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Subject: Re: Cold Front

Posted by [artisticrainey](#) on Wed, 25 Jul 2012 21:49:49 GMT

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Like trying to find a needle in a haystack.

Elise wasn't sure what had made her think of the old saying, but it sure fit the current situation. Even with the aid of the avalanche beepers, locating the victims hadn't been easy. They still had two people unaccounted for - a member of the ski patrol and the fourth guest. So far, there had been only one fatality - one of the ski lift operators.

"Frankie and Van Gogh from Mobile Control."

"Frankie here. Go ahead Maverick."

"Ski Patrol has located another victim and are requesting help on digging them out. I'm sending you the coordinates."

"FAB," Elise replied. Soon the coordinates appeared on the visor. Elise glanced over at Virgil who, was beside her. He nodded, indicating that he had received the information also. Elise adjusted the course of the hover bike, heading in the direction of the latest victim's coordinates.

Before long, the two IR agents could see two ski patrol members busy shoveling snow in the distance. They took the hover bikes as close as they dared. Virgil and Elise both grabbed a shovel off the back of the hover bikes and hurried over.

"How close are you?" Virgil asked as they reached them.

"Not sure," Leifur replied without looking up, as he tossed another shovelful of snow off to the side.

Elise had taken the thermal imager out of her pack. She switched it on and began scanning the area the ski patrol members were working on. "There are about four more inches of snow covering the victim," she told them.

"Hold up with the shovel," Virgil instructed. The two ski patrol members paused in their work and looked in his direction. "We've got equipment that will melt the snow. Less chance of causing an injury by accidentally hitting them with the shovel," he explained even as Elise handed him a thermal lance from her pack.

Leifur and Jokul took a step back giving Virgil some room to work. Both men were breathing heavily as they watched Virgil go to work. The blowing wind was the only noise that could be heard, as the thermal lance began to melt the snow. Eventually, the orange of a ski patrol jacket could be spotted. The second missing member had been located.

Virgil continued to melt the snow away, exposing more of the victim. When the head and shoulders of his co-worker were exposed, Jokul moved in closer. Kneeling down next to the hole that had been dug, he took off his right glove. Reaching down, he felt for a pulse but couldn't find

one.

Jokul looked up at his friend and co-worker, and slowly shook his head. Blinking away tears, the younger ski patrol member looked away.

"I'm sorry," Virgil said, not sure what else to say as Jokul stood up.

Jokul nodded. "We need to finish up here. We've got one last victim trapped somewhere on this mountain," he replied, refusing to let himself think about the loss of his co-worker. There would be time to grieve later.

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