**2b Page 24 READING TEXT**

Upper Intermediate Student’s Book

Life

A close shave

Kaziranga National Park in India is home to two of the world’s most endangered species: the tiger and the single-horned rhino. Photographer Steve Winter and writer Douglas Chadwick had only been working there a few days when they had a rather frightening close shave with some rhinos.

They were driving into the park to start filming, when their guide stopped the jeep to move a turtle from the middle of the road just ahead of them. Winter, Chadwick and their guard got out to stretch their legs and watch. But when Chadwick turned to look up the road, he saw something terrible.

About 50 metres away, a rhino was charging at them. Rhinos can sprint at more than 40 kilometres an hour, so there was no time to leap back in the car. Instinctively, the guard fired a shot into the ground just in front of the rhino. The crack of the rifle and the dirt that the bullet kicked up was enough to distract their attacker and he veered off into the grass seconds before reaching them.

Shaken, but relieved the incident had not been worse, they drove on. As they were entering the forest area on a raised section of road, three young rhinos climbed onto the road in front of them. The jeep stopped hurriedly, but this time the animals seemed uninterested and disappeared into the forest. Just then, however, the mother of the three, who had been keeping an eye on her young, came crashing through the trees from their left. No time to shoot this time. The female rhino slammed into the side of the jeep and started to wrestle it off the road. Indian rhinos don’t use their horns in a fight; instead they bite and this female’s teeth were gouging deep into the side of the jeep.

The guide had laid down a rule for his guests at Kaziranga – ‘No one is allowed to be scared.’ But his guests were breaking the rule, praying the driver could get them out of there. With the engine screaming, at last the vehicle skidded free. Even then the rhino came after them and it was only 150 metres later that she gave up the chase.

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