

Trapped

New York City: Friday October 31, 1999, 11PM

Nicholas White is working late on an urgent assignment. The 34 year-old manager is in a large open-plan office on the 43rd floor of a New York building. On the other side of the room a solitary **co-worker** is on the phone.

Down on the New York streets below the weekend has started. People are relaxing in bars and restaurants. 'I need a cigarette,' thinks Nick.

Getting up from his desk, Nick walks to the door. He calls back, 'I'll be back in a few minutes,' but his co worker is still busy on the phone.

Nick walks out of the office, leaving his coat on his chair. He takes elevator down to the lobby. Walking into the cool autumn night, he lights up a cigarette.

When Nick returns to the lobby it is very quiet. There is nobody around. The building is empty.

Nick gets into the **express elevator**. He presses the button for the 43rd floor.

The elevator **accelerates** up through the floors. There are no stops before the 39th floor, but everything seems fine.

Suddenly the elevator stops. The lights flash off and then on again. At this moment, Nick's **co-worker** is leaving the office. He gets into the down elevator. He is unaware that Nick is **trapped** somewhere below the 39th floor

In the other elevator, Nick presses the alarm. He sits down and waits for someone to come and rescue him

But nobody comes because nobody is there. The maintenance staff have gone home for the weekend. Nick is now alone in the building

Ten minutes tick by. Nick takes out his phone - but of course there's no signal! But he can see that a security camera on. Surely someone will see him soon.

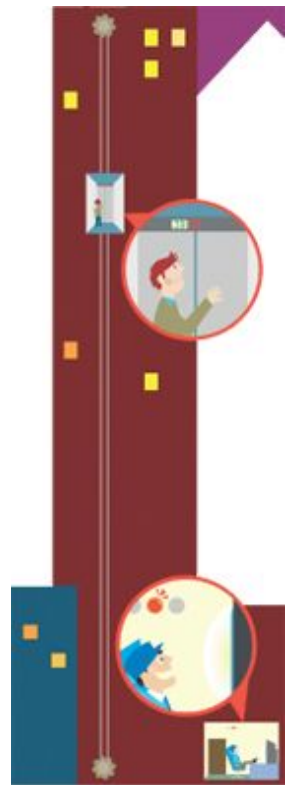
But nobody comes. Nick gets increasingly anxious. Is there any way out?

There is a an access hatch in the ceiling of the elevator. Nick tries to climb up to and open it. But it's impossible.

Many more hours pass. Nick has no food or drink - and only three cigarettes!

Finally on Sunday afternoon a security guard returns to the building. He notices Nick on a security camera. After 41 hours, Nick is finally rescued.

Remarkably, Nick does not need medical treatment. 'I'm just happy to be out,' he said. 'And I want to go home!'



Activities

Quick Check

1. Who is trapped in the elevator?
2. Why is he in there?
3. Why does nobody rescue him?
4. What does Nick have with him?
5. When do they finally rescue Nick?

Reading Comprehension: True or False

1. Nick was on the 34th floor at 11 o'clock at night.
2. He was alone in the office at this time.
3. He went out for a cigarette.
4. He came back up in the slow elevator.
5. Nick pushed the wrong button in the elevator.
6. The maintenance staff had left for the weekend.
7. The security camera in the elevator was turned off.
8. Nick had food but no cigarettes.
9. On Sunday afternoon someone noticed Nick on a security camera.
10. He was trapped in the elevator for 44 hours.

Vocabulary: Match the words below with their definitions

| Word | Definition |
|------|-------------------------------|
| | without knowledge |
| | suddenly go much faster |
| | keep safe from crime |
| | when you can't move or escape |
| | rapid/fast version |

trapped * express * accelerate * unaware * security

Writing

1. Imagine you are Nick White. Write a letter to a friend describing what has happened to you.