

## A Skiing Catastrophe

"I had so much fun skiing today and I learned how to ski backwards," Tilly said to her brother John as they walked past the moonlit pond.

"Yes, and I can't believe you did a jump!" John chuckled, winding his scarf around his neck as the wind whipped his coat.

"Come on, hurry up or we'll get in trouble," Tilly urged. Reaching into his pocket, John realised he'd forgotten his ski pass.

"Oh no, I've left my ski pass, Mum and Dad will be furious! Tell them I've gone back." And with that, John sprinted back to the ski slope.

Gasping for breath, John jogged through shadowy streets, until finally arriving at the dry-ski slope. Discovering an old, rotten gate, he made his way through the bramble-ridden sheep field, along the slippery felt and into the freezing, cobweb-painted fitting room. "Now, where did I leave it?" John wondered. Peering around the corner, John caught sight of his ski pass and breathed a sigh of relief. "Imagine if I'd have had to sidestep up the mountains in Austria!"

All of a sudden, the door swung shut and locked. John stepped back. In the midnight darkness, a shadow flitted as fast as a bullet through an open window. A wooden bench pressed into John's leg as his heart thumped as loud as a drum beat. Without warning, a rack of helmets tumbled to the floor. Someone was next to him. Someone he couldn't see. Who was it? A rush of icy cold air whipped John's hair, sending a prickle of fear through his body. He darted to the counter as his numb fingers crept along the rusty metal rack until they clenched around a ski boot.

John's eyes skipped across the room, searching for an escape route big enough for him to fit through. Terrified, he realised he was trapped. What would happen to him now? Footsteps echoed across the concrete floor, drawing closer. The shadow gaped in front of John, making him stumble back. Instinctively, John hurled the ski boot at the shadow. As the ski boot whizzed through the air, there was a bone-chilling shriek.

John grasped a ski pole and stabbed it into the door. Seconds later, he was outside, over the netting, across the car park and sweating along the wet, mossy road. Arriving at his house, he panted out his story to his and Tilly's parents. Moments later, Tilly burst in, clutching her face in agony and holding a ski boot. John, who instantly realised what had happened, burst out laughing.

"Will you two ever learn?" chuckled Dad. "I wonder who's going to pay for the bent ski pole - it better not be me!"

By Imogen and Fei