



Postcards from the Ledge: Collected Mountaineering Writings of Greg Child

Greg Child

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* Reflections and humorous pieces, plus insights into some of mountaineering's more controversial events

* Revealing portraits of other Himalayan climbers

Peeling back the layers to reveal the gritty truth about the elite climbing world is Greg Child's specialty. With clever wit, sharp observations, and insightful reflections, Child's writing covers the full spectrum of the mountaineering experience.

Entertaining even to those who have never been above sea level, Child's stories reveal climbing's other face. His description of the daily habits of mountaineers on expedition (who don't bathe for months) is both disgusting and horrifyingly funny. A post-climb fiasco in the offices of petty Pakistani bureaucrats proves that not all epics take place on high mountain faces. Falling of a rock climb in front of his mother is an exercise in humility.

Child takes up climbing controversy with the same keen insight. His investigation of Tomo Cesen's claimed first ascent of Lhotse's south wall is considered the definitive report on this controversial event. A hard look at the media frenzy around the death of Alison Hargreaves on K2 evolves into a brilliant, impassioned defense of a friend. He also speaks out on the money- and media-driven expeditions that now crowd Everest.

But Child never preaches. Whether contrasting his clumsy performance with Lynn Hill's elegant moves on a climb in the remote mountains of Kyrgyzstan or reflecting upon artifacts (from crucifixes to pink flamingos) that decorate the world's highest peaks, he writes it as he sees it, with a dose of wit. A true insider, Greg Child draws us deep into the world of climbing but never denies its dark side.

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Raymond Brown:

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