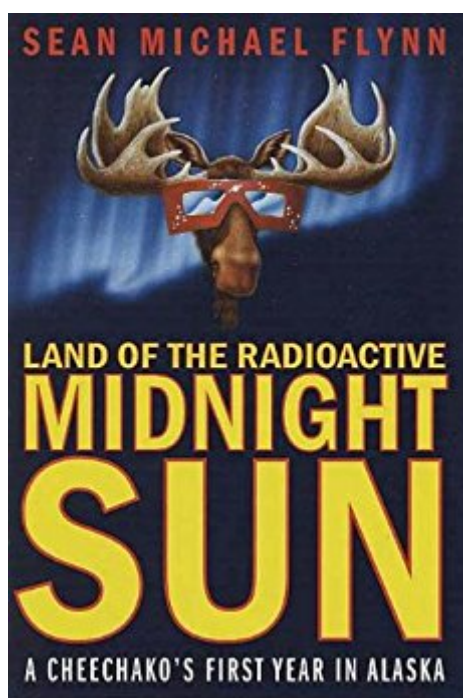


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Land Of The Radioactive Midnight Sun: A Cheechako's First Year In Alaska



Synopsis

"In New York City, a Cheechako (chee CHA-ko) would be the kid who just fell off the turnip truck. No street smarts. A pink windbreaker. A subway map sticking from his back pocket...In Alaska, a Cheechako is even easier to spot. He's the guy with his tongue stuck to a metal pole. A tenderfoot. A greenhorn." Land of the Radioactive Midnight Sun is the story of Lt. Sean Michael Flynn as he tries to survive his first year in Alaska. With romantic notions of Jack London and Bush piloting, Lt. Flynn requests a transfer to Eielson Air Force Base outside of Fairbanks, Alaska. He is a bit unnerved at how easy the transfer goes through. From a rugby game on a frozen river to living across from Santa's Village to random moose attacks to soaring over the Bush in an F-16, Land of the Radioactive Midnight Sun is a hilarious trial-by-many-errors account of what it takes to become a true Alaskan.

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Customer Reviews

I was stationed at Eielson at the same time as Sean but mainly knew him from his hilarious and entertaining (and eventually banned) columns in the base newspaper. I found the book by accident

years later while stationed at Elmendorf AFB in Anchorage, AK. Sean's account so perfectly encapsulates life as a Cheechako in the interior of Alaska it has to be a must read for anyone thinking of moving to, or even visiting, the heart of the last American frontier. Sean's newspaper columns were the topic of conversation every week in what was probably the most read USAF base paper in history - and his book is an ongoing laugh-fest with a style all his own, though very reminiscent of great humorists writers like Dave Barry. His experiences, while typical of a young, single guy (as I was at the time), give a true picture of what Alaska is all about. You don't have to know about Alaska or like the military to find this book a fascinating and eminently enjoyable read - but if you've ever been in the military, visited or thought about visiting Alaska - this is a book you can't pass up!

One good book, lemme tell you! The author has a great sense of humor and has a knack of mixing that with his experiences in Alaska while in the Air Force. Light reading, comical, and yet educational.

Great insight into living in the land of the Midnight Sun. Interesting in learning, the ups & downs and how to stay alive in weather that most of us will never see, or live in. Fun reading if you ever wanted to live in, or visit the north country, read this, before you buy your ticket.

As a New Yorker, I was very interested in reading about a city boy getting transplanted into the harshest wilderness. I was rewarded by a funny tale of what it means to become a man and an Alaskan. Flynn mixes humorous stories in with history lessons, culture clashes and the unending search for a good woman and a better pizza. I haven't laughed while reading this much since discovering David Sedaris. The author and his military buddies are very likable and it is easy to see how his heart can be split between such different landscapes and lifestyles. And he even gets the girl at the end! I highly recommend to anybody who wants to learn while they laugh.

Perfect reading prior to a trip to Fairbanks! Entertaining, humorous, and informative.

Sean Michael Flynn didn't save the world when he went to Alaska; he didn't feed the bears or teach the Eskimos and he didn't climb the highest mountain. But that's not what he set out to do. Flynn was stationed at Eielson Air Force Base in the Alaskan Interior, and while there he decided to make the best of an opportunity to do things most people never get a chance to do. Here he delivers an

immeasurably entertaining trip through his first year on the Last Frontier, filled with first-hand experiences written with a wit and humor that would make Dave Barry proud. (At times he made me laugh unlike any writer has been able to do since Lewis Grizzard. Yet his humor is refreshingly effortless...Flynn isn't the class clown, but he's the guy you know who can tell a story that'll leave you rolling on the floor.) Flynn never tries to be a hero, instead using a self-deprecating manner that lets you know he's 'one of us'. His "likeability" makes this a truly refreshing read. You'll really begin to enjoy the time you're spending with him (and that's not easy to accomplish with the written word.) He'd never say so himself, but the reader can tell that Flynn's an all-American guy-next-door...the kind of guy that other guys would like to hang out with and girls would like to take him home to their parents. In this book, he conveys that although the real Alaska might not be everything it's cracked up to be, in many ways, that's one of things that makes Alaska so much more. What's great about this book is everything that it's not---it's not a book about someone who goes to Alaska to communicate with the bears, or live off the land, or become a bush pilot, nor is it one of those books about someone who goes to Alaska to try to find himself. But in the end, that's exactly what he ends up doing. An absolutely fantastic read!

I really enjoyed this book. I appreciated the frank observations, the humor, and learned a few things about The Last Frontier along the way. This book is a mixture of the author's experiences with military bureaucracy and office politics, his impressions of the locals and their unique culture, diplomatic missions with the natives, Alaskan history, the role of the military in Alaska, and much more. The author just about does it all during his stay including dog mushing, fishing for salmon, and gold panning. His descriptions of these from a beginner's perspective, without much outdoor experience are hilarious and honest. As a Public Affair Officer he is tasked with some unenviable jobs including crash reporting, smoothing relations with the natives over their concerns about nuclear generators, dealing with the base commander over public affairs issues, fighting to keep his column alive after some indelicate (read hilarious) comments about a halibut charter captain's choice of fishing spots, etc. He pulls no punches in expressing his opinions. That's a good quality in a PAO and one that got him in hot water more than once I'm sure. Great read.

Having been stationed at Eielson during the same time as Flynn, I can vouch for his accuracy in the descriptions of the whole "Interior of Alaska" experience. I'm thankful that he wrote this, because now when people ask what it was like up there, I just tell them to buy the book. Overall I liked his stories and his range of topics, but sometimes they seemed to drag on a bit, especially when they

dealt with his lack of female options. He more than makes up for that, with poking fun at a sometimes stuffy US Air Force, and his quest for becoming a sourdough. A great book to pick up when you think life in the lower 48 is tough and you need a chuckle.

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