



Mountain of the Dead

Jeremy Bates

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Fact: During the night of February 1, 1959, in the remote reaches of Siberia, nine Russian hikers slash open their tent from the inside and flee into a blizzard in subpolar temperatures.

Fact: By morning all are dead, several having suffered gruesome, violent deaths. What happened to them has baffled investigators and researchers to this day.

It has become known as the Dyatlov Pass Incident.

Now, an American true-crime writer seeking answers to the enduring mystery sets out to retrace the hikers steps on their fateful expedition. However, nothing can prepare him for what he is about to discover...

Mountain of the Dead Details

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From Reader Review Mountain of the Dead for online ebook

Lisa says

Eh, it's Jeremy Bates. His stuff isn't bad, it's not great either. He takes the truth and mangles it! Seriously, that's not a bad thing. I think that my main problem is that I can see a few other authors doing it better. Heck, I'm not a writer at all, but....naw. I'm not sure why I can't get into Mr. Bates books. His concept always sounds great, but it doesn't quite hit the level of expectancy that I've created. He really never has. I've many Indie author's who I love to read. Their books aren't always a hit with me, but I do know that at least one out of three will knock my socks off! Bates doesn't even make my socks sag.

croddy says

I hate hate hate to not give Jeremy Bates 5 stars. Since I discovered him, I've loved his books and his writing. But, this book I just didn't like. I wanted to like it, I tried to like, I really tried to like it. But, in the end, I didn't. I couldn't even make myself finish reading it. It started out pretty good. It was reasonably suspenseful up until....the Yeti's. Suspense gone. I'm not really sure what I was hoping for, but I am sure, it wasn't Yeti's. I wanted the usual dose of narliness to happen. I didn't expect anyone to make friends with the "killers" who actually end up not being bad guys at all, because the real bad guys are the Russians who created and experimented on them. >.< Which is just sad, not scary. I will forever love reading novels by Jeremy Bates and this book will not stop my love for his books and writing, but this is just a no no no. Once the Yeti saves the group in the present, you find out everyone was lying for Corey....I lost interest. Caput! Honestly, I don't know how the Dyatlov group died...I'd like to pick back up the book and find out what Jeremy Bates has to say about it, but I'm a bit too disappointed at the moment to continue on with it. Maybe later. Keep Writing Mr. Bates. I look forward to your next book!!!!

Dayna Vanover says

Ridiculous Russians!

I have read all Jeremy Bates books and enjoyed them, but this book was the craziest one I've read. I had a hard time getting through this book, but I kept on reading hoping it would improve. The ending was so stupid, I should have quit while I was ahead.

Elisabeth Zguta says

Obsession about a mysterious past event turns into an unexpected horror. I enjoy and appreciate the writing style of Jeremy Bates, like his descriptive narrative, his casual voice, and I have read most of his novels, but this story leaps ahead of the others in the Scariest Places series due to the intense historical background that was cleverly added as a thread against the current day's story plot.

The true historical event that happened in the Russian mountains back in 1959 that was named the Dyatlov

Pass Incident, was well researched and smoothly intertwined that tale (which Bates totally expanded creatively) with the main story of the protagonist's search for answers. It was more than a search though, the protagonist was obsessed with the original mystery, compelled to do the trip.

More important, the old mystery was intriguing by itself, then add the current story of an obsessive man trying to come to grips with demons by throwing his all into a crazy expedition, dragging his BFF along, meeting up with unlikely climbing mates, who of course all have a reason for being there as well, and it makes for a stew of explosive scenes. There were moments I felt sorry for his dearest friend who faithfully followed Whitey and hoped things hadn't turned out the way they did for him, but it is a horror story. I could not have predicted the action scenes with the racing for your life kind of momentum, literally the story took me by surprise. As original and unseemly the characters who banded together were, the last few scenes were even more unexpected.

There were extra horrors added to the story when the main character and friends stumbled across additional mysterious and deadly places, while on their way to the final peak/pass.

I enjoyed reading this story very much and highly recommend this novel.

Bob Milne says

Although Mountain of the Dead didn't completely wow me, it entertained me enough to want to delve deeper into the back-list of World's Scariest Places.

Jeremy Bates knows how to create atmosphere and build drama, connecting historical mystery with contemporary thriller. It comes across as part documentary and part fictional narrative, with a lot of speculation between the two, and that intersection is what kept me reading.

I hate the cold and the snow, but I do love danger and adventure, so the contemporary journey into the frozen wastes was fantastic. Dramatic and action-packed, it captured the tension of human versus human conflict as well as human versus nature. It's a tense, often claustrophobic tale, and the little discoveries along the way just add to the excitement.

The story was a bit dry in parts, and I felt it suffered from some uneven pacing, but my fascination with the mystery and my craving to know how and why it all came together kept me reading. It's hard to capture a sense of drama with a historical tale that we know ends in death, but counting down the days, then the hours to live in each chapter is a nice touch - and that's where Bates excels. He knows how to make those connections, and he knows how to make a compelling argument while teasing the answers . . . and, of course, the monstrous big reveal.

As for that big reveal, reader reactions seem to suggest it's somewhat polarizing, but I think it's handled exceptionally well. There is a history and an explanation behind it, that goes beyond the usual "hidden monsters in our midst" trope, and Bates adds a sympathetic aspect to it that really flips the conflict in the later chapters, making us question who we should be cheering for. All told, a solid thriller, a great historical mystery, and an adventure that leaves me wanting to read more.

Susan Mills says

A Very CHILLING Tale

This clever author mixes a large collection of facts about a baffling mystery and his own creative ideas to craft a jarring tale, which includes intrigue, terror, love and sorrow. I was riveted by this book from the beginning. Anyone who is interested in the 1959 DYATLOV Russian mystery will want to read Mr. Bates fictional take on the events. His writing is good, and in many places, poetical.

M J says

Fab

Best one yet, I have read all of Jeremy Bates "Worlds scariest places" and this was great, it had me researching the dyatlov incident and Siberia as I went along.... part truth and part fiction, loved it

Dez Nemec says

Mountain of the Dead is the 5th installment of Jeremy Bates' World's Scariest Places books. While these are all standalone books, they follow a similar pattern. Except for this one. This one was a bit of a departure, but I really liked how he handled it.

The Dyatlov Pass Incident, as it is later known, is an actual mystery occurring in the Ural Mountains of the then Soviet Union. During the night of February 1, 1959, in the Siberian wilderness, nine experienced Russian hikers slash open their tent from the inside and run into a blizzard without proper attire. Interestingly enough, not all of the hikers died of hypothermia. One of the hikers was actually missing her tongue. An investigation by the Russian government concluded that an "unknown compelling force" had caused the deaths. But what was the force? Theories include animal attacks, hypothermia, avalanche, attack by Mansi people (indigenous folk of the region), or some type of military accident. The place where they died is called Kholat Syakhl by the Mansi - Mountain of the Dead.

True-crime writer Corey Smith and his friend, movie star Disco Brady, have traveled from Los Angeles to Russia to literally walk in the footsteps of the Russian hikers. They are even hiking at the same time of the year - starting at the end of January to reach Kholat Syakhl by February 1st. They meet up with Vasily Popov, a friend of deceased group leader Igor Dyatlov, who runs the Dyatlov Memorial Foundation. Corey has been in contact with Vasily, discussing theories and sharing information about the incident. Vasily has arranged the entire trek, as he has hiked it before along with guide, Fyodor. Before they leave, a friend of Vasily's named Olivia shows up and says she intends to go with them.

The chapters bump back and forth between the original group in 1959 and Vasily's group in 2018. The 2018 group attempts to follow the same path as Dyatlov's as closely as they. They pick up Fyodor and move out with snowmobiles, while Fyodor and Vasily traverse the terrain on a dogsled. Stopping in a Mansi village, the group meets with Raya. When asked her thoughts on what killed the missing hikers, she relates a story

about a forest giant that she claims she saw as a child. So now we have another theory - is the abominable snowman living in the Siberian mountains? The theory seems implausible until the group spends the night in Sector 9, a prison in the wilderness. Then there are the mysterious noises in the forest and the extremely large footsteps in the snow...

The group finally reaches Boot Rock, where some of the bodies were placed when found by rescuers. There is a memorial in place that Corey insists upon seeing. But the blizzard is getting worse and the group can't find their way back to the camp.

I really like what Bates did with this book. The mirroring between the 1959 hikers and the present-day hikers gives us a good idea what that group went through in 1959. Bates also peppers the Dyatlov group story with captioned pictures of their final hike in the wilderness – real pictures taken by the actual hikers and found during the subsequent rescue mission. I love how he merges the truth in his story. We know, based on their journal, where the hikers spent each day and Bates uses this information to place us with them on their journey. The Dyatlov Pass Incident is a real tragedy with no real answers, so Bates supplies us with one possibility. Perhaps it's not the most probable, but it was surely entertaining. And he has encouraged me to research the incident, which for me is always proof of an intriguing concept. Definitely recommended.

WendyB says

Two things to say first. One, I haven't read any of the other books in the series and I know it isn't necessary but I can't judge this book based on the quality of the others. Two, I won this in a GR giveaway. Free things are always nice.

So that being said, I didn't much care for this book. The opening segment made me think this could be a nice creepy read. Snow, ice, and a monster, what's not to like? Then the book nose-dived into endless, pointless backstory. Didn't care about any of it. Just tell me what happened to the group killed in 1959. Had to skim a bit through some sections to get to the end.

Tony says

If you enjoy horror thrillers loosely based upon real events, then "Mountain of the Dead" by Jeremy Bates is well worth a look. Although it has the subtitle "World's Scariest Places Book Five" they are standalone novels featuring plots which include the suicide forests in Japan, the French Catacombs and Aztec hauntings. This time out Jeremy Bates takes his well-researched blend of true horror to northern Siberia for his reimagining of the mystery known as the Dyatlov Pass Incident'.

The prologue opens in 1959 with a group of mountaineers exploring the northern Ural Mountains. Right from the off it is revealed that this is also their "last day to live" as there is something unknown and very dangerous lurking in the mountains. This is the crux which is the mystery at the centre of this novel and it is also the major weakness. From the way in which the plot unfolds, right from the start, there were just not that many realistic possibilities regarding who or what the killer might be. This limited the level of mystery and suspense on offer, even if it did jog along at an enjoyable and very easy to read pace.

Jeremy Bates constructs a very thorough and layered plot developed around the killing of nine hillwalkers

which is being reinvestigated in modern times by a successful non-fiction writer. We are introduced to the modern story strand when two Americans enter Siberia, attempting to head for the Dyatlov Pass and interview potential witnesses and see the site for themselves. Although this incident has already been researched extensively the author believes there has been some sort of government cover-up and has been obsessed by the story for some time. 'Whitey' also believes this to be perfect material for his next book, accompanied by his best friend 'Disco', a successful actor, the two men head north to the Dyatlov Pass. The problem is naïve American tourists are easy pickings for the rough and ready locals.

The second plotline takes us back to 1959, picking up the tale with 'Nine Days to Live' in the first of these chapter headings. The travellers are in the early stages of their journey, on the train towards the mining town of Serov and we are introduced to the characters. Along the way photographs are provided of the real people involved which add atmosphere and authenticity to proceedings, like reading a true crime book. Although this story thread is very detailed and has a great sense of time and place, the countdown diluted much of the tension with an air of inevitability to it. The book felt slightly overlong 384 pages, and these sequences could have been trimmed. We already knew they are going to die, I can appreciate the author wanting to humanise the characters, but it was dragged down by too much detail.

The present-day story with the two Americans had much more urgency than the 1959 countdown to death for the nine Siberians. 'Whitey' and 'Disco' struggle to make progress in Siberia, some locals help and hinder them along the way, Whitey battles to cope with his alcoholism and there are eventful flashbacks to a failed relationship which has exacerbated his drinking. Both Americans were entertaining characters and it was very easy to get pulled into their plight as the novel developed.

It was not difficult predicting where the two storylines were going to converge. As it is based on a real-life event the author is faithful to the original story and coming up with a plausible ending, which is not predictable, was never going to be easy. Before long Whitey and Disco are up to their eyeballs in trouble and you'll be feeling the frostbite along with the characters as it heads into a nail-biting climax.

"Mountain of the Dead" was a sound fact based historical novel which has lots going for it and I'm sure fans of the other books in the series will be very happy with it. However, it lacked the spark required in creating a genuine page-turner which would turn heads.

Kitkat says

I am a little disappointed with Jeremy Bate's new book in the series World's Scariest Places. I loved this series so much and I love the way he writes. However in this book he takes a different alternate route than what he usually writes. Bates talked about how humanity is the real monster and how humans can be pushed to do terrible acts to living things. I loved the idea and I honestly don't have a problem with it. What I have a problem with this book is the Yetis? Are you kidding me Jeremy Bates? I was really excited to see what the antagonists were going to be but I was just so disappointed and ridiculous. It was through page 300 that I thought no this cannot be true. I did like how the Yetis were created which was experimentation from when Stalin was in power. I found the history interesting but I hated that I didn't fall in love with the characters. There was no one I absolutely loved and the flashbacks were uninteresting. I felt bored through some of it and it felt like it dragged on forever. I just thought it could have been used a lot more interesting but I felt left down by it.

Brett Talley says

I've enjoyed many of Bates' books, but Mountain of the Dead is his best yet. If you are obsessed with the Dyatlov Pass Incident, read this book. If you've never heard of the incident, read this book; you'll learn a lot about the mystery even as Bates' imagination begins to displace the facts. And let me tell you--there is a moment of claustrophobia in this book so powerful, so vivid, and so well done that I almost had to put the book down. I felt it, in the way I rarely have with fiction. Just an excellent piece of horror.

Laura Patterson says

Unfortunately, it's more of a 2.5, which may be unfair, because I definitely compared it to his other "World's Scariest Places" series. I did enjoy this one, but it moved pretty slowly, and then at some point--and if you've read it, you know which point--I just thought what the? Seriously? If you've read this book, and weren't impressed, don't let it put you off from reading his others in the series.

Laura Ruetz says

I've long been fascinated with the Dyatlov pass incident and I absolutely loved the first 3/4 of this book but I am disappointed at the ending. I won't say more because of spoilers though. I did like the juxtaposition between the current day and the past, where we see both timelines as they progress to their goal. The doomed hikers in the past, and the author searching for the truth. I did like that. I liked how we get to see insights into who they were. Still a decent read, but I just feel like the ending was a let down of sorts.

Empress Reece (Hooked on Books) says

Mountain of the Dead is the 5th book in Bates' World Scariest Places series. This time around he takes us to the Dyatlov Pass in the Ural mountains in Russia. The story flips back and forth between the past Dyatlov Incident and the present group of hikers that are reliving and investigating the 1959 incident in effort to find out what happened to the group.

I'm intrigued by the events and mystique surrounding that horrific expedition so I've been reading as much non-fic and fic as I can find on it, including this story. Bates presented an interesting 'fictional' theory similar to J. H. Moncrieff's fic account in Return to Dyatlov Pass. Both were very good but I enjoyed the added suspense and thrill in Moncrieff's account. I think Bates intention in Mountain of the Dead was to add suspense by alternating the storylines and counting down to the day of the incident but unfortunately he didn't quite pull it off so the constant flip-flopping had the exact opposite effect on me.

*Read for 2018 AMMP Bairn Bingo- Deer

