

CHRISTINA FLAMPOURI & MARIA ROUSAKIS

# The Seven Summits: Reaching for the Sky

illustration by  
**CHIARA FEDELE**

translation by  
**JASON RIGAS**

 **PATAKIS  
PUBLISHERS**



Christina's eyes were always glued to the ground. If it was Eastertime, she was staring down at her shiny new shoes from her godmother. If it was summertime, she was watching ants hauling food to their anthill. Every day Christina counted the cracks in the sidewalk. She liked to hear the tapping sound her feet made as she walked.

On the rare occasion that she did look up, everything seemed big. Too big. Out of reach, like the cloud-covered mountaintops.

Her soul trembled when she followed her mother up the spiral staircase to the rooftop where they hung their linens out to dry. "Watch out!" Mama warned Christina. "Stay away from the railing!"

Scared as she was, though, Christina always dreamed of walking right up to that railing and taking off! She wanted wings that fluttered in the wind like the crisp white sheets on the clothesline. She wanted to fly past the world's highest peaks and touch the sky, to look up without fear.

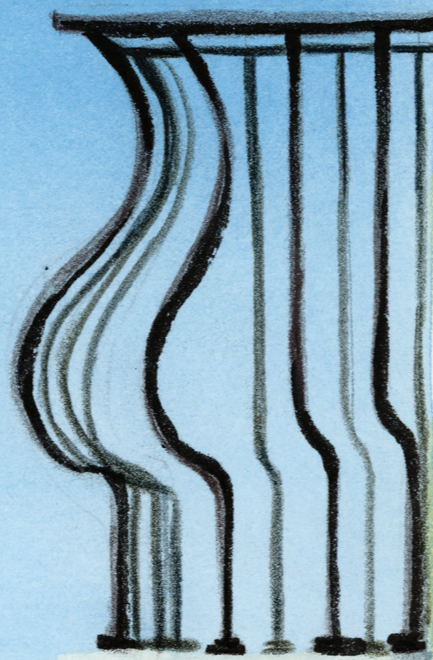


Dimitri stood on his tiptoes and stretched his arms into the air. "This world can be yours," he told her, wide-eyed. "That sky up there is for you. It's a place for your dreams. Climb high and you'll be flying without wings. And you'll never be afraid again."

Christina's eyes were fixed on her feet as she went back down the spiral staircase. She paid attention to the sound of each step and thought about Dimitri. Each tap of her toes brought her closer to his words. To her goal. To the first small victory that would lead to the Big One.

She got to work. She was going to reach the highest heights she could. She was ready to scale her first summit.

On one of those rooftop days, Christina spotted her cousin Dimitri perched atop a chimney. He was staring at the sky.  
"Hey! What are you doing up there?"  
Christina asked him.  
"Aren't you afraid?"



## The Creators

The Christina from this story is none other than **Christina Flampouri**, the first Greek woman to climb Mount Everest. Christina was also the first Greek woman to scale the Seven Summits, meaning that she climbed the tallest mountain on each of the world's seven continents.

She is a mountaineer and a motivational speaker.

When she isn't climbing mountains, Christina faces an equally rigorous challenge: motherhood! She has two children and believes that "we never really know if we've accomplished the goal of becoming the best possible parents, which is why parenting is a more difficult feat than the seven summits combined."

Christina's love of nature and commitment to family influenced her decision to establish Outdoor Moms, a community that inspires new mothers to keep pursuing their dreams while exploring nature and its many hidden treasures with their children.



Christina's passion for sharing her story with children and adults alike led her to **Maria Rousakis**, a Greek-American author who has written over sixty books so far and has received numerous awards in Greece and the U.S. Her works have been published in the United States, Taiwan, South Korea, and Turkey.

A mother of three grown children, Maria loves reading, cooking, baking, and ceramics. She plans to keep writing books for children and adults for years to come, as long as she has stories to tell.



Meanwhile, **Chiara Fedele** has spent years collecting stories of her own, including several about mountaineering, through her work as an illustrator.

Chiara uses a mixture of traditional and digital media. She lives with her family and their pets in a small village thirty miles outside of Milan, which makes it easy for her to go on hikes through the Italian Alps whenever she has time.

She has been a freelance illustrator since 2004, and her illustrations have appeared in publications across the globe.