

QUARTZ



Steep views have steep costs. (AP/Channi Anand)

SEARCH AND RESCUE

A crowdfunding campaign has raised more than \$100,000 to rescue two climbers in Pakistan

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September 01, 2016

This post has been updated with a comment from the director of the American Alpine Club and additional details about the search process.

Mountaineering is an expensive sport, especially when things go wrong. It's also a sport with a thriving, far-reaching community—of friends who've forged intense bonds while climbing and strangers who believe they understand each other.

That might explain why a GoFundMe campaign seeking \$100,000 to rescue two American climbers from a mountain in Pakistan exceeded its goal within 15 hours.

"We need your help getting Scott and Kyle off of a mountain in Pakistan..." the plea begins.

The two climbers, Kyle Dempster and Scott Adamson, have gone missing on Ogre II, a 7,000-meter peak in Pakistan's section of the Karakoram range.

According to the fundraising page, they set out on the north face of the mountain on August 21, intending to reach the top and come back down within five days. They were last seen on Monday, August 22, by the Pakistani man hired to cook for them on the expedition. He reportedly spotted them halfway up the mountain on Monday evening. On Tuesday, a storm arrived and diminished visibility in the area, and there has been no sign of Dempster or Adamson since then.

On August 28, a week after Dempster and Adamson began their expedition, their families and friends began coordinating a search and rescue effort with the help of local authorities and another climbing team in the area.

"Please help these boys," says the fundraising page, explaining that "we have also been required to transfer money for the helicopter rescue and porters on foot in search of Scott and Kyle. With the unreliable weather we are needing more money everyday."

Quartz has reached out to the organizers of the fundraising campaign and the American Alpine Club (AAC) for more information about the search efforts. Dempster is an AAC member and Adamson likely is too, which means both likely have a form of medical evacuation insurance from a company called Global Rescue, but that's not of much use unless they can

be located. Update: In an email, AAC executive director Phil Powers clarified that Adamson is not currently a dues-paying member, but that **he and Dempster are both benefiting from the club's evacuation and rescue program through Global Rescue.**

On the search front, chartering helicopters to fly around the mountain searching for the climbers is theoretically an option, but not in stormy weather—and such an exercise costs thousands of dollars per hour. As of August 31, efforts to locate Dempster and Adamson on Ogre II were limited to sending search parties on foot.

Dempster and Adamson "are two of their generation's strongest and most accomplished alpinists," said Jonathan Thesenga, who is the marketing director for Black Diamond Equipment, an outdoor gear company based in Salt Lake City, Utah, where the men live. Dempster, who co-owns a coffee shop in Salt Lake City, is sponsored by Black Diamond and a handful of other equipment retailers, including Outdoor Research and La Sportiva. His mountaineering accomplishments are well-documented online—including an historic ascent of Ogre II's sister peak, Ogre I, in 2012. For that feat, Dempster and another climber earned the prestigious Piolets d'Or award in 2013.

But something went wrong when Dempster and Adamson attempted to climb Ogre II together in 2015.

According to Dempster's retelling of the expedition in the American Alpine Journal, they were climbing below the summit when Adamson fell and broke his leg, at which point they had to rappel down the mountain face. During the rappel, one of the anchors that Dempster had secured to hold their ropes broke, dropping both men 90 meters down to the ground. "For weeks and months after our accident I beat myself up over my mistake and the complacency that nearly killed both of us," Dempster wrote.

There is no way to know what happened on the mountain this week.