

The Beast of the Mountain By I.Kerron

The beautiful Emerald Lake Lodge which was next to the frozen Emerald Lake, was a mile away from the mountaineers location as their Jeep Grand Cherokee barrelled through the snow filled roadway.

The snow had been falling since the night before however it only started to fall heavier from last night into the morning.

This would have made their journey impossible if it wasn't for the capabilities of their new four wheel drive, all terrain vehicle.

Jeff Bran sat up in the driver seat and focused his eyes to look through the frost covered windshield as they neared the lodge. We are almost there, Jeff said to everyone in the jeep.

Benjamin Crunch, who sat on the left side in the back, checked his rifle again, making sure that everything was in order.

Stacy Charms, who sat at his right, tightened her jacket and rubbed her hands together, to get some warmth.

"Is a bit chilly," she muttered as she picked up her mittens from her lap.

Henry Frost, who sat next to the driver, loaded extra shells for his tranquilizer shotgun rifle into his jacket pocket. He knew how deadly an angry bear could be when hungry or threatened. The call that he had received a few hours ago stated that a bear had startled one of the caretakers of the lodge while retrieving firewood.

Fortunately, he had gotten away and ran back to the lodge alerting everyone.

Jeff pulled up to the front of the lodge and placed the jeep in park. Everyone ready, Henry asked to which they answered yes in unison.

After their response, Henry opened the door to leave with everyone else following him, leaving the shelter of the vehicle and headed into the snow.

The team of four walked up the front steps and unto the porch of the building. Ben looked out at the area, taking account of the landscape. He could see a small firewood shed as well as a large mound of snow close by. It might have been a large vehicle resting under it. Behind that was the lake which seemed completely frozen over. It was hard for Ben to see through the snow from this distance.

Henry walked up to the front door and tried to push it in but it was locked from the inside. Peeking through the nearby window, he could see overturned furniture as well as other things in disarray within the lodge.

Stacy, who had continued onwards, walked around the corner of the porch and slightly gasped. She was greeted with broken glass on the floor of the porch. It was glass from the large window at the side of the lodge.

She quickly motioned for the others who came to her beckoning call. Henry looked at all the broken glass and then told Ben that the tranquilliser shots may not work.

Henry looked at the large pieces of glass and then the direction of the bars of the window.

'They were pointing inward!'

A bit of concern came over Henry's face as he assessed the situation.

He said softly to Ben, "Secure the porch and trunk anything that moves. If it is too big to be put to sleep... Kill it!"

Looking at Stacy, he said be the lookout with Ben.

She was about to reject his statement when she realised that it was actually an order.

Stacy moved closer to Ben as Henry and Jeff climbed over the window sill and entered into the lounge.

Ben propped himself up on the railing of the house and set his hunter rifle in a steady position.

Stacy decided to walk back to the front of the lounge to take a look around.

Inside the lounge was cold as the indoor heating wasn't turned on. Jeff motioned to Henry that he will check downstairs so Henry decided to walk upstairs. Henry steadied his double barrel shotgun as he began to creep up the flight of stairs.

Jeff left the main hall and moved into the room to the right. There was a table with stale food upon it meaning that it was set out some time before.

The nearby fireplace released very thin streams of smoke indicating that the fire was lit at some point and it had gone out.

'People were about to have breakfast it seems!'

Jeff picked up an apple from the table and walked to what appeared to be the kitchen area in the next room. When he moved into the kitchen, there was a large pot on the counter with a mixture of vegetables in the pot.

The stove was still lit with the fire burning low. Jeff stretched forth and turned the knob for the burner turning it off.

'It seems like everything had happened quickly, prompting an immediate response, leaving everything in the state that it was in.'

As he was about to walk towards the second entrance of the kitchen, he noticed what looked like blood, coming from that direction and passing through the back of the kitchen.

There was also a closed door to the back of the kitchen. Jeff drew his tranquilliser pistol from his attire with his right hand. With his left hand, he slowly reached forward for the doorknob.

"The suspense was deafening"

With a turn of the knob, he quickly pulled it open and readied the pistol. If all else failed, his left hand was readied to retrieve the combat knife from his lower right, pants pocket.

In the room, lay a man on the ground with a half empty bottle of brandy. There was blood on his upper right shoulder, from what looked like something tearing at his jacket.

Jeff stooped down and gently open palmed him on the jaw.

"Hey. Are you coherent?"

When the man began to come too, he was about to scream but then realised where he was and that a man was in front of him.

He seemed to be in some pain so he reached in his pocket and pulled out a tablet. Quickly taking it, he washed it down with some brandy.

Jeff took the bottle and said, "I do think that that is enough!"

The wounded man shook himself off and stood up. Softly, he asked, "Is it still here?"

What is Jeff asked?

His face began to turn white with fear as if the blood was leaving him...

Henry climbed the top of the indoor stairs and walked to the upstairs corridor. Holding the shotgun in front of him, he quickly turned right into the corridor. It was void of any life like beings.

Continuing to creep across the floor, he began to check the nearby doors for the upstairs rooms.

Locked...

Locked...

Locked...

Locked..

Henry made his way towards the end of the corridor, avoiding the nearby side table so as to not make any noise. He did not know what he would find but he had to be ready for anything.

Jeff turned away from the wounded man in the closet and headed back to the fireplace. Picking up an old piece of wood, he headed back to the kitchen stove.

Lighting the stove, he wrapped a piece of cloth around the piece of wood and lit it.

So after you saw the paw print in the snow, you began to run for the lounge. And then, when you ran, you saw the bear and it followed you to the lounge?

Yes. I made it to the Lodge and warned everyone who is in the basement but that is not the issue. The issue is that the paw that I saw wasn't a six foot paw print as a bear has. It was a five paw print.

Isn't there a chance that you are mistaken? Asked Jeff

No. Five foot paw print is either a large dog or....

A wolf! Jeff interjected...

The Loup - garou from Emerald Peak, the injured man muttered under his breath...

Upstairs...

Henry was about to walk into the adjacent corridor when a large paw swiped to the right, knocking the shotgun out of his hand.

Before him, a huge grizzly bear had seen the gun and swiped it away. The huge bear moved forward towards Henry.

Henry quickly reached for the table and used it as a shield as the bear moved towards him.

Suddenly the bear raised itself on its hind legs in order to exert more force in its next attack.

Quickly retreating in the other direction, Henry was able to avoid the bear as it noisily came back down on its front legs. The loud thud echoed throughout the house.

Downstairs...

Jeff looked towards the ceiling as he and the other individual heard the loud noise. Quickly switching off the stove, he picked up the pistol that he had placed on the kitchen counter and ran to the main hall.

As he walked into the main hall, the sound of wood breaking could be heard as the wooden railings at the top of the steps broke.

Henry had tried to block the angry charging bear that had tackled him. The force pushed him backwards resulting in him and the bear breaking through the railing and using the fastest route to reach downstairs.

Henry braced himself for the fall as he hit the floor below. The aggressive bear, which dropped close to him, quickly got up but before it could pounce on Henry, Jeff came up with the torch.

Jeff swung the fire at it while making loud noises.

He needed to acquire an opening to fire off a couple of tranquilliser rounds, else the bear would simply just retaliate due to the shots fired.

The fire did what was needed and the bear decided to rush towards the front door. As it was running to the door, Jeff got his opportunity and fired shots into the back of the bear.

Stacy, who had been watching through the window closest to the door, was pushed back as the bear burst through the front door and ran down the stairs.

Ben readied his rifle and shot a tranquilliser round in its front leg. Reloading, he raised the rifle and began to look through the scope as the bear began to disappear in the falling snow.

As he was about to pull the trigger, the mound of snow, which Ben had thought was a vehicle, began to move and something white and big attacked the bear and dragged it out of sight.

Ben walked to Stacy who was getting up and he helped her regain her footing. When she was standing, Jeff and Henry walked onto the porch.

After catching himself, Henry asked "Did you get it?"

With a bit of uncertainty on his face, Ben responded, "I don't know."

The three men walked to the last location of the bear and were greeted with blood splatter, which led to the mauled and mutilated body of a large, once aggressive, grizzly bear with its head separated from what remained of its body.

It's attacker was nowhere to be seen.... Partially seen paw prints, running off into the distance.