

WATER

I am a good swimmer. I was swimming in my local swim club and attended national competitions. I feel comfortable and confident when I am in the water. Some years later, I was splashing in the sea, when I glanced a shiny seashell at the bottom of it. The sun had been shining at the perfect angle for me to spot that silver and pearl reflection.

I decided to dive in for it, confident that I can achieve what ever I wanted. Water was my element. I knew how to regulate the ear pressure, I had no problems watching under the water, and holding a breath was not a big of a deal. What I did not calculate was how deep the water really was.

I haven't reached the bottom yet, when all my knowledge failed me. My ear started to hurt, my vision became blurry, and my lungs were screaming for air. Moment of decision and my stubbornness and confidence won. I keep going. I reach the bottom, grab that shell when the panic creeps on me. I am weak, I am exhausted, and still at the bottom of the sea, holding that damn shell. I no longer felt like water is my element.

I push myself as hard as it gets and kick even harder, while trying not to take a breath. I managed to reach the surface. Breathless. Alone with my triumph. Ashamed to believe I can conquer the water. Totally humble.

MOUNTAINS

Several years ago, Slovenia had been following a spectacular rescue of an experienced mountaineer who got injured 6.300 m high on the Nanga Parbat Mountain in the Himalayas. He had been trapped in the rocks for six days before the local sherpas were able to reach him with the helicopter. The rescue mission was extremely dangerous, because the air is very thin on such altitude, and they could all die.

Yet, this was not his last climb. When people asked him, why is he climbing, he answered: "Because I can hear the mountain calling me. And this call is a vibration that manifests itself on a physical level. I cannot control this. A rock, a wall, a mountain – that is something unmade. To merge with it, is to find connection with yourself, with the most authentic part of yourself."

Just like many others, Tomaž Humar died in Himalaya few years later, trying to reach the top of Langtang Lirung. His body remains on the mountain, as he would have wanted it.

NEST

It was a nice fresh morning, when the Spring is at its peak. I was walking on the forest path next to a small stream. I could hear the birds chirping in their busy day and the wind that followed them. In this lovely morning vibe, I could see a small bird nest on the edge of the smaller ridge. If I stretched a bit, I would be able to reach it. I would *definitely* be able to reach it with a stick.

And I wanted to, because there was a snake entering it. Her head had been inside, while her entire body was shining in the morning sun. On the edge of the nest, both parent birds were nervously jumping from the branch to the branch and making horrified noises. My heart was breaking while listening to their chirping, but the snake kept devouring her breakfast feast.

I found a stick and decided to enter this disaster, when I asked myself, why do I put any judgment to this situation? Who do I choose to deprive from it?

I step back and just observe the ways of life, the ways of nature. The feast was soon over, snake was moving out. And there were four stories to tell: dying, eating, fearing, observing.

GRETA

How dare you!?!

How dare you look away... and come here saying that you're doing enough.

My message is that we'll be watching you. This is all wrong. I shouldn't be up here. I should be back in school on the other side of the ocean. Yet you all come to us young people for hope. How dare you!

You have stolen my dreams and my childhood with your empty words. And yet I'm one of the lucky ones. People are suffering. People are dying. Entire ecosystems are collapsing. We are in the beginning of a mass extinction, and all you can talk about is money and fairy tales of eternal economic growth. How dare you!

Greta Thunberg made her famous speech at United Nations Climate Action Summit in 2019. She was pleading politicians to start taking environment protection seriously.