

The Sky Below: A True Story of Summits, Space, and Speed

By Scott Parazynski, Susy Flory

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“Scott Parazynski’s drive, curiosity, inventiveness, and great humor shine through the pages of *The Sky Below* and will certainly inspire future generations to pursue their dreams with every fiber in their being.” —John Glenn, NASA astronaut

An epic memoir from a man whose life is defined by exploration and innovation, *The Sky Below* re-creates some of the most unforgettable adventures of our time. From dramatic, high-risk spacewalks to author Scott Parazynski’s death-defying quest to summit Mount Everest—his body ravaged by a career in space—readers will experience the life of an elite athlete, physician, and explorer.

This intimate, compelling account offers a rare portrait of space exploration from the inside. A global nomad raised in the shadow of NASA’s Apollo missions, Parazynski never lost sight of his childhood dream to one day don a spacesuit and float outside the airlock. With deep passion, unbridled creativity, resilience, humility, and self-deprecation, Parazynski chases his dream of the ultimate adventure experience, again and again and again. In an era that transitioned from moon shots to the Space Shuttle, space station, and Mars research, Parazynski flies with John Glenn, tests jet packs, trains in Russia to become a cosmonaut, and flies five missions to outer space (including seven spacewalks) in his seventeen-year NASA career.

An unparalleled, visceral opportunity to understand what it’s like to train for—and deploy to—a home in zero gravity, *The Sky Below* also portrays an astronaut’s engagement with the challenges of his life on Earth, including raising a beautiful autistic daughter and finding true love.

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The Sky Below: A True Story of Summits, Space, and Speed By Scott Parazynski, Susy Flory Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Review

“In calm, brainy prose and with surprising humor, [Parazynski] writes, with coauthor Flory, about his adventures in going where few have gone before him, be that space or Mount Everest…His relatable, down-to-earth discourse mingles the ordinary with the extraordinary and will have readers feeling like they’re catching up with a best friend—one who happens to be an astronaut—over beers.” ***—Booklist***

“Plenty of former astronauts have written about their careers in books that tend to sound alike with references to family values in the face of profound risk, a hint of philosophy, boisterous camaraderie, natural bravado, true pride, and true or false humility. Among the proliferation of these, Parazynski’s is presented with a bit more panache. A genial, readable account of mountain climbing, spaceship travel, and other adventures.” ***—Kirkus Reviews***

“[*The Sky Below* is] the story of a remarkable life full of adventure on Earth and beyond.” ***—Houston Chronicle***

“Parazynski is as disarmingly down-to-earth as he is heroically stoic. You’re with him every minute in this hair-raising memoir, as he wrangles with wayward tethers outside the space station Mir, ‘sutures’ a solar array to the International Space Station, or gazes at the glittering tapestry of stars from Earth’s orbit.” ***—Nature***

“In his book, Parazynski’s life unfolds across chapters through detailed retellings. You read on as he attempts to conquer some of life’s greatest summits, finding family, love, and adventure along the way.” ***—Houstonia***

“Dr. Scott Parazynski's new book, *The Sky Below*, chronicles an amazing life.” ***—Forbes***

“An in-depth review of the many adventures of former NASA shuttle astronaut Scott Parazynski, it covers his many accomplishments and at the same time keeping a very conversational tone. For those interested in the background of some of America’s more recent space flyers, it has much to offer.” ***—Space Flight Insider***

“The best explorer autobiographies deal equally with inner and external challenges. In *The Sky Below: A True Story of Summits, Space, and Speed* Scott Parazynski strikes a perfect balance between the two facets of what goes into the making of an explorer—on and off this planet.” **—SpaceRef**

“Scott masterfully brings to life the skill and ingenuity of the entire NASA team during the dramatic and unprecedented repair of a live solar array aboard the International Space Station. Just as Mission Control saved the day during Apollo 13, Scott and team worked together, against long odds, to deal with a truly critical situation. *The Sky Below* is the compelling story of a born adventurer who, raised in the midst of the Apollo program, carries on the great American tradition of bold exploration, innovation, and scientific discovery.” **—Jim Lovell, Captain, USN (retired), veteran of four NASA space missions including Apollo 13, and author of *Lost Moon***

“In *The Sky Below*, Scott Parazynski captures the true essence of what it is to be an explorer/adventurer.

From underwater to the top of Everest to the ISS, Scott carried me along as if I was right there alongside of him. I could not stop reading as he takes you from one adventure to the next. I have read many books by astronauts and *The Sky Below* is one of the best. I thank Scott for giving us a glimpse of and the feeling of going to the edge." **—Charlie Duke, Brigadier General, USAF (retired), Apollo 16 lunar module pilot, and Apollo 11 capcom**

"Taking on big risks for even greater rewards requires careful planning, resourcefulness, rigorous training, passion, and creativity. This mindset certainly fueled our great nation since its founding, and even took us to the moon during the Apollo program. Scott has taken on enormous challenges while also learning from inevitable setbacks that come with risks. The adventures of *The Sky Below* will leave you breathless, while the lessons learned will inspire others in their passion to reach their own impossible dream." **—Gene Cernan, Captain, USN (retired), Gemini and Apollo astronaut, and the last man to walk on the moon during Apollo 17; author of *The Last Man on the Moon***

"Courage, intrigue, perseverance, risk, and discovery sound like great fiction, but add humility, humor, passion, and service to humanity and country, and you have the real-life challenges and adventures of astronaut Dr. Scott Parazynski. Only someone as extraordinary as Scott could accomplish so much in just one amazing life. Add dedication to inspiring youth to pursue their dreams, as well as devotion to his own children, and you have the dramatic page-turner, *The Sky Below*." **—June Scobee Rodgers, PhD, founding chair, Challenger Center for Space Science Education, and author of *Silver Linings* and the Star Challengers series**

"Former astronaut, Scott Parazynski, is a dear and close personal friend. We met when my husband Rick joined the astronaut corps in 1995. Preparing for Rick's flight in space as the commander, Scott was a natural choice to be with our family throughout the launch week in Florida. Famous people have real lives just like everyone else; some are just more extraordinary. Scott has climbed Mount Everest twice with one successful summit; he flew in space five times and spacewalked, but he also taught my newly fatherless seven-year-old son how to ride a bicycle. He faithfully showed up every day to my home in the aftermath of the tragedy to support and help any way he possibly could and even wore a tie. He picked up my parents at the airport the day of the tragedy and brought them to my grief-stricken home. His quiet strength and leadership comforted our brokenness. He navigated us through uncharted waters of grief. Scott was very instrumental in the renaming of Columbia Point in Colorado's Sangre de Cristo Mountains and led all the families on a life-changing adventure up the mountain to the memorial for the crew. He even ushered at my wedding of the second love of my life, Bill Thompson. Scott is truly a friend that loves at all times." **—Evelyn Husband Thompson, author of *High Calling: The Courageous Life and Faith of Space Shuttle Columbia Commander Rick Husband***

About the Author

Scott Parazynski was inducted into the Astronaut Hall of Fame in 2016, and is the recipient of many prestigious awards, including five NASA Space Flight Medals, two NASA Distinguished Service Medals, two NASA Exceptional Service Medals, the Aviation Week Laureate Award, the Antarctica Service Medal, the National Eagle Scout Association's Outstanding Eagle Scout Award, and the Lowell Thomas Award from the Explorers Club. Now a tech start-up CEO and a prolific inventor, he ventures into some of the world's most extreme environments in the name of exploration and innovation. Scott and his wife, Meena Wadhwa, a renowned planetary scientist, divide their time between Houston, Texas, and Phoenix, Arizona. His most important role to date is serving as a doting husband and father of two children.

Susy Flory is the *New York Times* bestselling author or coauthor of twelve books. She is a member of the

Authors Guild and was recently named director of a San Francisco Bay Area writers' conference. A breast cancer survivor, Susy celebrates life by riding a crazy ex-racehorse named Stetson, hiking in the High Sierras, and skiing black diamond runs whenever she can.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jaclyn Warner:

The actual book The Sky Below: A True Story of Summits, Space, and Speed has a lot details on it. So when you read this book you can get a lot of advantage. The book was compiled by the very famous author. The author makes some research prior to write this book. This kind of book very easy to read you can obtain the point easily after reading this book.

Neil Myers:

Can you one of the book lovers? If so, do you ever feeling doubt if you find yourself in the book store? Aim to pick one book that you just dont know the inside because don't determine book by its protect may doesn't work this is difficult job because you are scared that the inside maybe not as fantastic as in the outside appear likes. Maybe you answer may be The Sky Below: A True Story of Summits, Space, and Speed why because the excellent cover that make you consider about the content will not disappoint a person. The inside or content is actually fantastic as the outside or even cover. Your reading 6th sense will directly assist you to pick up this book.

Scott Hagen:

In this time globalization it is important to someone to find information. The information will make professionals understand the condition of the world. The healthiness of the world makes the information better to share. You can find a lot of sources to get information example: internet, magazine, book, and soon. You can view that now, a lot of publisher that print many kinds of book. Often the book that recommended for your requirements is The Sky Below: A True Story of Summits, Space, and Speed this guide consist a lot of the information from the condition of this world now. This specific book was represented how can the world has grown up. The language styles that writer use for explain it is easy to understand. The particular writer made some study when he makes this book. That's why this book ideal all of you.

Walter Feuerstein:

A lot of people said that they feel fed up when they reading a book. They are directly felt the item when they get a half regions of the book. You can choose the particular book The Sky Below: A True Story of Summits, Space, and Speed to make your current reading is interesting. Your own skill of reading proficiency is developing when you such as reading. Try to choose straightforward book to make you enjoy to study it and mingle the opinion about book and looking at especially. It is to be first opinion for you to like to available a book and examine it. Beside that the publication The Sky Below: A True Story of Summits, Space, and Speed can to be your brand new friend when you're sense alone and confuse with the information

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