

## ***BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE***

### **ARON RALSTON**

#### **BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

*Between a Rock and a Hard Place* is an autobiography written by Aron Ralston, an engineer turned outdoorsman and motivational speaker. It relates his experience in 2003 of being trapped for five days and seven hours in Blue John Canyon, in the Utah desert in the southern United States.

His right arm was trapped by a boulder and, unable to free himself, he amputated his arm using a blunt pocketknife. He then had to return through the canyon and climb down a 20-metre slope before he could reach safety and receive medical care.

#### **BEFORE YOU START READING**

- 1 Read about Aron Ralston and his experience. If you are able to, watch *127 Hours*, the 2010 film on the same subject.
- 2 Think about what attracts people to potentially dangerous outdoor activities and sports. Is it a love of adventure? A sense of boredom? Or something else entirely?
- 3 Share any accounts of survival or lucky escapes that you have heard or read about.



▲ Blue John Canyon, Utah, USA