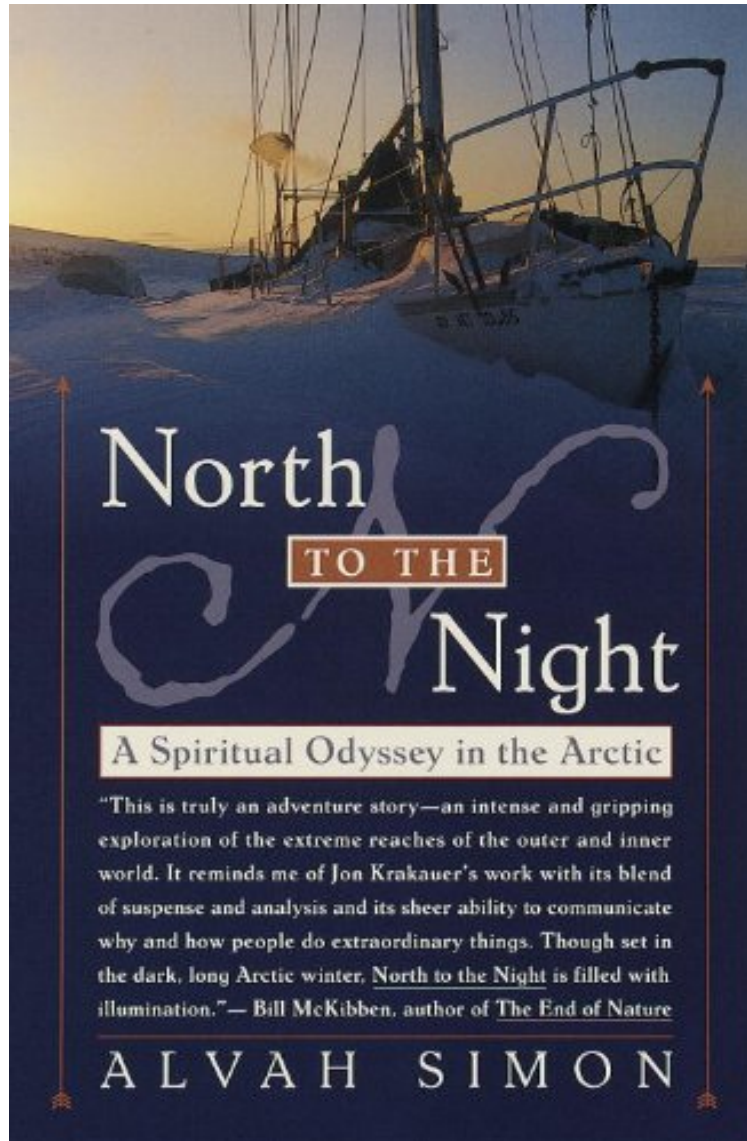


[Mobile ebook] North to the Night: A Spiritual Odyssey in the Arctic

North to the Night: A Spiritual Odyssey in the Arctic

Alvah Simon

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Alvah Simon : North to the Night: A Spiritual Odyssey in the Arctic before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised North to the Night: A Spiritual Odyssey in the Arctic:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Wintering Over in the Arctic By zorba An incredibly compelling book about a man and a woman who cruised up to the far arctic in a cutter that got ice-bound over the dark, sunless winter. Early on, Alvah Simon's wife had to go to be with her dying father in New Zealand, which meant that Alvah and their cat, Halifax, would have to endure the searing loneliness and occasional technical problems that accompanied

their challenge. With temperatures as low as -65 fahrenheit, Alvah carried on until the first tendrils of sunshine began to appear in April. The author necessarily includes a lot of technical data of interest to other boaters and at times, the long winter night produced lyrical, mystical dreams. But all in all, this was a riveting book, well-executed. As for me, I'll take a nice Philadelphia winter anytime!

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. At first I didn't think I'd like this book but it turned out to be one ...By Steve

At first I didn't think I'd like this book but it turned out to be one of the most exciting true life sailing adventures I've read in a long time. I would highly recommend this book to those who are interested in a mans adventure into the heart of the Artic Region that was truly a survival story.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Sailing, adventure, love and spirit journey. If any of these attract you, read this book!

By Steve Christensen

If you like sailing, and you like adventures, and you like spiritual journeys, this is the book for you. When I first read this book, I was heavy into sailing, but got much more from this book than the sailing part of it. You will love this book and it will be one that you pass to a friend and never see it again; it will be passed on and on. Why would anyone want to sail a boat less than fifty feet long into the Arctic just in time for the big freeze, winter in the ice, and then sail out? The book is unforgettable. If you missed it when it was first published, get it now. The story is timeless.

In June 1994 Alvah Simon and his wife, Diana, set off in their 36-foot sailboat to explore the hauntingly beautiful world of icebergs, tundra, and fjords lying high above the Arctic Circle. Four months later, unexpected events would trap Simon alone on his boat, frozen in ice 100 miles from the nearest settlement, with the long polar night stretching into darkness for months to come. With his world circumscribed by screaming blizzards and marauding polar bears and his only companion a kitten named Halifax, Simon withstands months of crushing loneliness, sudden blindness, and private demons. Trapped in a boat buried beneath the drifting snow, he struggles through the perpetual darkness toward a spiritual awakening and an understanding of the forces that conspired to bring him there. He emerges five months later a transformed man. Simon's powerful, triumphant story combines the suspense of *Into Thin Air* with a crystalline, lyrical prose to explore the hypnotic draw of one of earth's deepest and most dangerous wildernesses.

.com

Following his "Arctic dreams" that began with a photograph of the haggard crew of the ill-fated ship *Endurance*, Alvah Simon and his wife, Diana, set sail to winter in the high north. "We call them explorers, but I knew that look in their eyes," Simon writes of the early Arctic adventurers. "They were seekers, and that is a different thing." With self-discovery as a deeper agenda, the couple ventures into Tay Bay of remote Bylot Island; it is their ultima Thule--"the Last Unknown." Their small boat is willingly frozen in the ice. When Diana is airlifted out of the Arctic to tend to an emergency back home, Simon is unexpectedly left in solitude. His journey turns inward as he confronts the "uncomfortable awakening of my spiritual self." In the waning daylight, then total darkness, Simon's days are punctuated by depression and mania, a crackled voice over the radio, Inuit visitors, and hard-earned lessons as he is driven by the forces of the Arctic winter and by "the total loss of the sun." In this elegant, well-paced book, the Arctic darkness becomes a psychological landscape perforated with light and revelation, and Simon's thrilling tale is as captivating as his language. There is a welcome intimacy here as we share the same icy hull, listening close to this searching man. Simon courageously tells us about his darkest moments, dreams, and nightmares, and when the sun emerges, new eyes greet land and relationships. Simon has discovered his ultima Thule. --Byron Ricks

From Publishers Weekly

In the summer of 1992, Simon and his wife, both experienced adventurers, set off in a 36-foot sailboat, the *Roger Henry*, toward northern Canada to spend a year above the Arctic Circle. In his survival memoir, Simon recounts the physical and psychological demands of the Arctic with an almost sheepish bravado; his capacity to discuss the beauty of the landscape, the culture of the Inuit and the protean nature of glacial ice is matched only by a reckless drive to make his journey more "authentic" by taking unnecessary, and often life-endangering, risks. This juxtaposition makes for gripping reading, particularly when Simon is left alone to face the sunless, sub-zero winter months of "lifesucking cold" after his wife is called away to be with her dying father. Yet the author's account is often frustratingly lacking in introspection. Running low on fuel as the cold and darkness press in on him, Simon, in harrowing solitude from November to March, might have paused to offer some self-reflection on the mixed motives of the contemporary survivalist-adventurer? a dilemma discussed in much greater depth in John Krakauer's *Into the Wild*, for example. Instead, Simon delivers the tropes we have come to expect from this genre (humility in the face of nature, an unfocused critique of "civilization," the romanticization of native cultures), none of which are made more convincing in light of his daredevil behavior and steel-sided ship. Some readers may be troubled by the absence of a reason for this adventure, other than to flirt with death. Editor, Jon Eaton; rights, McGraw-Hill. Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From Library Journal

With no winter daylight and temperatures as low as 60 degrees below zero, Bylot Island in Canada's Northwest Territories, across Baffin Bay from northern Greenland, seems an unlikely place to spend the winter, especially alone in a small boat frozen in the ice. Simon, a wandering American with many nautical miles behind him, and his wife, Diana, a well-traveled New Zealander, planned to share the experience. But when her father's illness called Diana home, Simon stayed on alone with only a cat and occasional curious wildlife for companionship. Reading about so much darkness and ice and the hardship and introspection brought about by them

sounds grueling, but Simon can write. When not sharing his inner reflections, he provides interesting observations about the Inuits of the region. The experience, combined with Simon's fine narrative, makes this book a good choice for larger public library travel collections. ?Harold M. Otness, Southern Oregon Univ. Lib., Ashland Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc.