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This gripping and triumphant memoir follows a living legend of extreme mountaineering as he makes his assault on history, one 8,000-meter summit at a time. For eighteen years Ed Viesturs pursued climbing's holy grail: to stand atop the world's fourteen 8,000-meter peaks, without the aid of bottled oxygen. But *No Shortcuts to the Top* is as much about the man who would become the first American to achieve that goal as it is about his stunning quest. As Viesturs recounts the stories of his most harrowing climbs, he reveals a man torn between the flat, safe world he and his loved ones share and the majestic and deadly places where only he can go. A preternaturally cautious climber who once turned back 300 feet from the top of Everest but who would not shrink from a peak (Annapurna) known to claim the life of one climber for every two who reached its summit, Viesturs lives by an unyielding motto, *Reaching the summit is optional. Getting down is mandatory.* It is with this philosophy that he vividly describes fatal errors in judgment made by his fellow climbers as well as a few of his own close calls and gallant rescues. And, for the first time, he details his own pivotal and heroic role in the 1996 Everest disaster made famous in Jon Krakauer's *Into Thin Air*. In addition to the raw excitement of Viesturs's odyssey, *No Shortcuts to the Top* is leavened with many funny moments revealing the camaraderie between climbers. It is more than the first full account of one of the staggering accomplishments of our time; it is a portrait of a brave and devoted family man and his beliefs that shaped this most perilous and magnificent pursuit.

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