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The Reading Text «The Impossible Escape Episode 2» is taken from Richmond Publisher's course book Thumbs Up 3.



Richmond



The IMPOSSIBLE ESCAPE

A True Survival Story

Episode 2

“Simon! Simon! Help!” Joe yelled.

Joe was hanging on the rope like a big heavy spider. Simon was far above him and he couldn't hear Joe. He only heard the wind. With the snow, it was impossible for the men to see each other.



Simon attached himself to the mountain. He wanted to pull Joe up, but he couldn't. Joe was too heavy. Simon didn't know what to do. He waited there for a long time, and he started to feel very tired and cold. It was difficult for him to stand up. He couldn't go down the cliff—it was too dangerous.



He didn't know what to do, but he needed a solution. He yelled to Joe for a long time, but there was only silence. Simon thought about Joe's fall. He couldn't imagine that his friend was alive. Joe had a bad injury, and it was very cold. Simon started to think that Joe was dead. He felt no movement on the rope and he heard nothing. He also knew that he had little energy to survive.



Finally, Simon couldn't wait anymore. To save his own life, he decided to cut the rope and descend Siula Grande alone. He took out his knife and cut the rope. In a second, the weight—his friend, Joe—was gone. Now Simon was alone on the snowy mountain.



But Joe wasn't dead. When Simon cut the rope, Joe fell down the cliff and into a hole in the ice. Everything went dark. Then Joe opened his eyes. He felt cold and his body was full of pain, but he was still alive! He looked around. He saw a lot of ice. He was inside a glacier! His leg hurt a lot, and he remembered breaking it. Now many other parts of his body hurt, too.



Joe decided to continue down the mountain. He didn't want to die. He climbed through a tunnel in the ice. After a long time, he came out of the glacier. There was rock and ice all around him. He started slowly crawling and hopping back to base camp.



After a hard climb down the mountain, Simon finally arrived at base camp. He found the tent that he and Joe had left there and got inside. The tent protected him from the wind and snow. Now he was safe. He found a picture of his friend in his backpack and spent a long time looking at it.



Just a few hours ago, Joe and Simon were at the top of the mountain. They were so happy and excited. Now Joe was gone, and Simon felt sad and depressed. He wondered, "Did I do the right thing?"

Simon stayed at base camp. He often looked up at the mountain and listened for Joe's shouts. He waited and waited, thinking about his friend, but he saw nothing and heard nothing. He hoped that Joe was still alive, but after three long days, he realized that Joe was not going to come back.

Finally, he started packing up the equipment. He planned to leave the next day. That night, outside the tent, he could hear the wind blowing. After many hours, he fell asleep. He had a terrible nightmare. In his dream, he heard Joe yelling, "Simon! Simon!" He wanted to help Joe, but it was only a dream.



The next morning, Simon opened his eyes. The warm sun was shining through the tent. There wasn't any wind. Very far away, Simon heard Joe yelling, "Simon!" He thought it was only his imagination. Then he heard it again. He opened the tent and looked around.



The sun reflected off the snow. Simon blinked his eyes and looked around. It was quiet. Suddenly, he heard his name again. In the distance, he saw his friend, crawling toward him in the snow. He couldn't believe it. Joe was alive!



Now, Joe writes books about mountain climbing. He gives classes about courage and motivation. He and Simon still climb mountains!