Joe Simpson and Simon Yates were the first people to climb the West Face of the Siula Grande in the Andes mountains. They reached the top successfully , but on their way back conditions were very difficult . Joe fell and broke his leg. They both knew that if Simon continued alone, he would probably get back safely . But Simon decided to risk his life and try to lower Joe down the mountain on a rope（绳）.

As they went down, the weather got worse. Then another trouble occurred. They couldn’t see or hear each other and, by mistake , Simon lowered his friend over the edge of a precipice（峭壁）. It was impossible for Joe to climb back or for Simon to pull him up. Joe’s weight was pulling Simon slowly towards the precipice. Finally , after more than an hour in the dark and the icy cold, Simon had to make a decision. In tears, he cut the rope. Joe fell into a large crevasse（裂缝）in the ice below. He had no food or water and he was in terrible pain. He couldn’t walk, but he managed to get out of the crevasse and started to move towards their camp, nearly ten kilometers away .

Simon had returned to the camp at the foot of the mountain. He thought that Joe must be dead , but he didn’t want to leave immediately. Three days later, in the middle of the night, he heard Joe’s voice. He couldn’t believe it. Joe was there, a few meters from their tent, still alive.