Lane Salazar

Like Father

Like Son

“When I was little I would always have these dreams about how my dad died.” Kye said, “I always pictured him skiing down having the best time of his life until he hit that one bad patch of ice and lost control off a 300 foot cliff spinning and spinning, struggling to get his chute pulled until he hit the ground.”

“How old were you again?” asked his friend Tanner.

“I was two but my birthday was in like 12 days I think.”

“And tomorrow is the 12th year after he passed?”

“Eleventh.”  
 “Oh well do you want to go hit the park up now or what?”

“Sure.”

They skied down the pro section which led right down to Kyes house. When they reached the house, Kye realized an unfamiliar there was car in the drive way.

“Do you know whose car that is?” questioned Kye.

“Na th, and look it has New York plates, I wonder what’s goin on?” Tanner pondered.

When they walked in Kye’s mom was talking to some guy. The stranger looked straight at Kye and walked up to him and said “So you’re Kye.”

Kye responded, “Yea how do you know who I am?”

“My names William Labowsky, I was a good friend of your dad and his main photographer.”

“What are you doing here then?”

I looked at my calendar and saw your dad’s death was eleven years ago, and I’ve had an idea in my head for a while but you haven’t been old enough until now”

“Me? What does my dad’s death have to do with me?”

“Well what I have been discussing with your mom is, only if you want, taking you to where your dad died and going skiing around there you will ski the chute your father passed away on and I can make a documentary slash ski film about you and your father. So the only question I have remaining is, would you be down to come to Zermatt Switzerland and ski the Matterhorn?”

All Kye did was stand there with a blank stare on his face. Then he just walked toward his room telling Tanner to follow him. William just looked at Kye’s mom with a questioning expression on his face. Kyes mom offered to go see why Kye left.

When she walked into his room she saw Kye siting on his bed holding his dads journal, containing all the things Kye father did every day. Kyes Father was Anthony Peters, a man who was considered a skiing legend. He also was a professional base jumper. In his Journal was a log every day from 1999 the year he died. Kye automatically checked the day his dad died.

“ January 18th 1999

Today is the big day, skiing the Matterhorn will be one of the most extreme adventures of my life. Right now William, my photographer, is making coffee for everyone and the rest of the crew is getting all their ski stuff together. If anyone ends up reading this I would like them to know to take on every challenge thrown at them and live life to the fullest!”

After reading the page everyone stopped and looked at Kye. Kye immediately said “I’ll do it… I’ll go to Switzerland with that guy from New York”

Kye’s mom immediately responded “Kye if you don’t wan…”

“I’m going to do it!” Kye exclaimed “I want to, it will be a fun trip and I might be able to pick up some sponsors from the movie.”

“Okay go pack your bags and ski gear while I talk to William.”

“You know if anything happens to my Kyle, you’re a dead man.” said Kye’s Mom

“Nothing will happen; we are going to make sure it’s as safe as possible with guides and lots of maintenance checks, he will be fine. I will also make sure he keeps in close contact with you while we’re there.” said William

In that instance Kye came rushing down the stairs with everything he needed packed and ready to go.

“Well that was fast, you must be pretty excited.” said Kyes Mom

“Yea I’m pretty stoked. So when do we leave?” Asked Kye

“Go throw all your bags in my car. We will leave for the airport after you say goodbye and I call the rest of the crew.” said William

Kye put all of his gear in the back of Williams car. He said goodbye to his sister, Tanner, and his mother. They hugged for at least a minute and when Kye pulled away tears were running down his mothers face and she said, “Just promise me you won’t get hurt?”

“I promise” said Kye

Kye and William arrived at the airport a few hours later and got on a plane to New York, then to Zurich Switzerland, and drove to Zermatt from there. When they arrived the town was mostly dry with a little bit of snow here and there. But the town was surrounded by huge mountains covered in tons and tons of snow. One peak stood out the most and that was the Matterhorn. It’s tall, very steep and had almost no snow compared to the other mountains. This is a sign that there are lots of avalanches and high winds. They rolled into a driveway leading to a small log cabin with lots of other rentals cars and one local car. When they got to the house you could see everyone sitting inside by the fire. Grouped around what seemed to be an old man. They walked in and William introduced everyone to Kye except for the old man, the old man introduced himself. “I’m Alexander Pollack, Nice to meet you Kyle”

“Hi nice to meet you, I go by Kye, by the way.”

“Alexander is a local to this area and is going to be your mountain guide” said William

“I may be old but I’m still the best skier in all of Switzerland!” exclaimed Alexander.

The group continued on about skiing until the sun went down over the peaks and it was time to go to sleep.

When Kye woke up in the morning the aroma of frying bacon filled the air making Kye shoot straight out of bed and into the kitchen. Everyone else was awake and sitting in the Kitchen still talking about back in the day when the longer your skis were the cooler and better you were. As everyone babbled on about the good ol’ days Kye sat patiently waiting for his bacon. When they all sat down to eat breakfast Kye just dug in eating all the food, as if he hadn’t eaten in days. “You like my cookin?” asked Alexander

Kye replied “Yes sir, definitely the best breakfast I’ve had in a while. I usually just eat oatmeal for breakfast.”

“Is that so? Well you better get used to bacon and eggs for breakfast for the next week.”

Once everyone was done with breakfast they got all their ski gear and film equipment, and went out to one of the smaller peaks. They wanted to simply film Kye in the backcountry to see what he can do. The first place they went was Zermatt Resort. However on their way they came in to town and realized no cars were allowed in town. So they took Kye to some random mountain by the cabin.

They took snowmobiles up to where they wanted to ski. It started out as a beautiful no tracked powder covered flat run that dropped into a huge pillow line that ended in trees where Kye had built a jump. Alexander was the first person to go down the line simply just carving down the bottomless powder then avoided the pillow line yet still went off the jump and did a huge daffy. “Woah that was huge!” Exclaimed Kye, “He is crazy ballsy for being how old he is! That was sweet!”

Kye dropped in doing lots of butters and spins. He hit the pillow line doing a flatspin off the first pillow, landing on the rest and shredding them till the jump. Then he did a cork 9 mute off the jump his first time. Once he got warmed up he hiked up enough to do the jump. He dropped in and did another cork 9 with a safety grab. He hiked back up again and dropped in carving down his run in full speed, flying past the first camera man. When he went off the only sound was him carving off the lip off the jump. He did a cork 9 safety and went into a cork 7 tail grab.

“Did he just do a double off a backcountry jump?!” William questioned with great excitement “That was insane! I knew he was good but I didn’t know he was that good.”

“I didn’t even know that the kids these days do doubles.” said Alexander. Everyone chuckled.

Then Kye appeared out of the woods shouting to everyone else “We should go find some big mountain type stuff.” Everyone agreed with Kye so they starting getting all the film equipment and heading over to a glacier that if you hike enough will lead you to Chamonix, France. But there plan was no to go to Chamonix, their plan was just to simply ski down the glacier. The glacier was steep, icy, and had large consequences’ due to all of the hidden and not so hidden crevasses. Again they took the snowmobiles to the top and dropped in.

Starting with a small little pillow that alexander did a backscratcher off. Kye followed doing a 360. Then Alexander went off to the right and acted as if a hill was a half-pipe and did a lip side 360. Kye followed doing 540 tail to make sure he didn’t get shown up by an old man. Alexander just chuckled and kept skiing along down the rest which was just steep and icy. Avoiding most cliffs with the knowing that all the landings would be icy, But still hauling down the ridges, and at the bottom jumping over a crevasse.

Kye did the first few cliffs, but not the rest now that he knows there’s ice. But, when he got to the bottom he didn’t realize the crevasse and when in the air over it he panicked and crashed on the other side of the Crevasse. He tomahawked down the rest of the way until he got where Alexander was. Kye realized he had to hike back up and get his skis and poles which he had ejected out of on impact. It took him about 30 minutes to hike up and find one of his skis and both of his poles. He skied half way down and picked up his other ski, skiing down to Alexander “That was a ride!” Exclaimed Kye

“I bet that will be some pretty good footage to put in the film also especially you hiking up. That was funny!” stated Alexander

They skied the rest of the way down pretty easily to meet up with the rest of the crew

“You looked like a tire rolling down a hill!” William said while laughing

“That was so crazy, I have never done that before. It was actually pretty damn fun!” stated Kye

They took the snowmobiles back to the cars and went back to the cabin. When they got to the cabin they hung up all their wet gear around the fire. They watched the video of Kyle Tomahawking and doing a double cork over and over until dinner was ready. This time Kye didn’t eat fast he just took his time and interacted with everyone else telling ski stories. But when they finished everyone went right to sleep.

The next morning Kye was the first to wake up. Today’s the big day. Today is the day Kye is going to ski the Matterhorn. Kye double checked all of his gear before anyone woke up and made sure it was all going to work out good, especially his parachute. He had not used his parachute very much before today. Everyone woke up about 15 minutes after Kye was done checking all of his gear. Alexander started making breakfast again and when they ate Kye didn’t say much. But it was obvious he was anxious and nervous. Everyone got all the gear they needed together and still Kye was saying nothing. William walked over to Kye with a Gopro In his hand “Here you’ll need to put this on your helmet for when you go down.”

“Ok, I will” said Kye

“You nervous?”

“Yea I just don’t want the same thing that happened to my dad to happen to me.”

“It won’t, He crashed and wasn’t able to pull his chute. With the advances in everything these days your chute would still go off automatically if you couldn’t. You got this!”

“That’s good to know… Well should we head up there?”

“Yea, we just have to wait for the helicopter to arrive.”

“Wait we’re going in a helicopter?”

“Yea, how else would we get up there?” William chuckled to himself.

Then the loud sound of the helicopter faded in. Kye looked out the window and saw the helicopter land. He rushed to the helicopter and threw all his stuff in it, helping everyone else get their stuff into the helicopter. Then they were off, Kye had the biggest smile on his face but as they got closer and closer to the matter horn his expression got more and more tense and nervous. Finally they came to the top where Kye was getting dropped off. It was definitely the gnarliest place anyone has ever been dropped off by a helicopter. When Kye had all his stuff out, He waved and the helicopter and it pulled away panning around Kye as he looked at all the scenery. Then Kye walked to flatter area and put his skis on. Kye announced on the radio that he was ready.

Kye got the go ahead and on the radio you could hear Kye saying “3, 2…1… Dropping.” Kye hesitated dropping in but he dropped off the cornice down onto what looked as icy as an ice rink. But he still carved down onto a ridge were he partially stopped on to look where his line was. He skied down the sluff of the ridge then jumped to the other side. He started picking up speed traversing across the slope, then there was a bump that through him into a patch of ice and down went Kye. Tumbling down the icy mountain headed for a cliff and he kept tumbling as he hit a rock he shot off the cliff. Still tumbling, he landed on an icy patch but miraculously he landed on his feet and skied out and stopped on the closest ridge. He stood there for a while catching his breath and once he caught his breath he had to again survey where he was going to ski down because he had gotten off his line choice.

Then he remembered seeing a few hundred foot cliff below him which gave him an idea. He charged down the mountain and flew off the cliff soaring hundreds of feet in the air then he pulled his parachute, soaring down still. Then his parachute caught him slowing his speed down and he just floated down for a while then landing at the bottom of the cliff. He skied down to the very bottom. When he reached the very bottom he raised both arms in the sky and then collapsed. When the helicopter reached him he was congratulated by everyone and he hopped in the helicopter. He is now the youngest person to have ever descended down the Matterhorn.

William said “That was the craziest recovery that has ever happened I’m pretty sure! I can’t believe you landed back on your feet!” everyone agreed

“Yea it’s a weird feeling thinking you’re about to get seriously hurt then realizing you’re back on your feet skiing.” Kye said as everyone laughed.

“Well we’re all glad you are alright!” stated Alexander.

“Me too, it was kind of weird though I swear when I was flying down the mountain with my dad skiing right alongside me. He told me he was proud then vanished.”

“I believe it. Your dad was a great man and will always be remembered as one of the best skiers in history. But, you have to always remember to live in the moment, and this moment is your time.”