

summit blocks. Bail to the gully (like we did) or take the original West Face (Nelson) finish. In hindsight we should have summited, via the last pitch of the West Face line, and rapped east as per that original line. Instead we rapped the West Face, scurried down, went north through Sandy Gap, and rapped the lower northwest face...highly discouraged, as our descent blows.

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## California

### YOSEMITE VALLEY

*El Capitan, Lost in Translation.* Seven years ago I was inspired by Leo Houlding to find a line on El Cap and do it in perfect alpine style, from the ground to the top, free in a day. I tried this many times, but we got shut down every time. On El Capitan granite, it takes only 6' of blank rock and a 30-pitch rock climb turns to an aid line.

I scoped *Lost in Translation* for years and always wondered why people hadn't climbed it. It's not a big route like the Salathe, El Corazon, or the Nose, but it was a chance to accomplish a dream to put up a new free line ground-up, something that was never done before on El Capitan. I met Nico Favresse when he was working on one of the coolest free routes in Yosemite: Lappat (5.13a/b R) on Yosemite Falls wall. Nico climbed the route without placing any bolts. We talked a few times about new free lines, and then we decided to go for it on the right side of El Cap.

We scoped the line, and a perfect corner stood out. It looked from the ground that it would go free, but we thought there must be a reason why no one had free-climbed it. But our instinct kept us on track, so we decided to have fun and see where we would get, ground-up.

On August 30 at 8 a.m. we started climbing. We had a big free rack and a few pitons, copperheads, and a bolt kit. We didn't have bivy gear, only three gallons of water, and a few Power Bars. After eight pitches, a majority of them around 5.10/5.10+R, we reached the base of the big corner. We were surprised everything had gone free, with only 300' of the climb left to discover. The corner was grassy, and we couldn't see what was under the grass. It looked like people had attempted the corner before, because there were a few lead bolts and rap anchors. As the light went down we decided to stay and wait for morning. We spent the night on a small ledge dreaming of what could be under the grass. We were only two pitches from the top.

On September 1, after 10 minutes of cleaning, we knew the line would go. After cleaning holds and freeing moves, we estimate the pitch to be 5.12b/c stemming. After that the climbing eased up and allowed us to top out around 12. The dream became reality. *Lost in Translation* (1,200', 10 pitches, 5.12b/c R).

On September 8 we climbed the route in seven hours.

*From Ninov's website, [WWW.STONEMONKEYS.NET](http://WWW.STONEMONKEYS.NET)*

*El Capitan, Atlantis; Porcelain Wall, House of Cards.* In the fall of 2005, just left of Block Party (which I established in spring '05), I completed my second new line on El Capitan, in the alcove area of the southeast face, naming it Atlantis (VI 5.9 A4). I fixed the first two pitches to the top of the alcove over two days in early October, and then committed for another 18 days alone on