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Author: Bo Parfet with Richard Buskin

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*Die Trying: One Man's Quest to Conquer the Seven Summits* is an inspiring memoir by a man, who at the age of 26, began a four-year journey to summit all of the highest climbs on the seven continents. When starting his journey, Parfet was an overweight, under-trained 26 year-old working 100 hours a week as an investment banker at J.P. Morgan. His first summit, of Mt. Kilimanjaro in Africa, made him realize that he was capable of doing anything that he set his mind to, and whetted his appetite to go for more.

He had always dreamed of going to Mt. Everest, ever since reading about Sir Edmund Hilliary and Tenzing Norgay being the first documented people to summit the world's tallest mountain. Then, hearing about the challenge to summit the tallest on every continent, Parfet began taking the necessary steps to prepare. He started eating better, working to lose the excess weight he had put on as a junior banker at J.P. Morgan. He began to actively train during the off times when he wasn't climbing.

Each mountain brought its own set of challenges. Lessons learned on one mountain didn't necessarily translate to a different mountain. He learned the importance of friendship, trust, and simplistic intelligence, as well as the necessity of staying cool in the face of danger. And as if it isn't already inspiring enough that he conquered all Seven Summits, Parfet shares about his scholarship funds that were set up to educate people in each country he visited.

The mountains that Parfet climbed, in order of ascent, are as follows: Mount Kilimanjaro (Africa), Cerro Aconcagua (South America), Denali/Mount McKinley (North America), Vinson Massif (Antarctica), Mount Elbrus (Europe), Castensz Pyramid and Mount Kosciuszko (Australia -- two different lists of the Seven Summits exist), and finally Mount Everest (Asia).

Parfet's recollections of each of his climbs are filled with vivid detail that help you feel like you are right there with him. An energy to his storytelling keep the pages turning, because you want to know what happens next.

The accomplishments Parfet shares in *Die Trying* are humbling, especially when you realize how young he was at the time. You will laugh, cry, and bit your nails as he fights with a tent mate, loses a team member, and slides down the ice.

This book definitely ranks up there with the likes of Jon Krakauer, author of *Into Thin Air*. If Bo Parfet has more stories to share, he should tell them! *Die Trying* has definitely become my favorite book of 2009.