



Edge of the Map

Johanna Garton

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Johanna Garton's engrossing *Edge of the Map* traces the rise of Wisconsin native Christine Boskoff to the top of the list of elite mountain climbers.

Known for her humility, courage, strength, and uncanny ability to breathe at high altitudes, Boskoff was the first woman to summit six of the world's fourteen 8,000-meter-plus peaks, and the only woman expedition leader among all the elite guide services operating on Mt. Everest.

Based on hundreds of hours of interviews and research, Garton's book reveals a gifted, multifaceted, and much-loved young woman. Boskoff quit her work at Lockheed-Martin to give climbing her all. She is seen "always laughing, radiant, and down-to-earth;" but also in deep grief after her husband's suicide and the death of her father.

Garton honors Boskoff as an astute businesswoman, too; she sustained her need to climb by taking over Seattle's Mountain Madness guide service after its founder, Scott Fischer, died on Everest. And it reveals the shockwaves that went through the climbing community when Boskoff, then thirty-nine, and her climbing partner and boyfriend, Charlie Fowler, "one of the most iconic rock climbers of all time," went missing.

The discovery of Boskoff's diary led the searchers to Mount Genyen, a perilous peak rising 20,354 feet above the Tibetan Plateau. The narrative is gripping as it describes how Fowler and Boskoff, with a video camera strapped to her chest, climbed unroped, sinking into hip-deep powder with each step: "Now the only sound is Chris's gentle breathing." Then: sudden blackness; a brief, unexplained flash of light; and silence.

Powerful and moving, *Edge of the Map* is a story of human endurance taken to its limits, seen in Christine Boskoff's egoless striving to master herself and the mountain. Ultimately, it's a tale of great love given freely.

KRISTINE MORRIS (March / April 2020)

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