

The Escapist: How One Man Cheated Death on the World's Highest Mountains | 9781443450188 | 2016 | Gabriel Filippi, Brett Popplewell | 384 pages | HarperCollins Publishers, 2016

Depending on how you look at it, Frane Selak, a now 85 year old retired music teacher from Croatia, is either the luckiest, or unluckiest man in the world, having lived a life that resembles the plot to Final Destination; except after cheating death seven times, rather than be killed by a falling sign, he won £600,000 in the lotto in 2005. His first brush with death was while traveling from Sarajevo to Dubrovnik in 1962 on a train. During the trip, the train jumped the tracks and ended up in the river, which at the time was icy cold. Despite the situation, Selak suffered only a broken arm, an The Escapist: Cheating Death on the World's Highest Mountains. Author. Gabriel Filippi, with Brett Popplewell. It's a recurring sentiment in The Escapist, Filippi's first book, a memoir co-written by award-winning journalist Brett Popplewell, who was, until recently, a senior writer at Sportsnet magazine. As a character, Filippi has many facets here: doting but distant father, loving but distracted partner, striving but troubled son. Above all, he is singularly obsessed, like so many people before and after him, with the mountains. Like so many other inexplicable pursuits, climbing finds Filippi at precisely the right time, when he's lost just enough that he needs something to grab hold of to help him – The recent sudden death of Sir Charles Baskerville has struck everyone in the county. Though Sir Charles had lived at Baskerville Hall for a short period, his good character and generosity had won the love and respect of all who knew him. In these days of nouveaux riches, he was a rare man of an old county family who was able to make his own fortune and to bring it back with him to restore the fallen greatness of his family. Sir Charles, as is well known, made large sums of money in South Africa, and returned to England with them. It is only two years since he came to Baskerville Hall, and we