The other books on Everest 1996 can be checked out of a library. This is the one you want to have in your home.

This book is a companion to the Imax film of the 1996 Everest climb, made famous by the tragedy detailed in the Jon Krakauer book, Into Thin Air. This book is up to the usual standards of its publisher, the National Geographic Society. It contains spectacular photographs, and a narrative that contains both detailed technical information for the mountaineering junkie, and a gripping story.

My obsession with mountaineering began with "Into Thin Air" by John Krakauer. From there I progressed to "The Climb" by Anatoli Boukeerev. Then came "Eiger, Wall of Death", "K2 Triumph and Tragedy", and I currently have "Everest Diary" on my wish list. "EVEREST: MOUNTAIN WITHOUT MERCY" however, is my proudest posession to date. The awe inspiring photographs and the unbiased viewpoints from the expedition members were refreshing. There is little finger-pointing in this book. While I was well aware of the IMAX team's efforts during the 1996 tragedy, I came to admire them most for the efforts involved in the filming of the movie! I was lucky to be able to attend a lecture given by David Brashears shortly after purchasing this book and the IMAX EVEREST video. He truly is a die-hard filmmaker. The shots in this book (and in the movie) are breathtaking and were obtained at great risk. I strongly recommend this book to anyone who is facinated with the struggles of mountaineering. It combines facts (not blame) of the 1996 expeditions together with some of the most haunting photographs I have ever seen.

My Everest, "Experience", began with Mr. Krakauer and his book, "Into Thin Air". I then read Mr. Boukreev's book, "The Climb". Scattered amongst these were many other books about K2,

incredible rescues, etc. The first and second books mentioned are outstanding, and while only those who were there know what flaws, if any, the books contain, they are both enthralling, frightening, and in the end horribly sad. They are however written by individuals, and like all first hand accounts expose a personal viewpoint, that here is all the more complex due to the conditions under which the climbers were trying to stay alive and sort out their thoughts. There has been criticism written about both accounts, I am guilty, but from spectators like us, criticism is inappropriate. We just were not there. This book brings balance to the tragic aspects of the climb, and through photographs that can only be rendered through the I-Max System, the best sense of the scale of the attempt, and the personal components that any individual must have to make the summit of Everest a goal. The only very disturbing news this book shared was the unconscionable behavior of one team, who's country I will not mention in the hope that these climbers represent an aberration of that Country's Citizenry. While books and debates will continue on this tragedy for some time to come, this book does an outstanding job of stepping back a bit, leaving bias behind, and finally, stands as a memorial of sorts for all those who were there. Again my thanks to all those who made the book available, and my condolences to those who suffered, perished, and to their families. They were and are all remarkable men and women.

I don't know where I was in May 1996 that I missed out on this real life story. This book did an excellent job of recapturing the events of that month on Everest. I was transported back as if the events were happening real time. The pictures really took me there (well as close as I'll most likely ever get). I was taken in by the majesty as well as the tragedy of this story and those who lost their lives to Everest and to their insatiable desire to reach the summit. As opposed to Krakauer's book, Into Thin Air (which I read after being so enthralled with this book) I enjoyed this more impartial view and factual account of all the factors surrounding a decision to attempt a summit bid to the top of the world. After reading this book I can understand a person's desire to climb the summit but cement my own desire to climb no higher than 10 or 11,000 feet. I also enjoyed learning about the filming of an IMAX presentation. An excellent and enjoyable read.

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