

41. When every minute would Matter

by Jon Krakauer

Jon Krakauer climbed Mt. Everest in 1996. This text is part of his book 'Into Thin Air'. Thin air refers to low amount of oxygen in the air. Krakauer shares very exciting and adventurous experience of mountaineering expedition. He expresses full joy of being on the summit of Everest (29,028 feet). He spent only about five minutes on the peak. He had not eaten and slept well for the last three or four days at the same time he was getting low oxygen supply. He was feeling weak cold and tired.

Krakauer was climbing Everest under the guidance of Andy Harris of the New Zealand based team. During the descent a terrible storm hit the peak of Everest and the mountaineers were in a death trap. Six fellow climbers lost their lives and one had to have his hand amputated (cut).

Krakauer was more anxious about his oxygen tank getting emptied than the deteriorating weather condition. He describes the horrible descending of a crowd of climbers of various teams hurriedly together creating a traffic jam. Descending is as hard as ascending. His oxygen in the tank was finishing and he was feeling uncomfortable but could come down in the fresh oxygen and survived. It is a story of survival from a death trap.