Rescue in Chile

Thirty-three men are in a small, dark place. It is 2,200 feet under the ground. The men are miners, and they are trapped in a mine. They are alive, but does anyone know? Suddenly, they hear a noise. It's a drill! It is making a hole in the rock. Someone on the surface is trying to find the miners. But then the sound stops. The men hear the drill six times. It gets close, but then it goes away. Will anyone rescue them?

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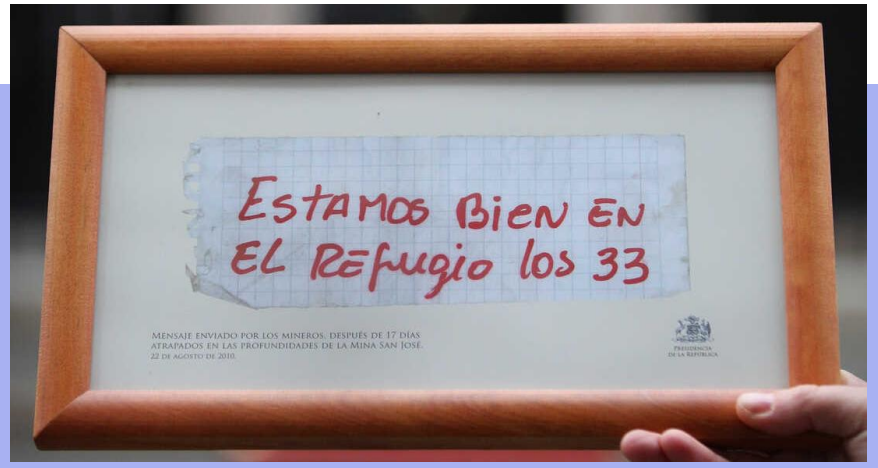
The story began on August 5, 2010, in Chile. Thirty-three miners go to work. They go down a shaft deep into the ground. There, they dig for minerals. At first, it's a regular day. Then in seconds, everything changes. Part of the mine falls in. The men cannot get out.

The miners are safe. But they are in a very small space. It is only 540 square feet. They only have a little food. They are afraid. How long will the food last? Will they have enough oxygen?

Above the mine, engineers begin to work. They look at a diagram of the mine. Then they start to drill holes. They drill for days, but they find nothing. Maybe the miners are dead. Then after 17 days, they hear a sound. Tap. Tap. Tap. Someone is tapping on the drill! When they pull the drill out, it has a note on it. It says, "We are fine. There are 33 of us. We are all alive."



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Everyone is very happy, but there is bad news, too. The rescue will take months. How can 33 men live in such a small place for a long time? Many countries want to help. They send many things for the rescue. They also send small electronic devices. The miners can use these devices to talk to their families. They can also watch videos. They watch a soccer game. The players' shirts say "Miners, be strong!"

Many engineers work on the rescue. A special drill makes a new shaft. A rescue pod will go down the shaft to bring each miner up. The pod is only 21 inches wide.

Finally, the shaft is complete. On October 12, after 68 days, the first miner comes up to the surface. All over the world, people watch. Everyone cheers! Twenty-two hours later, everyone is still cheering. The last miner finally gets to the top! All 33 survive.

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