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Gary Hemming: The Beatnik of the Alps

Mirella Tenderini

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Gary Hemming—the enigmatic Californian who brought the modern American climbing spirit and technique to the Alps during the 1960s—was a cultural hero in Europe during an era of social upheaval. Launched into fame after a daring rescue of stranded climbers on the West Face of the Dru, Hemming became a star of the French media. Yet his fame in Europe—and anonymity in America—sat uneasily with his rebellious nature. Mirella Tenderini explores Hemming's tumultuous life and spectacular climbs, creating a profound and tragic portrait of a man who sought a freedom—of love and climbing—that eluded him in this world. And perhaps in death Hemming became what the living cannot be—a legend and a myth. REVIEWS Reviews from the French, Italian, Spanish, and first English editions: "Hemming never behaved conventionally. A different man – fine mountaineer certainly, but also a poet and philosopher – he wrote, he loved, he hated and no one could hold him. He played with words, with people and with his own life. All that life is evoked by Mirella Tenderini." – Alain Roux in Le Dauphine Libere, Chamonix. "The first time in years that we have a mountain book that is subtle, strong and intelligent. Here the mountain has its true place as the mirror of passion." – Jean-Michel Asselin in Vertical, Grenoble. "The author's great ability is revealed in this amalgam – she salvages both objective and subjective truths, giving to the life a wholeness denied it in the climbing chronicles and legends that flourished around the myth of Gary Hemming." – Andrea Gobetti in La Rivista della Montagna, Turin. "Handsome, charismatic, with only poste restante for an address, Gary Hemming appeared as a rebel god when, in the summer of 1966, he rescued two Germans trapped on the west face of the Petit Dru. Fame overwhelmed him and he could never be the same lone Californian hippy able to achieve a synthesis of all his aspirations when climbing a big, Alpine wall. In 1969 his body was found in Wyoming. Suicide? Accident? LSD? We will never know, but some maintain it was merely a mise-en-scene: heroes never die." - Il Corriere della Sera, Milan. "The image emerging from this story is that of a hero of his time … who was the very expression of the anxieties, contradictions and hopes of the young generation of the 60s." – Piero Spirito in Il Piccolo, Trieste. "Gary Hemming belongs to that generation of American climbers which brought a purity of approach to the climbing of big Alpine routes." – Ignatio Cnado in Desnivel, Madrid. "The portrait of Gary in Mirella's account is of the Gary I remember, a man who unfailingly tried to be as good a man as any he knew, a man who desperately needed to conceal his private self but who sometimes thought he wanted to be famous. The preponderance of Mirella'a evidence is overwhelmingly that Gary really wanted love more than fame or even privacy. He had that love. His tragedy was that he was damaged precisely in a way that prevented him from seeing that. " – Pete Sinclair, American Alpine Journal, 1996 "In the early 1960s Gary Hemming rocked the Alps with the first ascents of the American Direct on the Dru, and the South Face of the Fou, then two of Chamonix's most difficult routes. A daring rescue brightened the limelight. Before and after, he climbed extensively near the top standard for nearly two decades, with such illustrious partners as Royal Robbins, John Harlin, Tom Frost, and Barry Corbett, making very early ascents of testpieces from the Steck-Salathé (when it was the hardest route in Yosemite) to the Walker Spur of the Grandes Jorasses." – Jeff Achey, Climbing, 1996

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Lester Jaworski:

Precisely why? Because this Gary Hemming: The Beatnik of the Alps is an unordinary book that the inside of the reserve waiting for you to snap that but latter it will shock you with the secret that inside. Reading this book alongside it was fantastic author who else write the book in such amazing way makes the content interior easier to understand, entertaining way but still convey the meaning fully. So , it is good for you because of not hesitating having this ever again or you going to regret it. This book will give you a lot of gains than the other book include such as help improving your proficiency and your critical thinking approach. So , still want to hold off having that book? If I ended up you I will go to the e-book store hurriedly.

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