



Tragedy at Pike River Mine: How and Why 29 Men Died

By Rebecca Macfie

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On a sunny afternoon in November 2010, a massive explosion rocked the underground Pike River coal mine, deep in a mountain range in New Zealand's South Island. More than an hour and a half later, two ashen men stumbled from the mine's entrance to report that 29 men remained trapped inside. Samples revealed extremely high levels of carbon monoxide in the mine and the presence of fire. For five agonizing days the men's families and friends waited and prayed until, after a second violent blast, all hope was extinguished. *Tragedy at Pike River Mine* is a dramatic, suspenseful account of a disaster that shook the nation—and the world. Pike River was no ordinary mine. It had been touted by the company and by government ministers as a showcase of modern mining. Shares in the company had been rapidly taken up by investors, swept away by predictions of extraordinary returns. Beneath the hype, though, lay mismanagement, mistakes and willful blindness that would cost men their lives. Based on extensive research and more than a hundred interviews, this powerful book provides chilling insights into the causes of the tragedy and puts a human face on the people who suffered.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Rebecca Macfie lays bare the pattern of promise and betrayal that doomed Pike River coal mine to disaster and 29 men to their deaths. Her spare, forceful narrative will leave readers far wiser and deeply outraged. . . . Investigative journalism at its very best." —Rod Oram, columnist, *Sunday Star-Times*

"Absorbing and heart-wrenching, this compelling book exposes corporate and regulatory failures of which all New Zealanders should be aware and ashamed." —Fiona Rotherham, *Fairfax BusinessDay*

"Macfie . . . gets to the heart of a complex and detailed story without losing or confusing her audience . . . Lucid, exhaustive, enraging." —Guy Somerset, *New Zealand Listener*

"Credit is due to Rebecca Macfie for her book, *Tragedy at Pike River Mine*. The investigation makes compelling reading, and illustrates the power of journalism in book form." —John Drinnan, *New Zealand Herald*

"This is the best sort of journalism – methodical, well researched and dispassionate. But you can feel its cold anger." —Nicholas Reid, *Reid's Reader*

"If you've already read accolades for this book, they're all deserved, and then some. Macfie digs through a mountain of information to deliver a compelling account of what went wrong at Pike River." —Jim Eagles and Mark Fryer, *Weekend Herald*

About the Author

Rebecca Macfie is a senior writer with the *New Zealand Listener* magazine. She was previously a senior writer and deputy editor of *Canvas* magazine, editor and deputy editor of *Unlimited* magazine, and has written extensively for *Independent Business Weekly* and *National Business Review*. She has 24 years' experience in journalism and has won numerous awards.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Katie Phillips:

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Jack Harbin:

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