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STEPHEN VENABLES

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Stephen Venables and three companions made the first ascent of Panchu Chuli Va remote Himalayan peak on the borders of India, Nepal and Tibet. A rappel anchor failed on the descent, pitching Venables into a 300-foot fall. Crashing through the black night, flung from rock to rock, he assumed that he was plunging to his death. Against all odds he survived, but was left stranded 19,000 feet above a labyrinth of glaciers and snow slopes with two broken legs, the threat of gangrene, and scant food or medical supplies. If he was to return to his wife and son waiting at home some 5000 miles away, Venables knew he had to draw on his reserve of courage and determination. The third Adrenaline Classic, *A Slender Thread* is a spellbinding account of Venables' survival and his intense personal struggle to understand the risks he takes for the sake of his insatiable passion for climbing. He comes as close to anyone to answering the unanswerable question: Why do they do it?

A gripping story. -- The Times, February 17, 2000 One of the most reflective, well-crafted, self-aware expedition books you're likely to read ... by a talented writer. -- High magazine, May 2000 Powerful, dramatic writing. This is one of the best mountaineering books to have been published for a long while. -- Sunday Telegraph, March 2, 2000 Venables writes with elegance, conjuring up vividly and honestly his companions, [with] an acute awareness of the environment through which he travels. -- Observer books review, January 16, 2000 From the Author Praise from one's peers is always welcome. I would like to quote from two specialist reviews. The philosopher Jos Bermudez wrote in the *Alpine Journal*: 'A Slender Thread is certainly one of the best expedition books I have read for some time. It is well paced, wittily written and hard to put down. Readers of Venables's earlier books will not be disappointed. The best part ... comes when Venables sets aside the self-deprecating and inward-looking house style of the British mountaineering establishment and shifts into a more reflective and self-examining mode.' On the other side of the pond, in the *American Alpine Journal*, Andrew Stevenson wrote: 'In many ways this book speaks to the aspects of climbing that I value, more so than those espoused in other climbing narratives, which of late seem to require some desperate sensational scheme or tragedy. Here we have, as Bob Bates said so well in the title of his book, "Mystery, Beauty, Danger". Added to the mix are capable companions and a little luck and humility. What more could one want from a book or a climb?'