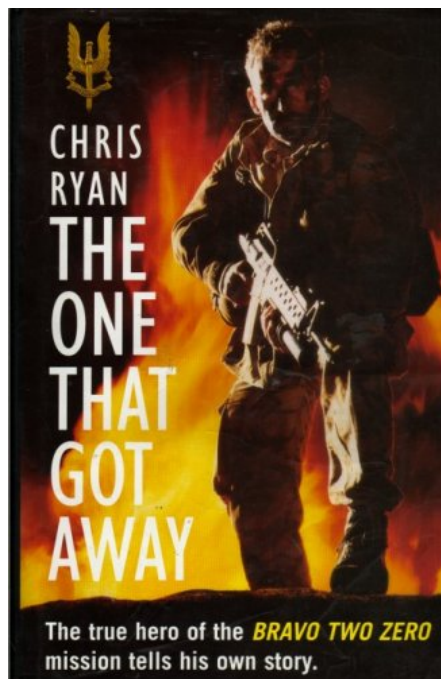




The One That Got Away

Chris Ryan

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The British Army's SAS—the Special Air Service—is recognized as one of the world's premier special operations units. During the Gulf War, deep behind Iraqi lines, an SAS team was compromised. A fierce firefight ensued, and the eight men were forced to run for their lives. Only one, Chris Ryan, escaped capture—by walking nearly 180 miles through the desert for a week. *The One That Got Away* is his breathtaking story of extraordinary courage under fire, of narrow escapes, of highly trained soldiers struggling against the most adverse of conditions, and, above all, of one man's courageous refusal to lie down and die.

The One That Got Away Details

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Author : Chris Ryan

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From Reader Review The One That Got Away for online ebook

John Nicholl says

What a great book! Absolutely brilliant!

Bea says

first book i read from Chris Ryan in moment he became my favorite author. and i would also recommend this one as first book to read from him. i know why author didn't dig that much in feelings and it was cleat even he tried to keep a distance and give a reader as much as possible objective story of his survival. i'm sure a never could write this way same story, but that's why i appreciate it more. only when you realize what's behind the word, you can fully understand. there is no way to doubt, you just must do, what's necessary... same as i had to read this book. thank you, Chris Ryan.

James says

As the companion to Bravo Two-Zero this provides another point of view of the events that took place in Iraq during the first Iraq war. The major difference is that the author was one of the three which got separated from the other five members of the squad and was the only one to actually escape Iraq.

It is always worthwhile seeing the same events from different points of view, as all memories are coloured by perspective. The main difference in these two accounts is that Andy takes most of the responsibility upon his own shoulders, whereas Chris blames others. This difference is going to draw you more to one account over the other depending on how you react.

I wasn't taken with the 'blame' approach that Chris takes on in the earlier part of the book and I was alienated. When he then goes on to relate his solo exploits until he is safely back with his units, I am drawn more into his story. It gives an excellent insight into physical and mental hardships and damage that the extreme conditions inflicted upon Chris. It also shows the, at times, unbelievable situations that he has to endure with various British officials and officers - the head of the Jordanian secret police who is an object of abject terror to his countrymen treats him infinitely better than one of his own countrymen!

Definitely worth a read, but it must be read with at least Bravo Two-Zero to get a more rounded view of events.

Mark Maguire says

This was an incredible book! I heard of the legend of Bravo Two Zero; I had watched numerous episodes of "Hunting Chris Ryan" on the Television, but until I had read this gripping book, I had no comprehension about the incredible mental, and physical challenges that the author had undergone during his record-breaking Escape and Evasion across Iraq to the relative "safety" of Syria. Indeed, some of the most memorable sections of the book occur during the authors' arrival in "friendly" territory.

The author's writing style drags you into the unfolding scenario and leaves you with a feeling a genuine suspense and intrigue, as you are made party to the internal machinations of Chris Ryan as he battles against the inclement weather; physical and mental deterioration, and the omnipresent threat of enemy patrols whilst he also reconciles himself to the incremental loss of his comrades throughout the evasion, compounded by the fact that he had no idea as to whether they had been captured; rescued, or killed.

I have read a number of Military Autobiographies this year. This book ranks amongst one of the most powerful, and honest, that I have encountered so far. The book is both a powerful, and graphic, account of the Bravo Two Zero operation that highlights one man's survival against incredible odds which should act as an inspiration for anyone currently experiencing adversity.

Peter says

Well done CR,deserve all the accolade.

Joe says

This is a great book and amazing when you take into account that it is in fact a true story.

The guy deserves many many more medals than he got for such an amazing escape which helps create more mystery about the SAS and probably helps attract more intense hardened nut cases to its ranks.

Steve Wilkinson says

My favourite book of all time and one I have read on many occasions. The story of one guy and the only guy from the Bravo Two Zero SAS team dropped behind enemy lines during the first Gulf War to escape.

The story goes from the beginnings of him being called up for service to the team being dropped and concentrates on his hundreds of miles walk to survival. The encounters he has and the way in which he and obviously the SAS are taught to survive is incredible to read.

Ben Jackson says

This is was a great companion book to Andy McNabs Bravo Two Zero. It actually makes a lot more sense when you read both books, giving you two entirely different points of view of the same events.

After having recently finished reading another of Chris's books, I'm glad to see he made it through such a harrowing experience.

Tina Crossley says

Totally my bag, exciting and compulsive reading

David Davies says

You will not find a better real life special forces book.

Andy B says

Nothing like a true story and one that shows the sheer battle with the elements within a war zone can kill you more than the enemy. Chris Ryan shows great guile, sheer perseverance and pure will to survive in one of the most hostile places on the planet at the height of a war that really had no winners. Great read, you feel like your taking the journey with the author.

Biscuitz says

If your reading Bravo Two Zero then you should read this, its another 1st person perspective of the same fateful mission.

Mr. D says

Not as good as bravo two zero. plus chris puts andy down quite a bit through out the book. not so much about his time there just basically more about him. quite an egotistical memoir. he clearly went through a gruelling journey but do feel he was probably the luckiest of that lot.

Jared says

Spoiler alert... I discuss specifics within the book.

DO NOT READ IF YOU DO NOT WANT ANYTHING SPOILED

Hm... deciding between a two and a three starrer for this one was tough. I ultimately decided for three stars because his account of stumbling through Iraq was interesting. His pub conversation style of story telling carries this type of story very well.

Still, just by his style and recollection, I know his type very well. While his story is amazing, it is just that. I am by no means calling him a liar, but this is his own account, which cannot be corroborated, and there are some pretty unbelievable points.

1. However many days into his escape across Iraq, without food or water, he drinks from the Euphrates. I am

sorry. I cannot buy that. He would have died from dehydration after that within hours.

2. His accounts about how his team got split up are shady, at best.

3. I was stationed in the part of Iraq where a large part of this story was written. He never clearly defines a wadi, but he makes it seem like the cover they provide was minimal and this is just the opposite.

4. His supposed enemy contacts accounts were limited and vague, especially his second encounter. He describes extremely limited functions in his hands yet is able to kill two men at once, one with a knife and one with his bare hands.

As said in another post here, his ego does get in the way. Also, this book could have been edited down about 75 pages, especially in the end. In the end, though, with belief suspended and the reader pretending they are listening to an old soldier at a bar, this is an enjoyable read.

Rich Gee says

Amazing courage by an amazing soldier. Go SAS!

Carter.friedrichsen says

This book is about a spy that goes behind enemy lines and gives information to his group. But somebody spots his group and has to go and rescue them. So this guy in this book does that. He goes to rescue them and he succeeds in doing so. Then he gets the purple heart for his honor and bravery. I like this book because it was about war.

Dylan says

To say Chris Ryan is not a egotist would be a lie, pictures in this book show him walking through fire in a sort of "Rambo" style.

To say he is a hero is also a lie, he starts the story talking about how his nerves cut out, and moments in his remarkable track make you want to go "But how could you do that?"

But one thing that is not a lie....Chris Ryan is damn impressive, strong willed and can get the job done, and if not, he can salvage something from it.

This work, which made him fairly well known in the UK, is a great read, it happened and it made us re-think what a human under huge strains can pull off, it also shows how war and hardships can mess the minds of those who lived them afterwards.

Basically two stories, his escape and the aftermath, The One that Got Away is a great bit of work, if you can just get over some of the things Chris talks about...

4/5

Sachahaworth says

Looking at the cover of the edition I bought, I think you'd be forgiven if you initially judged Chris Ryan to be a bit egocentric, because it bears the tagline "The real hero of Bravo Two Zero". Being published two years after Andy McNab's account of his experience in the same mission I translated that as "Do you know how difficult it is to escape from Iraq when there's a war on? Those other guys just sat there and people hit them!". Whether or not Ryan himself was responsible for the final cover, I don't know, but I thought it was tactless.

The book starts at the beginning of the Gulf War in 1991 before the invasion of Iraq. There were plans to insert three groups of SAS soldiers with varying objectives. Chris Ryan and Andy McNab are the most famous veterans of one of these groups: Bravo Two Zero. I Ryan's version of the story had more detail about the situation in their base camp and some of the problems that they had planning their mission, which is a fairly damning account of the disorganisation and lack of communication that existed: the failure of the army to keep track of its weapons stock, the lack of adequate knowledge of the terrain and the failure to check that the radios were capable of communicating. Like many disasters, a lot of mistakes needed to line up (the Swiss Cheese model) to result in the group being compromised, unable to get help and suffering from hypothermia.

Both Ryan and McNab have similar writing styles: first person, which gives them impression of them telling the story to you personally, and this makes it easy to read even when it gets technical. I would have preferred the introduction into who Ryan was and how he ended up joining the SAS to have been at the start. It's placed in the middle, almost like a dream sequence when they're lying up waiting during the day.

Unlike McNab's account, Ryan places a lot of blame and speaks very lowly of his colleague Vince, which given that Vince died during the mission and cannot speak for himself, it comes across as unfair. I guess that in a stressful situation, when you feel one of the party isn't coping as well as they could, it's easy to appropriate blame.

Perhaps the most interesting, and worrying part of the book is at the end, after Ryan ends up at the British Embassy in Damascus. At this point, it's obvious that the army has no plan for what to do in these situation, despite it being something that they are supposed to plan for. I was particularly surprised at the emphasis given on interrogating him and not immediately seeking medical attention, or letting him contact his family, even under supervision. I know that getting the information about why the mission went wrong is obviously important, but in the long run it's hardly encouraging for anyone who's likely to find themselves in a similar position in the future and personally, I think explains a lot why soldiers suffer psychologically.

All in all, this is a useful book for anyone who's involved in (Clinical) Risk Management, because it highlights how important it is to model all outcomes, that looking after your staff is important and the fact that relatives should not be ignored. I can only hope that from it, our armed forces have learned something useful and that twenty years on, we're not making the same mistakes.

Graham says

I had the impression that I might find THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY a bit boring - after all, I'd already read one version of the story in Andy McNab's BRAVO TWO ZERO. However, Ryan's authoritative tone adds his own spin to the proceedings.

The tale of the escape sees Ryan being pursued by vehicles, drinking radioactive water and murdering

sentries. It's all Boy's Own adventure stuff written with a survivalist edge. A great story well told.

graceymayy says

I really loved this book, it was fantastic. It gave me an in-sight view of what it was like for Chris Ryan. Kept me on the edge of my seat after each page.
