



AAC Publications

Lowering Error – No Stopper Knot

Washington, Index, Lookout Point, Rattletale Wall

Cherry Mayangitan (38) and I (39) were climbing Chasin' the Lizard (5.10a trad) at the Rattletale Wall. I had just finished leading the route and was being lowered by my partner, who was planning to follow and clean. Approximately 20 feet from the ground, my partner felt the end of the 70-meter rope move through her brake hand and then stop in her Grigri.

The rubberized cap at the end of the rope (which was new at the time) had caught in the Grigri and was the only thing preventing the rope from slipping all the way through the device. I quickly clipped in direct to a cam (my first piece), which fortunately was at my waist. I then asked my partner to carefully scramble up toward me, keeping me on belay, until she could free the rope from the Grigri. I untied and we both downclimbed to the belay spot.

ANALYSIS

Both the guidebook and Mountain Project mention that a 70-meter rope will not get you all the way down to the ground while lowering. We should have read the descriptions more closely, tied a knot at the end of the rope (or tied in the belayer), or used two ropes to descend. (Sources: Patrick Beeson and the Editors.)

Images

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