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# **Into Thin Air: Death on Everest**

By Robert J. Avrech

My name is Jon Krakauer.  
I went on an expedition to write  
about climbing Mount Everest.  
On May 10, I arrived  
on top of the mountain...  
but the summit came  
at a terrible cost.  
In the spring of 1996, two of  
the world's greatest climbers...  
Scott Fischer and Rob Hall...  
led this expedition  
to the top of the world.  
both men had summited Everest before...  
but this time they went as competitors,  
leading nonprofessional climbers...  
who paid as much as \$65,000 each  
to be guided to the top.  
There was a businesswoman from Japan,  
Yasuko Namba.  
A mailman from Seattle,  
Doug Hansen.  
Two ski instructors from Aspen...  
Tim Madsen and Charlotte Fox.  
A dentist from Colorado,  
Dale Kruse.  
A wealthy New York socialite,  
Sandy Hill Pittman.  
And a pathologist from Texas,  
Beck Weathers.  
A sudden storm rolled up  
from the bottom of Mount Everest.  
By the time it reached the top...  
five climbers,  
who I'd come to call friends...  
were dead.  
Scott Fischer and Rob Hall  
went as business rivals...  
each trying to get as many of  
their clients to the top as possible...  
and win the lion's share  
of the lucrative Everest market.  
I went as a journalist...  
to write about the wisdom of guiding  
rich novices up Everest...

once the province  
of elite climbers.  
Only later would I discover that I  
went for the same reason as the others.  
to stand on  
the highest point on Earth.  
Everest arouses  
a powerful desire.  
To those who don't feel it,  
it cannot be explained.  
I told myself I was here  
to write a magazine article...  
but already Everest  
was exerting its pull on me...  
already the fever was building.  
I'm Rob Hall.  
I want to make sure  
you know who your guides are.  
- This is Andy Harris.  
- Hi.  
- Mike Groom.  
- Hi there.  
Hey, Mike.  
And our lead climbing Sherpa,  
Ang Dorje.  
I'd like to begin by introducing...  
my fellow guides.  
To my right, Neal Beidleman.  
Hi, everybody.  
If you need anything at all...  
please feel free to ask him.  
And him is the one and only  
Anatoli Boukreev.  
And my lead climbing Sherpa, Lopsang.  
Hi.  
Tomorrow, we begin a ten-day hike  
into Base Camp Everest.  
Now, base camp is 17,600 feet.  
Then Camp One, 19,500 feet.  
Already there's a third less oxygen  
than at sea level.  
So we'll lay in again  
and let our bodies adjust.  
Then we go up to...

Camp Two.

Camp Two is 21,600 feet.

This is when you have to start worrying about cerebral and pulmonary edema.

Your brain can swell up...

like an overinflated balloon and your lungs can fill up with so much liquid... you literally drown.

Camp Three at 24,000 feet.

Now, your body is inhaling four times faster than normal... and still not getting enough oxygen.

Your digestive tract will want to quit... leaving your body so hungry for nutrients...

it will literally start to eat itself.

And then, it's Camp Four.

Welcome to the Death Zone...

where bad things can happen very, very quickly.

You're going to feel sluggish, careless, cold.

You'll only spend a few hours at Camp Four.

From this point onwards, nobody on this team travels without oxygen.

- Is that clear?

- No arguments.

The push for the summit starts at night.

We go up to the South Col...

the Balcony, the south summit...

the Hillary Step, the only point of technical climbing on the ascent... and then...

the top of the world.

Now, the most important rule:

If you are not on the summit

**by 2:**

I have seen too many climbers  
get killed...  
after reaching the top  
too late in the day.  
They run out of gas and get nailed  
by the conditions on the descent.  
So this rule is hard and fast.  
No matter where you are at 2:00 P.M.,  
you turn around.  
Unless you're 100 feet from the summit.  
Then you can run up, tag it.  
You know the answer  
to that one, Dougie.  
Even if you're 50 feet from the summit,  
you go down.  
You know that.  
Jon Krakauer, right?  
What was that all about?  
I was in Rob's group last year. Turned  
me around 300 feet from the summit.  
You'll make it this year.  
Have to.  
That's something, isn't it?  
Come on.  
Bit of a letdown, isn't it?  
Over 200 climbers  
got permits this season.  
There's only two weeks  
when we can climb her.  
We all have to go up  
at the same time.  
I was thrilled to finally be  
at the foot of the great mountain.  
But my excitement blinded me  
to obvious signs...  
signs that would have warned me...  
of the tragedy to come.  
There were teams from  
many different nations on Everest...  
some less experienced than others.  
The Taiwanese, for example.  
I'll help.  
It's upside down.  
See? This.

Upside down.  
This one too. See?  
Man, you don't belong  
on this mountain.  
Because there's so many people  
on the mountain this year...  
most of whom are incompetent...  
Scott and I have decided to coordinate  
our efforts for this climb.  
In terms of safety,  
it's the wisest course of action.  
Lopsang, you and Ang Dorje  
will head up the Sherpas.  
And we are gonna aim  
for a May 10 bid for the summit.  
Let me emphasize this, though.  
One in four climbers  
who make the top...  
get killed on the descent.  
That's because they've used up  
all their energy on the way down...  
and they make mistakes.  
At the risk of sounding unpopular,  
I'll say it again.  
My team have a turnaround time.  
I don't care where you are  
on the mountain, at 2:00 P.M...  
you absolutely must turn around.  
Even if you're 100 feet  
from the summit, you go down.  
You do not want to be caught  
on the face in the night.  
No one can survive  
a bivouac on Everest.  
Is that clear?  
What is your turnaround time?  
I don't believe  
in being that rigid.  
It's important for people to establish  
their own rhythm with the mountain.  
- You know what I mean?  
- Yeah, I do.  
Just put that in there.  
Thanks.

Do you realize  
how important this is?  
She the golden goose?  
I never let you down, Scott.  
Never.  
This is special network correspondent  
Sandy Hill Pittman...  
at Base Camp Everest.  
After having climbed six  
of the world's seven peaks...  
I am now making  
my third climb on Everest.  
This time I hope  
to make it to the top...  
attempting to report  
to all of you...  
step by step  
here on the Internet.  
Neal, can you hear me? Come in.  
Scott, I can barely hear you.  
I can sort of hear you  
a little bit. Can you hear me?  
It's a piece of crap.  
Quick word about oxygen.  
From Camp Four,  
this keeps you alive.  
This knob is the regulator.  
Turn it clockwise,  
it increases the flow of oxygen.  
Counterclockwise, you get less.  
This bubble in the tube...  
indicates that there still is oxygen  
in the container but not how much.  
Regulator, flow.  
Without oxygen, your brain will be  
reduced to the level of a six-year-old.  
Use it judiciously.  
Once this bubble drops, you're out.  
No more oxygen.  
I tell you, Scott.  
I cannot climb with the oxygen.  
Two times I summit Everest  
without oxygen.  
Come on, Anatoli.

Oxygen is no good for my power.  
You want me to be a good guide?  
Let me climb my way.  
Anatoli, I'm not worried about you.  
I'm worried about the clients.  
Tell them, to climb Everest,  
they must climb on their own.  
I guide, not a baby-sitter.  
I'm not talking about  
being a baby-sitter.  
I'm talking about  
being a professional.  
For me to be professional,  
I must climb on my own.  
Fine. Go for it.  
We would stay in base camp  
for three weeks getting acclimated.  
From there, it was five days  
to the summit.  
Already altitude sickness  
was taking its toll.  
Climbing Everest  
is a war of attrition.  
You all right, Dale?  
Once you get sick,  
you never get better.  
Come on.  
Say, Doc, have you got anything you  
could give Dale for that cough?  
Son, I'm a pathologist.  
All my patients are dead.  
Yeah, I know.  
Some of her wealthy friends  
flew in from New York...  
and had lunch with her.  
A luncheon, huh?  
That's good.  
Oh, come on. She has got to be  
able to do her thing. Right?  
- What is her thing?  
- The publicity thing.  
If I get her to the top of the mountain,  
that's good for me.  
- What are you writing?



- Just that. She's your ride, man.  
She's feeding you to the Internet.  
Just like you're feeding Rob  
to ''Outside'' magazine.  
We all want a piece  
of the Everest business.  
We all want to be famous, right?  
So Sandy's my ticket...  
and you're Rob's.

- Eliza.

- No.

What about Jane?

Just nice, simple Jane.

Think about that one

for a little while.

It's still nine weeks

till you're going to have the baby.

It's too much like Jan.

Easy to remember.

- I wish I was with you.

- Yeah, so do I.

- You be careful.

- As always, darling.

- I love you.

- You too.

Man.

What's in that pack?

She's got a satellite dish,  
computers.

I don't know what she's got.

That's crazy.

The weight will kill him.

I learned that the Sherpas believe  
that when you climb Everest...

you're climbing into

the house of God.

I knew that Fischer...

and Hall had

a slightly different view.

Success this year

was important for business.

It would bring more and more

paying clients in the years to come.

But in the end...

it is Everest  
who decides who climbs...  
and who does not.  
Yasuko!  
Boyfriend?  
Husband.  
Husband.  
Yasuko climb.  
He cook...  
uh, clean clothes.  
Your husband takes care of the house  
while you climb.  
Yes, yes.  
He's my wife.  
You're very lucky.  
My wife never saw it that way.  
Excuse?  
Climbing...  
cost me my marriage.  
The mountain?  
It's ruining my life.  
If we'd been paying attention,  
there were signs...  
that Everest was not pleased  
with what was happening on her flanks.  
But already the fever had diminished  
our ability to heed the warnings.  
We were in the Khumbu Ice Fall...  
where crevasses suddenly opened wide  
and swallowed their victims...  
and where more climbers had died  
than anywhere else on Everest.  
Wait until I've anchored the line  
and I'm ready.  
Ready.  
Hey! Hey!  
Whoa!  
- Free the rope!  
- Yasuko, you were supposed to wait!  
Beidleman, I've got her!  
I told her to wait  
until the rope was anchored.  
It's all right. You're okay.  
- Where the hell you been?

- Sleeping.

- You slept in?

- It happens, Scott.

Not when you're working for me,  
when you're supposed to be guiding.

- Scott--

- Don't "Scott" me.

You're a screwup and a pain in the ass!

I'm paying you to work.

You understand "work"

or is that word nonexistent in Russia?

I told you, I'm not from Russia.

I'm from Kazakhstan.

You're from nowhere, Anatoli, and you're  
never going to work for me again.

You don't mean that.

It's the altitude.

I don't believe this.

- What?

- Look. Sandy Pittman has a visitor.

Ang Dorje, something wrong?

Jon, is Sandy married to that man?

I don't think so.

From what I hear,

she's going through a divorce.

It's not proper.

What?

For man and a woman

to be together on this mountain...

when they're not married.

Very disrespectful.

I don't know what to say. Americans

look at these things differently.

We're not in America.

Ang Dorje, I can't tell her...

what she can and can't do.

Besides, other people

are doing the same thing.

Base camp is one thing.

Past base camp is another.

It's forbidden.

- You're not listening to me.

- I'm listening.

I can't run my outft

based on some superstition.  
Mother Goddess of the Earth  
will become very angry.  
The Sherpas made me feel uneasy with  
their talk of Everest taking revenge.  
I was uncertain that the others  
in the group felt the same way.  
Like Beck, whose fears were hidden  
beneath his laid-back Texas drawl.  
You hurt as much as I do?  
I just keep telling myself  
it's worth it.  
It's worth it because it's Everest!  
Race you to the top!  
Hey, it's the Taiwanese.  
What the hell are they doing here?  
It's getting too damn crowded  
on this route.  
They agreed not to start climbing  
till tomorrow.  
- Hey, Krakauer.  
- Hey, man.  
Hey, the ice is too slick  
for those boot liners!  
Boots! Get your boots on!  
Boots!  
I had never been on a climb  
where anyone had been killed.  
I had yet to learn that year  
after year on Everest...  
climbers pay for their arrogance  
with their lives.  
You only hope  
that when tragedy strikes...  
it happens to someone else.  
Okay. Come on.  
Easy, Dale. Easy.  
The Sherpas will break trail  
and climb ahead.  
Lopsang and Ang Dorje  
will begin to fix the ropes.  
Fixed ropes are the key  
to bagging this summit.  
Without them, we'll get

a logjam on the route...  
and we'll lose time.  
If we lose time, we'll lose our window  
of opportunity. Everyone understand?  
Yes, yes.  
Understand.  
All right.  
Those of you in my group...  
don't forget you've been supplied  
with loaded syringes of Decadron...  
which reduces swelling of the brain  
in case you get edema.  
But remember...  
you don't use it  
unless you have to.  
All right?  
And don't get killed. You won't  
get invited back on any more climbs.  
Easy does it.  
If we get a logjam on that mountain,  
you know rescue is almost impossible.  
At that altitude, we might as well  
be on the moon.  
I like to let my people  
make their own decisions.  
Things can happen  
very fast up there.  
That's how people die, Scott.  
Not my crew.  
We're invincible!  
Come on, Dale.  
Time to take you down.  
You got all the signs  
of cerebral edema.  
- Just let me rest.  
- Can't do that.  
You shouldn't do this alone.  
I need you to stay here  
with the clients, Beidleman.  
You too, Lopsang.  
- Get your feet under you, Dale.  
- Come on.  
Give me your arm. Other arm.  
That's it. Come on.

- I got him.  
- You're not going to wear yourself out?  
Not going to happen.  
We should have been worried.  
At 24,000 feet,  
Scott didn't understand...  
that he had squandered reserves  
of strength that he would need later.  
Now that Rob and Scott had merged  
their two teams into one...  
our fates were tied together.  
Buddy, you all right?  
- What's that?  
- I'm sorry.  
- For what?  
- For folding.  
Come on.  
Get your feet under you.  
Damn.  
- You okay, Scott?  
- Never better.  
You've been gone eight hours.  
You look exhausted, mate.  
- You've got to learn how to delegate.  
- Dale is the best friend I've ever had.  
You would have done the same thing.  
- You make it okay?  
- I'm fine!  
- How is Dale?  
- Alive.  
Any problems, Scott?  
Looking strong, Andy.  
Peaking at the right time.  
Yeah, no worries.  
You know, I should think we're going  
to knock this big bastard off.  
You don't look happy.  
You run your crew as you see fit.  
And here comes the "but."  
But Lopsang cannot perform...  
and carry 80 pounds  
of Sandy Pittman's gear.  
- He says he can.  
- He'll say anything you want to hear.

- You're his hero.  
- What do you want me to do?  
I've got a client who's got a job to do.  
She needs the equipment.  
- It's dangerous.  
- I know what I'm doing.  
- Do you?  
- Yeah.  
What happens if Lopsang folds?  
What happens if he can't fix the ropes?  
Not going to happen.  
I'm telling you, mate.  
Dump the blasted equipment.  
Can't.  
Can't, or won't?  
Leave it, Lopsang.  
Beck, what time you got?  
Up you go, Krakauer.  
Everest cannot be beaten  
into submission.  
You have to humor the mountain,  
then sneak to the summit...  
when it's not looking.  
By now, the altitude  
was a malevolent force...  
a vise squeezing tighter and tighter  
on my lungs and brain.  
We all had intense headaches  
that wouldn't quit.  
It felt like someone had driven a nail  
into our skulls.  
Attempting to climb Everest  
is a completely irrational act.  
Hey, why don't you stop and rest?  
Excuse?  
Stop. Just rest. Sit down.  
I am 47 years old.  
I'll be oldest woman...  
to climb Everest.  
I must.  
Must!  
As you ascend into thin air...  
you discover that humans  
are not meant to be here.

The wreckage of those who had come  
before us was everywhere.  
A mailman from Seattle.  
A couple from Aspen.  
A businesswoman from Japan.  
A New York socialite.  
And a freelance writer.  
We are all equal in the Death Zone--  
confused as children,  
drowning in our own juices.  
Doug.  
How's the barometer?  
Holding steady.  
We leave at midnight.  
Climb all night...  
Get to the summit...

**summit by 2:**

I hate this.  
The altitude?  
The mountain.  
What it's making me do.  
You're doing it, Doug,  
not the mountain.  
The mountain's got a hold of me.  
- All right, Beck?  
- Yeah, Andy. Let's go.  
Yasuko. Your torch.  
You okay, Scott?  
Yeah.  
All right.  
Time to go.  
We called ourselves a team,  
but above 26,000 feet...  
there was no such thing.  
From this point on,  
it was each climber for himself.  
I put my pen and notebook away  
long ago.  
Now, like the others, my thoughts  
were focused on the summit.  
The last thing I wanted was to get  
stuck in the Death Zone at 28,000 feet--  
cruising altitude of a 747.



Jon!  
Wait. Wait!  
Rest. We must rest.  
It's Pittman.  
She's being short-roped by Lopsang.  
Rob.  
Wait up.  
What's wrong?  
It's my eyes.  
I can hardly see.  
What?  
I had eye surgery  
a few years ago.  
I believe the altitude's causing this  
as a side effect.  
- A little late to be telling me that.  
- I didn't know.  
You're a doctor.  
Of course you knew.  
Rob, I didn't know.  
I would not lie to you.  
I think about a half an hour  
it will clear up.  
You stay here.  
I'm ready to roll.  
No arguments, mate.  
You don't move.  
Stay here and wait for me.  
I'll be back for you.  
I'm sorry.  
No worries, mate.  
Come on.  
Now promise me you'll stay here.  
Promise me, Beck.  
Cross my heart and hope to die, huh?  
We'll be back.  
Hey, Krakauer!  
What? Yeah.  
What's Ang Dorje doing all alone  
at the base of the step?  
The last obstacle before the summit  
was the infamous...  
Hillary Step, the steepest  
and most treacherous pitch...

on the entire mountain.  
A group this big had no hope  
of climbing it without fixed lines--  
ropes anchored into the mountain  
beforehand...  
by Sherpas Ang Dorje and Lopsang.  
Ropes.  
Where are the fixed ropes?  
Cannot fix rope alone.  
Lopsang, I wait for him,  
but he's too sick.  
Carry too much.  
Not enough oxygen...  
and pull up woman  
part way up the mountain.  
What's wrong?  
Where are the ropes?  
Ang Dorje...  
couldn't do it alone.  
Let's do it ourselves.  
We're burning daylight.  
Two hours.  
All we got is two hours.  
We'll get them fixed, Jon.  
One, two, three. No problem.  
Andy.  
We have to fix the ropes.  
It's fixed!  
I won't have enough oxygen  
to get down.  
This is bad.  
It's real bad.  
Come on, Krakauer!  
It's straight to the summit  
from here!  
All right. Let's do it.  
You guys better get moving.  
Some climbers are getting closer.  
We go.  
As I approached the summit,  
there was room...  
in my oxygen-starved mind  
for only a single thought--  
putting one foot

in front of the other.  
At this altitude,  
it's the same for everybody.  
Anatoli Boukreev,  
one of the world's strongest climbers.  
Or Andy Harris, a guide  
on Everest for the first time.  
Our brains were functioning  
on the level of reptiles.  
Our bodies were as ravaged  
as the terminally ill.  
Krakauer.  
- Take a picture.  
- Yeah.  
This is for the people  
of my homeland.  
Where are your clients?  
They are fine.  
They come.  
Hey, Andy.  
You okay?  
You okay?  
Only halfway, mate.  
Halfway.  
Got to get down yet.  
Oh, God.  
Too many climbers.  
I'll never get down.  
Krakauer, what's wrong?  
It's a traffic jam.  
We can't get down.  
The rope is our only way down.  
They'll never make the summit.  
I'm using up my oxygen too fast.  
Turn it down.  
You turned my gas down, right?  
Yeah, I got it.  
This feels good.  
Looking good, Pittman.  
Keep coming.  
Doug!  
It's turnaround time, mate.  
Not again. No, Rob.  
Please. Don't do this to me.

Listen to me--  
Come on. Let me finish this thing  
once and for all.  
I'm responsible for you.  
You're the one who talked me  
into coming back this year.  
You promised me  
I'd make it to the top.  
I never promised.  
Why doesn't he go by the time?  
It's clear. We can get down now.  
Let's go.  
Can't breathe!  
It's empty!  
Keep it together.  
Desperate for air, dizzy...  
terrified of blacking out  
and tumbling into Tibet...  
I carefully made my way down  
to the oxygen drop.  
As soon as I got there,  
I saw that something was very wrong...  
with Andy Harris.  
Oxygen.  
They're all empty.  
It's impossible.  
I'm telling you, mate.  
They're all empty.  
They're all--  
Andy, this is full.  
They're all empty.  
No! Feel the weight!  
- Feel it! The weight!  
- They're empty.  
All of them.  
You're not right in the head.  
You turned my gas up the wrong way.  
I'm telling you, these are full.  
Hey, Doug. Whoa.  
Hey, looks like  
we're going to get hosed.  
Storm is coming.  
I'm a mailman, Krakauer.  
Neither snow nor rain...

nor heat...  
nor gloom of night--  
Thanks for getting me to the summit.  
I didn't have time to ask why he and  
Doug were still going up the mountain...  
was supposed to be going down.  
When the group summited,  
they radioed base camp...  
and a flurry of faxes went out to  
friends and family around the world...  
announcing the expedition's  
triumphant success.  
Hey, Scott!  
Did you summit?  
Yeah.  
Hall and Hansen are still  
on their way up.  
You look spent. Don't you think  
you should turn back?  
No, I'm just dragging ass  
for some reason.  
When Rob and Doug  
got to the top...  
it triggered a surge  
of intense elation.  
But it was 4.'00 P.M...  
two hours after Rob's supposedly  
hard-and-fast turnaround time.  
Thank you.  
Thank you, Rob.  
We're going to go down.  
There's a storm coming.  
We did it.  
Rob, didn't we?  
We did it.  
Rob!  
No, it's Krakauer.  
What the hell you doing, Beck?  
My eyes.  
I can't see.  
Let's go down to camp.  
Any of our guides coming?  
Mike Groom.  
He's behind me.

Rob would want me  
to wait for Mike.  
He could short-rope me.  
You sure?  
I promised Rob  
I'd wait for him.  
Scott! It's me!  
Beidleman.  
Did you make it?  
We did.  
That's good.  
Sandy.  
I got you what you wanted, yes?  
Come down with us.  
I'll be fine.  
I'm fine.  
Lopsang, come on.  
I feel sick.  
Scott, must breathe.  
I can't breathe.  
I can't breathe.  
I feel so sick.  
I feel so sick.  
Only when I'd made it back  
to my tent...  
did I appreciate  
how wasted I really was.  
I'd never pushed myself  
so close to the edge.  
But now I was safe.  
We'd climbed Everest.  
In spite of everything,  
we had succeeded.  
At least I thought we had.  
Outside in the rising storm, my friends  
were in a struggle for their lives.  
After summiting, Rob and Doug were now  
descending to the Hillary Step.  
The other climbers were scattered  
all over the mountain.  
Everest had reduced them  
to lost and frightened children...  
unable to tell where they were.  
Everything erupted

into anarchy and chaos.  
Doug, you're out, mate.  
Don't worry.  
Come on, breathe, mate. Breathe.  
That's it.  
This is Hall.  
I'm at the top of the step.  
We need oxygen.  
Where's the drop?  
Rob, it's Andy.  
It's gone, mate.  
It's all used up.  
What?  
It's gone!  
That's not possible.  
We have six cylin--  
six cylinders stashed.  
- They're gone.  
- Where are you?  
I don't know.  
I'm going to find you, mate.  
Answer me, Andy!  
Hold on, mate.  
I beat it.  
What? What's that, mate?  
I beat Everest.  
Hold on, Yasuko. I'm coming.  
I'm okay.  
Rob, is that you?  
No, it's Mike and Yasuko.  
Beck, you ought to get up.  
Yeah.  
All right. Come on.  
You've got to move.  
I believe I will.  
Mike! Mike Groom!  
We lost you!  
I picked up Beck.  
Take Yasuko. She's had it.  
Sit down.  
How are your guys doing?  
Very rough.  
Yeah, mine too.  
We're never going to make it

back to camp.

We've got to try!

Yeah.

- Let's stick together.

- Sure. But which way?

I'm not sure.

Higher on the mountain, Lopsang  
lowered an exhausted Scott Fischer...

past Rob Hall and his friend  
and client Doug Hansen...

who was so sick from the altitude  
that he could no longer move.

We had all reached the summit...

but there are no conquerors  
on Mount Everest.

Where's Rob?

Isn't he back?

He has to be.

- The storm is still bad.

- Yeah.

I climbed with 15 expeditions.

Never, ever see storm come...

so fast...

so evil.

We've got to move.

Although we didn't talk about it...

we knew Rob Hall might as well  
have been on the moon.

In this kind of storm,  
at such an extreme altitude...

rescue was almost impossible.

We can't make it, Jon.

We can't get to Rob.

We have to try!

We can't get them.

Our friends are out there,  
and they're dying!

We can't go after them.

We must turn around now!

Scott Fischer!

Rob Hall!

Doug! Come on! Get up!

Get up and walk,

you bloody punter!



You got children waiting for you.  
You should go.  
Huh?  
You should go. Go.  
You can't make it with me.  
I'm not leaving you here, mate.  
You have no choice.  
You've got to go.  
You'll die too.  
Neither of us...  
is going to die.  
My people...  
do not die.  
Scott, slow down!  
Please!  
I know how to get down.  
Jump.  
I'll just--  
I'll just jump off this mountain.  
That's what I'm going to do.  
I'm just going to jump.  
I'll just--  
Hold on, Scott!  
Scott, please!  
This is Lopsang.  
Anyone.  
Lopsang and Scott.  
We need help!  
We're on the south summit!  
Anyone.  
Lopsang, it's Jon!  
Some Sherpas  
are already on their way...  
but the storm is so bad,  
it may take a while.  
Come on, Doug.  
- Where are you?  
- Take it easy.  
Rob!  
Hold on, mate!  
Rob, it's Andy!  
Hold on, mate!  
I've been lost!  
Hold on, mate!

I'm coming!  
Come on, mate.  
I've got to get you down.  
I can't.  
My legs.  
They're frozen.  
Come on, mate.  
Work on them!  
Come on, mate!  
Come on!  
Work them!  
- Wait there.  
- Where you going?  
Where you going? Come back!  
Don't go!  
I'm going to get help!  
Hold on!  
Camp Four, anyone there?  
This is Rob.  
Camp Four, anyone there?  
I'm here.  
Where, Rob? Where?  
Just below the step.  
Where's Doug?  
He's gone.  
Doug's gone.  
Andy was with you?  
Yeah. He was here.  
He's gone too.  
Oh, God.  
I should never have left them.  
I need oxygen.  
There are some O's...  
There were six cylinders.  
Six? Six hundred feet?  
No, 200 feet.  
I don't believe I can make it.  
You have to try.  
There's something wrong  
with my legs.  
Try! Rob, try.  
You've got to crawl if you have to.  
Can you get to the O's?  
- Got to try.

- Rob!  
- Got to try.  
- Can you get to the O's?  
Got to try.  
While Rob was stranded  
near the summit...  
most of the others had almost  
made it down to Camp Four.  
But by now the wind chill  
was more than 100 below zero.  
Just 200 yards  
from the safety of camp...  
the weakest climbers  
brought the whole group to a halt.  
Stars!  
I see stars!  
Is it clearing?  
I can navigate by the stars.  
Come on. Get up!  
Let's go!  
- Come on.  
- Get up, Sandy! Come on!  
It's no good.  
Tim.  
You go back. Get help.  
I'll stay here with them.  
Both of you go!  
More chance of rescue that way!  
I'll stay!  
Tim, we're the guides!  
You can't stay!  
I'm not leaving Charlotte!  
You hear me?  
Tim, listen to reason.  
I'm not leaving!  
Stay awake, Charlotte!  
I love you!  
- Stay awake!  
- Get up, Yasuko!  
I don't want to die!  
Don't leave me!  
Calm down!  
Sandy! Calm down!  
I don't want to die here!

We're going to bring help!  
- Don't leave me!  
- We'll bring help!  
Don't leave me!  
Yasuko, you have to let go!  
You can't go!  
I don't want to die!  
Scott, do you hear me?  
I am...  
invincible.  
We were reduced to banging pots  
to guide the climbers home.  
By now, Andy was dead.  
Doug was dead.  
Scott Fischer was probably dead.  
When I tried to comprehend  
the enormity of this fact...  
my mind refused to process it.  
Mike.  
Come on. Get up.  
Beidleman.  
Come on.  
Come on.  
We'll get you inside the tent.  
There is a--  
a group huddled...  
about 250 yards due east.  
If we don't bring them in,  
they're going to die.  
We have to go out and make a rescue.  
I tried once already,  
but this time we can make it.  
Charlotte! Pittman!  
Tim!  
Pittman! Beck!  
It's Anatoli! Charlotte!  
Here! Here!  
Over here!  
Stay awake!  
Pittman, Anatoli's here!  
Give her this.  
Breathe, Charlotte! It's oxygen!  
Breathe!  
Beck.

Can you hear me?  
I think they're dead!  
They're warm now.  
Comfortable.  
Let them be in peace.  
Oh, God!  
I know what I'm doing.  
I have been through this  
many times before!  
We can save Charlotte...  
and Pittman.  
Save the strongest.  
That is the law of the mountains.  
Yeah.  
Despite their exhaustion,  
Groom and Beidleman left Camp Four...  
to make one last attempt  
to rescue Rob Hall.  
Rob!  
Rob! It's Mike Groom  
and Neal Beidleman.  
We're just above Camp Four.  
Rob here.  
Listen. We'll try  
and get to you, mate, but...  
it's looking pretty bad.  
We'll never reach you  
in this storm.  
It's all right, Mike.  
It's all right.  
We've got to get back!  
We've got to go! Come on!  
Let's go!  
Please! Breathe!  
Please!  
He has very little pulse.  
Very slow.  
What do we do?  
We can save the Taiwanese climber.  
What about Scott?  
Can't the two Sherpas get him down?  
We can't carry Scott.  
We can only save one.  
If we try and save both...

we might all die.  
Oh, God.  
It is what Scott  
would tell us to do.  
You know he would.  
Damn it!  
Scott! You get up!  
Get up!  
I know you can do it!  
Come on! Get up!  
Come on!  
Please! Get up!  
I know you can! Please!  
This isn't happening.  
This isn't happening.  
It isn't happening.  
A name.  
We have to think of a name.  
Yes.  
Yes, my darling.  
This is Rob here.  
Can you patch me through to my wife?  
Do you have the oxygen?  
The oxygen.  
Just patch me through to Jan.  
I need to talk to her...  
before it's too late.  
Rob, listen.  
Don't give up.  
You're Rob Hall.  
Not for much longer, mate.  
Just patch me through.  
His wife is on the line.  
You're patched through.  
Jan.  
Can you hear me?  
Rob?  
Can you hear me?  
Can you hear me?  
Yes. Yes, my darling.  
Rob, you have to move.  
You have to.  
Please.  
Please, Rob.

Get up and move.

Can you?

Can you, my darling?

There's something wrong  
with my legs.

I can't move them.

Concentrate.

Rub your legs.

Get the blood moving.

Name.

We have to pick a name.

Sarah.

What?

What about Sarah?

Yes.

Yes, it's beautiful.

Then it's settled.

Sarah Hall.

Good.

I'm glad now, darling.

I'm looking forward to making you  
completely better when you come home.

I just know

you're going to be rescued.

Don't feel that you're alone.

I love you.

Sleep well, my sweetheart.

Please.

Try--

Try not to worry too much, eh?

I love you, Rob.

I love you.

I love you.

Rob?

Coming to Everest had been  
the worst mistake of my life.

The enormity of the tragedy--  
the awful finality of it--  
was beginning to sink in.

There was no way to fix this.

This wasn't some game  
that we could play over again.

Beidleman, you made it.

We couldn't get to Rob.

He was too high up.  
What about the others?  
I brought...  
Madsen, Fox...  
and Pittman.  
What about Beck?  
What about Yasuko?  
I couldn't help her, Neal.  
I'm sorry.  
Oh, my God.  
We thought you were dead.  
My God, it's a miracle.  
- Get up.  
- Easy! Watch his hands!  
All right, mate.  
We've got you.  
Get him inside.  
Come on, Beck.  
Goodbye, old friend.  
Five of our friends are dead.  
Hard to believe.  
It's even harder to understand.  
Why? What did they die for?  
It's a question  
that gets asked a lot in climbing.  
Perhaps we didn't treat  
this mountain...  
with the respect it deserves.  
We believe that  
with enough money...  
with enough equipment,  
with enough determination...  
we could conquer Chomolungma.  
So now we mourn our friends...  
Yasuko Namba...  
Andy Harris...  
Doug Hansen...  
Scott Fischer...  
and Rob Hall.  
They saw God's face.  
I hope--  
Oh, how I hope...  
that it was beautiful.