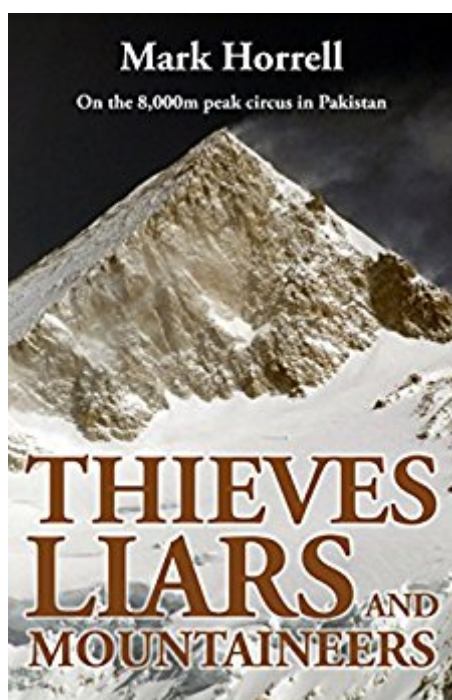


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# Thieves, Liars And Mountaineers: On The 8,000m Peak Circus In Pakistan (Footsteps On The Mountain Travel Diaries)



## Synopsis

This is the tale of Mark Horrell's not-so-nearly ascent of Gasherbrum in Pakistan, of how one man's boredom and frustration was conquered by a gutsy combination of exhaustion, cowardice, and sheer mountaineering incompetence. He made not one, not two, but three intrepid assaults, some of which got quite a distance beyond Base Camp, and overcame many perilous circumstances along the way. The mountaineer Joe Simpson famously crawled for three days with a broken leg, but did he ever have to read *Angels and Demons* by Dan Brown while waiting for a weather window? But that's enough about Mark's attempt; there were some talented climbers on the mountain as well, and this story is also about them. How did they get on? Heroes, villains, oddballs and madmen on 8,000m peaks attract them all, and drama, intrigue and cock-ups aplenty were inevitable.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I absolutely LOVE this author's climbing diaries. I just finished *Thieves, Liars and Mountaineers* and

it is just as great as the others I've read. This man is very open about his thoughts and fears, and tells the truth about high altitude climbing - its not for the timid or hesitant. Also, some of the events that happen on a climb are absolutely hysterical! I know I will never be a climber and probably not even a trekker, but I love reading about it. I want to read everything this author has written.

If you're looking for another "Into Thin Air" this is most definitely not it. That said it's a worthwhile read. Howell is presenting the real world, daily grind, the hurry up and wait of commercial, high mountain climbing. As other reviewers have said, it's in part travelogue but parts of that are interesting - what the climbers experience getting to the real climb and after the climb. And they did climb sensibly, waiting in camp, even descending to a lower camp when conditions were not safe to climb. A lot of climbers don't do that and die for it. I've never done any mountain climbing, have no desire to do so and certainly don't intend to start at my age but I find mountain climbing to be interesting reading. This book can further that knowledge. I felt the author probably presented the local people and conditions realistically. He was respectful of the sherpas. At times he did come off to me as a bit snobbish - no one else's reading material was worthy of him, their language beneath him, that sort of thing but that's my perception and it really didn't detract from the story. I plan to read at least one more of his books. They are fairly short as books go, about the right length I'd say for what he's doing.

This is the second volume I have bought from this author, short books (priced accordingly) for Kindle, that are lightly edited versions of his climbing diaries. This means these descriptions lack some of the power and drama of many mountaineering books that were written because a tragedy or other event hit the news. But there is an immediacy to the descriptions, and we hear more of the nitty gritty details of climbing as part of an expedition that we wouldn't get somewhere else. He includes a lot of pictures that are often quite visually stunning, and at other times they illustrate a moment he has just described.. The chapters are short as they cover each phase of the climb, and he doesn't spend a lot of time telling his life story or other person's past histories. It is what happened, what people said, what he saw, etc. We don't even get treated to an in depth description of how he earns the money to pay for the expeditions. As with the other climbing diary I read of his, I was impressed at how much importance this expedition places on the safety of the team members. Clients and Sherpas seemed to practically be on a one-on-one basis. This should almost be a requirement I would think, for those companies that accept persons with lesser skills on the taller mountains. I thought the title of the book was a little sensationalized. I mean, there is discussion of

theft and lies in the book, but it doesn't seem important enough to be included in the title. The style of writing being so immediate - from his daily journals - it lacks the suspense and lush details of some other books I have read about expeditions, but it is still interesting to be a fly on the wall on this expedition. I have pre-ordered Horrell's first full-length book, so it will be interesting to see how much the writing style changes from journal entries to a more polished book. In the meantime, these climbing journals continue to be worth reading at this entry level price.

I am an armchair climber and recently got hooked on the K2 books, the Peter Boardman, Ed Vistiours, et al, so found this and thought I'd see what perspective this author brought. Way surprised. Late in the book he relates that "he is not a climber for the sake of climbing, but for the sake of getting to see new country". Paraphrased, but I think that is what he was driving at. In other words, not a premier climber (and not pretending to be one) but not just a guy out on a stroll either. This was my first purchase from him, and am in the process of buying and reading the rest of his stories. More lighthearted reading than some of the more hard core books on the first ascents and struggles, his telling of the lost climber is heart felt and sobering. I like it a lot.

Mark Horrell's journal style is, well, unique. He doesn't claim to be the world's greatest climber. Instead, this is a view into climbing from the perspective of the rest of us, someone who trains when one can, someone who holds down an actual job. It's a wonderful, personal, perspective into a sport that is usually inaccessible.

I generally enjoy Mr Horrell's books. They are a quick read. May take the reader a few chapters to get used to his somewhat sarcastic and flip writing style. When he writes about scenery, one can nearly feel the icy wind and see the breathtaking summits.

I thoroughly enjoyed this book. I would love to trek in the Karakorum but will most likely never have the opportunity. Mark Horrell's diary of making this trek and climb gave me a sense of being there beside him during his expedition. I look forward to reading more of his books.

I'm a walker and a Sunday hiker, but I'll never get to K2. However, the next best thing is experiencing these mountaineering diaries. Really well done. I've got to pay attention on the train or I'll miss my stop when I'm reading this. I especially appreciate his daily reporting of life on a mountain trek, without all the tiresome lyrical philosophizing. I mean, I don't need someone - and

you don't either - telling us all about the "ethereal and sublime" experience of being on a mountain. Just tell us what you see and hear, and we'll supply the rest. This guy gets it, and I, for one, am grateful.

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