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14 Peaks: Nothing Is Impossible

14 Peaks: Nothing Is Impossible is a 2021 documentary film directed by Torquil Jones, and produced by Noah Media Group, Little Monster Films and Torquil Jones with Nirmal Purja, Jimmy Chin and Elizabeth Vasarhelyi as executive producers. The film portrays Nepal's deep connection to high-altitude mountaineering through the perspective of Nirmal Purja 'Nims' as a part of a mission he calls "Bremont Project Possible". The previous record was seven years. However, the fearless 38-year-old Nepali mountaineer embarks on a seemingly impossible quest to summit all 14 of the world's 8,000-meter mountains within seven months but along the way, he also encounters the challenging situations of negotiating sponsorship deals, personal relationships, and even interacting with Chinese bureaucracy.

Nirmal Purja, an elite Gurkha soldier and member of the United Kingdom's Special Forces, first stepped foot on the mountains in 2012. After climbing three peaks in a row in 2012, 2014, and 2017, he wanted to uplift the name of native Nepali climbers because they do not get the credibility for their support to other climbers throughout the expedition, and the incentives they receive are far lower than in the western expedition, despite doing the same job (Svokos). That is why Nims decided to do "Project Possible." Nims had to save money and seek possible sponsors the entire time they were preparing for this incredible adventure. Climbing the dangerous mountains was the least of the Gurkha warrior's concerns. He was having difficulty finding sponsorships since the money he needed was huge, and no one thought he could ascend

the mountains in a matter of months. So, he decided to remortgage his property to support his dream. Nims also chose to leave for the expedition before the entire project was funded, rather than waiting a year, for the two main reasons. The first was that he was at the peak of his fitness, having just recently left the Special Boat Service. The second was that if he waited another year, the expenses would almost certainly rise since he would need to obtain visas, permits, and flights. He also ensured that his support team received more money than that of the western missions (Purja).

The documentary starts with Nims encouraging us to dream big as he wanders across a sea of snow (Goldstein). He has divided his project into three stages. Phase 01 began in Nepal, which was a significant beginning for the project; nevertheless, the countdown officially started in April 2019 with the ascent of Annapurna, which is thought to be the statistically riskiest of the 8,000-meter peaks. On April 23, 2019, Nims and his support team summited Annapurna. The effort continued with successful ascents of Dhaulagiri on May 12th and Kanchenjunga on May 15th, both in three days. Following that, the group continued to its next target: Mount Everest. Purja summited Everest on May 22nd, Lhotse also on May 22nd, and Makalu on May 24th, breaking his own world record of summing all three summits in 48 hours. He photographed a massive queue of mountaineers that had formed at the Hillary Step on Everest, which drew worldwide attention. This marked the completion of Phase 01 of the project, with six 8000m summits conquered in a record-breaking four weeks. The doubters were starting to believe, and it was a good time to get away from the alps and resume the fund-raising campaign (Purja).

Nims began Phase 02 of the project in Pakistan on July 3rd, 2019, by ascending Nanga Parbat. After summing Nanga Parbat, the team successfully summited Gasherbrum1 on July 15th and Gasherbrum2 on July 18th and the group arrived at K2 base camp (Purja). Even though other teams had abandoned the season's attempt on the mountain due to poor weather, Nims and

his team decided to beat the odds and try the summit of K2. Nims, who led his fixing team, opened the path to the top and stood on the summit with his team on July 24th. Lakpa Dendi Sherpa, Gesman Tamang, Changba Sherpa, and Lakpa Temba Sherpa were also on the fixing team (Holmes). Nims and his group had just returned to K2 base camp on the evening of July 25th, and they were on their way to Broad Peak within 10 hours after their last descend. They summited Broad Peak in tough weather on the morning of July 26th with one push, completing the second phase in just 23 days (Purja).

Nims' mother's condition worsened between the gap of Phase 02 and 03 of the project. She suffered a heart attack on August 27, 2019. The doctors had warned him that her chances of life were low, and that they couldn't operate on her since she was in such poor health. Nims was very close to his mother, and if she had died, the project would have been over. But after a week, his mother survived, which was nothing other than a miracle (Goldstein). Even six months before Project Possible, in October 2018, Nims told his elder brother, Kamal Purja, that he planned to quit the army to pursue his passion. His brother was dissatisfied with his choice to leave the army and go on this deadly adventure. He did not speak to him for three months. He also had a sick mother back home, and Nims was the only one in his family who earned more money. He wasn't sure if he'd be able to meet his mother when he finished climbing because of her serious health condition (Purja).

The third and last part was in Nepal and China with just three of the fourteen 8000m peaks remaining. The firsts to be climbed were Cho Oyu on September 23rd, 2019, and Manaslu on September 27th, 2019, but a new challenge hovered which was an anxious wait for the permit from the China Tibet Mountaineering Association to climb the 14th and final peak, Shishapangma. The summit was closed to all climbers for the rest of the year. Nims went to great lengths, from political influence to social media support, to reach the summit and achieve his

mission. After weeks of negotiation, his team was relieved to know that the Chinese government had granted authorization for the necessary documentation to be provided. The last climb began with a 15-hour non-stop climb in heavy snow, narrowly avoiding avalanches. Then, on October 29th, 2019, Nims, accompanied by his team, joyfully declared to the world that his mission has been achieved. He kept his word and accomplished what many said was impossible (Purja).

Overall, with the team of skilled Sherpas, Nims traversed all the major peaks despite the terrible weather, life-or-death decisions, and the emotional weight of his mother's health back home. We don't get to spend much time in the documentary studying the details of each mountain because there are 14 mountains and the backstory in little over 90 minutes, but we do get to see some of the distinct variations, such as six feet of snow here, dangerous rocks there, or extraordinarily steep summits. I highly recommend you to watch *14 Peaks: Nothing is Impossible* documentary as it is a thrilling, action-packed story about bravery, determination, and pushing the boundaries of human endurance, and I am sure that you will thoroughly enjoy it.

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