

THE CHALLENGING MISSION IN ANTARCTICA

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As it is well-known, the weather conditions in Antarctica are very extreme. The whole continent is covered with ice, so few plants can be found. The temperature is so low that it is almost impossible to live there. Still, many people try to solve its mystery and explore it. One of these curious people is Felicity Aston, a meteorologist who has been working in Antarctica for over 10 years. She is the first woman who crossed Antarctica alone.



When she was a child, she admired Ernest Shackleton, the first person who travelled to the South Pole. She mastered in “Science of Meteorology” in Reading University, England because of her admiration for him. She became a member of the British Antarctic Survey in 2000. She worked with a group of scientists for 3 years with this organization.

In 2009, she prepared a group trip, which contained 8 women from different countries without dogs, equipment or vehicles. They only had long, thin skis on their feet. The group managed to reach the South Pole after 38 days, passing 900 kilometers in spite of all the difficulties.

In 2011, she planned something greater. She decided to discover Antarctica alone. It was a quite challenging mission. She had to take some precautions. After she trained herself both physically and mentally, she was ready to start. She said that the mental training was as important as physical training. “In Antarctica, there would be no one to depend on but me. If something went wrong, I needed to know that I could take care of myself.”¹



Her difficult mission started on 25 November 2011. Heavy weather conditions were only the beginning of the problems. She wanted to use a tent as a protection but she was not able to because of the strong wind. There were also very large crevasses in the ice that she had to cross over. She hesitated for the fear that the ice could change position while climbing. She was about to lose her faith but she did not let the fear control her. Finally, she managed to reach the end point, Hercules Inlet. She recorded a film when she realized that she had arrived. “I am finished. I am on my way home. The only thing I can think right now is that I want to call my mother on the telephone. I want to tell her I am here. I want to tell her I am fine... I do not want to go anywhere now. The airplane will come to me. It is so strange. I

¹ Retrieved from http://spotlightenglish.com/listen/alone_in_antarctica

cannot believe it. I cannot believe that I skied across Antarctica.”² The trip took 59 days and 1744 kilometers.



Felicity Aston showed her courage, physical and mental strength with this unbelievable achievement. She made it harder to do something better for other explorers by crossing Antarctica alone.

² Retrieved from http://spotlightenglish.com/listen/alone_in_antarctica