



# Extreme Fear: The Science of Your Mind in Danger (MacSci)

*Jeff Wise*

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## **Extreme Fear: The Science of Your Mind in Danger (MacSci)** Jeff Wise

Fear is a mysterious force. It sabotages our ability to think clearly and can drive us to blind panic, yet it can also give us superhuman speed, strength, and powers of perception. Having baffled mankind for ages, fear is now yielding its secrets to scientific inquiry. The simple model of "fight or flight"--that people respond to danger either by fleeing in terror or staying to fight through it--has been replaced by a more complex understanding of the fear response.

Veteran science journalist Jeff Wise delves into the latest research to produce an astonishing portrait of the brain's hidden fear pathways. Wise, who writes the "I'll Try Anything" column for *Popular Mechanics*, favors a hands-on approach, volunteering to jump out of an airplane while wearing sensors and to endure a four-hour simulated missile attack on a Navy destroyer. He returns with a tale that combines lucid explanations of brain dynamics with gripping, true-life stories of mortal danger: we watch a woman defend herself against a mountain lion attack in a remote canyon; we witness a couple desperately fighting to beat back an encircling wildfire; we see a pilot struggle to maintain control of his plane as its wing begins to detach. By understanding how and why these people responded the way they did, Wise argues, we can better arm ourselves against our own everyday fears.

Full of amazing characters and cutting-edge science, *Extreme Fear* is an original and absorbing narrative that will force you to reconsider the limits of human potential.

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