



The White Spider: The Classic Account of the Ascent of the Eiger

By Heinrich Harrer

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The White Spider dramatically recreates not only the harrowing, successful ascent made by Harrer and his comrades in 1938, but also the previous, tragic attempts at a wall of rock that was recently enshrined in mountaineer Jon Krakauer's first work, *Eiger Dreams*. For a generation of American climbers, *The White Spider* has been a formative book--yet it has long been out-of-print in America. This edition awaits discovery by Harrer's new legion of readers.

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The White Spider: The Classic Account of the Ascent of the Eiger By Heinrich Harrer Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

At 13,025 feet, the Swiss Eiger doesn't approach the height of Everest or Denali, but the sheer rise and difficulty of its 5900-foot north face keeps it in the company of the world's most celebrated peaks. At the time Harrer (*Seven Years in Tibet*, originally the sequel to this volume) became part of the first successful summit climb in 1938, the north face of the Eiger was considered the "last and greatest of Alpine problems" left in the world. Originally published in 1959 (with chapters added in 1964 and an index covering subsequent Eiger climbs), this riveting account of his ascent and the history of confronting the Eiger begins with the first fatal attempts to conquer the north face in 1935. It is a crisply written paean to the mountain where Harrer first earned recognition as a world-class climber. A simple narrative style brings to life the many obstacles faced by Eiger climbers: snowstorms, avalanches and a continuous shower of falling rocks among them. Harrer has a Hemingwayesque appreciation of the codes, bravery and rules of conduct governing the closed world of "true mountaineers." And he reserves special contempt for the sensation-seekers who gather to watch deadly feats of climbing from the ground below. Sections that document the evolution of climbing gear (Harrer wore no crampons on his 1938 ascent) and national rivalries in the WWII-era climbing community help make this volume an important contribution to the emerging canon of mountaineering literature.

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Review

'An outstanding book in the mountaineering library.' *Guardian* 'Even to look at the photographs of the terrible slopes of the Eiger chills the blood. Heinrich Harrer enables the reader to vicariously experience the cold and the terror of the climb.' *Irish Press* "'The White Spider" provides almost the classic statement of the weird and frequently misunderstood psychology of the modern rock-climber. Despite the grimness of much of what he is doing, Harrer communicates the irresistible joy of climbing as an antidote to the idea that climbers are masochistically trying to prove something to themselves.' *Sunday Times* 'A true classic from the early days of mountaineering...The terror and respect that the Eiger inspires is evoked superbly in Harrer's narrative.' *Maxim*

Language Notes

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Users Review

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Anthony Pippin:

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