



Documentary

Broad Peak: Icy Grave



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The last photograph of Markus Kronthaler alive shows him raising his arms towards the sky in triumph. He was at an altitude of 8,047 meters - almost at the summit. Just seconds later he lay dead on the ground, a victim of dehydration. His partner had no choice; he was forced to leave Kronthaler's corpse behind. There, just below the summit of Broad Peak in Pakistan, remained the body of the young Austrian climber - for an entire year.



This extraordinary documentary follows Markus' brother Georg, who, fulfilling a promise to his mother, climbs the 8,000 meter peak to retrieve his brother's body - a dangerous undertaking. He is accompanied on the hazardous climb by two friends, the alpine guides Paul Koller and Stefan Lackner, as well as six experienced Pakistani alpinists and the Viennese cameraman Hubert Rieger. It's a race against time. In the so-called "death zone", which begins at 7,500 meters, the human body is only capable of functioning at 40 to 50 percent of its normal capacity, even with supplemental oxygen.

At that altitude the air is so thin that every single step requires 4 torturous breaths, and no one can survive beyond 48 hours. Georg Kronthaler and his friends are able to stay in radio contact with the reporter Bernd Wetz, who remained in base camp. Then, after finally reaching Markus' body and beginning the recovery, the extreme weather conditions twice force the expedition to leave the body behind. Thick fog makes it almost impossible to locate where they had left Markus. With the situation already past the critical point, hope is nearly lost. Eventually, his brother's determination and bravery leads to success. On July 20th of 2007, exactly one year after the tragedy, Markus' corpse was finally retrieved and brought back to base camp. It was a mission that was considered impossible, yet it broke new ground and is now a milestone in the retrieval of climbers who met their tragic fate on the world's highest mountains.



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Documentary, 1 x 25' or 1 x 50'

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