

The Wreck Of The Kulluk: A Tale of Peril at Sea and Lessons Learned

Deep in the frigid waters of Alaska's Gulf of Alaska, lies a haunting reminder of the dangers and risks involved in offshore drilling operations. The wreck of the Kulluk, a massive drilling rig, serves as a chilling testament to both the power of nature and the fragility of human engineering.



It was December 31st, 2012, when the Kulluk embarked on its ill-fated journey. Owned by Royal Dutch Shell, the 266-foot tall vessel was designed to withstand extreme Arctic conditions, equipped with state-of-

the-art technology to drill for oil in the most remote and treacherous locations. However, as the events unfolded, it became evident that even the most advanced engineering could succumb to the forces of nature.



The Wreck of the Kulluk by McKenzie Funk(Kindle Edition)



4 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 977 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 46 pages
Lending	: Enabled



The Kulluk's goal was to be towed to Seattle, hundreds of miles away, for maintenance and upgrades. However, fierce storms soon descended upon the vessel, bringing hurricane-force winds and towering waves. The conditions were relentless, as nature unleashed its fury on the rig.

The initial signs of trouble emerged when the rig broke free from its towing lines, leaving it at the mercy of the elements. Desperate attempts were made to regain control, but it proved futile. As the Kulluk drifted helplessly, it rapidly approached the rocky shores of Sitkalidak Island.

A race against time began, as teams of professionals and emergency responders from around the region worked tirelessly to rescue the stranded rig. However, their efforts were met with numerous challenges. The harsh weather conditions made it extremely dangerous to approach the vessel,

while the remote location hindered the coordination and deployment of resources.

Days turned into weeks, and as the Kulluk remained battered and tossed by the relentless waves, the world watched in awe, tinged with disbelief. The sight of the once-mighty drilling rig being mercilessly battered by nature's power captivated the public, drawing attention to the risks and environmental impact of offshore drilling.

Finally, on the thirteenth day, the Kulluk's rescue was successful. But the sight that greeted the rescuers was haunting - a battered, broken shell of what was once a pinnacle of human engineering. The Kulluk had succumbed to the forces of nature, leaving an indelible mark on the psyche of all who witnessed its demise.

As investigations into the incident unfolded, numerous factors came to light that contributed to the Kulluk's untimely demise. The rush to transport the rig between Alaskan drilling sites in a narrow weather window, the lack of proper risk assessments, and the reliance on towing vessels not designed for extreme conditions all played a pivotal role.

Lessons were learned from this tragedy. Stricter regulations regarding offshore drilling operations were put in place, ensuring that safety measures and risk assessments were prioritized. The Kulluk became a symbol, a warning sign for the entire industry.

Years have passed since the events of December 2012, and the wreck of the Kulluk remains a sad reminder of the price humanity sometimes pays in its quest for energy and resources. It serves as a constant reminder that

while technological advancements may grant us the ability to tap into the Earth's depths, we are ultimately at the mercy of the natural world.

The wreck of the Kulluk stands as a testament to the strength of Mother Nature and the importance of respecting her power. It is a reminder that despite our best efforts, we are but mere mortals in the grand scheme of the universe. The Kulluk's legacy will forever be etched in our collective memory, urging us to approach offshore drilling operations with caution, humility, and a deep sense of responsibility.



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New Year's Eve, 2012: With the world's easy oil supplies tapped out, the energy giant Royal Dutch Shell has made an urgent, \$6 billion bet on finding new reserves in one of Earth's wildest environments—the frigid Arctic Ocean off Alaska. But the hunt for extreme oil pushes the world's biggest company past its limits, and disaster strikes. An oil rig, the Kulluk, breaks loose on the high seas and begins drifting toward the rocks of remote Kodiak Island. As a winter storm builds, Coast Guard helicopters race to rescue its crew, and a local sailor fights to keep the rig off the rocks.

In the tradition of *The Perfect Storm* and *In the Heart of the Sea*, *The Wreck of the Kulluk* is not just the firsthand story of a maritime disaster. This short book (previously published under the title *Of Ice and Men*) is the definitive account of the mistakes that led up to it, the corners Shell and its contractors cut, the heroism that saved lives—and the heroism that could ultimately save neither the Kulluk nor Shell's Arctic dreams. National Magazine Award finalist McKenzie Funk, author of the 2014's *Windfall: The Booming Business of Global Warming*, takes us from the remote edges of the American Arctic to the cockpits of the rescue helicopters to the boardrooms of the international oil industry and to Washington, D.C., where the push for “energy independence” can turn on the strength of a sailor’s knot—and on the fate of a runaway drill rig thousands of miles away.

Drawn from dozens of interviews in Alaska and hundreds of pages of Coast Guard reports and oil industry documents, *The Wreck of the Kulluk* takes us to the edge of the world with today’s energy explorers, whose quest for oil has stretched a line so long and thin from the rest of us that it threatens to snap.

PRAISE FOR MCKENZIE FUNK

“An intrepid journalist [who] brings a dizzyingly abstruse phenomenon down to a more human scale.”

—The Wall Street Journal, on Funk's 2014 book *Windfall*

“An exceptional crafter of narrative, Funk travels the globe hanging out with fascinating characters.”

—Mother Jones

"Funk's talent shimmers...Here is a brilliant young stylist at work, pushing the boundaries of investigative journalism and literary non-fiction.

—Eliza Griswold, author of *The Tenth Parallel*

"Funk's take on global-warming profiteering is as entertaining as it is disturbing."

—The New Yorker, on *Windfall*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

McKenzie Funk writes for Harper's, National Geographic, Rolling Stone, Outside, The New York Times Magazine and the London Review of Books. His first book, *Windfall*, won a 2015 PEN Literary Award, was shortlisted for the Orion and Rachel Carson awards and was named a book of the year by The New Yorker, Mother Jones, Salon and Amazon.com. A National Magazine Award and Livingston Award finalist, McKenzie won the Oakes Prize for Environmental Journalism for his reporting on the melting Arctic and has received fellowships at the Open Society Foundations, MacDowell Colony, and Logan Nonfiction for his work on data and privacy. He is a cofounder of the journalism cooperative Deca, a founding board member at the arts nonprofit Amplifier, and a former story consultant at the Center for Investigative Reporting. Funk speaks five languages and is a native of the Pacific Northwest, where he lives with his wife and sons.



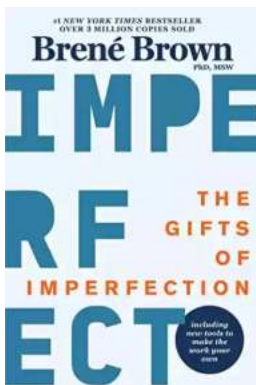
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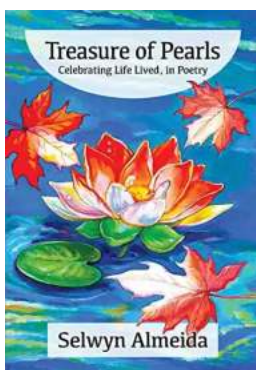
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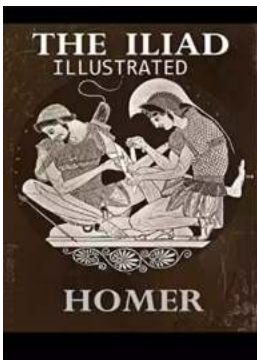
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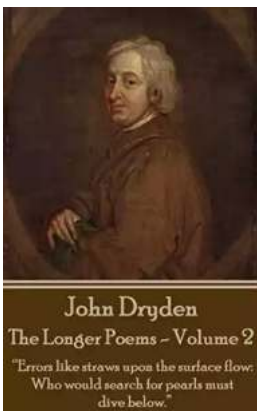
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