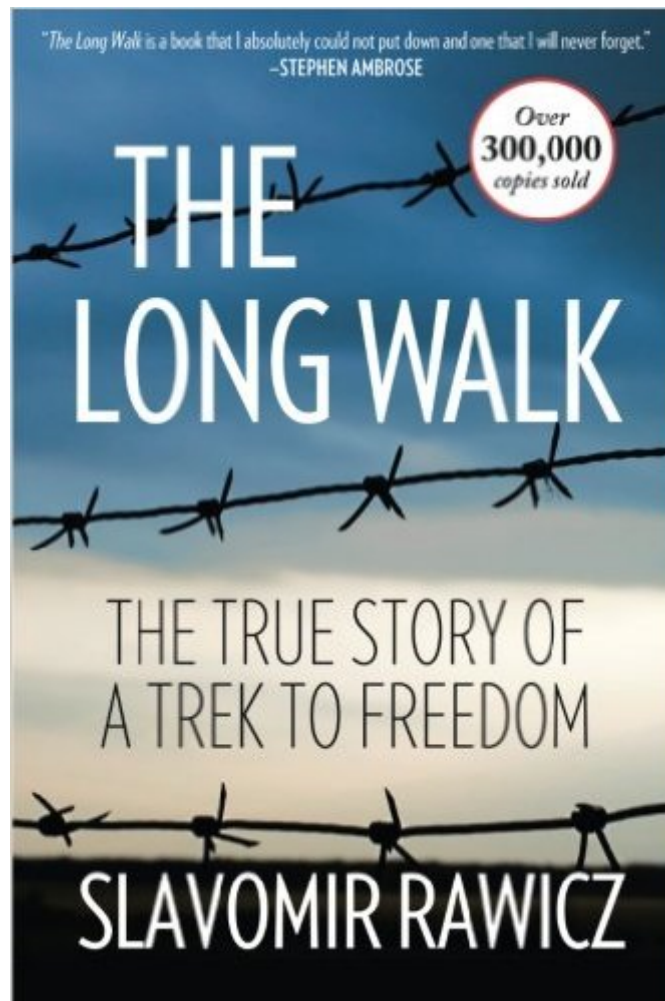


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# The Long Walk: The True Story Of A Trek To Freedom



## Synopsis

"I hope *The Long Walk* will remain as a memorial to all those who live and die for freedom, and for all those who for many reasons could not speak for themselves."--Slavomir Rawicz  
In 1941, the author and six other fellow prisoners escaped a Soviet labor camp in Yakutsk--a camp where enduring hunger, cold, untended wounds, untreated illnesses, and avoiding daily executions were everyday feats. Their march--over thousands of miles by foot--out of Siberia, through China, the Gobi Desert, Tibet, and over the Himalayas to British India is a remarkable statement about man's desire to be free. While the original book sold hundreds of thousands of copies, this updated paperback version includes a new Afterword by the author, as well as the author's Foreword to the Polish book. Written in a hauntingly detailed, no holds barred way, the new edition of *The Long Walk* is destined to outrank its classic status and guaranteed to forever stay in the reader's mind. \*\*\*  
Six-time Academy Award nominee Peter Weir (*Master and Commander*, *The Truman Show*, and *The Dead Poets Society*) recently directed *The Way Back*, a much-anticipated film based on *The Long Walk*. Starring Colin Farrell, Jim Sturgess, and Ed Harris, it is due for release in 2011.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The story in a nutshell: A Polish Army officer is captured by the Soviets after they have joined Hitler in dismembering his country. Rawicz (the officer) is tortured in the Soviet prison system and sent to the Gulags. Faced with misery in Siberia and probable death, he and a band of others escape and undertake a two thousand-mile long journey from the snows of Siberia through Mongolia, the Gobi Desert, and across the Himalayas toward British India and freedom. This is a great story. The author

describes the mindless torture under the Soviet system in a manner that should persuade any reader of the evil of totalitarianism. The description of his train journey, hundred-mile winter hike through a Siberian winter to his gulag and life in the camp is fascinating. His will to survive amidst degradation, the elements and overwhelming odds are a testament to the human thirst for freedom and liberty. As other reviewers have stated, there are some parts of the book that invite skepticism. His befriending by the camp commandant's wife seems as improbable as it is crucial to his ability to escape. The escapees journey across the Gobi Desert where his group went for many days without water beyond what I understood a person could tolerate. Without any climbing tools, his party went across the Himalayas to India -- a feat that seems fantastic. Also his brief description of spotting what could only be described as the elusive Yeti in the Himalayas stretches credibility (unless it does actually exist). That being said, this story is exhilarating and I found it believable and enthralling. It is a wonderful adventure story and describes the limits of what the human spirit and mind can endure to survive in freedom.

I am an avid reader of non-fiction adventure stories. Based on the positive reviews of *The Long Walk*, I was anxious to get my hands on a copy and dig in. Now that I have read it, I must say that it was a real disappointment. This book is not for any objective reader expecting an authentic non-fiction adventure story. If you're just interested in distracting yourself with a bizarre adventure fantasy, and are willing to forget reason and ignore the outright lies, then you might like it. But it is definitely not a true account of the author's experiences as trumpeted in the subtitle and text. Rawicz (through his tabloid journalist ghost writer, Ronald Downing) makes countless outlandish claims that are not supported by any witnesses, documentation, or even detailed descriptions on his part. Moreover, his assertions often defy the laws of science and common sense. Here are but a few examples:- reaching his destination after wandering a year through 4,000 miles of wilderness with no maps, supplies?- trekking 12 days across a torrid stretch of the Gobi desert in mid summer with no water or food?- crossing the Himalayas, summiting mtn after mtn in only worn moccasins and a few ragged articles of clothing?- encountering a yeti and taunting it like those guys in the beef jerky commercial (no joke-it's in the book!)- Rawicz's inability to provide the most basic details about his ordeal such as the first name of one of his closest companions on the trek (the American, "Mr. Smith") or where he was finally picked up by the British Army or the hospital he claimed to recover in?the list goes on and on...The BBC did an investigation into Rawicz's story and also concluded it was a fraud.

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