

His Bitter Half

Supporting your husband's ski needs is admirable—if not always easy. By Edie Thys



I believe in guys' trips. I also believe in girls' trips, couples' trips and all-by-yourself trips. Each has a purpose. So last fall, when my husband was asked by his buddies to commit to a boys' spring heliskiing trip, I was genuinely supportive. The bitterness didn't creep in for weeks.

I first heard about heliskiing in the 1970s from a dashing single friend of my father's. He would drive up from San Francisco in his yellow Porsche to our rented ski cabin at Squaw on Friday nights. Then, while we ate tuna casserole, he would unwind on the couch, glass of scotch in hand, and regale us with tales of the Bugaboos and the Cariboos—faraway places that sounded

fabulously exotic to our young ears. With visions of bottomless powder dancing in my head, I resolved to go on such an adventure. In the 30-plus years that followed, I would be a member of the U.S. Ski Team for nearly a decade, compete in two Olympics and see the world atop a pair of skis. But to this day, I have yet to go on a heliskiing adventure.

Not so for my husband, who was heading to the Monashee Lodge, the plush property in the Canadian Mountain Holidays portfolio, where after skiing powder till 5 p.m. guests enjoy the hot tub, comfy couches, delicious dinners and a bar full of friends, new and old. Being the bitter wife left

behind with two young kids as your hubby heliskis is such a cliché. I strive to be—or at least pretend to be—above that.

Furthermore, I'm all too aware that adventures just don't spontaneously happen as we get older, busier and—yikes—throw families into the mix. Somebody has to work hard to make an adventure happen. And friends who plan ahead (of which I have none) should be rewarded.

Months of lead-time, however, can leave too many days to mull over the value of a large discretionary expenditure. When my husband started balking at the trip's multithousand-dollar price tag and at the time he'd have to take off work, I started to get steamed (but I had to respect his spousal strategy of recasting a transparent boondoggle as something that, *sigh*, must be endured).

While feeding the hamsters and packing lunchboxes for another day of domestic bliss as my husband ramped up for his trip, I tried to find a happy place by remembering how hard he works, how he supports my nearly every whim and how he rarely asks for guy time. But in early March, when the details finally emerged that his "week trip" in British Columbia from our New Hampshire home was actually 10 days—including my birthday—my temperature began to rise.

At 6:30 a.m. on the day of his departure, as I retrieved the morning newspaper, I noticed a bicycle track in the slush alongside our driveway and followed it. I found a figure limping into the house, his hip, elbow and face bloodied from an early morning workout crash. The time, the money, the preparation—would it all come to naught because of idiotic male behavior? My boiler finally exploded.

A hasty round of X-rays later, he was in the car with a buddy heading to the airport. After one email affirming a safe arrival and five feet of fresh snow, communication went silent. As with teenagers, no news is good news, and the weather map showed a radar blanket of snow. I never heard another word about the price or the time away from the office.

"You've got to do this with the girls someday," was all he could say, with unconcealed awe, when he finally checked in. I'll get my girls' trip, all right. It may be a golden girls' trip by then, but I'm taking it. Two weeks, minimum. ●