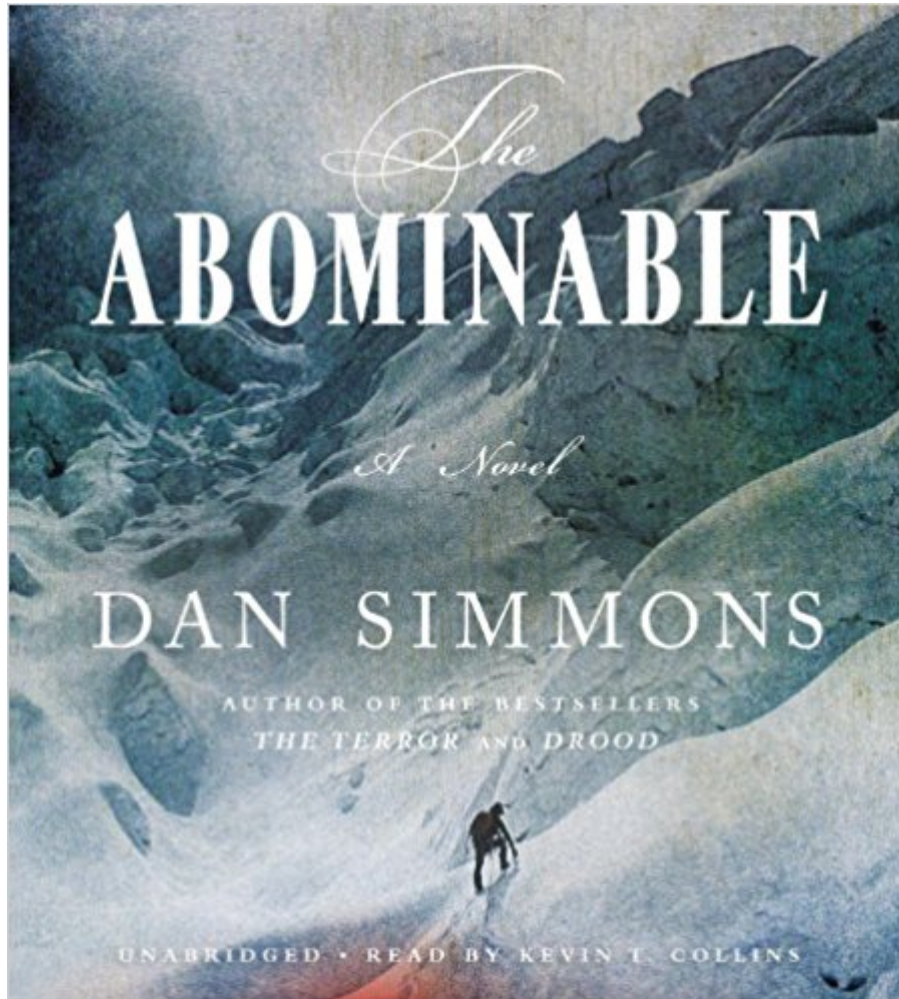




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The Abominable: A Novel



Synopsis

ALA Reading List Award for History, Short ListA thrilling tale of high-altitude death and survival set on the snowy summits of Mount Everest, from the bestselling author of *The Terror*It's 1924 and the race to summit the world's highest mountain has been brought to a terrified pause by the shocking disappearance of George Mallory and Sandy Irvine high on the shoulder of Mt. Everest. By the following year, three climbers -- a British poet and veteran of the Great War, a young French Chamonix guide, and an idealistic young American -- find a way to take their shot at the top. They arrange funding from the grieving Lady Bromley, whose son also disappeared on Mt. Everest in 1924. Young Bromley must be dead, but his mother refuses to believe it and pays the trio to bring him home. Deep in Tibet and high on Everest, the three climbers -- joined by the missing boy's female cousin -- find themselves being pursued through the night by someone . . . or something. This nightmare becomes a matter of life and death at 28,000 feet - but what is pursuing them? And what is the truth behind the 1924 disappearances on Everest? As they fight their way to the top of the world, the friends uncover a secret far more abominable than any mythical creature could ever be. A pulse-pounding story of adventure and suspense, *The Abominable* is Dan Simmons at his spine-chilling best.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Even Jake Perry, the fictional travelogue author Dan Simmons meets in his latest novel, jokes that his reader may not make it through this endless stack of notebooks. But lovers of Simmons's blend of alternate history, mystery, and myth will appreciate this three-act thriller set in the interwar years.

Young American alpine climber Jake is invited on a recovery mission to find Percival Bromley, a British lord who vanished on Mt. Everest. Much of the novel is devoted to the strategies and techniques of mountain climbing as it was developing in the 1920s, and Jake, his friend Jean-Claude, and team leader Deacon spend a lot of time rubbing elbows and comparing gear with real alpinists of the era. But amid the wash of detail, Simmons plants crucial facts and conjectures about early-20th-century Europe that won't pay off until Jake and his party are nearing the top of the world. Can murder and carnage be fully explained by the evil of men? Is a supernatural threat looming over the expedition? As usual, Simmons doesn't answer all the questions he's raised when the mysteries surrounding the loss of Percy Bromley are resolved, but his fans, like Jake, are sure to enjoy the journey. Agent: Richard Curtis, Richard Curtis Associates. (Oct.) --This text refers to the Preloaded Digital Audio Player edition.

Simmons, in this thematic cousin to *The Terror* (2007), once more plunges into a storm of snow and ice, this time tackling no less than Everest. It's 1924, and a trio of rogue climbers—a "mysterious WWI vet Deacon; emotional Frenchman Jean-Claude; and our narrator, brash young American Jacob—are hired to find the corpse of a dignitary lost on Everest. While they're there, they go for the legendary summit. Right away, there's a complication: a fourth team member, the dead man's cousin—and a woman, no less! But it's the subsequent complications that make this required reading for anyone inspired or terrified by high-altitude acrobatics: sudden avalanches, hidden crevasses, murderous temperatures, mountainside betrayals, and maybe "just maybe" a pack of bloodthirsty yeti. Though the first 200 pages of climbing background might have readers pining for the big climb, it is nearly always interesting, and, later, Simmons excels at those small but full-throated moments of terror when, for example, a single bent screw might mean death for everyone. Exhausting in all the best ways; maybe read this while it's still warm out? --Daniel Kraus --This text refers to the Preloaded Digital Audio Player edition.

This was a fantastic read. I read *The Terror* a few years back and was blown away by it, so I was eager to try this one when I heard of the similar premise about a group of men banding together for survival in the cold unknown. It was amazing in the first book, so why not this one? I'm very baffled by all the negative reviews here of this book. The general consensus seems to be that everyone here loved *The Terror* but found *The Abominable* to be slow, exhaustive, and far-fetched. Without giving anything away, I want to try to address some of the criticisms against the book: 1) "Too much climbing technique explanation." I won't deny that there are a few dense parts where Dan Simmons

delves into deep description about climbing techniques to the reader, but I also don't think that it was so much so that it felt like reading a training manual. I recall maybe two chapters that covered the characters undergoing specific lessons and tests on how to climb, and I found these to be completely essential to the book. The explanation of crampon devices in particular are so integral to the book later on once they reach the mountain, as it becomes the primary means of how they all ascend where many other parties had failed, and I would have only understood what they were doing had Simmons not so meticulously and visually described it to me earlier.²) "Too much build-up that took too long to get to the mountain." I'm not going to lie, it does take awhile for the main action of the mountain to happen. The characters don't even reach the mountain until page 250 or so, but I did not find anything leading up to this point to be boring by any means. Simmons took a lot of time in these first 250 pages to build up the mystery of the missing Percy Bromley and wove a very tangled, intriguing web that completely invested me. Jake, Deacon, and J.C. (the recovery team paid to find Bromley) spend a lot of time before they reach the mountain interviewing and piecing together the different accounts from different people who saw Bromley on the mountain, only to find that nothing adds up - someone is lying or there's a bigger conspiracy at play. The build-up was written and woven together so well that I was completely hooked by the time they reached the mountain and hardly noticed the 250 pages that it had taken to get there.³) "The final revelation in the mystery is not believable." This is the only criticism that I will partially agree with. When the final twist is revealed about what really happened to Bromley and the motivations behind everything that transpired with him, I did find it far-fetched. Some reviewers here seemed to be disappointed that it was not a mysterious monster (i.e., the Yeti) that caused Bromley's disappearance, but I rather liked that it was not fantastical. I already read that in *The Terror*, and I appreciated the different approach here. I was able to buy who was behind it no problem, but the why was slightly outlandish to me. I think that Simmons was working really hard for me to suspend my disbelief because it a pretty hard sell, but I didn't find it so ridiculous that it completely ruined the novel for me. The whole story is worth reading, and the ending definitely stayed with me for quite some time. I really believe that this book deserves a try, despite the all the negative reviews here. I cared about each and every one of the main characters in the recovery team and was on the edge of my seat the entire read rooting for their survival even though I knew they all could not possibly prevail. It's hard not to compare it to *The Terror* because they share the same frigid and cold atmospheres and a story about a band of men trying to survive in horrid conditions, but that is where the similarities end. *The Abominable* should be looked at individually, and I thought it was still a worthwhile and great read.

I enjoyed this book, more like a primer on mountain climbing, but interesting to read. The characters were quite personable and so it was upsetting when one of them died. Also interesting to read the history or pseudo-history of what may or may not have happened on Everest and in world events leading up to World War II. If I thought this book was going to be about the yeti, it wasn't. They were mentioned, and allegedly causing havoc, but I had never known of yeti attacks on camps or villages so was suspicious it was something or someone else. It was. The title certainly was not meant for the abominable snowman, but for something else. I would recommend it for those who would not get bogged down or turned off by the intricacies of mountaineering.

I bought the book because I enjoyed Simmon's adventure settings—this one in the cold, snow, ice, and generally inhospitable weather. He uses the geography and weather as another character to further the drama and plot; full of twists, turns, and unpredictability. This story did not disappoint. Very enjoyable read I will look for more of his adventure settings..

In typical Dan Simmons style: brilliantly written, although a little slow to start. But stick with it— it is an extremely rewarding read. Kudos in particular to the amount of research that must have gone in to the depiction of climbing a mountain such as Everest. An emotive and complex tale.

Overly ambitious, but a worthwhile read for the mountain climbing enthusiast. The biggest problem is the 1st person narrator who is way over his head in the drama being played around him. Whenever he leaves straight narration and contributes to the dialogue he degrades the story. This is a slow plodding read of survival played out in the world's most inhospitable environment as our protagonists are being chased by machine gun toting Nazi thugs, even though this description sounds like an oxymoron.

Dan Simmons is a fantastic writer. I've read quite a few of his books and love the attention to detail. There could be a bit more description for the likes of some, but this is my kind of read. Even though it was based on a fictional adventure it was loaded with finely researched facts about mountain climbing and the men and women who enjoy risking their lives for the thrill of it! If you like long wordy books read Dan Simmons--you will come away with knowing things you never thought to question.

This is my first Dan Simmons novel. I loved the extensive research and meticulous detail regarding the history, political climate, geography, culture and mountaineering equipment and techniques. It was also wonderful to have a strong woman as part of the ensemble. This book is particularly appropriate for history buffs and climbing aficionados.

Dan Simmons had me hooked from the Prologue. As always, this author manages to blend fiction with history, and make obscure facts and details entertaining.

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