

APRIL 8TH KHUMBU ICEFALL

WE HAD ANOTHER PRACTICE DAY SCHEDULED IN THE ICEFALL TODAY AND ANDRONICO, MISAIL, AND MYSELF DEPARTED BASECAMP AT 7.30AM. AT THE BASE OF THE ICEFALL WE MET ANDREW FROM DISCOVERY CHANNEL (HE S THE GUY THAT HAS CLIMBED 10 OF THE 8,000M PEAKS WITHOUT OXYGEN) AND HE WAS PLANNING TO CLIMB WITH US AND FILM US TOO. AS I HAVEN'T SPENT MUCH TIME IN FRONT OF THE CAMERA, I GUESS I WAS A LITTLE CONSCIOUS ABOUT HOW I LOOKED AND WHAT I SAID, I DIDN'T WANT TO GET CAUGHT ON CAMERA WOFFLING ON ALL ABOUT "ME" WITH A HUGE BOGEY HANGING FORM MY NOSE OR ANYTHING EMBARRASSING LIKE THAT! I GUESS NOT WANTING TO SEEM LIKE A SNAIL IN FRONT OF ANDREW, WE ALL MOVED A LITTLE FASTER THAN WE PROBABLY SHOULD HAVE. I HAD THE USUAL DRAMAS ON THE LADDERS WHICH ANDREW HAPPILY CAPTURED ON FILM, BUT ABOUT 4 HOURS INTO OUR CLIMB IN THE ICEFALL, I STARTED TO HYPERVENTILATE. I HAD THIS HAPPEN TO ME BEFORE IN HONG KONG WHILST HAVING A HUGE ROW WITH MY THEN BOYFRIEND WHILST ON A TRAINING RUN AND ALL OF A SUDDEN I COULDN'T BREATHE. THANK GOD I KNEW IT WASN'T THE ALTITUDE BUT IT IS SCAREY WHEN IT HAPPENS AND I DIDN'T FEEL LIKE CLIMBING ANY HIGHER. I THINK IT WAS JUST THE FIRST DAY HAVING THE CAMERAS ON ME COMBINED WITH A HUGE PHYSICAL EXERTION OF SPEEDING THROUGH THE ICEFALL IS WHAT CAUSED THIS. HOPEFULLY ILL START FORGETTING THE CAMERA IS THERE AND JUST BE FILMED WITH A RUNNY NOSE AND BOGEYS, AS EVEREST IS THE TYPE OF MOUNTAIN THAT REQUIRES YOUR FULL ATTENTION.

ANDRONICO AND MISAIL CARRIED ON UP THE ICEFALL UNTIL 30 MINS FROM CAMP 1 UPON WHICH THEY RETURNED BACK TO BASE CAMP. ANDRONICO REPORTED THAT THE 5 LADDERS ROPED TOGETHER WAS EXTREMELY NERVE WRACKING, AS NOT ONLY DOES IT BOUNCE UP AND DOWN (AS IF THAT ISN'T ENOUGH) IT ALSO SWINGS TO THE SIDE TOO!

I TURNED BACK ABOUT AN HOUR BEFORE ANDRONICO AND MISAIL, AND BOLTED BACK DOWN THE ICEFALL WITH ANDREW OVERTAKING THE KOREAN TEAM WHOM WERE OUT TRAINING TOO. ONE POOR GUY LOOKED SO DELIRIOUS I WASN'T SURE HE WAS GOING TO MOVE ANYWHERE.

ABOUT HALF WAY DOWN THE ICEFALL, I LEPT ABOUT A FOOT IN THE AIR AS THERE WAS A BIG AVALANCHE, I HID SHAKING BEHIND ANDREW BUT IT IS A CONSTANT REMINDER JUST HOW FRAGILE THE KHUMBU ICEFALL IS.

I ARRIVED BACK AT BASECAMP EXHAUSTED, I HATE TURNING BACK BEFORE THE OTHERS SO I WAS FEELING A LITTLE BLUE. DAVID BREASHEARS WAS WAITING AT OUR CAMP TO SAY HI TO ME AND HE TOLD ME THE TWO DIRECTORS STEPHEN AND JOHN WERE LEAVING THE NEXT DAY TO HEAD BACK TO LA TO CONTINUE WORK ON THE FILM.

I HAD A LAZY REST OF DAY, READING IN MY TENT AND WE NOW HAVE 2 DAYS OF REST AHEAD.