

## Boo-Yaa

### Description Essay by Ethan Young

The golden orange sun is slowly setting over the summit of the mountain overlooking the ski resort. The twelve inches of new snow that accumulated over the duration of the day rested on top of everything like powdered sugar on a doughnut. Everybody is getting ready for the big day that's upcoming, opening day of skiing. Now to some, "it's just another day in the mountains"; but to others, "it is the day that starts the thing they love doing, slashing through the knee-deep powder on the freshly groomed trails, with the brisk mountain air swirling through their helmets." But this isn't from the skier's point of view; it's from a little "higher" vantage point. Some would argue it's the best vantage point, a bird's eye view.

They're sitting in the rental shop the night before opening day, all polished and primed and ready for a long season of sharp cutting and hard landings against the packed snow.

"Whelp, here we go again."

"Yup, another season to entertain."

"You know, as much as we complain about being skis, we have a pretty fun job....Just hold onto the skier's boot."

"Ya, you're right. There's nothing like that first renter coming in and getting you to go tear up the slopes."

"Oh, and don't even get me started on that first drop-off. All I have to say is 'Boo- Yaa, brother.'"

As the skis are jammed into the rental shop one last night, the smell of disinfectant permeates through the shop and seems to give everything that "sterile" feel. The helmets are

polished so fine that one could shave his face in front of them, and the boots aren't scared with the smell of rotting toe jam. Things are just pretty swell at the moment; but as the night turns into dawn, all skis say goodbye to one another as they are about to be separated for six months.

"Here we go' is right," says one pair of skis, as they're grabbed and screwed up to fit with their dynamic duo, the boot, for what could be a month or just a morning. Outside they go and are stuck in a drift of bone-chilling snow while the skier gets on his gloves. Then uprooted like a tree in a wind storm, they are yanked out and thrown onto the firm, snow-packed ground, and boots click into the bindings as if they will never be removed. Both skis, looking up at the mountain ahead, get ready for the long and gruesome ride up on the chair lift and then just simply hanging there without any bottom under them for quite some time.

"Ahh, finally some snow!" scream the skis with a tone of relief, as the skier pulls over to the edge of the crest and the tips look down over a ten-foot face before they will actually come in contact with the slope. They take one last deep breath of the fresh evergreens, the openness of no surroundings, and the uncertainty of what will happen between the summit of the mountain and the bottom.

The right ski looks at the left ski and says, "Here we go."

"It's all downhill from here,"

"Boo-Yaa, Brother. Boo-Yaa."

At that moment the weight of the skier presses down on the skis harder than normal, and he leaps off the crest and into a free-fall for a solid two seconds before the nice transition between air and snow. The skier can't see his skis due to the powdered sugar snow, so he just thinks, "They'll be fine." But the skis that are buried under the powder are so confused they can't even tell which way is down, so they keep sliding through the slick snow, swooshing and

swashing side to side, going over the unevenness of the mountain with ease. Just before the skis can't take it anymore, they come to a complete sudden stop. The momentum that is built up was distinguished as the skis dig into the mountain and spray a wall of snow as though they were fire extinguishers.

The skis try to catch their breath. Between deep, wheezing breaths of the skiers, the skis catch a comment: "Hey, let's go through those rocks and hit the jump at the bottom." So they feel the weight of the skier lean forward, and the push from the poles launches them down over a rocky face. A little snow trail goes between two giant boulders, only a mere nine feet wide. As the turns are hard and short, the snow cascades out from under the skis. After they think it is going to be like this the whole way down, they stop turning and let off a sigh of relief; but soon after that sigh, they remember what's after the rocks: the jump.

As they are pointed straight down, they hit an uneven bump just like any other, except this one has a small protruding fraction of a rock sticking out that catches a ski and causes the skier to become unbalanced and start to tumble. After the skier finally catches himself against a boulder and the snow, he looks down to find that his right ski is missing. He pops off the left ski and starts to ascend the slope, looking for the missing puzzle piece. He disappears from the sight of the left ski but returns with "ol righty" in hand and slides down to the left ski, popping both back on.

The left ski asks, "What happened"?

The right responds with a simple "Stupid rocks." So they get back in the groove, having forgotten the main reason for going through the rocks: the jump.

While heading straight down as fast as possible, it all comes back to the skis. They prepare for flight. And no later than they remember, they feel all the pressure of the world come

down on top of them, followed by a “Wheee” from the skier. They hold their breath and shut their eyes. When they feel the wind rushing on top and bottom of them, they open their eyes and realize that they better start flapping because they see that they are above the rolling white ocean beneath them. After being in the air for what seems like an eternity, they hit the soft, waist-deep powder with a thud from the weight of the skier and then plus some.

Once they are out of the powder, another hockey stop occurs about three hundred yards away from the lift. Thinking “Okay, a nice easy ride down...not exactly,” the skier plants on the outside ski to make a sharp needle-point turn and jets into the trees. Now the trees are skis’ worst nightmare: the edges of the cold, hard bark emerge from the white snow that is covered with green pine needles from the evergreen above. They catch on the bottoms of skis and carve their mark into the underlying side of each ski.

Finally, out of that horrendous place the skier calls “Fun.” The skis glance up to see the ski lift insight. They look at each other and say, “It is the first run of the day on the first day.”

“Ya, man, I know. It is going to be a long season.”

The skier plops down on the chair for a second run. The skis look straight ahead and say, “Here we go.”