

A POEM

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The follies of youth and mountains do not always go well together - you know when you still think you are indestructible; it can lead us into "difficult" situations. Like in the Zillertal one day when the climbing was more (a lot more) difficult than anticipated and the weather turned against us and "well". Thoughts turned from "*will we be late getting back to the hut?*" to, "well", "*Will we get back to the hut?*". But we did and ate dinner like horses accompanied by two large glasses of red wine. These last, relaxed us a bit. Suddenly, I picked up pen and paper and the poem below came out complete. I didn't compose it. Honest! It was all preformed. Someone else in there must have. Still, it summed up the day.

Das Zillertal

or

It Went Wrong - Nearly

Who stretches forth a trembling boot?
 Upon a stoney mountain,
 Inserts a toe in tiny niche,
 Sets boot on rock about him.

Grip tight on slender nodule,
 Gaze round on nothingness,
 Feel boot slip slow on grating grip,
 And wonder, "Where to next?"

A smile will sooth a wondering heart,
 The beauty all around,
 Will reassure an anxious soul.
 What lies beyond below?

Grey green pillars to the sky
 Stretch out to heavenly blue.

Each ice crystal beauteous
On each ice field we knew.

Beauty loves you all around,
But, stony hearted mountain,
Dare I let slip on slender grip,
No mercy on the mountain.

This rope suspends you over death,
But shields you not from questions.
They spring like streams from mountain sides,
In minds eternal fountains.

Beauty and horror, never apart,
This Jekyll and Hyde are partners.
But which is truth, and which is lie,
Will you ever find on mountains?