

XPEDITION FORCE – THE DRAMA

Adventures on Ecksmount

STORY OUTLINE

This is the story of a group of four explorers who are setting out on an adventure to climb the mysterious mountain, Ecksmount, after the children in your church raised the money for them to go on the expedition.

CAST

Dr Emmanuel Hill: serious scientist who wears a white lab coat at all times (even in the coldest weather) and is in charge of the expedition.

Sarah Dale: team medic and the only really sane member of the team.

Janice Meadow: airhead assistant scientist who is not what she appears.

Colin Slope: muscle-bound assistant who is argumentative and sometimes a bit nasty.

INVOLVING THE CHILDREN

Each day the children's presence will be acknowledged by the cast members, who will address them directly. Within each script, one of the cast members will make a reference to snow. The children should pelt the cast with 'snowballs' which have been prepared in advance (foam balls or screwed-up paper). The point of getting the children to throw the snowballs is to help emphasise that they are in the same place as the cast. If this is too difficult to organise, then have someone offstage ready to shower the cast with fake snow.

DAILY SYNOPSIS AND STAGING REQUIREMENTS

Sunday 1: Adventures on Ecksmount

The cast appear in your church to collect the funds that the children have raised for them to go on an expedition. HQ has also told them that they will get their instructions in addition to the money. You will need a fairly large envelope with a large cheque inside plus some official-looking papers.

Day 1: Arrival at base camp

The cast arrives at base camp after a very long journey feeling very tired and irritable. They find their first clue that all is not what it seems. Have a picture of a big mountain in the background. All cast members will need rucksacks – Meadow's should be absolutely enormous. You will need a piece of paper like a map which will have the mysterious message for this day written on it.

Day 2: Higher up the mountain

It is late at night. The cast find the second mysterious message and start to wonder exactly what is going on. Meadow makes it clear that she is out to do something evil. The same big mountain should be in the background. There should be a small pool on stage with feet sticking out of it if possible so that it looks as though there is something dead in it. You'll need a bottle with the mysterious message inside.

Day 3: Campfire blues

The explorers are running out of food and are getting more confused about the mysterious messages. They try to work out what is going on. Meadow is worried that they might work out the story behind the messages so she resorts to desperate measures to stop their discussion. The same big mountain should be in the background, and there should be a campfire arrangement at front of stage. You will need a piece of paper for the mysterious message and three sticks of celery.

Day 4: Between a rock and a hard place

The explorers are lost in a blizzard and are getting desperate. They can't see where they are or how to get to the top of the mountain. They discover a cave and a mysterious message carved out in the wall. Meadow seizes her opportunity to pursue her evil plan. The same big mountain is in the background. If possible have some sound and special effects at the beginning to simulate blizzard conditions. Create a cave-type scene at the front of the stage. You'll need to have the mysterious message on the wall of the cave.

Day 5: Summit up

The explorers awake to find they have made it to the top of the mountain without knowing it and they discover unexpected treasure. If possible, it would be good to change the scenery since the explorers are supposed to be on the top of the mountain. You'll need a box with the mysterious messages from previous days written on its outside. The message for today is inside the box along with a small cross and some cookies.

Sunday 2: Meet the press

The explorers are interviewed. They are questioned about the events on Ecksmount. There is the option of doing this on video and showing it as a news item instead of 'live' in the church.

Follow-up: Remember me and tell the story

The explorers are all tricked into meeting each other in a remote location, thinking the others have invited them. It has been some time since their adventures and they are beginning to wonder if the amazing things they experienced together really happened or if they were just dreaming. A voice challenges them to remember what happened and to tell the story. You will need a simple campfire.

SUNDAY 1: ADVENTURES ON ECKSMOUNT

Hill: (Sweeping in confidently.) Right then everyone, let's get sorted. Janice put down the alligator, you know what happened last time.

Meadow: (Offstage.)

Aaaaaaaaaaarrrrrrrrrrggggggggghhhhhhhhh!

Hill: Oh well, too late then. Sarah, give Janice a hand, will you? She's probably missing one!

(The rest of cast appear. Janice's hand is wrapped in a very large bandage.)

Hill: Come on everyone, look alive. Don't worry about the hand Janice, you'll grow another one, dear! Now where are the children? We're late for our meeting. Hurry up everyone!

Slope: (Angrily.) Pah! What's the point of meeting these children? They only raised some money to send us on the trip. This is such a waste of time!

Dale: Come on Colin, get a grip. We've been through all of this so many times. Why don't you get it into your thick head that we need the money or we can't go on the journey? HQ said we'd find out where our expedition is going to at the same time. (She bends down to tie her shoelace.)

Hill: (Looking at Meadow.) Ah Janice. How's the arm, dear?

(Hill slaps Meadow on the back. She topples backwards, falling over Dale and knocking herself out.)

Dale: (Getting up to look at Meadow.) She's out for the count! (Checks her pulse.)

Hill: Oh, erm, well. No matter. Now, where are our children. We're late and they're supposed to meet us here. And we need to get our instructions from them. I can't see any children.

Can you? Can you see them? (Looks over the children's heads and in strange places – encourage the children to try to be noticed.)

Dale: (Noticing children for the first time.) Erm, Dr Hill. (Points at children.) The children are here.

Slope: (Aghast.) Oh for heaven's sake! Are you mad? These are just some silly kids that should be out doing something else. (To the children.) You're the ones who raised our money? I can't believe it!

(Lots of booing and hissing from the children!)

Hill: Colin! What are you doing? Stop that right now! HQ told us that our children would be surprising and that we should accept them whatever they looked like. (Addresses children.) OK then! One of you has an envelope for me, I believe? (A child hands over an envelope which Hill opens. As he reads, he goes steadily pale and starts to shake, rubs his eyes and shakes his head and says quietly.) Oh no. Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear.

(Dale, Slope and the revived Meadow creep up behind him and try to see over his shoulder. There's a scuffle for space. Slope elbows Meadow in the face and she is knocked out again.)

Dale: What does it say?

Hill: Well, we're going on a longer journey than I thought. It's a long one. Very dangerous. Very, very dangerous.

Slope: (Sneering.) Dangerous? Pah! I thrive on danger. Nothing can make me afraid. Nothing.

Dale: Where are we going, Dr Hill?

Hill: We've to go to Ecksmount and climb to the top. Apparently there's something up there waiting to be discovered that will change the universe for ever.

Dale: Ecksmount? Did you say Ecksmount? (Hill nods.) But nobody has ever returned from Ecksmount alive. Nobody. There must be some mistake? Surely it's a mistake.

Hill: It's not a mistake. That's where we've to go and so our journey begins. The more surprising thing is that we have to take these children with us. (Looks at the children.) Well it's a surprise boys and girls but I think you can do it. Are you ready

for the expedition? Will you be brave? Will you do your best? Will you join the Xpedition Force?

(Everyone sings the Xpedition Force song.)

Slope: Oh fantastic. It's bad enough we have to go to the middle of nowhere, but we have to take these useless kids with us. What a waste of time!

Hill: (Sharply.) Slope! Enough! Okay team. We know what's ahead. Time to get on with the job. Let's go!

(Hill leaves. Dale and Slope look at each other for a moment and then walk off forgetting all about Meadow. A moment later, Meadow begins to stir. Slowly she gets up and looks around to make sure her colleagues have left. Once fully standing, she begins to pace up and down and looking at the children in a threatening way.)

Meadow: So you're coming with us on the expedition are you? You silly fools! Don't you realise what's going on here? Don't think those other idiots will protect you. They have no idea what's going on either. They don't realise that this journey will be their last. Turn back while you can or it may be your last journey too! (Exits with evil laugh.)

DAY 1: ARRIVAL AT BASE CAMP

(As the cast appear, the children should shout and cheer in welcome.)

Slope: (To the children.) Oh would you please stop that noise and be quiet. We've had a terrible journey and we don't need you making all that noise.

Hill: (Putting down his rucksack.) Ah, good morning children. Glad you got here ahead of us. And you've set up camp. Well done.

Dale: (Over shoulder.) Janice! Hurry up for goodness' sake. You're always last. (Notices children.) Ah. Children. How did you manage to get here before us? Did you fly on Concorde?

(Janice appears with very large rucksack. Stagger under the weight and threatens to collapse on the children.)

Slope: Watch out! She's going to keel over!

(She comes to a stop and then totters back and

forward before falling over and passing out. Hill is busy examining the camp and hasn't noticed.)

Dale: Oh, Dr Hill? I think you need to come over here and check out Janice and the kit. She's passed out again.

(Slope has moved to side of camp and notices something on the ground. He picks up a piece of old paper and holds it up to the light. It looks like an old map. Hill and Dale peer at Meadow.)

Slope: (To himself.) What is this? It's the last thing I'd expect to see here. (Looks around.) I wonder who was here last?

Dale: (Noticing.) Hey! Colin, what's that?

Slope: (Putting the paper in his pocket.) Oh, nothing. Just a bit of rubbish for the fire.

Hill: Right everyone, time to sit down for a minute. Janice is still out cold. Sarah, you're on dishes tonight.

Dale: (Sighing heavily.) Quiet here, isn't it?

(Silence.)

Slope: Yeah it's really, really quiet.

(Silence.)

Hill: Very, very, very, very quiet. Very quiet indeed.

(Silence. Meadow sits up suddenly, bolt upright and screams a deathly scream.)

Meadow: (Pointing at Slope.) The bit of paper! (She falls back down as though fainting again. Everyone looks stunned.)

Dale: What is wrong with that woman? (To Slope.) You had a bit of paper earlier Colin, what was it?

Hill: You found a bit of paper? What is it, man? Come on we're a team here. If you've found something significant, you need to tell us.

Slope: (Takes paper out of his pocket.) I don't think it's important. All it says is, 'Listen to the sound'. (He puts the paper down on a rock.)

(Pause. They all think about the message.)

Hill: Confusing. Mmmm. Maybe you're right and it's not important.

Dale: Brrr! (Shivers.) It feels really cold. Do you think it will snow?

(At this point the children shout, 'It's a white-out!' and pelt the cast with their supply of snowballs.)

Hill: Ah well. That was sudden. Okay. We've arrived. But we need to get a fire going and set up camp properly. Let's go get some firewood.

(Hill, Dale and Slope leave to search for wood. After a moment, Meadow gets up, goes over to where Slope has left the bit of paper, reads it, and then very slowly rips it up, laughing in an evil way while doing so.)

Meadow: Oh, Dr Hill, you think you are so, so clever. But you have no idea of what's ahead of you! Listen to the sound indeed. Ha! By the end of this you'll be lucky if you can hear yourself scream! (She laughs evilly and exits.)

DAY 2: HIGHER UP THE MOUNTAIN

Dale: (Noticing the children.) Oh look everyone. The children are here before us again. How do they do that? (To the children.) How do you do that?

Slope: Oh please. Ignore them, they just get to sit about and watch us do the hard work. (Sticks out his tongue at the children.)

Meadow: (Sniffing.) Phew, what's that smell?

Dale: It's disgusting whatever it is. Absolutely horrible.

Hill: Yes. It is rather unpleasant isn't it? No matter. Look there's a rock pool. Let's go and get some water and then make camp here.

(Everyone puts down their stuff.)

Slope: You can't expect us to sleep here surely? Not with that stench? It's horrible. (He searches through his bag and brings out a peg, which he puts on his nose. Everyone stares at him.)

Dale: Colin. You are a very, very strange man. It's only a smell. (Pause.) Got another one of those pegs handy? (He gives her one.) Ta. (She puts it on. Hill looks at them and just shakes his head.)

Meadow: Look into the pool everyone. You'll see the reason for the smell.

(They all go over to look.)

Hill: Oh dear. It's a dead sheep.

Slope: Wow. Interesting intestines. Look at the liver

and the kidneys and is that its brain and what about—

Dale: (Interrupting.) Save the biology lesson, Colin. This is revolting.

(Meadow bends too far over the pool and falls in – she gets very wet.)

Slope: Well done Janice! Try not to swallow or you may suffer the same fate as the sheep. What are we going to do now?

Hill: It's freezing cold. Maybe it will snow.

(At this the children shout, 'It's a white-out!' and pelt the cast with snowballs.)

Dale: Well that was handy! Janice gather up some of the snowballs and put them in the pot for boiling. (Meadow makes to gather them up but trips on a log and falls over, knocking herself out.)

Slope: Oh well never mind, Janice. We'll do it shall we? (Moves over to beyond the pool area to gather snow.)

Dale: (Points.) What's that? Glistening in the moonlight? (Hill goes over and unearths a bottle. He looks at it, takes off the lid and a small, old and dank bit of paper falls out. Dale picks it up and reads it.)

Hill: What does it say?

Dale: 'Smell the perfume.' A bit strange, isn't it? Bit scary really. I wonder if it has something to do with the sheep?

Meadow: (Now recovered.) Maybe it was the sheep that wrote it?

Hill: Sheep can't write, Janice. They're very baaaaaad writers! (Laughs at his own joke while others shake their heads.) Mmm. It's interesting that we've found another message. What was the one we had yesterday? Colin, old chap, you still got that bit of paper we found yesterday?

Slope: (Looking through his pockets.) It's in my pocket I think. No it's not there. Sarah, do you have it?

Dale: No. I thought you did.

Slope: (Irritably.) Well I don't. Why do I always have to be the organised one?

Dale: I wasn't saying you did but it was a bit stupid of you to lose it!

Slope: Stupid? So I'm stupid now am I? Well I'll tell you what's stupid. This whole expedition, that's what! We are half way up a mountain and we have no idea why we're here. And the worst bit is I'm surrounded by total idiots. (Storms off.)

Hill: Well, Sarah. You do have a knack for upsetting that man. I'll go after him and calm him down before he gets too far away and can't find his way back. You could set up the tent over there. (Hill exits, Dale goes off the opposite direction to set up the tent.)

Meadow: (Sitting up and moving to where bottle and note have been left.) Smell the perfume, eh? (Rips up the paper slowly laughing in an evil way.) It won't be long now. I will have to bide my time, but these idiots have no idea what's ahead. They'll never leave this mountain alive. (Evil laughter while exiting.)

DAY 3: CAMPFIRE BLUES

Hill: My, it's cold tonight isn't it? But just look at the stars. Aren't they amazing?

(Everyone looks up.)

Dale: (Sighing.) Oh it's so romantic!

Slope: Romantic? Are you mad? We're stuck on the side of a mountain with no idea of what's ahead of us. It's freezing, our food's running low and it's getting harder to breathe. What's romantic about that?

Hill: Please don't start, you two.

(Dale and Slope turn away from each other.)

Dale: I'm really hungry.

Slope: We've had our rations for today. You know that.

Hill: I'll have a look round for some food, eh? You never know what might be growing up here. (Gets up and takes torch and wanders over the area of the stage and notices the children.) Oh my. The children are here. You were very quiet. Hope your supplies are holding up. You might have been a bit more generous with ours! No matter. We'll see what we can find. (Hill wanders around.

The others sit in silence. Meadow stokes the fire.)
Hey! Everyone! I've found another one of these strange messages. Come and see!

(They all go over to him.)

Dale: What does it say?

Slope: Let's have a look? (Adjusts torch.) 'Taste the bread and wine.' What does that mean? I can't see any bread or wine anywhere!

Meadow: Where's the one from yesterday? Maybe it has something to do with the perfume?

Hill: Dunno. When I got back to the camp last night I couldn't find it. Figured it had blown away in the wind.

Dale: Okay. Let's try to remember. The first day's message was about listening to the sound, wasn't it?

Slope: Yeah that's right! And yesterday's was about smelling the perfume.

Hill: This is really strange. It's like someone is trying to tell us something but I just don't get it.

(They all return to the fire.)

Dale: Well at least the fire's warm. Thank goodness we didn't have snow today.

(The children shout, 'It's a white-out!' and pelt the cast with snow. The fire goes out.)

Hill: Ah well. Spoke too soon there, Sarah. Pity about the fire. And no food to be found either.

Meadow: (Looking up.) I found some roots earlier that are edible. Not much, but better than nothing if you're hungry. (Rummages in bag and passes them around.)

Dale: Thanks, Janice. Aren't you eating one?

Meadow: No. There were only three, and anyway I'm not hungry.

(They all chew on the roots and then slowly one by one they fall into a drugged sleep. Meadow goes over to Slope, takes the note from his hand and reads it before slowly ripping it up.)

Meadow: Oh no. Great forces are at work that might get in the way of my plans. I didn't anticipate this. Luckily these fools will never work out what's going on and will be sacrificed for their

stupidity. (She laughs.) I will have to act quickly. I must make contact while they sleep. Tomorrow they'll get the surprise of their lives. Or should I say their deaths! (She laughs evilly and exits amidst much booing and hissing.)

DAY 4: BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE

Slope: Oh, thank goodness. A break in the snow.

(The children shout, 'It's a white-out!' and pelt the cast with snow.)

Hill: Spoke too soon, Colin. Come on, everyone, we have to keep going. Stay close together and don't get separated. Not now.

Dale: Hard ... to ... keep ... going.

Slope: Can't ... feel ... my ... hands ... or ... feet.

Hill: Come on everyone. We have to keep going until we can find shelter. Janice, keep hold of the food bag at all costs!

(They all wander round stage in the wind and snow.)

Slope: Is that a rock ahead we could shelter under or is it a cave?

Dale: It's a cave! Come on everyone let's go!

(They all stumble into the cave.)

Slope: We can't stay here for long or the cold will get us. There's no wood for a fire. Nobody fall asleep. We need to keep climbing so we can climb above the weather, but we need to join together so we don't lose anyone.

Hill: Good idea! Janice get the ropes out. We'll rope up and then have some food.

Dale: This rock's pretty old. (Feels it with her hand.) Funny. It feels like something's been cut into the wall here. Colin, give me your torch. (He hands it over.) Look everyone. It's another one of these strange messages!

Slope: What does this one say?

Hill: 'Watch out who touches you.' How odd! How does that fit with the other messages? Oh I don't know. Maybe they're not messages at all?

(Meadow begins to rope everyone up while they

are concentrating on the puzzle.)

Slope: Yeah, maybe you're right. I mean, 'listen to the sound' and 'smell the perfume'.

Dale: And yesterday's was even stranger, 'Taste the bread and wine'. What are these messages about?

Hill: And more importantly who are they from? (Looks at rope.) Oh, thanks Janice. The rope feels secure. Just yourself to do and then we can have food.

(Meadow moves away from the group and ties the end of the rope to a far wall. The others slowly realise they've been trapped.)

Hill: Janice! Stop playing games. What are you doing?

Meadow: You all thought you were so clever! But clearly not clever enough. (She laughs.) And you thought I was this poor, stupid little Janice. Boss her around, get her to carry all the bags. Well it's payback time. I'm going to get the treasure and you'll never make it off this mountain!

Dale: Janice! Don't do this! Don't leave us here. Please. We're your friends. We've been through a lot together!

Slope: Treasure? Did you say treasure?

Meadow: Oh don't fool yourself, Sarah. We were never friends. I was assigned to this group and told to wait my time. To wait for my turn to be of service. And yes, Colin, there is treasure on this mountain – treasure beyond your wildest dreams.

Hill: Who sent you here Janice? Who are you working for?

Meadow: (Packing her stuff.) Wouldn't you like to know? But I'm not going to tell you. (She laughs.) Instead I'm going to get the treasure that's mine. Goodbye little people! I'm sorry it had to end this way. Well for you anyway! (With an evil laugh, she departs.)

(Silence.)

Hill: I'm sorry everyone. This is all my fault. I should never have brought you here. It was my stupid vanity. I wanted to prove to everyone that I could do this so that they would accept me.

Dale: No. Don't. I came because I wanted to. I had hoped to find something new – something to believe in, something to live for.

Slope: Me too. I had hoped that somehow I'd discover the point of everything. The reason for being on the planet.

Hill: Well, it looks like this is the end. Let's get close together so we can stay warm for as long as possible.

(They snuggle closer together.)

Dale: What on earth was Janice doing? Who is she really? Why did she leave us here?

Slope: We'll probably never know. (Yawns.) Oh! I feel so sleepy.

Hill: Me too. I can't keep my eyes open.

Dale: Got ... to ... try ... to ... stay ... awake

(Slowly they all fall asleep and are still. From offstage Meadow screams.)

Meadow: Oh no! It can't be true. Not you! Not here! Please, no. No.
Noooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo!

DAY 5: SUMMITS UP

Slope: Sarah! Dr Hill! Wake up! It's morning. We've survived! We're okay! It's unbelievable. But we're okay!

Hill: Look. The ropes. They're loose! We're free!

Dale: What happened? It must have been that guy who came into the cave during the night? He must have cut the ropes.

Hill: Guy? What guy?

Slope: Wait a minute. You're right. There was a guy. He woke me up and told me not to be afraid.

Dale: Me too.

Hill: That's so strange. I thought it was a dream! He told me he had come to rescue us. He said he'd been with us all along and he'll keep us safe.

Dale: He told me we had found the real treasure. It would remind us of the most important death that has ever taken place – a death that makes it possible for us to be friends with God.

Slope: He told me that this death gives us something to look forward to.

Hill: This is so strange. I thought I was dreaming but how could we all have the same dream?

(Silence.)

Dale: What about Janice? I wonder where she is?

Slope: We may never know. She obviously wasn't on the side of the man who rescued us. But let's get out of here and see where we are.

(They all move out of the cave area and take a look at their surroundings.)

Hill: We're on the summit. We were here all the time. We're here! (Group hug.)

Dale: Look at the view. It's incredible.

Slope: It's beautiful.

(They move around until Dale trips on something.)

Dale: Hey everyone come over here. It's an old chest. How odd. (She digs it out and takes it to the others.)

Hill: Look all of the words of the messages are on the chest. Look, there's the first one, 'Listen to the sound'.

Slope: And there, look – 'Smell the perfume'.

Dale: And there's the third one – 'Taste the bread and wine'.

Hill: And the one from the cave – 'Watch out who touches you'. They're all here. But what do they mean and what's inside?

(Dale opens the chest. Another message is on the back of the lid.)

Slope: Look. Another message. It says, 'See for yourself'. I just don't get this.

Dale: It's something to do with the man in the cave and the things that happened to him. I'm sure of it.

Hill: I think you're right. I don't understand it but I think you're right.

Slope: But look in the chest – there's a wooden cross.

Dale: The Romans put people to death on a cross... Hey, the man who rescued us told us about the most important death ever that made it possible for us to be friends with God.

Hill: One man's death on the cross has changed the world – this is something everyone can share in!

Slope: Look there are some cookies in the box, I'm starving!

(They sit together and share the cookies between them.)

Hill: Right. It's time to go down this mountain. I don't know what I expected from this expedition but I'm going home with more than I bargained for.

Dale/Slope: (With their mouths full of cookies.) Me too!

Dale: Oh, and the weather is so glorious. Let's make a move before it begins to snow.

(The children shout, 'It's a white-out!' and pelt the cast with snowballs. This time the cast should pelt them back!)

SUNDAY 2: MEET THE PRESS

Leader: One of the features of our Xpedition this week was that we got to watch a real life expedition force as four intrepid travellers attempted to climb the perilous mountain, Ecksmount. Last Sunday we were introduced to them and now let's welcome them back!

(The three surviving cast members enter, looking sombre. Hill takes up his place beside the Leader.)

Leader: (Confused.) Weren't there four of you last week? Where's your colleague?

Hill: (Looks at the children.) Well, hello again children! Glad you made it back safely. (To the Leader.) Our fourth colleague? (Shakes head.) Sadly we don't know. It turned out that Janice wasn't quite the person we thought she was. She was completely the opposite of what we expected!

Slope: She was a complete horror! I bet she was the one who destroyed our messages. She tied us up in ropes, she left us for dead, she probably poisoned us and—

Dale: (Interrupting.) She snored. She snored like a pig! (She demonstrates. Colin's eyes go heavenward.) She picked her nose as well (Mimes action.) and probably ate what came out! (Laughs.)

Hill: (Abruptly.) Thank you, Sarah, that will do.

Leader: Messages – you mentioned messages? (All nod.) What were they?

Hill: At each level of the mountain, we found a strange message. At the time, we had no idea what they were about, and they did have a habit of disappearing! It was lucky our children were there to remember for us.

Slope: On day one, the message was... (Looks to the children for them to answer.)

Children: Listen to the sound.

Dale: On day two, the message was... (Looks to the children for them to answer.)

Children: Smell the perfume.

Slope: On day three, the message was... (Looks to the children for them to answer.)

Children: Taste the bread and wine.

Dale: On day four, the message was... (Looks to the children for them to answer.)

Children: Watch out who touches you.

Hill: And on the last day, it was... (Looks to the children for them to answer.)

Children: See for yourself.

Leader: But what do the messages mean? Who left them for you?

Slope: We're not sure, but on our last night on the mountain, when all hope was lost, each one of us thought we'd dreamt that a kind man came to us and left us with a message of hope. Something that got us through the night. Something that will stay with us for ever.

Dale: And he set us free. We all fell asleep tied up and left for dead. In the morning, we were free and discovered we were on the top of the mountain.

Leader: But wasn't there any treasure? Diamonds? Rubies? Gold?

Hill: Not that kind of treasure, no. But what the man left us with is the kind of treasure that will never fade away.

Leader: And so what about Janice? Where is she now?

Dale: We have no idea. She tied us up, left us in a cave to die and disappeared.

Leader: And who was the strange man who set you free?

Hill: (To the children.) Oh, I think you know. After this weeks' events, I think you all know who he is. And if you don't (Pause. All the cast members look at each other.) maybe it's time you did.

FOLLOW UP: REMEMBER ME AND TELL THE STORY

(Hill is alone on stage, sitting by the fire. Occasionally he looks around.)

Hill: (Noticing the audience.) Ah, children. Quiet as mice as usual. I didn't see you when I arrived. How do you always get here first? How have you been? It's been a long time since we were on expedition.

(There's a noise off stage and Slope and Dale appear together, rather bedraggled and windswept. They are arguing and speaking at the same time.)

Slope: You idiot! It was your fault, I said to go left and you said go right and so we went your way and look what happened. We ended up (Counts disasters on his fingers.) falling off a cliff, injuring our limbs, losing all our food and being eaten alive by sheep!

Dale: Oh Colin, you do go on. Chill out, it was an adventure! And the sheep were lovely. They weren't eating you, they were being nice. Friendly.

Slope: Friendly! Friendly! I'd rather be eaten alive by sharks than be nibbled at by sheep. Dirty creatures. (Shudders.)

Dale: And anyway it was you who got us lost. How was I to know I was reading the map upside down. I've never been here before. It was your fault.

Slope: Was not!

Dale: Was too!

Slope: Was not!

Dale: Was too!

Slope: Was not!

Dale: Was too!

(Dr Hill is looking on, somewhat bemused. He coughs to let them know he is there and they stop suddenly. Turn to face him, turn to face the audience and then become suddenly professional.)

Dale: Ah, Dr Hill. Lovely to see you again, sir. How are you? (She shakes his hand.)

Slope: (Shaking his hand.) Yes, Dr Hill I'm glad you invited us out here for this reunion. I'm sorry we're so late. Got attacked by some, erm, marauding sheep. (Looks embarrassed.)

Hill: Me invite you? I didn't invite you. I thought you'd invited me?

Dale: You invited us. We each got a note from you telling us to come to this place and to wait to see what would happen. It was clearly from you.

Hill: My note said the same thing but it was clearly from you two.

Slope: How strange. (Pause.) Ah well, no matter. We're here now. How have you been? Busy?

Hill: Yes very busy. After our adventures on Ecksmount I returned to my regular work. All seems a bit distant now.

Dale: Yeah, for me too. I sometimes wonder exactly what happened on that mountain. I'm beginning to think that it was all a wonderful dream.

(They all settle down in front of the fire.)

Slope: Yeah, you're right. It was a dream. Bit embarrassing really. People at work saw the news reports, thought I was off my head! Told them it was just frostbite on the brain or something.

Hill: Really? You really think we all just had the same dream? It didn't really happen? That man that we all saw, didn't really set us free?

Dale: Oh, you know, I expect we all thought we'd had the same dream. Some kind of affect of the stress and the weather, who knows?

(Silence while they all look into the fire.)

Voice off stage: Remember me and tell the story.

(They all look up and look at each other.)

All: What? What did you say?

Hill: I didn't say anything!

Slope: Me neither!

Dale: Well it definitely wasn't me. What is going on here? First we get those strange invitations and now we're hearing voices. Maybe it's those sheep, Colin! (Looks worried.)

Slope: Since when can sheep speak?

Dale: Ah, right enough. But who spoke?

(They all look at each other.)

Voice: Remember me and tell the story.

Hill: (Standing up.) Remember who? Remember what?

(There is a long silence.)

Voice: I am the one who saved you. I know you all by name. You are my friends. Remember me and tell the story.

Dale: It's him! It's the man who set me free on Ecksmount. I had decided it was all a dream, that it didn't really happen.

Slope: That it was too good to be true.

Hill: I think we've been invited here to remember what happened and to go back and tell the story again.

Dale: But people think we are mad!

Slope: And that from the woman who thinks sheep can talk!

Dale: Be serious. They think we're mad. Some of my friends won't talk to me any more because of this stuff. What will happen if I go home and start telling the story all over again?

Hill: I don't know, but somehow I think that the person who invited us here will deal with all of that. It's funny, but I suppose, after some time,

you start to forget the important things. I think we're supposed to always remember and to always tell the story. So that's exactly what I'm going to do. Are you coming with me?

(Dale and Slope look at each other and stand up.)

Dale: Of course! It's another adventure. Who knows where we'll end up this time!

Slope: But what about those sheep?

(They all exit.)

Website

These scripts can also be found on the Xpedition Force website:

www.scriptureunion.org.uk/xpeditionforce

