Freeze

I trudged onwards towards the top of the snowy mountain, my friends had all given up the climb long ago through concern for their wellbeing.

Lucky me, I didn’t have any reason to be concerned about something so monotonously trivial. For I had little reason to care whether or not I made it to the top and triumphed or fell short and was left to the snowy glaciers to die.

It was the ultimate test and it was one that I had been looking forward to for a long time, ever since my husband had passed away.

In fact, at that moment I didn’t truly feel like I had anything to live for as I was doing all that had kept me going for the past eight months and to be perfectly honest. It didn’t make me feel as good as I thought it would.

I was freezing my ass off, and what was even worse was that I really needed to pee, but I couldn’t go, not unless I wanted my dick to literally turn into a popsicle or even worse, for it to fall off due to frostbite.

I was not wearing enough layers, I had underestimated how cold the climb would be and I was only wearing four layers when the weather called for six.

Despite this, I kept going and my friends who brought the right amount of clothes were camping down at the bottom of the hill I was climbing.

But I kept going, not because I was stronger willed than they were but because I was indifferent to the outcome of the climb.

What did it matter if I lived or died? All life feels like the middle of the three-act structure now; all conflict, with no conclusion in sight or at all.

But I couldn’t just lay down and wait for the cold to get me.

No.

I had to fight, if I was going to die, I was going to die on my feet not laying down and looking at the dumbass sky, I needed this to end but I was too much of a coward to end my own life.

I opened my mouth to laugh at the absurdity of it all but snow entered my mouth before I could.

I gagged and punched my stomach until I threw the freezing ice back up the way it came.

I admired the sick for a second, the orange of the sick was such a stark contrast to the pure white that was enveloping me all around that I had to smile.

“Look ma, I did an art,” I thought as I continued to steamroll my legs up to the top of the snowy peak.

Finally, I reached the top of the hill and immediately collapsed into the snowy ground.

I tried to look around but a blizzard kicked up, blinding me and making it near impossible for me to see anything.

But through the snowy mist, I saw a small opening: a cave.

I slowly rose to my feet, grunting with exasperation as I did so and pulled myself to the cave.

I breathed heavily as I did so until I finally reached the caves warm embrace.

I fell onto my knees and looked around, the cave was small, yet deep and it was strangely bright as if someone had lit a fire further down.

I lay there on my knees for a time just waiting to get my energy back and then I started to move myself towards the heart of the cave.

The light became brighter until I reached a circular dome, with a fire still freshly lit and a man lying down lifelessly.

Without reacting I walked over to him and checked his pulse, he was warm, but his pulse was nowhere to be heard. This made me come to the conclusion that he was newly deceased.

I thought about leaving the cave, but something made me stay with him by the fire.

I inspected his area and saw an old bag lying next to him.

I looked inside it, maybe it had food, I hadn’t eaten all day I was starting to feel the ramifications of missing breakfast.

But alas, the bag was barren, save for a tiny little journal.

Intrigued, I lifted the journal out of the bag and started to read it.

12/December

I fear that I may not make it off of this mountain alive, but I need to at least try, Maya and the kids are waiting for me and I really need to see them just one more time, to say goodbye.

13/December

I’m so hungry I could eat a horse, why did I forget to bring food with me from the camp? Why was I so desperate to prove a point? I guess it doesn’t matter now, hopefully, somebody will come and rescue me before it’s too late.

14/December

Any chance of me moving is gone now, my legs feel like stone slabs dragging me to the depth of life. It’s too late for me, but if anyone finds my body, if anyone is reading this, I’m begging you, bring me to my family they deserve closure. My name was Arthur Tun and I need to be known. And now I sleep, knowing that I won’t wake up.

I closed the diary and looked at the dead man lying below me, I needed to get him out of the cave and back down the mountain. Reaching the top didn’t matter to me anymore.

I needed to make sure I lived at least until I filled out Arthur’s request.

And even after that, I needed to live, his journal made me realise that even though I didn’t have anyone that loved me romantically, dying over that was ridiculous because I obviously had people who loved me, just not in the same way.

A few of which were camping at the bottom of this hill, hopefully, they’d forgive me for storming ahead, but I knew that they would because they love me.

So, I picked Arthur up using all of my remaining strength plus interest and carried him out of the cave and towards closure.