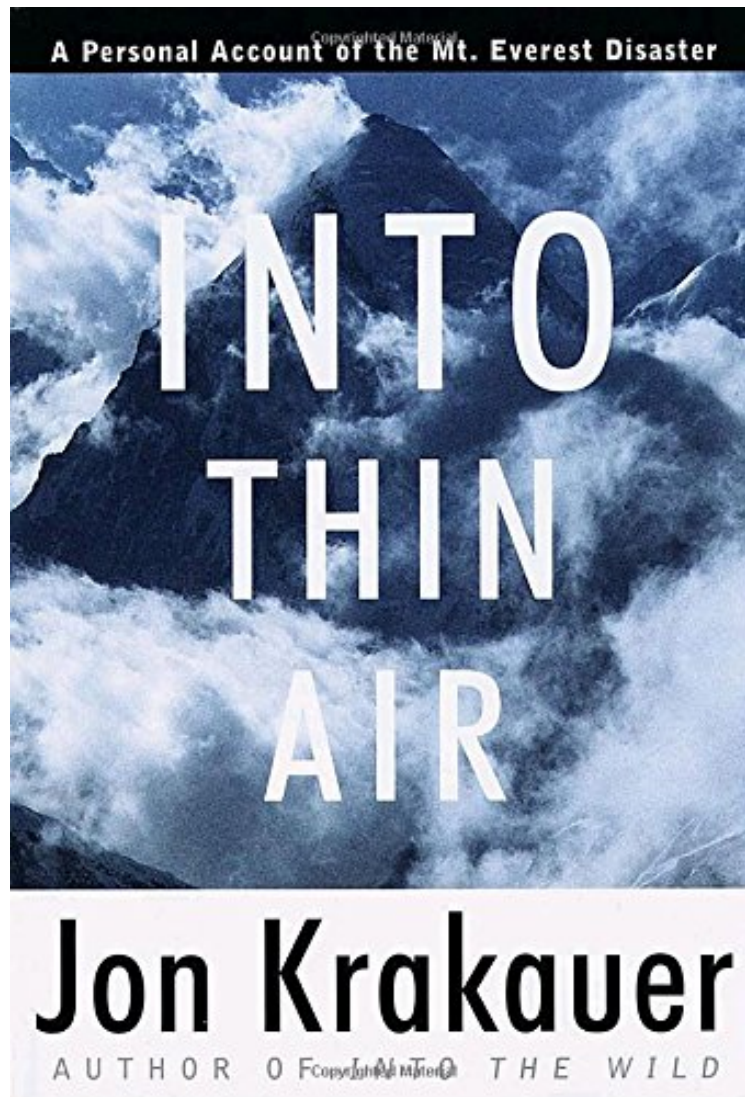


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Into Thin Air: A Personal Account of the Mount Everest Disaster

Jon Krakauer

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Jon Krakauer : Into Thin Air: A Personal Account of the Mount Everest Disaster before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Into Thin Air: A Personal Account of the Mount Everest Disaster:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Great bookBy Deborah E. PerfidioI have to say, before reading this book I had NO idea what climbing mountains entailed. It is how shall I say, "another world" - one I would be terrified to be a part of after having read this book. I agree with others that - perhaps also it is because it was written at such an

emotional time, but Krakauer does seem to have a lot of emotional distress boiling inside of him, but I am certain it has to do with possible, survivors guilt, which he does mention and the fact that this feud brewed between him and Boukreev, and I agree - having read and reread many different POVs on this particular part of Boukreev not using oxygen, turning back before alot of the people but then saving 3, I agree that Krakauer has a particular amount of anger toward this man, who is deceased now, but the impression even with the ending of him ultimately coming to a certain amount of admiration for him, it seems as though a large amount of his distress stems from a seemingly small incident at the top of the mountain (but again I am no mountaineer) and from what I read, it wasn't such a small problem though to me almost seems irrelevant in regards to the rest of the book and the huge feat of ALL of the climbers, survivors or not, of what they accomplished, God Rest the Souls of those who did not survive. To have gone through what he had, being a journalist and not a mountaineer as they say, one can only imagine - there has to be a lot of pain in his heart about seeing people he went up with only to watch 10 of them I think it was? die, And at one point - (Im terrible with the names) there was a part where he sees who he thinks is Andy Harris but turns out to actually be another man who survived and it brought him a tremendous amount of pain that he originally thought the man was alive and in a camp, his significant other called only to have to call them back the next day to tell her that he was in fact dead. Again, the book was a HUGE undertaking for me as far as keeping everyone's names straight so I might be confusing that one point - I just know that Krakauer seemed to be emotionally terribly distraught by a lot of the events that happened. To debate this Boukreev using oxygen I think is pointless - what happened happened - to me, anyone who climbs mountains for a living or for sport I admire, I suppose, but I also think YOU ARE CRAZY LOL - (said as light heartedly as I can) my goodness, what possesses people to want to do this? It has to be a calling a true inner calling that I can just not fathom. It sounds like an awful lot of pain for a little gain but hey, the same can be said for life in general. I admire Krakauer and enjoyed the book thouroughly. I did not read the Climb and probably never will - one mountain book for me is enough. It was enthralling but scared me to a degree. Again, I cannot imagine the pain of being that cold and without oxygen, being asthmatic, and thinking back to my oxygen depleted youth NOTHING hurts worse than not being able to breathe so climbing any mountains for me is OUT OF the question, especially after reading this book WOW is all I have to say!!! And for anyone a part of the 1996 climb who is still alive - give yourself a break, you too, Krakauer, what you did was fine and I see no reason for you to feel guilty - let go of those negative feelings - at one point in the book a Sherpa gets hit in the back of the head with a stone several times and turns to tell Krakauer, WHAT have we done to make the mountain Gods so angry??? That part more than any other made me think....what INDEED????? 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Slightly more cathartic than clinical By Peter Monks Together with Joe Simpson's Touching the Void: The True Story of One Man's Miraculous Survival, "Into Thin Air" is perhaps the most widely read book about modern mountaineering today. Krakauer, a journalist accompanying an expedition of "paying customers" to climb Everest in 1996, was caught in a storm that shortly after summiting that killed five climbers. "Into Thin Air" is a cross between a clinical examination of the factors that contributed to this disaster and a (limited) self-examination and therapeutic exercise by the author to confront his own contribution to the tragedy. While "Into Thin Air" at times feels like a slightly padded and stretched version of the magazine article Krakauer initially wrote, in general the story moves quickly and is compellingly told. Krakauer has, in my view, been reasonably scrupulous in seeking a range of views and recollections and relatively honest about his own perceived shortcomings - he is also candid about the difficulties involved in piecing together an accurate picture from the recollections of cold, tired, frightened and oxygen-deprived people in stress - or of in being overly critical of their decisions with 20/20 hindsight. While one would have to read a work from an opposing viewpoint such as The Climb: Tragic Ambitions on Everest to form a definitive opinion of the actions of Andrei Boukreev, for example, Krakauer's criticism of Boukreev's actions before the disaster appears measured and objective (and gives space to opposing interpretations) while acknowledging his heroic and superhuman rescue efforts during the storm. Some of the one-star reviews attacking Krakauer on this front appear a bit unreasonable and unwilling to consider that Boukreev's heroism doesn't rule out inadequate planning or cooperation beforehand. The most disappointing aspect of "Into Thin Air" is the authors tendency to conflate relatively trivial virtues (being an amusing dinner companion, having agreeable political views, or being able to climb a mountain well) with more fundamental human virtues - which seems to be a fairly common trait in works of this nature. If you are a better climber and a more entertaining companion than the next guy/girl on the rope, then you are a better person and that's it. As a consequence, he comes across as relatively shallow and banal, and never really engages with some of the more fundamental moral questions posed by events on Everest that climbing season, when a number of climbers in distress were either ignored, given insufficient help or pushed beyond their limits in order not to compromise what is, ultimately, a fairly empty achievement to let somebody die for. While no particularly profound thinker himself, Joe Simpson does a far better job of challenging this mental climate in Dark Shadows Falling. Somewhere between three and a half and four stars (I marked it down to three only because there are so many 4/5 star reviews posted already). Certainly far more interesting and memorable than the authors Eiger Dreams: Ventures Among Men and Mountains, which also seems interested in trivial personal qualities at the expense of more important ones. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Greatly enjoyed this book By Doplar Well written written and very interesting. For someone who has never, will never

and would never climb a hill much less a mountain, I enjoy vicariously going up the mountain from the warm comfort of home with a book in my hands. And while I have little empathy for those who climb mountains such as Everest and kill themselves in the process I do feel for Krakauer for having experienced so much guilt and pain as a survivor. And for those who would and who have criticized him in his writing about this tragedy, I say, "stick it in your ear." Seems to me Krakauer was very honest in his reporting of this incident and any part he may have had in it. I do not feel there was anything he could have done to cause anything to have come out any differently. I mean, come on, when you're functioning on about 10 brain cells at high altitude who is to blame anyone for much of anything that happens up there.

When Jon Krakauer reached the summit of Mt. Everest in the early afternoon of May 10, 1996, he hadn't slept in fifty-seven hours and was reeling from the brain-altering effects of oxygen depletion. As he turned to begin his long, dangerous descent from 29,028 feet, twenty other climbers were still pushing doggedly toward the top. No one had noticed that the sky had begun to fill with clouds. Six hours later and 3,000 feet lower, in 70-knot winds and blinding snow, Krakauer collapsed in his tent, freezing, hallucinating from exhaustion and hypoxia, but safe. The following morning, he learned that six of his fellow climbers hadn't made it back to their camp and were desperately struggling for their lives. When the storm finally passed, five of them would be dead, and the sixth so horribly frostbitten that his right hand would have to be amputated. *Into Thin Air* is the definitive account of the deadliest season in the history of Everest by the acclaimed journalist and author of the bestseller *Into the Wild*. On assignment for *Outside Magazine* to report on the growing commercialization of the mountain, Krakauer, an accomplished climber, went to the Himalayas as a client of Rob Hall, the most respected high-altitude guide in the world. A rangy, thirty-five-year-old New Zealander, Hall had summited Everest four times between 1990 and 1995 and had led thirty-nine climbers to the top. Ascending the mountain in close proximity to Hall's team was a guided expedition led by Scott Fischer, a forty-year-old American with legendary strength and drive who had climbed the peak without supplemental oxygen in 1994. But neither Hall nor Fischer survived the rogue storm that struck in May 1996. Krakauer examines what it is about Everest that has compelled so many people -- including himself -- to throw caution to the wind, ignore the concerns of loved ones, and willingly subject themselves to such risk, hardship, and expense. Written with emotional clarity and supported by his unimpeachable reporting, Krakauer's eyewitness account of what happened on the roof of the world is a singular achievement. *Into the Wild* is available on audio, read by actor Campbell Scott.

.com *Into Thin Air* is a riveting first-hand account of a catastrophic expedition up Mount Everest. In March 1996, *Outside* magazine sent veteran journalist and seasoned climber Jon Krakauer on an expedition led by celebrated Everest guide Rob Hall. Despite the expertise of Hall and the other leaders, by the end of summit day eight people were dead. Krakauer's book is at once the story of the ill-fated adventure and an analysis of the factors leading up to its tragic end. Written within months of the events it chronicles, *Into Thin Air* clearly evokes the majestic Everest landscape. As the journey up the mountain progresses, Krakauer puts it in context by recalling the triumphs and perils of other Everest trips throughout history. The author's own anguish over what happened on the mountain is palpable as he leads readers to ponder timeless questions. From *School Library Journal* Heroism and sacrifice triumph over foolishness, fatal error, and human frailty in this bone-chilling narrative in which the author recounts his experiences on last year's ill-fated, deadly climb. Thrilling armchair reading. Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc. From *Library Journal* On May 19, 1953, Edmund Hillary and Sherpa guide Tenzing Norgay achieved the impossible, becoming the first men to stand on top of Mount Everest. But by May 10, 1996, climbing the 29,000-foot "goddess of the sky" had become almost routine; commercial expeditions now littered Everest's flanks. Accepting an assignment from *Outside* magazine to investigate whether it was safe for wealthy amateur climbers to tackle the mountain, Krakauer (*Into the Wild*, LJ 11/15/95) joined an expedition guided by New Zealander Rob Hall. But Krakauer got more than he bargained for when on summit day a blinding snowstorm caught four groups on the mountain's peaks. While Krakauer made it back to camp, eight others died, including Scott Fischer and Hall, two of the world's best mountaineers. Devastated by the disaster, Krakauer has written this compelling and harrowing account (expanded from his *Outside* article) as a cathartic act, hoping it "might purge Everest from [his] life." But after finishing this raw, emotionally intense book, readers will be haunted, as Krakauer was, by the tragedy. Highly recommended. -?Wilda Williams, "Library Journal" Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc.