

APRIL 6TH KHUMBU ICEFALL

AFTER A 10 HOUR SLEEP, WHERE I SLEPT THROUGH THE DEPARTURE OF MISAIL, KIKO AND ALL OUR SHERPAS AT 5.00AM TO GO TO CAMP 1 AND AN AVALANCHE, I WAS AWOKEN AT 8.00AM WITH MY SHERPA TEA. WE ARRIVED INTO THE ICEFALL FOR OUR PRACTICE SESSION AT 10.30AM, I CONSIDERED THIS LATE AND HAD BEEN CHOMPING AT THE BIT, READY WITH MY HARNESS ON SINCE 9.30AM. I WAS ANXIOUS TO GO IN AND OUT OF THE ICEFALL FAST AND NOT HANG AROUND IN THE SCORCHING SUN OF THE LATE MORNING) ITS REALLY HOT IN THERE). I HAVE TO CONFESS I FELT MORE TIRED TODAY THAN YESTERDAY. I PASSED ALL OUR SHERPAS WHO HAD ALREADY BEEN TO CAMP 1 AND WERE HEADED BACK TO OUR BASECAMP IN A 6 HR TRIP. I LOVE THE SHERPAS, THEY ARE ALWAYS FRIENDLY AND SMILING AND THEY ARE JUST MACHINES UP HERE AT THIS ALTITUDE.

EVERYONE HAS CONCLUDED THAT THE ICEFALL IS MUCH LONGER AND MORE DIFFICULT THAN USUAL. I APPARENTLY HAVEN'T REACHED THE DIFFICULT PART OF THE ICEFALL YET ACCORDING TO DAVID BREASHEARS LAST NIGHT AT DINNER!

ERNESTO AND I REACHED THE THREE LADDERS WE WERE PRACTICING ON YESTERDAY IN A FAIRLY QUICK TIME. I WAS ON ALL FOURS IN THE MIDDLE OF A LADDER CROSSING STARING DOWN INTO THIS BOTTOMLESS WALL OF ICE WHEN SUDDENLY THERE WAS A HUGE AVALANCHE. I SCREAMED AT THE TOP OF MY LUNGS FOR ERNESTO,)DIDN'T REALLY KNOW WHAT HE COULD DO TO HELP) BUT ERNESTO ASSURED ME AS I REMAINED FROZEN ON MY KNEES THAT THE AVALANCHE WAS TO OUR RIGHT AND THAT I WAS OK. NOTHING LIKE THAT ADRENALIN RUSH.

PATO WAS A LITTLE SLOWER TODAY AND TAKING PICTURES, SO I ZOOMED DOWN AS FAST AS POSSIBLE WITH 2 SHERPAS FROM ANOTHER EXPEDITION. I WANT TO MOVE THROUGH THAT ICEFALL AS FAST AS MY LUNGS WILL ALLOW ME.

I MET THREE ENGLISH GUYS FROM JAGGED GLOBE ALSO PRACTICING ON THE LADDERS AND I PASSED THE KOREANS HAVING THEIR PUJA CEREMONY ON MY WAY BACK TO CAMP..

WHEN I GOT BACK TO OUR CAMP, I HEARD THAT KIKO WHO WAS EN ROUTE BACK DOWN FROM CAMP 1 WAS REALLY SICK WITH A FEVER AND SORE THROAT. IT TOOK HIM AND MISAIL 10 HOURS TO GET TO CAMP 1 AND BACK DOWN AGAIN. PATO, OUR DOCTOR, ERNESTO AND I WERE ALL ANXIOUSLY ON STANDBY FOR KIKOS RETURN TO BASECAMP AS HE HAD RADIOED US TO SAY HE FELT TERRIBLE. I FORGOT TO MENTION THAT IT HAS BEEN SNOWING EXTREMELY HEAVILY HERE, HENCE ALL THE AVALANCHES.

KIKO WAS REALLY ILL WHEN HE APPEARED AND HAS GONE STRAIGHT TO BED. ANDRONICO, RODRIGO AND PERTEMBA RETURNED FROM LOBUCHE LOOKING LIKE SNOWMEN, SO WE ARE ALL BACK TOGETHER AGAIN!

TOMORROW I HAVE A REST DAY BEFORE GOING HIGHER INTO THE ICEFALL ON 8TH APRIL AND I WANT TO CONSERVE MY ENERGY FOR THEN. IM GOING TO SEE THE DISCOVERY TEAM TOMORROW TO SEE IF THEY ARE STILL INTERESTED IN FILMING THE GREASYHAIED GRINGA.

ITS 5.30PM IN THE AFTERNOON AND IM FINALLY WARMING UP IN MY TENT. I THINK I AM THE ONLY PERSON WHO HAS PUT ON WEIGHT AT BASECAMP, PALDE OUR COOK IS AMAZING ALTHOUGH HE OBVIOUSLY DOESN'T ENJOY HIS OWN COOKING AS HE IS SUPER SKINNY! HE WILL BE COMING UP TO CAMP 2 WHICH WILL BE OUR ADVANCED BASECAMP WHEN THE TIME COMES FOR US TO HEAD UP THE MOUNTAIN...