

Touching the void accounts comparison essay

[Life](#), [Emotions](#)



In *Touching the Void*, Joe and Simon both record the same accident that happened during mountain climbing in the Andes. They both use a realistic and logical tone, but Joe's mind is in a fight between emotion and rationality, whereas Simon is naturally calculative and unemotional. Throughout the whole account, Joe uses language devices to emphasize how painful he is. For example, in the sentence 'A wave of nausea surged over me' he uses metaphor, depicting the pain as 'a wave', to underscore the pain taking over him strongly and uncontrollably. Also, the description of a 'wave' 'surging over' illustrates an image of a tsunami, implying that he was helpless and vulnerable under the great pain. Despite the pain, he shows self-control and determination. To calm himself down from nausea, he says 'I pressed my face into the snow, and the sharp cold seemed to calm me.'

The sentence that comes right after the description of uncontrollable pain indicates his physical pain and mental control going against each other. The verb 'sharp' has connotations of knife and pain, suggesting that the cold is another type of pain he gives himself to make him forget about the other form of pain. In addition, the way he says 'seemed to calm me' hints that it probably didn't but he is trying to make himself believe that it did, which highlights his restraints. On the other hand, the tone Simon writes in is so dry and emotionless that it doesn't sound like an autobiography. Instead of describing his emotions, he explains what he does and what he should do next—things that goes on in his mind.

When he hears that Joe broke his leg, he comes up with a conclusion that Joe would die, and instantly, he decides what himself should do: 'I accepted without question that I could get off the mountain alone. I had no doubt

about that.' In these two sentences, he uses three first tense pronouns (I), demonstrating that his focus is on himself rather than Joe, almost seeming selfish and arrogant. However, it substantiates that he is sharp minded, pragmatic and not flattery.

Also, the short sentence used after a complex sentence implies how certain he is about his decision and how confident he is about himself. In conclusion, Joe's determination and restraints are struggling against physical pains and overwhelming emotions, unlike Simon who innately reacts sharp-mindedly and perceptively to the situation, probably because he isn't the one that hurt himself.