

The Spirit of Ben Macdui

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FADE IN:

EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE - DAY

Heavy clouds and fog around the snow-covered mountain. TWO FIGURES climb the last few feet to the summit.

SUPER: BEN MACDUI, SCOTLAND

SUMMIT

An ice-ax digs into the snow.

JOHN LASSITER (late 30s, slim and athletic) climbs to his feet then reaches down to help -

LIZ LASSITER (early 30s, beautiful tomboy) takes his hand and pulls herself to her feet. She pushes her ice-ax into a strap around her waist.

John wraps an arm around her as they scan the beautiful scenery.

JOHN

Happy Anniversary, honey. I told
you we'd get here.

Liz kisses John's cheek then takes off her backpack. She pulls out two flasks and hands one to John.

Liz raises the flask to her mouth and drinks as she scans the snow covered summit. An apprehension appears in her eyes. John notices and takes her hand.

JOHN

You okay?

Liz snaps her attention to John as if her mind was elsewhere then offers a weak smile.

LIZ

Sure... just out of breath, that's
all. It's been a while.

JOHN

And who's fault is that?

LIZ

I know, I know, but we're here now
aren't we?

John reaches into the backpack and pulls out a camera.

Liz crunches through the snow as, in the background, John takes pictures. The apprehension is back in Liz's eyes.

JOHN

Don't go too far, okay honey?

Liz waves in response and continues crunching through the snow. There appears to be an echo to her foot-steps. She stops and glances over her shoulder back to John.

The footsteps continue, only more distant now.

Liz shivers and fastens her ski-jacket right up to the neck.

LATER

Liz rests against a rock as John takes pictures.

LIZ

Are you almost finished?

JOHN

Yeah, just a few more honey. You in a rush?

He turns the camera to her with a smile and snaps away.

Liz struggles to hide a reluctant smile, then finally poses.

JOHN

Fabulous darling.

Liz laughs and sits back on the rock.

LIZ

You sure you didn't hear it?

John walks over, packing up the camera.

JOHN

Didn't hear a thing.

An incomprehensible GAELIC WHISPER fills the air.

John and Liz share a look - they BOTH heard that.

JOHN

Come on, lets pack up.

Liz doesn't need to be asked twice and is on her feet almost before the words leave John's mouth.

They put their belongings back in the backpack then trudge through the snow.

LOUDER FOOTSTEPS seem to follow them. Slower than theirs but the noise gets closer each time.

John and Liz spin around but nothing is there but the vast snow and fog.

JOHN
(nervous laughter)
Kind of spooky up here, huh?

LIZ
Shut up. We can laugh once we're
off this mountain.

They turn back around but before they start to walk a FIGURE, far in the distance, becomes visible.

At least nine-foot tall and almost a ghostly-white.

John squints, trying to get a better view, but Liz lowers her head and marches on with more intensity.

LIZ
John! I want to get off this
mountain!

John pulls a puzzled face as he continues to stare at the figure, which now appears a lot closer.

JOHN
But you see that, right?

He catches up with Liz.

JOHN
What the hell is it?

Liz concentrates only on her own feet.

The GAELIC WHISPER again, louder now.

Tears well in Liz's eyes as she pulls at John's hand.

JOHN
Oh... My god!

Liz looks back at John, the tears now flow.

LIZ

What?

JOHN

Liz, just turn around and follow me, don't look back, okay?

Liz does exactly what John just told her not to and her face turns instantly to horror. Her mouth opens to form a scream but no sound comes out.

John wraps his arm around her as they both turn around and move as fast as they can through the knee-deep snow.

Heavy footsteps follow them. Close and getting closer.

Liz's breath becomes laboured but her eyes show the fight needed to keep going.

She drops to the ground in a SCREAM of agony.

John stops and turns around. He sees Liz with her left leg stuck in a pot-hole, almost down to the knee.

He helps her up and supports her weight as they move towards a sheltered CAVE-like area. The rucksack still lies in the snow, forgotten.

INT. CAVE - DAY

Liz's fibula bone is exposed in her leg.

She SCREAMS in pain as John wraps his scarf around it.

JOHN

Shh, honey, it's going to be okay.
I'll get you some water.

John looks around the cave which is only just big enough for the two of them, the entrance is so thin that it seems almost impossible that they managed to fit through.

JOHN

Where's the bag?

Liz seems to waver in and out of consciousness and doesn't answer.

John stands up, walks to the entrance and looks out. He sees the rucksack where it was left and curses under his breath.

JOHN
Liz, I'm going to have to go
outside.

Liz's eyes open in shock.

LIZ
No, John, don't leave me. That
thing --

JOHN
There's the water in there and the
first aid pack. We need it.

He kisses her lips then walks back to the entrance.

LIZ
Please John.

John looks over his shoulder and forces an attempted
comforting smile.

JOHN
I'll be back in a few seconds. I
love you.

He disappears through the gap.

Liz closes her eyes and lowers her head.

LIZ
I love you too.

A long silent moment passes as Liz mouths a prayer...

The GAELIC VOICE. Louder. A SHADOW casts over Liz. She snaps
her attention back to the entrance.

LIZ
John?... John!?

Slow, powerful FOOTSTEPS in the snow outside. The shadow
disappears then returns in intervals as if whatever is
outside is pacing.

Tears flood down Liz's cheeks as she studies her injury.

She stretches her arms out to the walls for support then
raises herself up on to her good leg.

She brings down her injured leg, keeping all of her weight
on the other --

Liz crashes to the ground.

EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE - NIGHT

The snow pours down in almost blizzard conditions. The wind HOWLS.

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

Liz rests in the corner. Her skin an unhealthy blue.

She holds two small photographs in front of her in shaky hands.

Her lips quiver and her teeth chatter as she gazes at the pictures of TWO SMALL CHILDREN.

LIZ

I'm sorry babies. I'm so sorry.

She kisses each photograph in turn then lays them on to the ground in front of her.

Liz reaches into the strap around her waist and pulls up the ice-ax. She holds it in front of her.

LIZ

God forgive me.

She runs the blade across her neck. Blood instantly pours from the wound as she drops to her back.

Blood runs all the way to the entrance of the cave.

FADE OUT.