DARK KNOWLEDGE READS PRESENTS

The Nonfiction

STARTER PACK



Shipwrecks, poisons, cold cases, cults, and more.
Twenty-seven true stories worth staying up for.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Every book in here earned five stars.

These are the true stories I couldn't put down: shipwrecks and frozen seas, invisible poisons, cold cases, cults, and the people who lived through all of it.

If you're new to nonfiction, or you've been stuck in a reading rut, start here. Pick whichever section pulls at you, and check off each book as you finish it.



Happy reading,

Dark Knowledge Reads

01 EXPEDITIONS & EXPLORATION *5 books*

Frozen seas, deadly peaks, and the edge of the known world.

- [ ] **Endurance** *Alfred Lansing*
  Shackleton's ship is crushed by Antarctic ice, and 28 men must find their own way home.
- [ ] **In the Kingdom of Ice** *Hampton Sides*
  An 1879 Navy crew sails north to find an open polar sea and gets locked in the ice instead.
- [ ] **The River of Doubt** *Candice Millard*
  After losing the 1912 election, Theodore Roosevelt nearly dies mapping an uncharted Amazon river.
- [ ] **Into Thin Air** *Jon Krakauer*
  A journalist's firsthand account of the 1996 Everest storm that turned a summit push into a disaster.
- [ ] **Rocket Men** *Robert Kurson*
  The high-stakes 1968 mission that sent the first humans around the moon.

02 AGAINST ALL ODDS *4 books*

Stranded, shipwrecked, and somehow still alive.

- [ ] **The Indifferent Stars Above** *Daniel James Brown*
  The Donner Party's ordeal, told through one young woman who lived through it.
- [ ] **Miracle in the Andes** *Nando Parrado*
  A survivor of the 1972 Andes plane crash on 72 days in the mountains and the trek that saved them.
- [ ] **Unbroken** *Laura Hillenbrand*
  An Olympic runner survives 47 days adrift on a raft, then years as a prisoner of war.
- [ ] **In Harm's Way** *Doug Stanton*
  The USS Indianapolis sinks in 1945, leaving hundreds of men stranded in shark-filled water for days.

03 DISASTERS, DISEASE & MEDICINE *4 books*

When the danger is invisible until it's too late.

- [ ] **The Radium Girls** *Kate Moore*
  Young women painted glowing watch dials, licked their brushes to a fine point, and slowly began to glow themselves.
- [ ] **The Hot Zone** *Richard Preston*
  A deadly relative of Ebola surfaces in a monkey facility just outside Washington, D.C.
- [ ] **The Worst Hard Time** *Timothy Egan*
  The families who stayed on the southern plains through the Dust Bowl's black blizzards.
- [ ] **The Vanishing Family** *Robert Kolker*
  A family facing a rare inherited dementia joins the fight to stop it.

04 SCANDALS & SECRETS *3 books*

Fortunes, frauds, and double lives.

- [ ] **Empire of Pain** *Patrick Radden Keefe*
  How the Sackler family built a fortune on OxyContin, and the crisis it left behind.
- [ ] **Bad Blood** *John Carreyrou*
  The reporter who exposed Theranos on how a billion-dollar blood-testing startup was built on lies.
- [ ] **The Spy and the Traitor** *Ben Macintyre*
  A KGB officer secretly spies for Britain, until a CIA mole puts his life on the line.

05 KILLERS & THE HUNT FOR THEM *3 books*

The investigators, the obsessives, and the ones who got too close.

- [ ] **The Stranger Beside Me** *Ann Rule*
  A crime writer's coworker and friend turns out to be Ted Bundy.
- [ ] **Zodiac** *Robert Graysmith*
  A newspaper cartoonist's obsessive hunt for the killer who taunted San Francisco with ciphers.
- [ ] **The Night Stalker** *Philip Carlo*
  Richard Ramirez's 1985 terror across Los Angeles and the manhunt that ended it.

06 CULTS & CLOSED WORLDS *3 books*

Places that are almost impossible to leave.

- [ ] **Seductive Poison** *Deborah Layton*
  A Peoples Temple insider escapes Jonestown months before the massacre.
- [ ] **Nothing to Envy** *Barbara Demick*
  Six ordinary North Koreans describe life through famine and fear.
- [ ] **A River in Darkness** *Masaji Ishikawa*
  A man's 36 years trapped in North Korea, and his escape.

07 CRIMES THAT SHOOK A NATION *5 books*

Cases that changed how we see justice.

- [ ] **Say Nothing** *Patrick Radden Keefe*
  A mother of ten is taken from her Belfast home in 1972, and the silence around it lasts for decades.
- [ ] **Helter Skelter** *Vincent Bugliosi*
  The prosecutor who convicted Charles Manson tells the full story of the case.
- [ ] **The Menendez Murders** *Robert Rand*
  Two wealthy brothers kill their parents in Beverly Hills, and two very different trials follow.
- [ ] **Columbine** *Dave Cullen*
  The 1999 school shooting, and the myths that grew up around it, re-examined.
- [ ] **Devil's Knot** *Mara Leveritt*
  Three teenagers are convicted of murdering three boys in West Memphis amid a satanic panic.

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