

What a day I have had!

Once my mate had laid her egg, she turned and waddled off into the sea. Off she went to hunt, leaving me stuck on the ice on my own with the most important job. I had to keep our precious egg safe and make sure that it is away from the cold, dangerous ice and the strong, blustery winds. As soon as she waddled off to the sea, I tucked our little egg up under my tummy in my brood patch. I felt so worried about looking after our little egg. So, there I was, stuck on the snow-covered ice with an egg on my feet! Can you imagine that? Standing still in the freezing cold keeping such a delicate object off the ice. What's more, there was nothing whatsoever to eat! Not one little fish. Would you like to go without breakfast, lunch, tea and supper for months at a time? It's not like I could go waddling off to the sea to hunt either! I couldn't leave my egg behind or take it with me so not only was I stuck, but I was starving hungry as well. I felt miserable.

This morning, I joined the hundreds of other male penguins and snuggled up with them in a huge huddle. To make it fair, we had to take it in turns on the outside of the group where it was the coldest. Luckily, I had my thick feathers and layers of fat under my skin to help me to stay warm. Most of the time, we trundled very, very slowly together in our huddle across the frozen snow but today we reached a steep, slippery slope so we had to slide down on our tummies. Sliding quicker and quicker, I pushed myself along with my flippers. Feeling petrified that the little egg would slide out and be crushed, I tried to steady myself. I had to be so careful not to bump into any of the other penguins. Once we had made it to the bottom, all of a sudden, I heard a tiny sound. It was like nothing I had ever heard before. Quietly, it went, "Chip, chip, chip." What could it be? Looking down at my feet, I realised that my special little egg was beginning to hatch!

Eventually, after two whole months, I can finally meet my little chick. After a while, out popped my little, fluffy chick! I couldn't believe my eyes! I was so relieved that it had survived all of the blizzards. Immediately, I had to make sure that the precious baby was warm enough so once again, I tucked it up under my tummy. Before long, the chick began to whistle. Louder and louder, it called and called. "It must be hungry," I thought to myself.

As I woke up, I noticed a black dot on the horizon, getting closer and closer. I recognised who it was...it was my mate! At last, the wait was finally over! After what felt like forever, she was back. Feeling overjoyed, I trumpeted to her as loudly as I could so I could show her how pleased I was that she was back! Even the chick joined in, whistling and calling with me. Quickly, Mum fed the chick with fish that she had caught in the depths of the ocean and stored in her stomach. Hungrily, it gobbled down the lot. Finally, it is my turn for some food. Leaving my mate to look after the chick, I am going to set off on the long journey to the sea for a well-earned meal. About time too!