

Snow begins to fall.

I lie in the snow for a long time, long enough for the thick, white flakes to cover the red patches of my coat.

When I sit up, I look at my watch, but I don't see it. I still see me, from a long way away. I am shivering. I crawl to the brow of the hill and look down the steep slope. Part of me sees how far it is, and part of me sees me seeing.

I try to get to my feet, but I am shaking. My knees fold underneath me and I sit down, hard. My ponytail is dark with melted snow.

Wet. The part of me looking tells the part of me feeling. I got wet. I'm not supposed to get wet.

I look the other way and see a shelter of sorts—a low cave in the rocks of the hill. I crawl inside.

It is dark and I shiver hard. One of my snowshoes drags behind me, half off my boot. It doesn't seem like a big problem. My eyes are pulling shut when I sense warmth and lean my back into it.

*The bear half wakes again. Someone is there. Her sensitive nose tells her immediately that it is not her cubs, that it is not another bear. But, under the perfumed shampoo and soap and deodorant, she smells another animal. Whatever it is, it is alive. And it is small and cold.*

*She rolls again, flings out her great arm and drags the thing to her chest. It is a comfort to feel it warming beneath her touch.*



## Comprehension and vocabulary

1. In the paragraph that begins, “I lie in the snow...”, which two adjectives are used to describe the snowflakes?
2. Where does the narrator shelter?
3. What evidence is there that the narrator is in danger before they enter the cave?
4. Bears are usually portrayed as fierce, aggressive animals. What evidence is there in the text that the bear in the story might not be fierce and aggressive?

## Techniques and effect

5. Why do you think the author has chosen to write in the first person? What affect does it have on the reader? Give specific examples from the text if you can.
6. The text in the last two paragraphs looks different to the text in the rest of the extract. It is shown *like this*, rather than like this.

Why do you think this is? What effect does it have?

## Extended writing

7. Imagine that you are in a similar situation – stranded in the wilderness. Lost. Alone. Write one paragraph in the first person, describing your surroundings vividly. Write a second paragraph about the first steps you take to make sure you survive.