



# Trapped

*Marc Aronson*

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In early August 2010, the unthinkable happened when a mine collapsed in Copiapó, Chile, and 33 miners were trapped 2,000 feet below the surface. For sixty-nine days they lived on meager resources and increasingly poor air quality. When they were finally rescued, the world watched with rapt attention and rejoiced in the amazing spirit and determination of the miners. What could have been a terrible tragedy became an amazing story of survival.

Now, with exclusive interviews with rescuers and expert commentary, Marc Aronson brings us the backstory behind this incredible event. By tracing the psychological, physical, and environmental factors surrounding the rescue, *Trapped* highlights the amazing technology and helping hands that made it all possible. From the Argentinean soccer players who hoped to raise morale, to NA SA volunteering their expertise to come up with a plan, there was no shortage of enterprising spirit when it came to saving lives.

## Trapped Details

Date : Published August 30th 2011 by Atheneum Books for Young Readers

ISBN : 9781416913979

Author : Marc Aronson

Format : Hardcover 144 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, History, Adventure, Survival, Childrens, Middle Grade

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## From Reader Review Trapped for online ebook

### Jessie says

Finished in just a few hours, this quick read definitely captures your attention. I remember following this news story and hoping for survival. This book gives great detail on the logistics of the rescue and all that was put into the miners wellbeing.

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### Patti Sabik says

Loved this book! Perfect length (& chapter lengths) for MS NF readers and writing is very engaging. This would work really well as a read aloud.

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### Christine says

For me, this is a 3-star book. But I am not the target audience and teens might give this four stars. Although I found it a quick and interesting read, I expected a bit more meat in terms of the science used to get these guys out. I would have liked some diagrams of the different types of drills, for instance, along with the explanations of the pros and cons of each approach. I just found it a little thin on details. It felt a little rushed.

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### Amy says

The best parts of the book were obviously the descriptions of the men down below and how they worked together. Some of the material seemed too technical for this age group. I think this would have a lot of appeal to kids who like reading about natural disasters. I felt it needed more photos to make it more real for the readers.

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### 529\_Amalia says

Trapped: How the World Rescued 33 Miners From 2,000 Feet Below the Chilean Desert written by Marc Aronson, Atheneum Books for Young Readers, (2011). “Estamos bien en el refugio los 33 (we are in the shelter and are well, the 33)” Contact, on August 22, 2010, seventeen days after the collapse of the San Jose mine, no connection to the world above, a note with these words was attached to a drill that was sent from 2000 feet below the Chilean Desert from the 33 miners that were trapped in that mine. Aronson does a fantastic job of telling the story of how these miners had the courage and hope to survive 69 days in that mine. From explaining how forty million years ago the “great dance of shifting continents” began and in the crevices of Atacama Fault is the treasures of our planet, gold, silver and copper to the rescue efforts of the miners, Aronson tells the story from “above” and “below”. He explains in detail how people from around the world came together to save those 33 miners, and how those 33 miners worked together to save themselves. Aronson uses “exclusive interviews with key rescuers, unique photos, and intriguing historical background” to tell this amazing story. He shows “the astounding psychological strain, physical challenges and scientific hurdles involved” in this astonishing rescue. With extensive pages following the story, a timeline, glossary,

the world of the miner, an explanation of how Aronson wrote this book, notes and sources, useful websites and an index, this is an outstanding modern-day story of survival of a current event that can be used for grades 7 and up.

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## Betsy says

The notion that history is always happening isn't necessarily obvious to a kid. I remember have several moments of revelation when I was younger, realizing time and time again that the folks we studied in school were real. That they walked around like I did. History has a tendency to play out like a movie when you're young. You might be moved but you wouldn't necessarily be able to wrap your head around the notion that there but for the grace of God go I. To hammer this notion home it might be advisable to find moments in recent history that have been recorded for all of posterity. Like, say, the Chilean miner incident of 2010. A lot of kids (as of this review) would remember when that was in the news. Yet they might not think of that as a historical incident yet. Enter *Trapped* by Marc Aronson. Here we have a book that sheds some light on the story that hypnotized the world. With its natural tension and everyday heroes, *Trapped* is that rarest of nonfiction beasts: A contemporary work of historical fact that has you gripping the edge of your seat.

The collapse of a San Jose mine on August 5, 2010 wasn't anything the world hadn't seen before. Mines collapse all the time. It's a dangerous occupation. The difference here, of course, was the fact that the 33 men trapped 2,300 feet underground were still alive. Suddenly the world was riveted by their story. Would the rescuers be able to find them? And even if they did, how would they get them out? Backmatter to this true tale includes brief biographies of each of the thirty-three miners, a Timeline, a Glossary of Names and Terms, a word on "The World of the Miner" by a miner, a note to students, Notes and Sources, a Bibliography, a list of interviewed subjects, Useful Websites, and an Index.

A good work of nonfiction for kids makes you want to keep reading, even when you know the outcome. When I pick up a book like *Amelia Lost* by Candace Fleming, I love that I feel like there may be a chance that they'll find Ms. Earhardt this time. Similarly, when I read *Trapped* I have to feel like there's a chance that they won't rescue the miners this time. Indeed there were several moments when it really seemed as though the miners wouldn't be found. Aronson parcels out this tension, knowing better than to fill the narrative with foreshadowing or some kind of false narrative technique. And like Fleming's book he makes sure to tell two different stories at once. We are both with the miners and with the rescuers as the tale unfolds.

Mr. Aronson is a fan of context. It isn't enough to know that this story takes place 2,000 feet below the Chilean Desert. He must show you how that desert was formed. And it isn't enough to simply know that these men were farmers of items like copper. He's inclined to give you the very history of copper itself, going so far as to tie it into scenes from *The Lightning Thief* or *Harry Potter* (sometimes inexplicably). For me, these sidenotes distracted from the larger (and more interesting) story. I know why Aronson has included them, but most of this information appears at the beginning of the book in a big lump. I would have preferred it to be integrated evenly throughout the text. That way a sentence like, "Today, the average American uses sixteen pounds of copper a year" will have the adequate oomph it deserves.

Aronson writes for both child and teen readers, and you're never quite certain which he'll write for next. In this particular case he's made certain that this book would appeal to kids as well as those in the throes of adolescence. Of course, to do that he has to tiptoe around some interesting issues. I didn't follow the disaster very closely when it was occurring back in 2010, but one thing I do remember is hearing that one of the miners had the awkward problem of being visited via the hole by both his wife and his mistress. You'll find no mention of that fact in this book. There are points where the men resolve to become better people when

they leave the mine, and there's a point where Aronson condemns the sordid stories that the press indulged in at times, regarding the miners' personal lives as nothing more than tabloid fodder. Nothing sordid makes it onto these pages, though. Later we read an account of the items that were lowered to the miners. Amongst the listed objects is "a picture of a pretty girl". Call me dirty minded, but it is possible that picture was more than just that. It doesn't matter, though. That's not the story that's being told here.

At the end of *Trapped* Aronson includes a section called "How I Wrote This Book: And what I learned that could be useful for students writing research reports (and a couple of last thoughts from men I interviewed). The section distinguishes nicely between original research and merely trolling the web. The book certainly works as an example of how to do research, but I suspect that the primary readers will be those kids eaten up by curiosity. How does a person survive for months under the ground? How do you fight off the claustrophobia? And how do you rescue someone if you can't quite get a lock on where precisely they are? *Trapped* seeks to answer all these questions and, in doing so, satisfies a variety of different kinds of readers. If you're looking for an account of recent history with a happy ending (no small feat no matter what the year) seek ye no further. This, as they say, is it.

Ages 10 and up.

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## **Richie Partington says**

8 October 2011 TRAPPED: HOW THE WORLD RESCUED 33 MINERS FROM 2,000 FEET BELOW THE CHILEAN DESERT by Marc Aronson, Atheneum, August 2011, 144 p., ISBN: 978-1-4169-1397-9

"Can I go buddy  
Can I go down  
Take your shift at the mine?  
-- Hunter, Garcia, & Lesh, "Cumberland Blues"

"Copper is a chemical element with the symbol Cu (from Latin: cuprum) and atomic number 29. It is a ductile, semi-precious metal with very high thermal and electrical conductivity. Pure copper is soft and malleable; an exposed surface has a reddish-orange tarnish. It is used as a conductor of heat and electricity, a building material, and as a constituent of various metal alloys."  
-- Wikipedia

"But then, at the end of the 1800s, the world went electric. First telegraphs, then telephones -- talk ran on copper wires. Just at the moment when the world suddenly needed more copper, a new process was invented that made it easier to separate the metal from other rocks. So even as metalsmiths crafted the Bronze Age, coppersmiths made possible the Age of Electricity. Today, the average American uses sixteen pounds of copper a year -- at home, work, and at school. Five pounds of that is recycled, but that means for every American, eleven new pounds of copper must be found, mined, processed, and shipped."  
-- TRAPPED, p.20

I've not had much opportunity to read or write about books over the past month or so, as I've been deep in the midst of repairing and painting our house. In the process, I've frequently had my hands on copper pipe (which is around ten bucks for a length of the half-inch diameter stuff at Home Depot) and on copper electrical wiring (which snakes its way behind all of the walls in the house). I know my way around these essential construction materials pretty well, having grown up helping install plumbing in new homes and repairing it in older homes. I was using a pipe cutter before I could read, cutting away used fittings and solder from old pieces of copper pipe which could then be sold at a good price to the scrap metal place for

recycling.

So, I've known about the chemical properties and practical uses of copper, and I knew that it was mined and refined. But I never really thought about the mining process, the work -- and danger -- going into retrieving the ore that eventually becomes a run of pipe or a stretch of wire behind a wall in a house.

"We all agreed that we should all share the food that was there. You just had to rough it. Every twenty-four hours eat a small piece of tuna. Nothing else.'

"Small' meant as little as possible -- about half a soda-bottle-cap-full -- twice every forty-eight hours, along with a sip of milk, which was turning sour, a bite of canned peach, and a cracker. Oily water, perhaps taken from the ground, or drained from the machines, soon joined the milk."

TRAPPED by Marc Aronson alternately drops us a nearly unimaginable distance into the ground, where we spend time with 33 miners in Chile who were trapped last year when 1.4 billion pounds of rock suddenly closed up their one route home, and sets us alongside those, aboveground, who were desperately trying to reach the miners before they died. In a departure from his books about what happened a long time ago, Marc Aronson steps into the role of a journalist to tell a current story about the race to save the lives of these 33 miners, and how the miners, themselves, were first and foremost responsible for coming out of that half-mile-deep hole alive.

"Alejandro Olave is an expert at figuring out where a drill is going underground and when it is shifting away from the proper path. He knew why they were having so much trouble. The maps they were using 'had not been updated.' Brown was told that the shelter [the miners were, hopefully, alive in] might be anywhere within eighteen feet of where they were aiming. But the target itself was only about seven and a half feet wide. They were digging blind through thousands of feet of rock to find a small target, which was not where it was supposed to be. That is way too much room for error."

But thanks to an international outpouring of assistance, including everyone from NASA and submarine commanders to drilling experts and psychologists, the miners were found to be alive and were able to be furnished with food and supplies for the months that it required to safely dig an escape route and build them an escape capsule.

It has to bolster one's faith in humanity to see how, in times of need, people of so many nations can actually come together to solve a crisis.

If there is one amusing aspect of this true survival story, it is the outpouring of assistance from companies such as Sony, Apple, and Samsung who provided consumer products to help keep the miners occupied for the time between when they were discovered alive and when their rescue was completed. (What would you want at hand for recreation if you were going to be trapped in your basement for the next couple of months?)

Author Marc Aronson concludes the story by sharing his research process for the book -- a not-to-be-missed lesson in information literacy for young researchers..Given that it takes increasing effort and energy to extract valuable metal ores -- like copper -- on which we depend, I am hoping this book inspires readers to think about what they are doing before tossing in the garbage any recyclable metal products that -- after the finding, mining, processing, and shipping -- have only been used once.

Richie Partington, MLIS

Richie's Picks <http://richiespicks.com>

BudNotBuddy@aol.com

Moderator [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/middle\\_...](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/middle_...)

<http://slisweb.sjsu.edu/people/facult...>

## Martha Davidson says

Just finished reading an interesting book entitled *Trapped: How the World Rescued 33 Miners from 2,000 Feet Below the Chilean Desert* (2011) by Marc Aronson. A friend loaned me the book. The book is written for a juvenile audience, but the way the story is told worked for me. A mine collapsed in Copiano, Chile, trapping 33 miners 2,000 feet below the earth for sixty-nine days. The book shares a great deal of information about mining and the drilling that led to the rescue. I would have liked to have learned even more about the resilient miners and their families, but what Aronson presents was very informative and readable. As a teacher, I also like the way the author provides some useful ideas and incentives for young readers to continue their own research into the subject. There are other books on the mine disaster. Aronson mentions one: *33 Men: Inside the Miraculous Survival and Dramatic Rescue of the Chilean Miners* (2011) by Jonathan Franklin, a journalist. There is another that seems popular: *Deep Down Dark: The Untold Stories of 33 Men Buried in a Chilean Mine, and the Miracle That Set Them Free* (2014) by Héctor Tobar, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist. The book inspired a movie entitled *The 33*, starring Antonio Banderas. The idea of Mr. Banderas gives this older (but perhaps still a little juvenile) reader some incentive for further research, or at least movie watching.

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## Michele says

I really wanted to like this book. I loved the topic, and thought it was a great way to introduce young people to a wide variety of topics. It is true that this book touched upon many interconnecting bits of information in order to study the disaster and rescue efforts of this mining disaster. I liked the many photographs and disparate information. However, I feel that the book was too scattered, especially for children. My students will most likely not even know where Chile is, and the those that understand the reasons for the dangers in mining would be limited. I believe there needed to be more connections between the various subjects; more "hand-holding" to explain both the disaster and the complex efforts of rescue by various parties.

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## Kayla says

I am satisfied with my choice to read *Trapped: How the World Rescued 33 Miners from 2,000 Feet Below the Chilean Desert* by Marc Aronson. The straightforward text made understanding the situation quite clear. While the information was highly concise, it was also highly effective. The mine collapse happened in the beginning of August in the year 2010 when the main ramp leading into the San Jose Mine crumbled, leaving 33 men stranded with no way to escape and only enough food and water rations to last a few days. Emergency officials begin the rescue process immediately. After 17 days of being trapped underground, the miners manage to use a probe to send a message to the outside world saying, 'We are fine in the shelter, the 33 of us.' This puts a glimmer of hope into the families' lives that their loved ones will be all right. On August 23, a second probe manages to reach the men. These probes became the means of communication and a way for food and water to be transported between the men and the rescue officials. It is not until August 27, 22 days after the cave in, that the miners are informed on the lengthy process that will be used to free them (referred to as Plan B). For approximately six days, the Plan B drilling goes according to plan. However, things come to an abrupt halt when a drill bit is damaged on September 6. The bit is quickly fixed and on September 17, the Plan B borehole reaches the miners. There is a complication; the hole is only 12 inches wide and will need to be widened with a second pass. Plan C is then thrown into action right away. By

October 5, the rescuers were within 160 feet of the trapped miners. The rescue mission moved at a much faster pace than what was originally expected. Officials' earlier predictions were that the rescue date would be as far away as November or even Christmas! Finally, on October 9, the Plan B drill breaks through the roof of the mine. The families of the 33 men are ecstatic knowing that their loved ones are close to being in their arms once again. At 12:11am on October 13, the first miner is rescued. One by one, the survivors are brought back to the outside world. It is not for another 22 and a half hours after the rescue operation begins that the 33rd man is brought to the surface. Embraced by the hugs of their families, the men prayed and thanked the Lord that they were safe.

The only criticism that I would give the book is that there was not very much background information on each of the miners themselves and their story of how they dealt with the underground struggles. Those topics were briefly covered, but not in depth. I would recommend this book to middle and high school students. The book shows how wonderful humanity can be when others fall into an unwanted situation and I hope that others can become as enlightened as I was.

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### **Janet says**

I'm really glad I read this YA non-fiction book, *How the World Rescued 33 Miners from 2,000 Feet Below the Chilean Desert* by Marc Aronson. This book was written in a really simplistic way which made it really easy to understand. I thought the way it was presented was concise but highly effective it gave readers the sentiment of the Chilean miners. This non fiction book was about the mine collapse in Chile that occurred in 2010 and trapped 33 miners. This novel did an excellent job in describing the setting in where the mine disaster occurred and the reasons why the miners would take such dangerous jobs. The book takes you through their journey of pain and survival 2,000 below the earth. It demonstrates to readers how they were capable to survive underground for over 2 months in an enclosed space without the certainty that they were going to be rescued. One thing I wish that the novel did was to give more background on each of the miners that were trapped, but I guess that is another book/story on its own.

I would recommend this book to middle school and high school students. This book will help demonstrate that history is happening now and that it is not a far away thing. It will teach them to have empathy for those who have to take arduous jobs because they have no other opportunities and need the job to survive. It will also hopefully enlighten them and show them the beautiful side of humanity in which people help others regardless of race, language, religion, or culture. I would especially recommend this book to Latino teenagers to show them a piece of their culture, a piece of their history, strength, resilience, and to show them that all of this is being taken into consideration by the world. Arriba Chile.

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### **Ricki says**

With perspectives from above and below ground, *TRAPPED* is a nonfictional account of the 33 Chilean miners who were trapped underground at the end of August, 2010. I found the book to be intriguing, and I found it to be both informative and engaging. After I read it, I was eager to share some of my new knowledge with others, which is a hallmark of a great book. My one complaint is that it didn't offer very much information about the miners after they emerged above-ground. I watched a documentary on TV that interviewed some of the miners this year. Many are suffering from depression and PTSD. I was eager to read about this, but I think Aronson may have left it out because that wasn't the focus of his book. Additionally, his book may have been in publication before this information was released.

I highly recommend this book, particularly to readers who want to check out a great work of nonfiction.

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### **Jenny says**

This is the version that's been adapted for young readers, and tells the story of the 33 miners that were trapped in a Chilean mine for over two months. The story itself is only about 100 pages, so it's a pretty quick read, but it was very informative and interesting. I learned quite a bit about mines, and Aronson did a great job explaining the different equipment brought in to help save the men. It was fascinating to read about what the men did in order to survive, and also what the outside world did to help them. However, I was a bit disappointed in the last chapter, which covered the actual rescue of the men. I would have liked to read more about the individual rescues - did anyone have issues making it aboveground? What about afterwards? Are any of them still working in mines? Unfortunately, the final chapter lacked the details I was looking forward to, but overall, still an interesting read.

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### **Wendy says**

Sigh. I know what book I WANTED. It focused on the 33 miners. Each one of them got a name and a story and a family. Some of them were brothers and one of them liked Elvis and lots of them liked to play dominoes and one of them was an awesome Colonel Potter type who got everyone to do what they were supposed to and not turn on each other and not ask for an extra serving of canned tuna. Sometimes the story would cut to the rescue operation above and the waiting families, but mostly you'd be down in the mine, and then everyone gets brought up one by one and shakes the president's hand while wearing some rad Oakleys.

This is not that book. It would have been if Jon Krakauer had written it. Let's have a moment of silence for the book Jon Krakauer will never write about the 33.

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I'm not a big fan of Aronson's writing. He likes to insert himself in the narrative and I don't dig that, and also makes leaps in his similes. When you say "More recently, in Rick Riordan's *The Lightning Thief*", you date your book. Plus it's just kind of weird. There's other stuff about bronze and copper that feels extraneous, and an awful lot of references to Greek mythology that didn't seem to add anything. Get back to those miners.

So even though no one has any responsibility to write the book I wanted instead of the book he wrote, I just didn't think this was great. The flopping between "above" and "below" wasn't smooth. Most of the photographs were really dull visually. I imagine there must have been licensing issues. Worst of all, the ending, the day of the rescue, is hardly given any development. Just a thing about how a strong guy had to go first and the captain came up last. NO DRAMA, and drama is what that day was all about, and it was awesome. But instead the book ends on a very flat note.

I'm glad he points out that miners still work in bad conditions all over the place and lots of them never get rescued. The rest of the back stuff feels extraneous, especially the lengthy thing about how HARD it was to write this because it's practically current events. Authors love to put in stuff about their PROCESS at the end of books now.

Also, the list of people he interviewed seems weird. In that he didn't talk to anyone from Chile at all. I expect it is hard, or perhaps impossible, to get access to the miners themselves. But surely... And couldn't the reason

WHY he didn't talk to anyone from Chile have appeared somewhere in that long process note, seeing as it's already there? Speaking of which, does anyone really affectionately refer to the Internet as "the Net" anymore?

All three stars for the parts with the miners in.

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### **Becca says**

The collapse of the San José Mine occurred in 2010. That makes this a relatively current event, one I'd not heard of before reading this book.

This is intended for a juvenile/young adult audience, but it's still informative and well-researched. My favorite part was actually the section at the very end entitled "How I Wrote This Book." Most authors don't go to the bother of explaining that, which is probably why it fascinated me so. XD The story of the miners is obviously incredible too. Those seventeen days of waiting, waiting, waiting to be found.... The thought makes me shudder!

Great read, recommended.

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