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Zuckoff, Mitchell. Frozen in Time

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Journalist Mitchell Zuckoff knew there was a story that must be told when he set out in 2012 on a recovery mission to the isolated polar cap of Southeast Greenland. There, almost exactly sixty years before, in the winter of 1942, three downed planes were part of a unbelievable story of survival and heroism, a compelling mystery that he was now a part of.

On November 5th, 1942, a lost cargo plane carrying five American servicemen crashed into a glacier due to hazardous weather conditions. Four days after that initial crash, the crew of an American B17 ferrying a long-rang bomber across the Atlantic to England were redirected towards Greenland, attempting to follow an increasingly weak radio signal from the downed cargo plane. They flew into a complete whiteout and crashed, breaking in half on impact, the tail of the plane hanging precariously over a crevasse. Nine airmen found themselves in one of the most inhospitable places on earth with hardly any resources. For five months, the B17 crew battled starvation, madness, frost-bite and failed attempts to walk more than a few yards into hurricane-strength blizzards. Amazingly, some were able to survive by sheer will, camaraderie and ingenuity.

But the glacier was not finished. It claimed a third plane, this one a Coast Guard Grumman “Duck” carrying a pilot and radioman whose mission it was to locate and rescue the B17 crew. They were successful in rescuing some of the survivors but vanished into a storm, not to be recovered until 2012, when a perilous expedition was launched to repatriate the bodies of these lost heroes from under 30 feet of ice. The book flips between this expedition and the events that began to unfold in November 1942, providing maps and the details on the scientific techniques needed to locate missing aircrafts. Together a fascinating and complex narrative is woven; one that will not disappoint fans of military history and true adventure stories. If you enjoyed books like Laura Hillenbrand’s*Unbroken* and Zuckoff’s previous book,*Lost in Shangri-la*, be sure to pick this one up.

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