Into Thin Air

#1 NATIONAL BESTSELLER • "A harrowing tale of the perils of high-altitude climbing, a story of bad luck and worse judgment and of heartbreaking heroism." —PEOPLE

A bank of clouds was assembling on the not-so-distant horizon, but journalist-mountaineer Jon Krakauer, standing on the summit of Mt. Everest, saw nothing that "suggested that a murderous storm was bearing down." He was wrong. The storm, which claimed five lives and left countless more—including Krakauer's--in guilt-ridden disarray, would also provide the impetus for Into Thin Air, Krakauer's epic account of the May 1996 disaster. By writing Into Thin Air, Krakauer may have hoped to exorcise some of his own demons and lay to rest some of the painful questions that still surround the event. He takes great pains to provide a balanced picture of the people and events he witnessed and gives due credit to the tireless and dedicated Sherpas. He also avoids blasting easy targets such as Sandy Pittman, the wealthy socialite who brought an espresso maker along on the expedition. Krakauer's highly personal inquiry into the catastrophe provides a great deal of insight into what went wrong. But for Krakauer himself, further interviews and investigations only lead him to the conclusion that his perceived failures were directly responsible for a fellow climber's death. Clearly, Krakauer remains haunted by the disaster, and although he relates a number of incidents in which he acted selflessly and even heroically, he seems unable to view those instances objectively. In the end, despite his evenhanded and even generous assessment of others' actions, he reserves a full measure of vitriol for himself. This updated trade paperback edition of Into Thin Air includes an extensive new postscript that sheds fascinating light on the acrimonious debate that flared between Krakauer and Everest guide Anatoli Boukreev in the wake of the tragedy. "I have no doubt that Boukreev's intentions were good on summit day," writes Krakauer in the postscript, dated August 1999. "What disturbs me, though, was Boukreev's refusal to acknowledge the possibility that he made even a single poor decision. Never did he indicate that perhaps it wasn't the best choice to climb without gas or go down ahead of his clients." As usual, Krakauer supports his points with dogged research and a good dose of humility. But rather than continue the heated discourse that has raged since Into Thin Air's denouncement of guide Boukreev, Krakauer's tone is conciliatory; he points most of his criticism at G. Weston De Walt, who coauthored The Climb, Boukreev's version of events. And in a touching conclusion, Krakauer recounts his last conversation with the late Boukreev, in which the two weathered climbers agreed to disagree about certain points. Krakauer had great hopes to patch things up with Boukreev, but the Russian later died in an avalanche on another Himalayan peak, Annapurna I. In 1999, Krakauer received an Academy Award in Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters--a prestigious prize intended "to honor writers of exceptional accomplishment." According to the Academy's citation, "Krakauer combines the tenacity and courage of the finest tradition of investigative journalism with the stylish subtlety and profound insight of the born writer. His account of an ascent of Mount Everest has led to a general reevaluation of climbing and of the commercialization of what was once a romantic, solitary sport; while his account of the life and
death of Christopher McCandless, who died of starvation after challenging the Alaskan wilderness, delves even more deeply and disturbingly into the fascination of nature and the devastating effects of its lure on a young and curious mind.

Into Thin Air

Jon Krakauer's acclaimed account of a disastrous expedition on Mt Everest. This is the true story of a 24-hour period on Everest, when members of three separate expeditions were caught in a storm and faced a battle against hurricane-force winds, exposure, and the effects of altitude, which ended the worst single-season death toll in the peak's history. 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.

Into Thin Air

#1 NATIONAL BESTSELLER • "A harrowing tale of the perils of high-altitude climbing, a story of bad luck and worse judgment and of heartbreaking heroism." —PEOPLE A bank of clouds was assembling on the not-so-distant horizon, but journalist-mountaineer Jon Krakauer, standing on the summit of Mt. Everest, saw nothing that "suggested that a murderous storm was bearing down." He was wrong. The storm, which claimed five lives and left countless more—including Krakauer's—in guilt-ridden disarray, would also provide the impetus for Into Thin Air, Krakauer's epic account of the May 1996 disaster. By writing Into Thin Air, Krakauer may have hoped to exorcise some of his own demons and lay to rest some of the painful questions that still surround the event. He takes great pains to provide a balanced picture of the people and events he witnessed and gives due credit to the tireless and dedicated Sherpas. He also avoids blasting easy targets such as Sandy Pittman, the wealthy socialite who brought an espresso maker along on the expedition. Krakauer's highly personal inquiry into the catastrophe provides a great deal of insight into what went wrong. But for Krakauer himself, further interviews and investigations only lead him to the conclusion that his perceived failures were directly responsible for a fellow climber's death. Clearly, Krakauer remains haunted by the disaster, and although he relates a number of incidents in which he acted selflessly and even heroically, he seems unable to view those instances objectively. In the end, despite his evenhanded and even generous assessment of others' actions, he reserves a full measure of vitriol for himself. This updated trade paperback edition of Into Thin Air includes an extensive new postscript that sheds fascinating light on the acrimonious debate that flared between Krakauer and Everest guide Anatoli Boukreev in the wake of the tragedy. "I have no doubt that Boukreev's intentions were good on summit day," writes Krakauer in the postscript, dated August 1999. "What disturbs me, though, was Boukreev's refusal to acknowledge the possibility that he made even a single poor decision. Never did he indicate that perhaps it wasn't the best
choice to climb without gas or go down ahead of his clients." As usual, Krakauer supports his points with dogged research and a good dose of humility. But rather than continue the heated discourse that has raged since Into Thin Air's denouncement of guide Boukreev, Krakauer's tone is conciliatory; he points most of his criticism at G. Weston De Walt, who coauthored The Climb, Boukreev's version of events. And in a touching conclusion, Krakauer recounts his last conversation with the late Boukreev, in which the two weathered climbers agreed to disagree about certain points. Krakauer had great hopes to patch things up with Boukreev, but the Russian later died in an avalanche on another Himalayan peak, Annapurna I. In 1999, Krakauer received an Academy Award in Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters--a prestigious prize intended "to honor writers of exceptional accomplishment." According to the Academy's citation, "Krakauer combines the tenacity and courage of the finest tradition of investigative journalism with the stylish subtlety and profound insight of the born writer. His account of an ascent of Mount Everest has led to a general reevaluation of climbing and of the commercialization of what was once a romantic, solitary sport; while his account of the life and death of Christopher McCandless, who died of starvation after challenging the Alaskan wilderness, delves even more deeply and disturbingly into the fascination of nature and the devastating effects of its lure on a young and curious mind."

**Into Thin Air - A Personal Account of the Mount Everest Disaster**

The author describes his spring 1996 trek to Mt. Everest, a disastrous expedition that claimed the lives of eight climbers, and explains why he survived.

**The Climb - Tragic Ambitions on Everest**

Everest, the major motion picture from Universal Pictures, is set for wide release on September 18, 2015. Read The Climb, Anatoli Boukreev (portrayed by Ingvar Sigurðsson in the film) and G. Weston DeWalt’s compelling account of those fateful events on Everest. In May 1996 three expeditions attempted to climb Mount Everest on the Southeast Ridge route pioneered by Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay in 1953. Crowded conditions slowed their progress. Late in the day twenty-three men and women-including expedition leaders Scott Fischer and Rob Hall-were caught in a ferocious blizzard. Disoriented and out of oxygen, climbers struggled to find their way down the mountain as darkness approached. Alone and climbing blind, Anatoli Boukreev brought climbers back from the edge of certain death. This new edition includes a transcript of the Mountain Madness expedition debriefing recorded five days after the tragedy, as well as G. Weston DeWalt's response to Into Thin Air author Jon Krakauer.

**Quicklet on Jon Krakauer's Into Thin Air (CliffsNotes-like Book Summary)**

ABOUT THE BOOK When I first read Jon Krakauer’s Into Thin Air: A Personal Account of the Mt. Everest Disaster, I was enthralled and amazed. The story he tells about a doomed Mt. Everest expedition in 1996 is both thrilling and terrifying, and it also has a lot to say about the problems with the commercialization of adventure expeditions on the highest mountain in the
world. It’s a well-researched and extraordinarily well-written first-hand account of the tragic expedition, and Krakauer’s excellent storytelling makes for gripping reading. Not only was he a member of this expedition, but he knows how to tell a story - how to introduce characters, build drama, and describe situations. He also has a gift for researching and writing history. When I first read Into Thin Air, I was prompted to read everything I could get my hands on about Mt. Everest. You could spend several years reading through this material, since there have been many books published about Mt. Everest, including several about this same disaster. Reading as many as you can will throw you into a fascinating, complex, and sometimes contradictory world of adventurers, scientists, business people, Tibetan and Nepalese guides, socialites, swindlers, politicians, artists, dreamers, and many other characters - as well as the frigid and challenging character of the mountain itself. Whether this is your first or fiftieth foray into the literature of Mt. Everest, you won’t be disappointed by Into Thin Air, and it will certainly draw you into its subzero spell. MEET THE AUTHOR professional writer Vivian Wagner has wide-ranging interests, from technology and business to music and motorcycles. She writes features regularly for ECT News Network, and her work has also appeared in American Profile, Entrepreneur, Bluegrass Unlimited, and many other publications. She is also the author of Fiddle: One Woman, Four Strings, and 8,000 Miles of Music (Citadel 2010). For more about her, visit her website at www.vivianwagner.net. EXCERPT FROM THE BOOK Into Thin Air (1997) began as a 1996 article for Outside Magazine. Krakauer wanted to develop the story more fully, however, and thus was the book was born. He’d originally been assigned to examine the commercialization of Mt. Everest for the Outside article. That ended up being the focus of the story after all, but with a much more tragic outcome than he or his editors could have imagined. For the article and subsequent book, Krakauer joined an expedition led by Rob Hall’s Adventure Consultants. During that season, a number of other expeditions were also on the mountain along with Krakauer and Hall, including Scott Fischer’s Mountain Madness. Both Hall and Fischer were killed in the May 1996 disaster, along with six other climbers. Since its publication, Into Thin Air has been at the center of controversy surrounding Krakauer’s account of events, particularly in regards to questions about who was responsible for tragic errors made on the mountain. Much of the initial criticism of the book came from the Russian climbing guide Anatoli Boukreev, who disputed Krakauer’s depiction of him as neglecting his mountain guide duties. In response to Krakauer’s book, Boukreev published his own account of the tragedy, co-authored by G. Weston DeWalt, called The Climb (1997). In postscript to a later edition of Into Thin Air, Krakauer took up this debate and defended his account of the tragedy against Boukreev’s criticism. Buy a copy to keep reading!

**Classic Krakauer - Essays on Wilderness and Risk**

"The gripping articles collected in Classic Krakauer--originally published in magazines such as The New Yorker, Outside, and Smithsonian--show why he is considered a standard-bearer of modern journalism. Spanning an extraordinary range of subjects and locations, these pieces take us from a horrifying avalanche on Mount Everest to a volcano poised to obliterate a big chunk of Seattle; from a wilderness teen-therapy program run by apparent sadists to an otherworldly cave in New Mexico, studied by NASA to better understand Mars; from the notebook of one Fred Beckey, who catalogued the greatest unclimbed mountaineering routes on the planet, to the last days of legendary surfer Mark Foo. Rigorously researched and vividly
written, marked by an unerring instinct for storytelling and scoop, these pieces are unified by the author's ambivalent love affair with unruly landscapes and his relentless search for truth"--

**Three Cups of Deceit**

Greg Mortenson, the bestselling author of Three Cups of Tea, is a man who has built a global reputation as a selfless humanitarian and children's crusader, and he's been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. But, as bestselling author Jon Krakauer demonstrates in this extensively researched and penetrating book, he is not all that he appears to be. Based on wide-ranging interviews with former employees, board members, and others who have intimate knowledge of Mortenson and his charity, the Central Asia Institute, Three Cups of Deceit uncovers multiple layers of deception behind Mortenson’s public image. Was his crusade really inspired by a desire to repay the kindness of villagers who nursed him back to health when he became lost on his descent down K2? Was he abducted and held for eight days by the Taliban? Has his charity built all of the schools that he has claimed? This book is a passionately argued plea for the truth, and a tragic tale of good intentions gone very wrong. 100% of Jon Krakauer’s proceeds from the sale of Three Cups of Deceit will be donated to the “Stop Girl Trafficking” project at the American Himalayan Foundation (www.himalayan-foundation.org/live/project/stopgirltrafficking).

**A Day to Die For - 1996: Everest's Worst Disaster - One Survivor's Personal Journey to Uncover the Truth**

On the night of 10-11 May 1996, eight climbers perished in what remains the worst disaster in Everest's history. Following the tragedy, numerous accounts were published, with Jon Krakauer's Into Thin Air becoming an international bestseller. But has the whole story been told? A Day to Die For reveals the full, startling facts that led to the tragedy. Graham Ratcliffe, the first British climber to reach the summit of Mount Everest twice, was a first-hand witness, having spent the night on Everest's South Col at 26,000 ft, sheltering from the deadly storm. For years, he has shouldered a burden of guilt, feeling that he and his teammates could have saved lives that fateful night. His quest for answers has led to discoveries so important to an understanding of the disaster that he now questions why these facts were not made public sooner. History is dotted with high-profile disasters that both horrify and capture the attention of the public, but very rarely is our view of them revised to such devastating effect.

**Into Thin Air - A Personal Account of the Mt. Everest Disaster**

Biography, autobiography, and memoir is among the best ways to teach students to appreciate nonfiction reading.
The peak of Earth's highest mountain is the stuff of legend but whereas once it was only the most intrepid climbers who reached the top, now there’s a whole tourist trade. Sean Smith on the bucket-list...

Aspen-based mountaineer suing over use of his photos of Everest
A Personal Account of the Mountain Everest Disaster,” he was told there would be 25,000 copies of the book. However, the illustrated edition, which was published in 1998 as a spin-off of Jon...

Former Aspen mountaineer died from head injuries
Fox survived the 1996 climbing disaster on Mount Everest that killed eight climbers ... I didn't think I could endure it anymore,” Fox said in Jon Krakauer's best-selling book about the incident,...