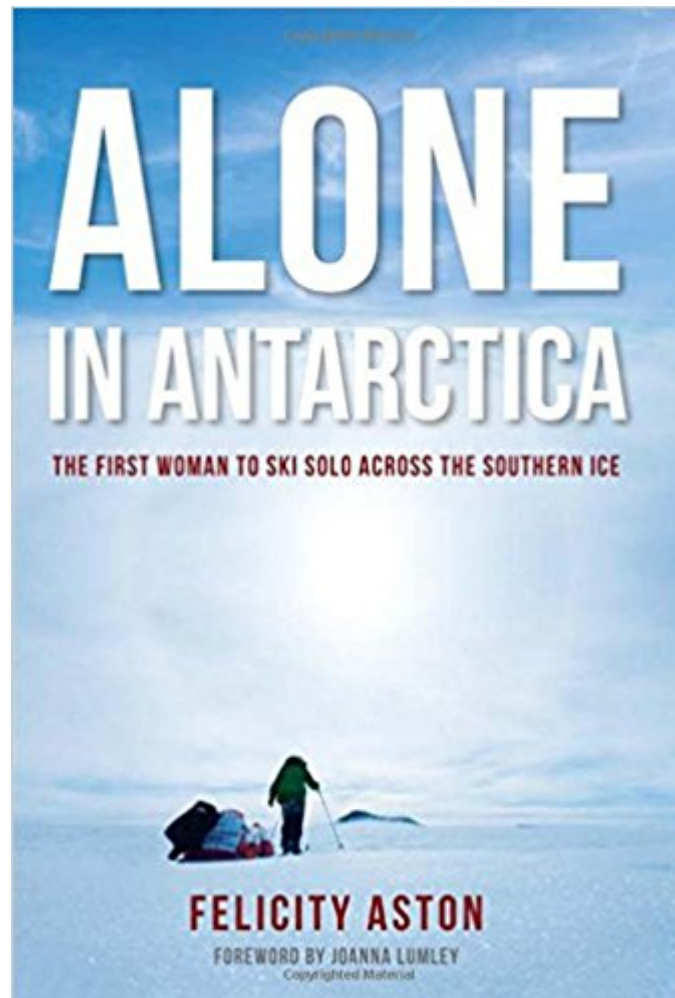




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# Alone In Antarctica: The First Woman To Ski Solo Across The Southern Ice



## Synopsis

In the whirling noise of our advancing technological age, we are seemingly never alone, never out-of-touch with the barrage of electronic data and information. Felicity Aston, physicist and meteorologist, took two months off from all human contact as she became the first woman -- and only the third person in history -- to ski across the entire continent of Antarctica alone. She did it, too, with the simple apparatus of cross-country, without the aids used by her predecessors -- two Norwegian men -- each of whom employed either parasails or kites. Aston's journey across the ice at the bottom of the world asked of her the extremes in terms of mental and physical bravery, as she faced the risks of unseen cracks buried in the snow so large they might engulf her and hypothermia due to brutalizing weather. She had to deal, too, with her emotional vulnerability in face of the constant bombardment of hallucinations brought on by the vast sea of whiteness, the lack of stimulation to her senses as she faced what is tantamount to a form of solitary confinement. Like Cheryl Strayed's *Wild*, Felicity Aston's *Alone in Antarctica* becomes an inspirational saga of one woman's battle through fear and loneliness as she honestly confronts both the physical challenges of her adventure, as well as her own human vulnerabilities.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"A quick-reading account of a spectacular and appalling journey." --Kirkus "Aston's memoir gives the reader a good sense of her isolation, her determination, and her fragility." --Aston doesn't overdramatize her adventure - she favors straightforward descriptions over breathless prose

- but she still pulls us in and makes us feel as though we are with her, at the freezing-cold bottom of the world." &#151;Booklist"Felicity Aston ventures into even more extreme climes when she sets out to become the first woman to ski solo across Antarctica. Her memoir, *Alone in Antarctica*, brings to life the terror, the wonder, and the craziness of her two-month ordeal." &#151;National Geographic, Best New Travel Read of Fall 2014"An extraordinary journey of solitude and determination"&#151;Ben Fogle, author of *The Teatime Islands*, *Offshore*, *Crossing*, and *The Race to the Pole*."Felicity's dynamic and inspiring storytelling links us all to our own crossing, helping us all push beyond our fears to reach our goals. Her descriptions of the ice and her honesty of the feelings it brings forth, stir our love for that magnificent place and the lifestyle of the challenge - we want to return!"&#151;Ann Bancroft and Liv Arnesen, polar explorers"Felicity's gripping adventure captures the thrill and fear of Antarctic exploration"&#151;Ranulph Fiennes, author of *Killer Elite*, and *My Heroes*"Her achievement is remarkable"&#151;The Daily Mail"Admirable, emotional and enchanting... a must-read"&#151;Wanderlust

Felicity Aston is the first and only woman in the world to ski alone across Antarctica. The 35-year-old British expedition leader, public speaker and freelance travel writer from Kent also led the 2009 Commonwealth Expedition to the South Pole, the first British women's team across Greenland; this became the subject of her first book, *Call of the White*, a finalist in the Banff Mountain Book Competition in 2011. Outside Magazine named her one of their 2012 Adventurers of the Year. Felicity lives in Birchington-on-Sea, Kent, in the UK.

After reading several books about dead white male explorers in Antarctica, this account was a refreshing change. I found myself rooting for this woman, sometimes wanting to give her a kick in the snowpants to tell her to get a move on and at points being moved to tears about a necklace her sister gave to her and some cookies in the bottom of her bag. I think her book truly made me understand how terribly difficult such a journey is mentally, from battling her loneliness and strange behaviors and thoughts brought on by fatigue to some quirky moments that made the reader realize just how alone she really was to some dangerous behavior that had me seriously concerned about whether she was going to make it alive. She seemed to me to be very candid in this account, sharing her vulnerabilities and mistakes so that you really are rooting for her once she leaves the South Pole. I gave the book four stars because I wanted more. This had a movie-like ending, not a book ending. She seems to gloss over the physical effort too much in my opinion. She has a hilarious anecdote about her training with a tire, but I wanted more details about her training for this

adventure. Because I was rooting for her at the end, I wanted to be there for her reunion with her family and to see the reaction of her friends and followers. She speaks in the beginning about how such a journey changes someone and she does touch on how she's changed, but I was curious whether she was changed in the years that followed. Did her personality change? Did she change the way she chose to live her life? I also was interested in the messages she sent out on her sat phone. She and the reader don't know how her real-time accounts played online, but it would have been interesting to learn what the response was from those following her. Not during the journey, because that would have wrecked the solitary feel of the book, but in hindsight as she learned about it upon her return. Maybe time for another edition with a new epilogue?

This is an amazing story. Felicity Aston tells her story and as the reader you feel like you are right there with her on the ice as she attempts to traverse the most amazing landmass and scenery. From page 1 the adventure hooks you and you don't want to put the book down. As she tells her story she expresses herself in a very humble and easygoing straightforward manner. When she tells the story of why she did this it is not to achieve a status of elitism, or inflate her ego but just to test what her own personal limits are and what drove her to find that out. At the beginning she had no preconceived notions of whether she would be able to finish this or not and there were doubts along the way however she persevered making a little bit of progress everyday and eventually she achieved her goal. She also had some good general advice for the reader which I really liked and it would apply to just about anything that if you persevere you will achieve your goals and that we are capable of more than we give ourselves credit for. The way she expressed this is that we "all must get out of the tent" everyday whatever our symbolic tent is, whether we are camping, riding a bike a long distance, hiking, or whatever our adventures are. So fundamentally whatever you are doing you have to get up and get going no matter how good you are at doing the adventure or it will never get done. Congratulations Felicity on making an amazing story and being able to tell it. Bonnie Krim

This book chronicles the amazing story of one woman who was brave enough to do what others would consider nearly impossible - skiing alone across the continent of Antarctica. Through methodical training and organization, Felicity Aston overcame every challenge the Antarctic threw at her. She is remarkable, courageous, and daring. Her writing draws the reader in to find out what will happen next. Readers who enjoy this book may also enjoy *Alone Across The Arctic*. *Alone Across the Arctic: One Woman's Epic Journey* by Dog Team

This book is an amazing testament that blends candor, courage and commitment to tell an amazing story. Felicity, lays bare her most raw emotions and anxiety with uncommon clarity as she doggedly pursues her dreams and conquers in spite of the odds. This book inspires, amuses, and illustrates one person's journey yet serves as an example to the rest of us on how to pull ourselves up by the boot straps to keep on going no matter what. "just keep getting out of the tent..." is her mantra and reminds me of Little Nemo's "just keep swimming."

This book inspired me to stay in life's arena, challenging me to discover my own fears, ability to persist and not allow failure or disappointment to flatten me. Her description of the aloneness she felt in the vastness of the Antarctic continent on her journey alone was so insightful and self-aware. Although her story was at times difficult to stick with I really enjoyed her incredible expression of her emotions on her journey. I highly recommend to women who intend to do great and difficult things.

Superb writing by a person addicted to being alone and her attempts to deal with her loneliness by pushing her body to the limits in the Antarctic wilderness. I worry a bit about anyone who's addiction places her life in danger, worried that one day she will perish in the wild. At the same time, through her ruthless, almost poetic exploration of her inner demons, I have a better understanding of her needs and coping strategies, both inner and outer. Found it a fascinating, very readable book!

I read a lot of "adventure" books but what made this one stand out for me was how Ms. Aston shared her personal feelings along the way and was not afraid to ask the hard questions of herself about why even do something like this and what comes after such an accomplishment? How much is enough? Its a great adventure book by itself and just the scope of being out there alone in that environment would have made it a worthwhile read.

As an experienced backcountry traveler and aspiring polar explorer, Ms Aston's book is both informative and inspiring. A great perspective on the mental challenges of long-distance solo expeditions.

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