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ALIVE: THE STORY OF THE ANDES SURVIVORS. By Piers Paul Read. *Philadelphia and New York: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1974. 6½ x 9½ inches, 352 pages, illustrated. $10.00.*

Man's will to survive has been the subject of very many studies, books and essays, but the ingredients remain largely undefined. Predictable heroes often crumble and die, while the improbables emerge as leaders. The ordeals described by Shackleton, Scott, Noyce come to mind at once; they are fascinating and instructive, though not conclusive. This recent book by Piers Paul Read deserves a prominent place in the history of human endeavour, the psychology of survival, and in the annals of adventure. It is an exceptional book, difficult to leave, filled with moral and ethical issues, and rich in lessons. Hopefully it will be required reading for all whose tasks expose them to risks in hostile settings.

In October 1972 (which was at the end of winter in the southern hemisphere) a chartered plane carrying forty-five passengers crashed somewhere high in the Andes, but due to storm, poor navigation and faulty radio contact, its position could be only approximated and the condition of its passengers was unknown. Many passengers and crew were killed instantly, as the plane broke apart at initial impact; more died within days and others were killed by avalanches that buried the shelter improvised within the wreckage of the fuselage. Still others died during the next long weeks. Finally, after the official search had been halted and restarted several times, and while some of the families of the passengers persisted in their efforts to at least find the wreckage, two members of the surviving group made a fantastic ten day sortie over 14,000-foot peaks, and reached cowherds who brought rescue to the fourteen survivors who had remained in the wreckage. The book is a stark, realistic account of how the sixteen survived for seventy days through terrible storms, sub-zero temperatures at 13,500 feet without adequate food, shelter, clothing or medical care — sustained by a few individuals whose will to live was unquenchable.

The chartered plane had carried little food and much of this — along with most of the baggage — fell with the tail section several miles from where the fuselage, which had lost its wings, came to rest. The small amount of food available was gone in a few days and the survivors faced the terrible choice between certain death from starvation, or eating the flesh of those who had been killed.

The author describes with compassion and sensitivity how the decision was reached; indeed these adjectives may be applied to the whole book — which is understated, stark, and objective almost to a fault. As the nineteen who remained alive after the first awful weeks became more and more accustomed to their incredibly difficult situation they accepted the flesh of their dead friends as a Eucharist. Most were devout Catholics, and later described the strength which their religion had provided. Though the Church later rejected the analogy of Eucharist, at the same time it accepted as morally right the eating of human flesh under the circumstances.

In actuality, although the cannibalism has been the most publicized aspect of this ordeal, it is far less dramatic or important than the will to survive which brought from shy obscurity certain leaders, and reduced more popular figures to weak ineffectiveness. The evolution of a form of balanced hierarchical government is an interesting and significant theme in the book.

Fifteen of the passengers were rugby teammates, and were not only in magnificent physical condition but also had a sense of cooperative effort and knowledge — at least superficial understanding of one another. The others were friends or families of the team, and only a few had not known each other before. Unquestionably this closeness affected survival; one doubts whether the usual motley group of commercial airline passengers could have endured even for a short time under such conditions.

Piers Paul Read is a novelist, but there is nothing fictional about this record; it is taut, spare, vivid. Above all it is fiercely honest: those who failed are identified; those who triumphed appear as larger than life — but with weaknesses too. The dialogue is realistic; the descriptions are strong but not overdone.

Read spares us little: this is not a book for the squeamish. Faeces, urine, haemorrhoids, pus, and the stench of unwashed bodies, putrid flesh and ordure are very real. As Read spares little he conveys a sense of integrity and honesty which is overwhelming. One feels that this is exactly how it was. There is neither glorification nor vilification; heroes have weaknesses in their strength; slackers have some virtues. The book was written soon after the survivors returned — one assumes after Read had many carefully recorded interviews with every person — and only a few glimpses are given into the lives of the sixteen since they emerged emaciated and blinking into the fierce light of public acclaim — and criticism. It will be fascinating to see, some years from now, just how true has been their own prediction that their lives

have been profoundly changed . . .

Because of its implicit lessons on survival, the book should be required reading for all who may be exposed to the kind of horrors or physical and emotional trials which may occur — at sea, in the polar regions, in deserts, or anywhere that disaster may place individuals at the mercy of natural forces and elemental urges. It will have a permanent place in the literature of exploration and of human courage because of both its content and its style.

Charles S. Houston

TULUAK AND AMAULIK: DIALOGUES ON DEATH AND MOURNING WITH THE INUIT ESKIMO OF POINT BARROW AND WAINWRIGHT, ALASKA. By Stacey B. Day. *Minneapolis: Bell Museum of Pathobiology, University of Minnesota Medical School, 1973. 5 7/16 x 8 7/16 inches, 176 pages, illustrated. No price indicated.*

Stacey B. Day is a medical man with impressive credentials: M.D., Ph.D., and D.Sc. He is currently Head of Biomedical Communications and Medical Education at the Sloan-Kettering Institute for Cancer Research in New York City. He was formerly Conservator and Head of the Bell Museum of Pathobiology at the University of Minnesota Medical School. In the summer of 1972, while serving in the latter capacity, he visited the North Alaskan communities of Barrow and Wainwright with an interdisciplinary student expedition; their objective was to study circadian rhythms under conditions of 24-hour daylight. While in the area Dr. Day decided to learn about Eskimo attitudes and customs surrounding death and mourning. *Tuluak and Amaulik* is a report on this investigation.

The book consists primarily of transcriptions of Day's conversations with Eskimos, presented as a disconnected series of "dialogues." Most of the dialogues took place in a more or less formal interview context, presumably by special arrangement. Others occurred as impromptu conversations recorded as opportunity permitted while Day was walking around the villages. Interspaced among the dialogues are several brief sections dealing with a mixed assortment of topics. Subjects include (1) previously published Eskimo stories, (2) comments on a few well-known Arctic books, (3) unacknowledged excerpts from C. C. Hughes' *An Eskimo Village in the Modern World,* (4) miscellaneous observations on the country and people, and (5) information about Eskimo customs taken from other sources. An appendix lists the surnames to be found in the Eskimo population of Barrow.

The purpose of this book is obscure, and so is its organization. The fifty or so sections are not numbered, there is no table of contents or index, and no effort has been made to integrate the various sections into a cohesive whole. The conversations are presented in the same order in which they were recorded, but there is no apparent logic to the sequence in which the other sections are presented. Citation of other sources is generally unprecise, and in a few cases virtually nonexistent.

Despite its interesting subject matter this book contributes nothing to our knowledge about anything. Such substance as it contains consists of excerpts from or summaries of material already published by someone else. The dialogues and commentaries *could have been* instructive if Day had known anything about Eskimos or anything about social research — but he did not meet either requirement. The book as a whole *might have been* interesting if Day had condensed and organized his material and presented it in some useful way — but he did not do this either.

But the most serious problem with *Tuluak and Amaulik* is the way it infringes on the rights of informants. In the first place, Day identifies by name every person he interviewed, except for a few lucky ones who refused to identify themselves to him. This procedure violates the right of informants to anonymity, a right they surely would have exercised in this case if they had realized what was happening. Day also broke more general standards of fair play by editing his own remarks but leaving untouched those of his informants. This procedure is unfair unless those involved know that their comments will be published verbatim, a condition that could not have been met in this case. It is however really Day who comes out looking the fool, for who else would confront an utter stranger in a store, ask him point-blank what he thinks about death and dying, and expect a publishable response?

This book never should have been written.

Ernest S. Burch, Jr.

NATIVE RIGHTS IN CANADA (Second Edition). Edited by Peter A. Cumming and Neil H. Mickenberg. *Toronto: Indian-Eskimo Association of Canada, 1972. 7 x 10 inches, 352 pages. $12.95 cloth, $7.95 paperbound.*

Native Rights in Canada is certainly the most comprehensive review and analysis of the legal and historical background of aboriginal