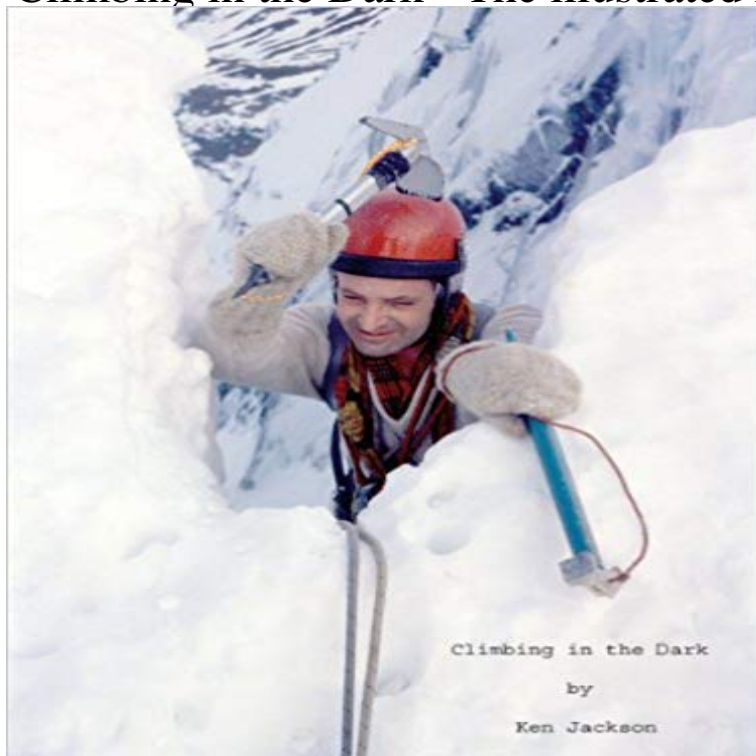


Climbing in the Dark - The illustrated memoirs of a rock climber.



This is an autobiography written by one of the Cleveland Mountaineering Clubs stalwarts, Ken Jackson ... In the Lakes, Kens claim to fame are the first ascents of Dyad and Fulcrum on the East Buttress of Scafell, but reading through this enjoyable tale there are many accounts of failures, falling, benightments galore and general mountaineering epics. It is Kens honest and self-deprecating humour, written in an easy-flowing style, which appeals, giving this book a sincere and delightfully amateurish view of the climbing scene in the sixties. The book contains a plentiful selection of photographs, taken with a cheap Boots camera, but again, this shockingly amateurish approach to the illustrations gives the book character. I found it a joy to read. Al Phizacklea. From the Fell and Rock Climbing Club Chronicle (June 2009). The book describes some memorable climbs in the Lake District, Scotland and the French Alps in the 1960s. Some of these climbs were stranger than fiction like my meeting with a mythical monster on the arctic summit of Ben Nevis. Others were deadly serious like my spectacular fall on Point Five Gully, described in the guide book as the most famous ice climb in the world! And taking part in these adventures were such legendary figures as Allan Austin, Martin Boysen, Les Brown, Dougal Haston, Geoff Oliver and Paul Ross. The book includes the text of previous, paperback editions, and an added photograph of the Brocken Spectre, the ghostly halo which appears round a shadow in a mist. An added chapter aims to prove that when joints stiffen and fingers no longer close, there are some mental challenges that are every bit as inspiring as the almost impossible walls of Scafell, the mind-blowing slabs of Glen Etive, and the icy gullies of Ben Nevis challenges like understanding the nature of time and space and conscious awareness, in which we are aware that we

are aware that we are aware !Excerpt.
Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved:-The front points of my crampons must have pinned my boots to the ice, for I fell head first, banging my head with a resounding crash into the frozen snow in the bed of the gully, tearing apart the nylon webbing and stitching inside my AGV helmet. A split-second later and I was sliding head first down the gully at high speed. All I could see was a patch of bright, blue sky, framed by the sides of the gully as I whizzed past them. Luckily, I was now on my back, with my rucksack acting like a sledge and absorbing much of the bumping and buffeting of this unwanted sleigh ride. I reckon I must have fallen at least a hundred feet and reached a speed of more than thirty miles an hour before the rope tightened and I began to slow down. When I did eventually come to a halt, I just hung there, upside down and helpless, unable to move my arms, devoid of any feeling in these limbs. Still hanging upside down, I became aware of another climber, crouching in a corner, just above me. He had belayed there, waiting for me to finish the pitch, when I had suddenly descended upon him, threatening to knock him into the next world or to impale him on the hardened-steel points of my crampons. He reached down and jerked me upright. `Thanks, I said, my voice shaking. `You all right? he asked in a soft Irish brogue. `Im not sure. I cant feel my arms. And my fingers wont move. But at that very moment the feeling came back with a vengeance. Pins and needles, but a thousand times more intense, flooded down my arms and made my fingers burn. I wondered what other vital parts had been damaged. My legs seemed OK - at least I could move my toes. And the feeling had come back to my fingers. Then I realised I could only see downwards. When I looked up, everything was dark. `God, Im half blind, I thought. Then it dawned on me what had happened, that the collapse of the webbing in my AGV helmet had allowed it to drop down over my eyes. Thank God for that!

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