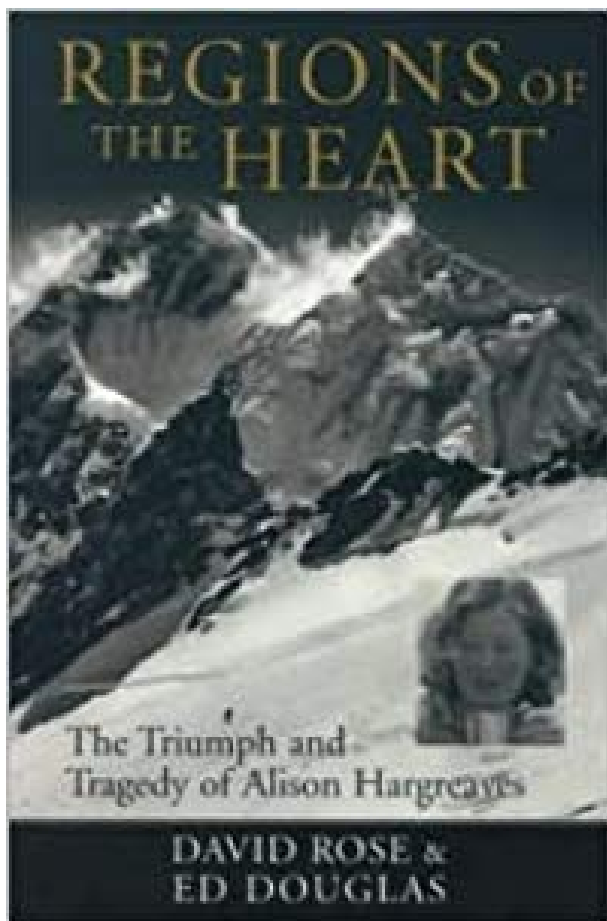


Regions of the Heart: The Triumph and Tragedy of Alison Hargreaves



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By any standard, Alison Hargreaves was a world-class mountaineer. In May 1995, she reached the summit of Mount Everest without support or bottled oxygen. No other woman and few men had climbed the mountain in such a strong style, and the accomplishment made Hargreaves an international climbing star. Three months later she was dead, killed by a sudden, violent storm shortly after struggling to the top of K2, second in height to Everest but a more dangerous challenge. In the emotional public reaction to this tragedy, her triumphs were suddenly eclipsed by controversy. Instead of eulogies, her death was greeted by anger: How dare the mother of two young children risk her life and her family's future on so deadly an undertaking? Was her lifelong passion for climbing a badge of courage or the mark of supreme irresponsibility? Should she be remembered as a superlative mountaineer or as an immature and selfish woman? It was a bitter end to an extraordinary and misunderstood career. In "Regions of the Heart," David Rose and Ed Douglas set the record straight, presenting a thoughtful, compelling portrait of Hargreaves that restores her reputation while acknowledging her shortcomings and lapses of judgement. They show us a woman who found freedom and fulfillment on the steep faces of some of the world's most forbidding mountains, a wife trapped in an increasingly troubled marriage, and a mother who sought literally to climb her way to financial security -- a desperate gamble for which she would ultimately pay with her life. Short-listed for the prestigious Banff Mountain Literature grand prize, "Regions of the Heart" is a story of unparalleled adventure and a vivid glimpse of the intensely competitive, always perilous world of men and women who are never more than

a single step away from death. Readers will finish this book both saddened and inspired, with a new understanding of Alison Hargreaves and the true challenges she struggled bravely to overcome.