MAY 17TH - CAMP 2 - BASECAMP

I HEADED DOWN WITH RODRIGO FEELING SICK AND WITH A BLISTER THAT CAUSED SUCH PAIN WITH EVERY STEP. RODRIGO HAD VOLUNTEERED VERY BRAVELY TO TAKE THE GRINGA DOWN!! WE HEADED OFF, PRETTY FAST I HAVE TO SAY CONSIDERING HOW ILL I FELT AND ALL WAS FAIRLY UNEVENTFUL UNTIL WE GOT INTO THE ICEFALL. WE CHATTED TO CHRIS WARNER WHO HAD MADE THE SUMMIT OF LHOTSE WITHOUT OXYGEN AND HE WAS FEELING AWFUL. HE HAD GOT THE BASECAMP BUG A FEW DAYS BEFORE HIS SUMMIT ATTEMPT AND HE WAS FEELING PRETTY ROUGH. WE HAD A BRIEF CHAT THEN RODRIGO AND I HEADED DOWN TOGETHER. AT THE TOP OF THE ICEFALL BEFORE U START ON THE ROPES AND LADDERS AMONGST THE MAZE OF DEATHLY LOOKING SERACS AND OVERHANGING ICE THERE WAS A HUGE CREVASSE WE HAD TO CROSS ( IT REALLY SHOULD HAVE A LADDER THERE) I TOOK ONE LOOK AND SAID TO RODRIGO BEFORE HE LEPT FOR IT "

DONT YOU THINK YOU SHOULD CLIP IN?" " YEAH GRINGA MAYBEE FOR ONCE YOU ARE RIGHT HE SAID JOKING WITH ME" LUCKILY HE CLIPPED IN BECAUSE AS HE LEPT, THE ICE HE LANDED ON COLLAPSED AND HE WAS LEFT SWINGING OVER THE CREVASSE. I SCREAMED, ITS SO HORRIBLE WHEN THIS HAPPENS AND MY HEART RATE SHOT TO ABOUT 200 BEATS PER MINUTE. HE FINALLY GOT SECURED ( IF YOU CAN CALL ANYTHING IN THE ICEFAL SECURE) ON THE OTHER SIDE, AND MY HEART BEAT EVEN FASTER AS I KNEW I WOULD NOW HAVE TO JUMP TOO. I MADE IT, BUT WE BOTH WERE IN SHOCK AND PANTING WITH OUR HEADS ON THE ICE. I WOULDNT WANT ME TO BE THE PERSON TO RESCUE ME SO IM SURE RODRIGO WAS RELIEVED THAT HE MANAGED NOT TO FALL INTO THE DEPTHS OF THE CREVASSE!! WE CONTINUED ON REALLY FAST - I HAVE NO IDEA WHERE MY ENERGY WAS COMING FROM, JUST AN URGENT NEED TO GET AWAY FROM SNOW AND ICE I THINK. THE WHOLE ICEFALL HAD CHANGED YET AGAIN AND THIS TIME EVEN WORSE EVERYTHING WAS MELTING. WE MET THE ICEFALL DOCTORS AND THEY ARE GREAT BUT A LITTLE RELAXED ABOUT THE LOOSE ICE SCREWS ON THE LADDERS AND CASUALLY ASKED US TO TAP THEM IN IF WE SAW ANY LOOSE ONES! THANK GOD THIS WAS OUR LAST TIME IN THE ICEFALL IF THAT IS HOW RELAXED THEY ARE I THOUGHT TO MYSELF..

THE NEXT INCIDENT HAPPENED TO POOR RODRIGO WAS WHEN HE WAS ON A LADDER WHICH UNBEKNOWNST TO US HAD ONE OF THE LOOSE ICE SCREWS THE ICEFALL DOCTORS WERE TALKING ABOUT ON IT. LUCKILY RODRIGO WAS CLIPPED IN, BECAUSE THE LADDER SHOOK HEAVILY AS HE CROSSED IT AND JUST BEFORE HE REACHED THE OTHER SIDE OF THE CREVASSE, THE WHOLE LADDER TIPPED OVER!! HE LEPT FOR DEAR LIFE AND LUCKILY REACHED THE OTHER SIDE WITHOUT FALLING INTO THE CREVASSE. NOW IT WAS MY TURN.. MY HEART RATE SHOT UP AGAIN AND I CRAWLED ACROSS MOST OF THE LADDERS ON THE DESCENT, ALL DIGNITY ABOUT LOOKING GOOD LONG GONE! WE CARRIED ON DOWN FAST AND I WAS CONSTANTLY ON EDGE ABOUT ANY FURTHER MOVEMENTS INTHE ICEFALL. FINALLY AFTER ABOUT 3 HOURS OF HELL, MY FOOT WAS SO PAINFUL AND MY I WAS TRYING NOT TO THROW UP, WE SPIED PERTEMBA!! TEARS WELLED UP IN MY EYES AS I REALISED I COULD FINALLY RELAX, THE ORDEAL WAS OVER AND THIS ANXIETY THAT HAD TAKEN OVER MY BODY COULD BE RELEASED. HE WAS WAITING WITH A COCA COLA FOR US AND ITS NEVER TASTED SO GOOD!! WE ALL HUGGED AND SAT AND HAD OUR COKES AND THEN RODRIGO, CHRIS WARNER AND I HEADED BACK THE FINAL STEPS TO BASE CAMP. I WAS FOLLOWING RODRIGO AND THE WHOLE OF BASECAMP IN OUR WEEKS ABSENCE HAS BECOME LITERALLY A RIVER!! AMAZING HOW QUICKLY THINGS CHANGE ROUND HERE. WE WERE CROSSING A SMALL RIVER OF MELTING ICE AND RODRIGO JUMPED ON A SEEMINGLY LARGE SECURE ROCK AND THE NEXT THING IT COLLAPSED AND HE WAS SITTING WAIST DEEP IN ICY COLD RUNNING WATER.. WHAT A WAY TO END OUR TRIP DOWN THE ICEFALL. I THOUGHT BASECAMP WAS SAFE BUT EVERY SECOND ROCKS AND ICE WILL CREAK AND MOVE AND MY TENT IS SO PRECARIOUSLY PLACED ONTOP OF A SMALL MELTING SLAB OF ICE THAT IF I WASNT HERE FOR JUST ONE MORE NIGHT I WOULD HAVE TO REPITCH IT!!!

WE HAD A DELICIOUS LUNCH, MY ILLNESS SEEMS TO HAVE SUBSIDED NOW THAT I WAS BACK AT BASECAMP!!I WAS SO HAPPY TO SEE OUR COOKS BIM, CHULDUN AND CHAGMA..I LOVE THEM ALL, THEY ARE SUCH AMAZING PEOPLE. WE SAT AND GOSSIPED ALL AFTERNOON, RODRIGO, PIPE, PATO, KIKO AND I AND THEN I CAME TO WORK ON THE COMPUTER.. THE BOYS GIVE ME GRIEF ABOUT NOT BEING ABLE TO START THE GENERATOR AND WOULDNT DO IF FOR ME UNTIL THEY HAD CONSUMED AT LEAST 5 BEERS!! I THEN WORKED ON MY JOURNALS AND 500 EMAILS!! UNTIL DINNER AND ALSO SPOKE TO MY MUM WHOM I MISS DESPERATELY. I WAS REALLY WORRIED ABOUT ANDRONICO STILL AT CAMP 1 AND I KNOW ILL BE ABLE TO RELAX FULLY WHEN HE IS DOWN SAFELY AT BASECAMP.