



AAC Publications

Mt. Corcoran (Peak 4,151m), South Pillar, For the Love of Men

California, Eastern Sierra

“Watch me!” I yelled to Connor Chilcott and Derek Field below me as I climbed above a sharp flake that would mangle me badly should I fall. I did not have the right gear to protect the 5.10 offwidth I was climbing, and could not allow a slip.

We were six pitches up the south pillar of Mt. Corcoran, just southeast of Mt. LeConte. I had envisioned an aesthetic route up the obvious prow on the peak’s south face, left of the original route climbed in 1998 by Bart O’Brien and David Harden. Now in the middle of it, I was scared, but I felt comfortable sharing my fears with my two partners, and I stayed focused on the task ahead. I continued up the steepening crack until I reached the overhanging hand jams, and finally a good piece of protection.

Though this climb ended up being an enjoyable adventure, it was close to being called off, as all three of us—Derek, Connor and I—were going through tough times psychologically. It was very fortunate we didn’t bail, however, as on the approach we all slowly opened up to each other about the troubles in our lives—things men usually don’t talk about. We lamented how unfortunate it is that men are under so much pressure to be stoic, and not share things that might make us appear weak. In opening up to each other, we all found that we felt stronger, as feedback from buddies in similar situations led to greater understanding of the things troubling us, acceptance, and after the trip, at least a partial resolution.

Connor took over on the following pitch and did a brilliant job at connecting thin fingercracks through bulges and topping the pitch with a bouldery crux of overhanging baggy fist jams.

After two more pitches, and then simul-climbing and soloing for a few hundred feet, we stood on the summit an hour and half after dark. The descent was one of the cruxes of this taxing day, as we faced 500’ of technical down-scrambling in an extremely loose and steep gully—one might benefit from the use of strap-on crampons, even when there is no snow in the gully!

Because we’d had such a therapeutic session, opening up about what was on our minds, we dubbed the route For the Love of Men (1,500’, 10 pitches, 5.11b), after a very recommended book on the topic.

— Vitaliy Musiyenko

Images



Mt. Corcoran (Peak 4151m) showing the line of For the Love of Men (1,500', 10 pitches, 5.11b), a new line climbed by Connor Chilcott, Derek Field and Vitaliy Musiyenko in summer of 2020.

Article Details

Author	Vitaliy Musiyenko
Publication	AAJ
Volume	63
Issue	95
Page	
Copyright Date	2021
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions