

Michael Graff – XXXI
The Climber

I could see every muscle strain in his fingers, and their tips turned a creamy white as he held onto the edge of the cliff. His hands were calloused and scarred from years of experience, and currently covered in a light powdering of white chalk. Now the veins on the back of his tired hands were turning a royal blue as they popped from under his skin. If he did not move soon I was sure he would lose his grip and fall down the cliff – he had so little left to conquer. I had to ask. “Do you need a hand?” I watched his hands tense up along with the rest of his body as he looked up at me with bragging annoyance while answering me. “Kid these hands climbed Everest.” With me in a state of slight embarrassment he pulled himself up to the ledge and sat down next to me with a gruff sigh as he cracked his knuckles and relaxed his hands.