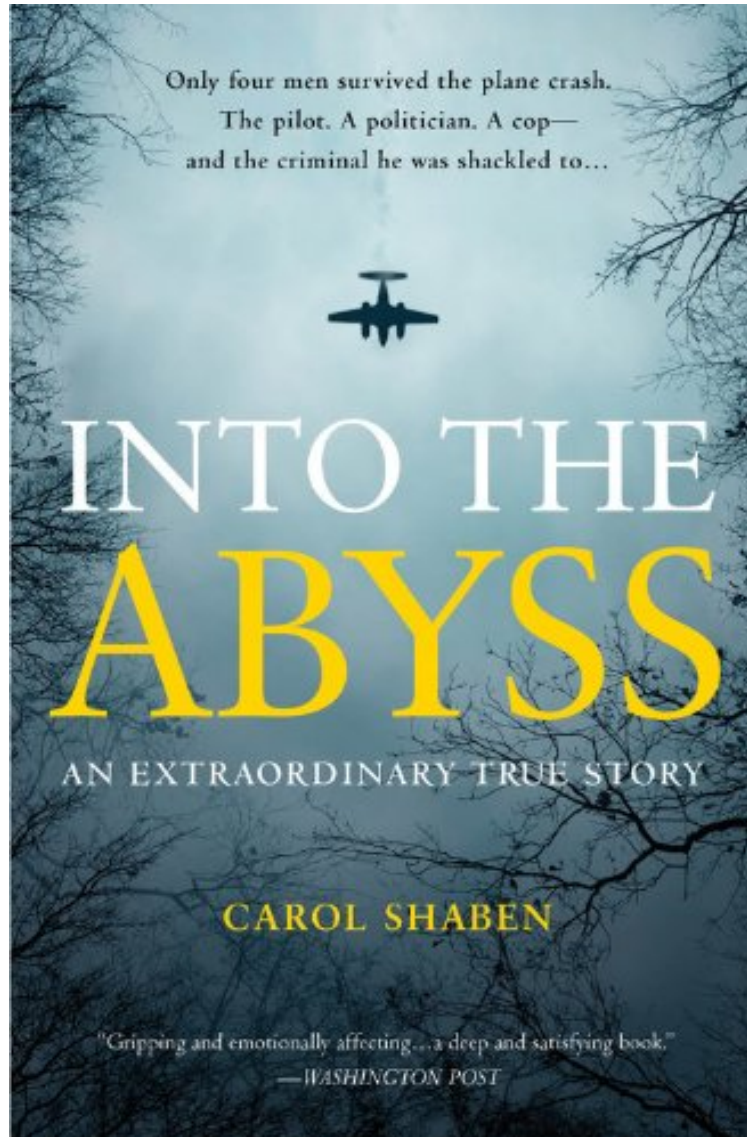


(Library ebook) Into the Abyss: An Extraordinary True Story

Into the Abyss: An Extraordinary True Story

Carol Shaben

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Carol Shaben : Into the Abyss: An Extraordinary True Story before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Into the Abyss: An Extraordinary True Story:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. My review in Aviation History magazine By Stephan Wilkinson In October 1984, a Piper Navajo Chieftain commuter flight, loaded to the gunwales with nine passengers and too much baggage plus one young and thoroughly in-over-his-head pilot, crashed onto a snowy mountain slope in northern Canada. Six of the passengers died, some slowly and in agony. Three, plus the pilot, survived and spent a bitter-cold

night and part of the next day in their street clothes, without shelter, before being saved by a substantial search-and-rescue operation mounted by the RCAF, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and civilian pilots and snowmobilers. All four kept their wits about them despite having injuries ranging from banged up to severe. It was an odd quartet. One was an important Canadian politician. Another was the pilot, who knew he had screwed up badly by trying to make a solo night instrument approach to an airport that was below minimums and had an ADF beacon as its sole navaid. And the other two were a Mountie and a tough young ex-con he'd been escorting to court. The prisoner was the strongest, bravest and most resourceful of them all. Without him, some might have died. The author, Carol Shaben, had unusual access to the four. Her father was the pol, and she has used that happenstance to tell a survival story in a manner and with a style that the deservedly lauded Jon Krakauer would appreciate. As somebody who has both piloted Piper Navajo Chieftains and flown in the Canadian north country, I also find it remarkable that Shaben, a nonpilot, has gotten every aviation detail right. There are aviation experts writing and reporting for major media outlets who couldn't do half as well as Shaben does. The book in fact is about long-term survival far beyond a cold night in the bush. There are the struggles of an overworked young pilot trying to build hours so he can get a real airline job, as well as the marginal existence of the tiny, family-run commuterline that hires him. The crash bonds the four survivors, who become friends thereafter--particularly the Mountie and his former prisoner. Each handles the crash experience in a different way, and their lives are thereafter shaped by it. Shaben follows them all through their emotional and physical struggles. She tells a fascinating story of lives that were changed forever by a dreadful night that the rest of us can barely imagine.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. The teaser is better than the book. By Rachel I've enjoyed the book, but truly expected it to be more of a page turner. I opened it, expecting the fast pace of survival in the wilderness. I'm an avid outdoors (wo)man, and I'm fully aware the risk of the mountains at night. The details of emotions are scarce, and I know the emotion of being lost in a wilderness about to freeze to death. The book tells a nice story, and good insider details of the plane crash, but, alas, moves too slowly and spares plenty of detail in the telling of its story. What about the fear of the elements? The icy conditions? The probability of animals nearby? At one point, Erik and Paul are working under the plane, and out of nowhere comes the accusation that Paul has been stealing from the luggage and the deceased. It has been shown earlier in the book, where he uses clothes of the deceased to clothe those clinging to life, but I fail to see its relation to the rest of the story. Why was this important? Of course it mattered, because otherwise the four clinging to life were likely to have frozen to death, but the accusation of petty theft? Not what I expected. I like the side by side comparison as time marched on. I enjoyed some of the smaller details that may have otherwise been overlooked, but Ms. Shaben's father is the center of her focus. The others had to be thinking of their own lives. Again, detail in this section is sketchy. Oh, and the first section of the book is incredibly dull, and all about Erik's flight experience, not in reference to the remainder of the book, or so I felt. It's alright. I'd recommend you get it from a library or a friend, though, if you so desire. There are better stories out there.

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A riveting account. By Judy I was thrilled that this story has finally been told. And I think there was no better person to tell it than the daughter of much beloved Larry Shaben, a survivor of the crash, a senior cabinet minister in the Alberta government, and charismatic leader in this northern Alberta community. Carol Shaben's skill in presenting factual accounts of this compelling drama in the manner one would expect of her journalistic background, and yet written with the story-telling ability of a fiction writer, makes for great reading. The story line is almost a "made for Hollywood scenario" as a convict being transported by an RCMP officer survives the crash and then faces a moral decision to run and avoid his own destiny facing court charges, or to stay and save the lives of his fellow passengers in this horrific plane crash. But it is not Hollywood fiction, it is reality - and Shaben does a great job of following the survivors twenty years after the crash to explore the impact this horrific accident had on the unfolding of the lives of the survivors, including her father. A great read!

Only four men survived the plane crash. The pilot. A politician. A cop... and the criminal he was shackled to. On an icy night in October 1984, a commuter plane carrying nine passengers crashed in the remote wilderness of northern Alberta, killing six people. Four survived: the rookie pilot, a prominent politician, a cop, and the criminal he was escorting to face charges. Despite the poor weather, Erik Vogel, the 24-year-old pilot, was under intense pressure to fly. Larry Shaben, the author's father and Canada's first Muslim Cabinet Minister, was commuting home after a busy week at the Alberta Legislature. Constable Scott Deschamps was escorting Paul Archambault, a drifter wanted on an outstanding warrant. Against regulations, Archambault's handcuffs were removed-a decision that would profoundly impact the men's survival. As the men fight through the night to stay alive, the dividing lines of power, wealth, and status are erased, and each man is forced to confront the precious and limited nature of his existence.

From Booklist In October 1984, a commuter plane crashed in northern Alberta. Of the 10 people aboard, there were 4 survivors: the pilot, an RCMP constable, the prisoner he was transporting, and the author's father, the late Larry Shaben, Alberta's housing minister. Journalist Shaben relies heavily on the memories of the survivors, who formed an improbable bond as they waited, desperately, to be rescued from almost certain death from their injuries and from the freezing temperature. The rescue comes about halfway through the book. The rest of it explores the crash's aftermath

and the lives of the survivors. Paul Archambault's story is the most interesting. A prisoner with a long rap sheet (car theft, breaking and entering), he became a hero after the crash, saving the RCMP constables' lives and helping to keep his fellow survivors warm and safe until the rescuers came. For him, the crash was a life-changing event, but ultimately his life ended tragically. Although author Shabens' father was one of the survivors, she divides the limelight among all four of them. --David Pitt "Gripping and emotionally affecting. . . a deep and satisfying book." *Washington Post* [Shaben] vividly recreates how these four total strangers managed to survive the tragedy. *New York Post* "With *Into the Abyss* Carol Shaben gives us an astonishing true story of catastrophe and redemption. Shaben writes from the inside out, as in the best non-fiction, creating a nuanced and tightly braided portrait of four men and their shared trauma that is by turns terrifying and deeply humane. Every line in this story rings true." John Vaillant, author of *The Tiger* "Electrifying...Shaben's riveting narrative is filled with heart and the story is well told." *Publishers Weekly* "[T]his is a complex, chilling narrative rendered with depth and precision, engaged in both its characters and the larger social moment... A worthy addition to the canon of extreme-survival nonfiction." *Kirkus* "As a concept, it doesn't get much better [than this]... *Into the Abyss* is in the best traditions of true-life journalism and grips from beginning to end." Iain Finlayson, *The Times* "The gripping account . . . is ultimately about the survivors, telling the story in scouring yet respectful detail of the four men who limped away from the fatal crash." Fish Griwkowsky, *Edmonton Journal* "A story that has haunted Vancouver-based writer Carol Shaben, Larry's daughter, since it happened... She was able to use [Archambault's] story to take readers along on that stormy night, to the side of a mountain where four men struggled to stay alive overnight alongside the six others who had died." Tracy Sherlock, *Vancouver Sun* About the Author Carol Shaben won two Canadian National Magazine Awards--a Gold Medal for Investigative Reporting and a Silver Medal for Politics and Public Interest--for articles that highlighted the subject of this book.