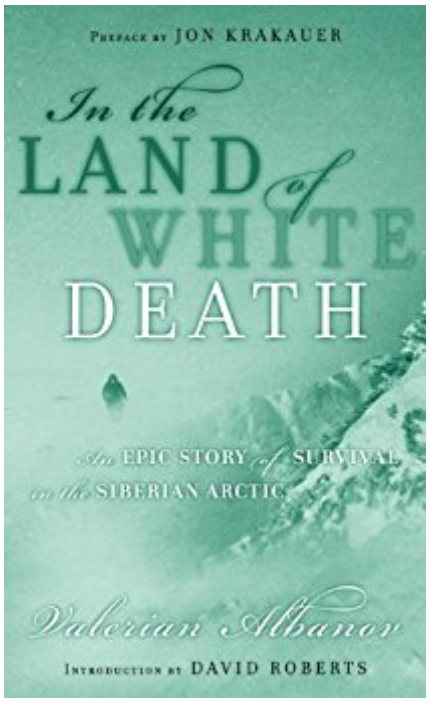
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In The Land Of White Death: An Epic Story Of Survival In The Siberian Arctic (Modern Library Exploration)



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Synopsis

In 1912, six months after Robert Falcon Scott and four of his men came to grief in Antarctica, a thirty-two-year-old Russian navigator named Valerian Albanov embarked on an expedition that would prove even more disastrous. In search of new Arctic hunting grounds, Albanov’s ship, the Saint Anna, was frozen fast in the pack ice of the treacherous Kara Sea-a misfortune grievously compounded by an incompetent commander, the absence of crucial nautical charts, insufficient fuel, and inadequate provisions that left the crew weak and debilitated by scurvy.For nearly a year and a half, the twenty-five men and one woman aboard the Saint Anna endured terrible hardships and danger as the icebound ship drifted helplessly north. Convinced that the Saint Anna would never free herself from the ice, Albanov and thirteen crewmen left the ship in January 1914, hauling makeshift sledges and kayaks behind them across the frozen sea, hoping to reach the distant coast of Franz Josef Land. With only a shockingly inaccurate map to guide him, Albanov led his men on a 235-mile journey of continuous peril, enduring blizzards, disintegrating ice floes, attacks by polar bears and walrus, starvation, sickness, snowblindness, and mutiny. That any of the team survived is a wonder. That Albanov kept a diary of his ninety-day ordeal-a story that Jon Krakauer calls an "astounding, utterly compelling book," and David Roberts calls "as lean and taut as a good thriller"-is nearly miraculous.First published in Russia in 1917, Albanov’s narrative is here translated into English for the first time. Haunting, suspenseful, and told with gripping detail, In the Land of White Death can now rightfully take its place among the classic writings of Nansen, Scott, Cherry-Garrard, and Shackleton.

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Customer Reviews

The story is during the years just prior to the First World War, so it’s quite a few years later than most Arctic stories. The crew are sailing the seas to the north of Russia; looking for faster trade routes, similar to the searches for the Northwest Passage expeditions in North America. Like most of these stories, the ship and crew were woefully unprepared, ignorant of any Arctic lore, and huge personality clashes made even good days difficult. After abandoning ship and crossing the ice for months, there was one wrong-headed move after another., which creates a lot of nail-biting incidents. It’s written in diary style and is quite an easy and interesting read.

This is an incredible tale of survival, written in a spare style so appropriate to the setting. Picture this: it is 1913 and your ship has been stuck in Arctic ice for over a year, drifting with the floe further north each month. Fearing that you will not escape this icebound existence in the coming year, you decide to get some of your more hardy shipmates together and try to walk to land across the frozen Arctic Ocean, carrying over a month’s worth of supplies by sledge and some handmade kayaks to make the final crossing to land. Besides the arduous task of dragging yourself and supplies across the ice, you and your crew face blizzard conditions, polar bears, surprisingly dangerous walruses, malnutrition, and all sorts of surprising challenges (including the dangers of vitamin A poisoning from eating polar bear liver - warning to the wise). Knowing that this is a true story makes it all the more compelling. I read this book every time the winter weather gets me down, just to remind myself that things could be worse than suffering through a week with the Polar Vortex. Highly recommended.

This is a story of survival in the Artic. In the early 20th century the author sailed as navigator on an ill fated voyage into the Artic. The ship became locked in ice and eventually the author (of the dairy detailing this story) left the ship with several other men to try to reach islands to their south from which they might be rescued. They had a very rough go of it to say the least with bad ice, lack of food and necessities and attacks by polar bears and walrus. At times the story did seem to become

somewhat repetitious with their hardships and could be a bit depressing and a bit long. But after all the hardships and disappointments the author and his companion were taken aboard a ship and got back to Russia. The story was well written. The characters were generally developed. For the most part the editing was good. There were some annoying run togethers in this Kindle version, especially in the earlier parts of the book, for example "before meto revealed" for :before me to reveal" The intended line was generally obvious with a 2nd look but could be initially confusing especially when the run together occurred at a line break.

This is a different breed of polar literature. "In the Land of White Death" has none of the operatic heroism and tragedy that permeates polar classics like "The Worst Journey in the World", "Mawson’s Will", or "Endurance". Albanov was under no illusions of grandeur: the party he was a member of were simply looking for new hunting grounds, and Albanov is keenly aware that if they die out on the ice it will be inglorious, miserable, and pointless, helping nobody and in service of nothing.This brutal lack of sentimentality is what makes "In the Land of White Death" so unique and so important in the polar canon. Albanov continually rages against the men under his leadership for their stupidity, laziness, and treachery. His writing is honest, direct, terse, and immensely readable. In fact, this is probably the only great polar story that could be read in a long day or a couple afternoons.Many of those who died during the "golden age" of polar exploration were revered as national heroes. When the bodies of S. A. AndrÃƒÂ©e and his crew were returned to Sweden in 1930 after an absurd attempt to hot air balloon to the North Pole, the streets were packed with one of the biggest acts of public mourning in the nation’s history. History has been far less kind to these explorations; what was once seen as bravery is now often viewed as hubris and startling incompetence. "In the Land of White Death" captures all of that long before historians had a chance to reevaluate polar literature. Albanov writes with an emotional clarity that was decades ahead of its time.

Great read if you have an interest in arctic exploration or just want to read survival stories in the cold harsh climate of the arctic.Very cool that it’s taken from the first hand account of one of the survivors and leader. A journal not just written about it by someone who researched it.

Pretty darn good story. The compilers of the book at the end do a lot of supposing about this and that - but if you like a yarn where it is a terrible journey and most of them die - this is great - fills in some lost gaps on polar exploration or more like getting stuck in the ice. Pretty much a must read

for arctic weather lovers.

My favorite thing about these true stories of Arctic survival are the details. I want to feel the cold biting into my skin. The drudgery and camaraderie of day to day living, both on ship and on the ice. The God awful fear of not knowing whether you'll make it home or die a cruel, frozen death. I didn't feel any of that. It could very well be that the original version was much better,. Also, there was one very lonely map on the kindle version of this book. Books like this should have maps all over the place. I doubt I'd recommend this book, but I would love to read a more gripping account of this tale.

This is the very best historical adventure story of survival I've ever read.What an amazing feat for those that survived

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