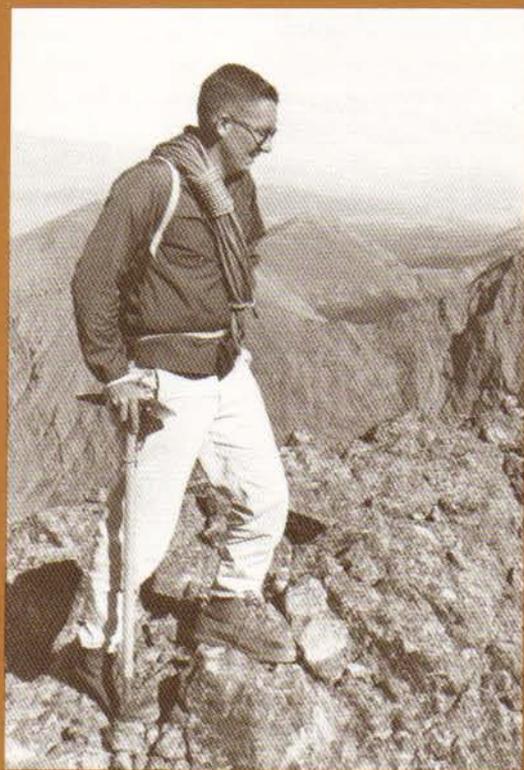


DURANGO LIGHT



by Ed Williamson

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The photograph used on the cover of the book was taken in 1959 on the top of the Crestone Needle in the Sangre de Cristo mountains of southern Colorado. The Los Alamos, New Mexico climbing party had just finished the rescue of two climbers from Washington State. They had spent the night on a ledge of the Ellingwood Arete of the Crestone Needle after having lost their rope. The photograph of the climbing leader, Dr. Charles Mader, was taken by one of the rescued climbers.



Ed Williamson is a Christian minister who has lived in Northern New Mexico and West Texas. After earning his doctorate at Southern Methodist University, he began his work in churches in 1971, and currently serves as pastor of a church in West Texas. He received his mountaineering training from two special friends in Northern New Mexico and from instructors of the Exum Guide Service in the Grand Teton National Park. He has summited many of Colorado's highest mountains, including Mount Eolus and the Crestone Needle, as well as Wyoming's Grand Teton, and has led group expeditions of young people on several mountain climbs, hikes, and retreats. His work has been published in *Trail and Timberline*, the magazine of the Colorado Mountain Club. He is married and has a wife and three adult children. He may be found on many late-summer days on the trails and mountains of Colorado.

SYNOPSIS

The story is about a Vietnam veteran who has begun a new life in the beautiful mountain setting of Durango, Colorado. Mike Rader, the protagonist, is trying to lead a quiet life as an outdoor store manager who climbs mountains as a hobby. He is romantically involved with Tracy Diamond, a former New York photographer who has moved to Durango to shoot landscape photography pictures for an exhibition she plans to call *Durango Light*, a title describing the way the atmospheric golden light plays on her mountain scenes.

Mike Rader saves a young woman named Jill Carpenter in a mountain climbing accident, and discovers that she is the daughter of his guitar teacher, Ruby Carpenter. Ruby tells Mike that her daughter has been mixed up with the drug culture and pleads with him to help her get off drugs. At first Mike is reluctant, but then he sees Jill intimidated by Dil Cullen, an influential businessman with drug smuggling connections. Dil, like Mike, also climbs mountains as a hobby, though he is much more advanced. Cullen wants to control and seduce Jill, and Mike becomes very protective of her. Mike offers Jill a job in his outdoor sporting goods store and she accepts the invitation. Dil, is enraged by this, but uses cool manipulative skills to try to regain control of the girl.

A growing conflict develops between Mike and Dil over Jill, with Dil attempting to bring her back under his control and Mike working to keep her free of Dil and drugs so that she can make her own decisions. To help rehabilitate Jill, Mike and his climbing partner Buck Corwin take Jill mountain climbing with them, and the story reveals much of the adventure of true mountain climbing mixed with the personal struggles and growth of the characters.

Dil, employing his “enforcer”, Jimmy Rowe, attempts to have Mike killed in a duel with Mike between two fast “muscle” cars on a mountain road, but Jimmy miscalculates and is accidentally killed in the process. Frustrated, Dil then resolves to even the score with Mike. He plans to have his revenge and possibly win Jill back in a climactic hand-to-hand battle on the summit of a high mountain. The mountain has a surprise awaiting both the hero and the villain.

DURANGO LIGHT

Afternoon light
Always, afternoon light
Warm-cold, yellow light
Old, vintage light
Falling across old weathered boards
Of a hundred snow-cold winters

Light
Crossing sparkling rapids
Of the Rio Animas

Haunted light
Filtering yellow through aspen leaves
Reflecting
From the glass of broken window shards
Of the mine cabins of long ago
Filtering quietly
Into dusty rooms.
Light of lives long past
Lives of the survivors
Lives of the dead
Light that leaves its mark
On the mountain side
The cold mountain
Long after the sun
Has set.

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DURANGO LIGHT CD-ROM

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