

## The Expedition: Two Parents Risk Life and Family in an Extraordinary Quest to the South Pole

**Chris Fagan**

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In her stunning memoir *The Expedition*, Chris Fagan details her trip with her husband, Marty, through remote, harsh, and otherworldly Antarctica, a place that presents challenges unlike any others on Earth.

At minus twenty-two degrees Fahrenheit, with blasting wind that made balance nearly impossible, and through blowing snow that turned the world into a vast, horizonless white sheet, the husband-and-wife team skied from the edge of Antarctica to the South Pole—unguided, unassisted, and unsupported. They were among about a hundred others to do so, if the only American married couple to complete it.

The quest demanded everything they had—physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. Their preparation had to be impeccable and their team dynamics exceptional. There was no room for error. Intimate and brutally honest, Fagan's story is about the dynamics of relationships, too—with oneself, one's partner, family, and community.

Thanks to the couple's experience in extreme endurance sports and wilderness know-how, high-level physical fitness and adventurous spirits, courage, and supportive home community, success came. Harrowing accounts of roadblocks—an old knee injury that threatened to hinder pulling their sled over rugged terrain; the failing health of a parent; concern for their twelve-year-old son at home; and relationship concerns—arise throughout. "In Antarctica, it would be just the two of us in a tent, and no one else for hundreds of miles around us," writes Fagan.

An account of an adventure that shapes their lives, *The Expedition* recalls extreme temperatures, terrifying storms, physical and mental exhaustion, equipment failures, and a strained relationship. Still, in cruel yet stunningly beautiful Antarctica, Fagan recalls how she and Marty made peace with who they are at their cores, passing the biggest test of their lives—together.

KRISTINE MORRIS (July/August 2019)

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