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438 dias libro

Jose Salvador Alvarenga zarpó de Chia-pas el sábado 17 de noviembre de 2012 con su compañero Ezequiel Córdoba pa-ra pasar el día pescando tiburones. A pe-sar del aviso de tormenta los dos se aden-traron en el mar en una pequeña barca y cuando les alcanzó el temporal tambien se les averió el motor. Segºn el relato de Jose Salvador, este pudo sobre-vivir en alta mar gracias a una dieta a base de pescado crudo, tortugas y pájaros pequeños y bebiendo agua de lluvia, sangre de tortuga y su propia orina. Ezequiel, que no quiso comer, no pudo resistir tanto tiempo y murió de sed y de hambre. Catorce meses despues, con cabellos largos y rubios, barba poblada y sin poder apenas hablar ni caminar, Jose Salva-dor llegó a la playa del atolón Ebon en las Islas Marshall, siete mil millas más allá de donde salió con su bote, el 30 de enero de 2014. Fascinado por la historia, el periodista estadounidense Jonathan Franklin entrevistó en numerosas ocasiones al pescador y a todos aquellos que estuvieron presentes cuando apareció en las Islas Marshall y que le acompañaron en los días posteriores mientras estuvo hospitalizado para comprobar su estado de salud. Jump to ratings and reviews438 Days is the miraculous account of the man who survived alone and adrift at sea longer than anyone in recorded history—as told to journalist Jonathan Franklin in dozens of exclusive interviews.On November 17, 2012, Salvador Alvarenga left the coast of Mexico for a two-day fishing trip. A vicious storm killed his engine and the current dragged his boat out to sea. The storm picked up and blasted him west. When he washed ashore on January 29, 2014, he had arrived in the Marshall Islands, 9,000 miles away—equivalent to traveling from New York to Moscow round trip.For fourteen months, Alvarenga survived constant shark attacks. He learned to catch fish with his bare hands. He built a fish net from a pair of empty plastic bottles. Taking apart the outboard motor, he fashioned a huge fishhook. Using fish vertebrae as needles, he stitched together his own clothes.He considered suicide on multiple occasions—including offering himself up to a pack of sharks. But Alvarenga never failed to invent an alternative reality. He imagined a method of survival that kept his body and mind intact long enough for the Pacific Ocean to toss him up on a remote palm-studded island, where he was saved by a local couple living alone in their own Pacific Island paradise.Based on dozens of hours of interviews with Alvarenga and interviews with his colleagues, search and rescue officials, the medical team that saved his life and the remote islanders who nursed him back to health, this is an epic tale of survival, an all-true version of the fictional Life of Pi. With illustrations, maps, and photographs throughout, 438 Days is a study of the resilience, will, ingenuity, and determination required for one man to survive fourteen months, lost at sea.GenresNonfictionSurvivalBiographyAdventureMemoirAudiobookTravel 1,274 people are currently reading16.6k people want to readDisplaying 1 - 30 of 1,345 reviewsFebruary 10, 2017This is a stunning story. How does a hard-partying, spendthrift illegal immigrant (into Mexico!) who sells his catch for subsistence level pay and has no ambitions actually have the wherewithal to survive so long drifting at sea both physically and mentally? Earlier this year I read Adrift: Seventy-Six Days Lost at Sea. I doubted that 438 Days would be as good because I identified with Steve Callahan who had been shipwrecked off the Canaries while attempting a passage to the Caribbean. I've sailed that route. But this book was better. The writing was better, the details of the story were more interesting and unlike Callahan, Alvarenga had not researched how to survive a shipwreck and had, apart from his knife, no tools, all he had were his wits and experience of the sea. This is not to take away from Callahan at all, that was also a 10 star read, but 438 Days was more interesting because all the problems and their solutions were explained in detail. Much was really interesting and nothing I could envisage, from his captive 'larder' of seabirds, to knowing what organs of fish to eat. Sadly his companion, the young Ezekiel didn't have the survival instinct strongly enough to overcome his revulsion at certain foods. Where Alvarenga saw nutrients, Ezekiel saw disgusting organs oozing blood. He died. How do you go for a swim, or to scrape tasty barnacles from the bottom of the boat when there are sharks around? How do you overcome the depression of having fishermen wave to you from a container boat and pass on by? Franklin is a superb writer, chronicler of the only person ever to been documented surviving and living off the sea for more than a year. The afterword, that I find usually boring in most books is Franklin's story of his connection with Alvarenga and what happened afterwards. It also gives the reason that Alvarenga who never sought fame or fortune from his ordeal, agreed to have the book written with interviews over an entire year. Alvarenga is a true hero, a man of great strength and has sought to be, by his example, a beacon of light to those who cannot overcome problems. If he could survive the worst existential problems that are beyond imagining, so can we all pull back from the black dog that sits on our shoulders in times of great depression._____Things I've learned so far notes on reading the book: Look for flotsam and jetsam. A large piece of white styrofoam found floating and then tethered to the boat was seen as a handy resting place for exhausted seabirds who then became an easy meal to catch.Praying is a good thing to do. It doesn't work in quite the way anticipated. After all the gods you beseech to save you are the very ones that let you get into that predicament in the first place perhaps they weren't paying attention and might with a lot of praise and bargaining might now. I say gods because Hindus and Buddhists have equally valid deities to the monotheistic sets.. But it calms you down, and gives you hope. This is better than wild panic and despair. On the other hand you could meditate, same results._____This is an amazing story to read. Alvarenga survived because he had the ability to think clearly, plan and not be despondent when one plan didn't work. It was tactics, the will to survive, intelligence. And luck. I'm enjoying this book.10-star-books 2016-150-reviews 2016-read January 26, 2016I am a sucker for survival stories, especially those set at sea. Have no idea why. Perhaps it's for the visceral, vicarious thrill of experiencing these terrifying events unfold from the safety and comfort of my reading chair. Which probably makes me an asshole, but let's be clear -- it's not the SUFFERING I get off on, but the grittiness and ingenuity required of the survivors to live through the ordeal so that we can all learn from it in some profound way (there is a part of me that uses these stories as self-help manuals -- what to do when stranded on an island, in the desert, in the Andes, in the Pacific ocean, on Mars!) (waves to Mark Watney -- yes I know he's a fictional character but you get my point).To call Salvador Alvarenga's true survival story of 438 days (!!!) adrift at sea "extraordinary" just might be the understatement of the century. His tale is the very epitome of extraordinary and then some. Can we just invent a new word please? So okay, extraordinary, but also terrifying and amazing and shocking and unbelievable. How can it be humanly possible for a person to survive so long adrift at sea with few supplies? What will this person eat? Where will they get their drinking water to stave off death from dehydration? Supposing food and water challenges are addressed, how does a person go about developing a mental toughness, a spiritual and emotional resiliency to go on in the face of insurmountable odds, immeasurable aching loneliness, crippling boredom and sensory deprivation?Jonathan Franklin does a great job here fleshing out Alvarenga's story with as much specific detail as possible pertaining to the 438 days, but also balances this side of the story with accounts from other people who have survived long periods at sea highlighting similarities and differences. He also quotes from scientists and psychologists who have studied survival and the mental, emotional and physical changes humans undergo in extreme survival situations. This helps put Alvarenga's experience into a larger, more meaningful context. If you do the audiobook thing, the reader for this one is excellent. His voice kept me immersed in the details and drama with very little opportunity for my mind to lose focus and wander. This is a gripping tale of extreme human survival that left me exhausted, humbled, and inspired. A before and after of Alvarenga and his first haircut and shave: 2016 audiobook man-vs-nature March 30, 2016What a remarkable story! I've heard about people being found after days and even weeks at sea but never have I heard the story of José Salvador Alvarenga, a man who was adrift in the ocean for 438 days. Where was this news story??? Where was I???Initially, 438 Days: An Extraordinary True Story of Survival at Sea was to serve as a filler book for me between library holds. I didn't even intend to finish it. But once I started, I was glued and let's just say that my TBR list was quickly put on pause. I was so astounded by the creativity that comes with the act of survival. The things Alvarenga did and ate and used and thought in order to stay alive! The intrinsic desire to live really is something special and Alvarenga wants his story to encourage others to never give up...not only when they are physically stranded in a seemingly hopeless situation but also when they are struggling emotionally as well. "Alvarenga questioned if his journey was a life lesson by God. By all reasonable standards, he should have been dead long ago. Was he being allowed to live for a reason? The only answer Alvarenga could articulate was that he had been chosen to bring messages of hope to those considering suicide. He began to recite the lessons aloud. Don't think about death, if you think you are going to die, you will die. . . . Everything will work out. . . don't give up hope, remain calm. It was the very mantra he had unsuccessfully attempted to impart to Córdoba. Now he was using it as a guide for his own psychological survival. What could be worse than being alone at sea? That's what I could tell someone thinking about suicide. What further suffering could there be than this?" 438 Days: An Extraordinary True Story of Survival at Sea is a well-documented nonfiction account told by investigative journalist: Jonathan Franklin after he interviewed Alvarenga and several collateral sources. If you enjoy true stories of survival, this is a great one. It appeals to all the senses and emotions. I highly recommend it. My favorite quote:"Survival is not a passive activity, it's an active pursuit. If you don't work at it, you are screwed. I have a pet theory that one of the most dangerous things you can do in life is minimize all risks. You fall on your face, nothing happens, and so when something big happens, you're totally unprepared, you have no tool kit."changed-my-perspective disaster-survival nonfiction October 9, 2021Salvador Alverenga, originally from El Salvador, living on the coast of Mexico and eking out a living as a fisherman, and Ezequiel Cordoba, a younger Mexican gentleman who was crewing for Alverenga for the first time, are lost at sea during a violent and lengthy storm in November 2012.This story is truly amazing. I can't even imagine drifting at sea for a day, let alone 438 of them. The fact that Alverenga survived at all and the things he did to ensure his survival are absolutely mind-boggling. He was very innovative in his thinking and for the most part was able to maintain an optimistic outlook throughout his ordeal. The amount of trash he saw float by him is astonishing! The book itself was very well written by journalist Jonathan Franklin and didn't drag at all. I enjoyed the maps and pictures which were included in the hardcover edition which I borrowed from the London Public Library.October 2, 2023Very interesting story and characters but unfortunately it didn't really capture my interest.December 10, 2019Well, how interesting can a book about a bloke in a boat be? The answer is – very interesting, riveting even. 438 Days: An Extraordinary True Story of Survival at Sea is exactly that, riveting. Salvador-Alvarenga spent a record 438 days lost at sea, drifting westwards across the pacific, totally exposed in a small fishing vessel relying on his own resourcefulness to survive. Alvarenga tells his story to journalist Jonathan Franklin over dozens of interviews, sure the story is good, but it's the writing that totally captures the reader from page one. It is so well told.I found so much of this story remarkable and surprising. For example, the amount of rubbish (flotsam) that is floating around in the middle of the ocean is not only vast, it is shameful. The number of turtles and birds around also surprised me, apparently turtles swim 12,000 miles across the Pacific Ocean to China each year – I don't know about you, but I reckon that's amazing. Also, birds often used the boat as a resting place, much to their peril, during their massive journeys across the globe.It's also interesting to learn that people who have a purpose tend to fare better in situations like this, and this is the reason why people like doctors and nurses have quite a high survival rate in concentration camps, they have jobs which give meaning to their existence. Franklin used experts to sprinkle this book with their expertise, the reader will learn a great deal about how humans survive (or don't survive) in extreme situations.One important point that stayed with me is the fact people don't remain the same after an ordeal, you can never go back to what you were before. Whether it be a situation like this or a severe illness, living through a survival situation is life changing. You don't bounce back as people might expect.I didn't think I'd like this book, so it was a surprise I found this to be a real page turner – full credit to the Author and Alvarenga for sharing this remarkable story with us.4 StarsNovember 24, 20244 = Good.Paperback.This was my bookclub's read this month and what a read it was!How come I have never heard of this man and his amazing survival story? 438 days adrift at sea.I was a little surprised at his blase attitude towards his working equipment prior to his trip, and also, being a vegan, most of the hunting made me grimace. I'm sure I would do the same thing if stranded though.I will say, at the start,I also doubted his story(as did the author initially). A very addictive book and one where you shake your head in admiration at his resilience.June 11, 2020The true story of 438 days in the Pacific Ocean - in a small dingy.Both Salvador Alvarenga, experienced fisherman, and Ezequiel Cordoba, twenty-two year old apprentice, left Costa Azul, Mexico to do a days fishing. Many would not go out that day due to a coming storm, but Alvarenga knew he could make it out and back before the worst of the storm hit. That was not to be. They drifted across the Pacific Ocean, surviving by eating raw turtles and birds. One man died of extreme hunger from his lack of will to live. The other floated in the Pacific Ocean for over 14 months. This book details the trauma that Alvarenga went through to feed himself, remain semi-healthy and maintain his sanity, during his 6,000 miles of drifting from Mexico to the Marshall Islands. His determination and will to live, his inventive ways to survive and his promise to Cordoba, kept him alive. This all transpired in 2013 - hard to believe, but factual. December 3, 2015I received an advance copy of this title from the publisher in exchange for an honest review.I not only appreciate the incredible story told, a story that has much to tell anyone who has ever felt themselves facing seemingly insurmountable odds (which is pretty much everyone), but also the tremendous research which creates the basis for the tale, and the heartfelt sympathy and respect that Mr. Franklin gave to Salvador Alvarenga, our protagonist. This story is a feast for the mind as well as the heart.I would place Mr. Franklin's book on the same shelf as such classics as Alive and Into Thin Air. I found it particularly interesting to have read this book right after finishing The Martian. While I loved The Martian, it paled in comparison (mainly because it was fiction) to the real story. It is an apt analogy on some levels, yet Alvarenga's suffering was much more profound than that of the fictional astronaut and his isolation was no less extreme.Franklin's deep research provides tremendous insight into the incredible journey: into the true immensity and isolation of the Pacific Ocean, the daily requirements and suffering of being a castaway for more than a year, as well as the physical and even more illuminating, at least to me, the psychological toll that it took on Alvarenga, a man who probably was the one in a million who could have survived this ordeal.Another unexpected and appreciated surprise for me was that Franklin did not end the story with the rescue, as most authors do. He stayed with Alvarenga as he attempted to readjust to society, both physically and mentally. This is the "rest of the story" that we are usually not given. I also appreciated Mr. Franklin's deep sympathy and respect for Mr. Alvarenga, which gave the story an emotional impact that is often missing in nonfiction. I can't imagine a novel exploring the emotional and physical suffering of its hero any deeper than this fine book.5 stars. Highest recommendation.2015-favorites 2015-reads arcsNovember 21, 2015FOUR HUNDRED AND THIRTY-EIGHT DAYS! That's how long José Salvador Alvarenga was stranded at sea. Without a working motor or even any oars, he found himself adrift in his small boat, fighting for his life and sanity as the ocean's currents carried him, mostly at a snail's pace, over 6000 miles across the Pacific Ocean. As the author points out, that's almost the equivalent of a baby crawling from Rio de Janeiro to Paris, except for the baby could probably do it faster. Starting out I was a bit worried at first because the earliest chapters seemed a bit dull, and the story wasn't moving fast enough to suit me. But my fear was unfounded, as the author shortly proved himself a capable storyteller, and it turned into a very good story about a man that I think most people won't be able to help but like and whose resilience you have to admire. This is one you really can't go wrong with IMO. I think every bookworm will probably wanna check this out.awesome nonfiction read-in-2015 March 31, 2021This biography was amazing. It is the type of non fiction that makes me feel good about being alive. In 438 Days: An Extraordinary True Story of Survival at Sea, we meet a man named Salvador Alvarenga and see his unbelievable will to live against all odds. Somehow, I never heard about this man. I can't believe this happened in my lifetime and I missed the news about it. Salvador Alvarenga survived 438 days adrift in a small fishing boat. He had no food, no water, no hope for so, so long. That is longer than anyone in recorded history has survived at sea, EVER! He went into the ocean November 17, 2012 and came out January 29, 2014. His story of survival is amazing! He became a national celebrity the minute people figured out how long he was out there. His journey almost pales in comparison to his fight to get back to normal after the trauma of his ordeal.Admittedly, this book starts off with a rough index of readability. It is written by a investigative journalist who spent almost a year with Alvarenga and his family. Salvador Alvarenga is not an educated man or well spoken. He is not a grand storyteller, but this was such a grand story. What the author did for Alvarenga's story, and the thing that made this story more amazing, is to add in professional and personal interview snippets. He cited experts in Oceanography, Research of Ocean and Earth Science, Applied Physiology, and Climatology, to name a few. He also interviewed the people at home that suspected him dead and the few that held on to hope. Between Alvarenga's memories and the experts collaboration of what it might have been like, the author was able to make this educating and entertaining. In that order. The order of the story makes sense, I wouldn't change a thing about this book.I really enjoyed this book. Alvarenga comes across as a very humble hero. His story is so incredible. I spent lots of time trying to imagine what I would do to survive. The most compelling evidence of Alvarenga's resolve is that his crew mate died after the first 4 weeks. Surviving 4 weeks at sea is no small feat, but Salvador Alvarenga lost the only human company he had and then went on to live another 13 months alone. It is hard to really comprehend what he went through.The other thing about this book that really won me over, was that we actually got to see Alvarenga's struggle when he did come home. People didn't believe him at first. The author did a great job of explaining what it was like for him to re-enter society. He landed on an island where no one spoke his language. He was unable to explain his appearance or how long he had been gone. He was in complete survival mode and expected his rescuers to try to eat him. He was hounded by the press and was too weak to even speak a few words, much less give an interview. His journey back into society took almost as long as his sea journey. I feel so privileged to have read it. His story gives me hope for the resilience of the human spirit. His life is something for the record books. Salvador Alvarenga's story is one that must be told.adventure biography non-fiction April 18, 2022"A mutual survival instinct overcame fatigue. With the morning sun, they could see the waves approaching, rising high above them and then splitting open. Each man would brace and lean against a side of the open-hulled boat. Depending from which direction a big wave appeared, the men would jump to the opposite rail in an attempt to counteract the roll. But the waves were mad, slapping each other in midair, joining forces to create swells that raised the men to a brief peak where they could get a third-story view, then with the sensation of a falling elevator, instantly drop them."True story of two men who left Mexico in November 2012 during a fierce storm and how one of them survived for over a year adrift in the Pacific Ocean. The ingenuity this man showed was amazing. He found a way to capture raw fish, turtles, and birds, accumulate fresh rainwater, and endure life in a twenty-three-foot boat with no motor while shielding himself from the sun by curling up in an ice box!I am very impressed with the author's ability to take José Salvador Alvarenga's thoughts and craft them into a compelling account without repetition (the days adrift must have been incredibly similar). He weaves in expert commentary and includes maps of ocean currents to track the boat's path to the Marshall Islands. It provides insight into how a person can improve the chances of making it through an ordeal with an unknown ending date without succumbing to despair. It is well written and will appeal to anyone who enjoys true stories of survival. "Despite his temporary bonding with God, Alvarenga's true faith remained attached to one of his core beliefs: optimism. "I never thought in the negative, I remained positive," he said. "I told myself I was going to survive, to be brave, have faith, not fall down. I knew that I was adrift, but I was thinking about surviving. I was always thinking ahead, planning. I was brainstorming inside the icebox. How did I do it? I imagined solutions."biography maritime non-fiction June 22, 2018This does what it says on the tin. You want a survival story, the typical "guy succeeds against death-defying odds" account? Here it is. A Salvadoran fisherman named, appropriately enough, Salvador Alvarenga, set out on a fishing expedition from Costa Azul, Mexico. A bad storm moved in, boat blew off course, and 438 days later he washed up on Ebon Atoll in the Marshall Islands, 6,700 kilometers from the place he had set out from. That's pretty far away, but during that time Alvarenga's boat was reportedly moving at an average speed slower than that of a crawling baby (that's the most interesting factoid I took away from this whole thing).Surviving the voyage made Alvarenga a celebrity of sorts, and both his life before the voyage, the voyage itself, and his newfound celebrity once he'd washed up on land again are recounted here as factually as is possible in a case like this where so much relies on one person's account of things.For this particular kind of story, the author does pretty much everything he ought to and puts it all down in a compelling way. But I can't say I garnered much more than I would have from a lengthy news article of the journey, or this book extract that author Jonathan Franklin published in The Guardian.I wanted Alvarenga to survive, while at the same time I didn't feel any particular connection to him. No real insight is provided into who Alvarenga is or what motivates him. Franklin himself doesn't seem too clear on those details. All we know is that Alvarenga reportedly left his family in El Salvador to go work as a fisherman in Mexico because he feared that a gang would try to take his life. That episode isn't ever fleshed out in any satisfactory detail, and Alvarenga's reported motivation to stay alive – to see his daughter again – didn't ring true with me for whatever reason. So there you have it – a survival story about some guy who drifted an awfully long way in a boat and had to eat a lot of birds to survive. The first thing he requested upon reaching land? Tortillas. I could relate to that. I like tortillas too.audiobook man-vs-nature non-fiction September 26, 2015"Don't think about death, if you think you are going to die, you will die… everything will work out…don't give up hope, remain calm".A long-lasting storm of five days overcame fisherman Salvador Alvarenga's small boat, stalling his engine and tossing all of his navigational equipment, tools, food and water overboard. For months he drifted thousands of miles in solitude in a huge silent ocean, surviving additional storms, a blinding sun, circling sharks and agonizing hunger. There were many terrible days of despair. How he found the strength, the will to live, and resourcefulness for survival were inspirational and remarkable. With a weakening body and constant tricks of the mind, the ways he adapted to the challenges of shelter, food and water were brilliant. This man's deep faith and boundless imagination, ultimate acceptance and peacefulness carried him through a mind-blowing journey that most people could not survive.This book is expected to be released on November 17th, 3 years to the day Alvarenga left Mexico for the two-day fishing trip that turned into 438 days. Thanks to Atria Books for providing me with a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest review. I really enjoyed it.December 10, 2019January 25, 2021WOW. 5 stars. This book was absolutely riveting. As soon as I saw 438 Days: An Extraordinary True Story of Survival at Sea pop up in my Goodreads feed (thank you, BookHound ♡), I knew that I wanted to read it ASAP and placed a hold on it at my local library. I'm not sure why I find survival tales like this one so intriguing, but I do. Having grown up in Newfoundland, I also feel a deep connection to the ocean and the diversity of creatures that inhabit it. In November of 2012, José Salvador Alvarenga set out for a two-day fishing trip off the coast of a Costa Azul, a small village in Chiapas, Mexico, with a younger man named Ezequiel Córdoba. They got caught in a terrible storm, all of their supplies got washed away, and the engine broke down on their 25-foot fishing boat. They battled the storm for several days while rescue parties tried to find them. The rescue mission was unsuccessful, and the two men drifted further out to sea with little more than the clothes on their backs. The only protection they had from the sun and rain was an ice box. When they got so malnourished that they couldn't maintain their body heat, they would squeeze into the ice box together, hugging to stay warm.Alvagenga survived for 14 months by eating raw fish (did you know that fish eyeballs are high in vitamin C and can prevent scurvy?), sharks, birds, and turtles that he caught with his bare hands, and collecting rainwater in bottles. When food and water was scarce, he resorted to eating his beard and finger nails and drinking his own urine. His partner, Córdoba, wasn't so lucky. One day, he ate a raw bird that had swallowed a poisonous sea-snake, and he became so ill that he refused to eat any more birds after that, a fearful decision that ultimately lead to his demise. While stranded on his little boat in the middle of the Pacific ocean, the extreme isolation caused Alvarenga to hallucinate and he considered feeding himself to the sharks in his worst moments of suicidal desperation. He made it through this trauma by creating an elaborate fantasy world in his head, talking to the animals and to his partner's sun-mummified corpse, and having full conversations with the ocean as if she were a person. He was also motivated to survive in order to make amends with his estranged teenage daughter, Fatima. He kept track of time by observing the waxing and waning of the moon, and even celebrated Christmas and his birthday based on those calculations. At one point, he was joined by a whale who hung around his boat for a whole week. He was devastated when he woke up one morning to find her gone. Her baby stuck around for a bit, but he was rambunctious and kept banging the boat which got old fast. There were a couple of parts that made me tear up with emotion. At one point, a little while after Córdoba had died, he befriended a bird and named him Francisco. However, after days of not being able to catch any food, he had to resort to eating his new friend :(Another part made me cry because it was beautiful: When Alvarenga washed up on the shore of Tile Islet, a small island that is part of Ebon Atoll, he was discovered by locals Emi Libokmeto and Russel Laikidrik. They fed him pancakes and gave him clothes to wear, and as he was sitting by the fire, he made eye contact with Emi and they smiled at each other. I felt so happy and relieved for him in that moment.Alvarenga's story was beyond fascinating, but I also really appreciated the interviews with survival psychologist, Dr. John Leach. It was interesting to learn about the ways that humans adapt to these kinds of situations, and what factors might work in someone's favor. For example, being able to create elaborate fantasies to help distract oneself from relentless anxiety and suffering, might mean the difference between life and death. The author, Jonathan Franklin, did an amazing job of bringing Alvarenga's narrative to life in a way that was both honest and compelling. It was well-researched and held my attention the whole way through. If you enjoy stories about the sea and epic tales of survival, I highly recommend picking this one up. It reminded me a lot of Life of Pi, which I also loved, except this one's a true story. Sometimes truth is stranger than fiction.5-stars author-from-usa borrowed-from-library January 5, 2016There are stories of survival and then there is this story of simply refusing to die. Salvador Alvarenga will forever be the man to tough for the sun to fry and for tough circumstances to thwart.438 days at sea. 118 days with a companion. Are you kidding me? How many could survive that isolation on land with a healthy stock of food and water? Now let's trade your water for urine and your food for raw fish and birds. Let's see how long you manage to survive.Not only is this story gut wrenching, filled with anticipation, excitement, it is mind blowing. This is the factual Papillion. A modern day Shackleton. There is no question that this is one of the most epic stories of survival that has ever graced the news.I love a book that leaves me shaking, feeling what the characters felt, and sensing the mental battles that all had to endure. Most of all, I love the books that make profound changes upon my mental composition. This book left me confessing that I would never again turn away from a hungry hand nor complain about my own personal sufferings. I am ever so thankful Jonathan Franklin was able to spend time with Salvador Alvarenga to convey a properly detailed and respected story. Let me leave you with Salvador Alvarenga's own reason for this book as written by Mr. Franklin:I suffered so much and for so long. Maybe if people read this they will realize that if I can make it, they can make it. Many people suffer only because of what happens in their head; I was also physically being tortured. I had no food. No water. If I can make it so can you. If one depressed person avoids committing suicide then the book is a success."Be strong. Think positive. If you start to think to the contrary, you are headed to failure. Your mind has to be relaxed "as you think about survival. Don't think about death. If you think you are going to die, you will die. You have to survive and think about the future of your life, that life is beautiful! How can you imagine taking your own life? There are challenges and punishment in life but you have to fight!"A most excellent author's note as well: Finally, another thanks to Salvador Alvarenga. May we all show such grace, humor and humanity when life drives us to the edge of sanity. He is a wonderful teacher and a man who drives better at sea than on land.2016 2016-january adventure March 22, 2016This is an Amazing story of survival. One November 17, 2012 Salvador Alvarenga age 36 and Ezequiel Cordoba age 22 left Costa Azul Mexico in a 25 foot small boat to fish. A storm blew in and pushed the small boat out into the Pacific Ocean. On January 29, 2014 Alvarenga drifted ashore on Ebon, the southern tip of the Marshall Island chain, almost 7000 miles from where he started. Salvador drifted on the ocean current for 438 days. Garbage drifted by some of which he ate and other he found use for such as bottles and barrels to catch water in.Franklin interviewed Alvarenga for days to obtain his story. He did extensive research and interviews with oceanographers and other experts about the ocean and weather. Franklin states that Alvarenga said that battling loneliness, depression and suicidal thoughts were the most difficult to overcome in his battle for survival. I enjoyed the section where he tells of the week a whale shark drifted alongside his boat and attracted fish which he was able to catch. I read this as an audiobook downloaded from Audible. George Newbern did a good job narrating the story. This is a must read story for those who are interested in survival or sea stories.audio-book biography non-fiction April 19, 2022I heard about this story on MFM and the book was ABSOLUTELY WILD. If you like survival stories, this does not disappoint.January 19, 2016An amazing survival story but it wasn't very well written. I'm not impressed by the author.July 16, 2019In which we discuss... cannibalism?Alvarenga is not perfect. He drinks, he smokes marijuana, he parties hard, he left his daughter -- a one-year-old -- behind and he's an illegal living in Mexico. Franklin doesn't try to hide any of that. But we also see the good in Alvarenga, a man who refuses to quit. He takes pride in his job, finds family among his coworkers, has a good sense of humor and a generous spirit.Alvarenga and Ezequiel get stranded in a boat together after a storm, a boat which ends up drifting all the way across the Pacific ocean.Eating / Food / Starvation:The difference between Alvarenga and Ezequiel is that Alvarenga could eat anything. He brags about it. He says that as a kid, growing up very very poor, that he ate raw meat. He'd eat raw fish to impress his buddies, or whenever he got hungry on a fishing trip. To Alvarenga, there was no hesitation. As soon as he realized it was a survival situation, he began catching and eating raw fish. Ezequiel, with whom Alvarenga shared the food, was quite a bit pickier. He wouldn't drink turtle blood, and wouldn't eat turtle meat at the beginning. He thought raw bird smelled horrible, and only ate a little. Eventually Ezequiel dies of starvation or thirst (Alvarenga had been drinking turtle blood during the drought periods, but Ezequiel refused).Inconsistencies regarding Ezequiel:Who was Ezequiel? The truth is, Alvarenga didn't know. Nobody from the fishing village knew. They called him Ezequiel Cordoba or Pinata. The Telegraph said that another fishermen said "there was a boy on that boat" but that they didn't really know anything about him. Also, his age is unknown. Accounts vary on Ezequiel's age, stating anywhere from 22 (the book), 23 (The Telegraph) and 24 (NBC).Ezequiel's family saw the report on TV and claimed him. Afterwards, they sued Alvarenga for a million dollars for eating Ezequiel. This was after being paid 1,000$ from the boss, and asking again. Also after they saw Ezequiel's previous lawyer sue about not being included in this book. I don't think Ezequiel's family was out for the money, and their case of "cannibalism" was just to make an extra buck. But I will discuss, below, my own case for murder-cannibalism.The Case For Murder-Cannibalism:Alvarenga would eat anything.There is a passage about a "duck" that Alvarenga caught and broke its wing so it couldn't escape. Alvarenga talked to the duck, slept with the duck, sang to the duck, but eventually he killed and ate the duck after everything else ran out. Alvarenga says he killed the duck at night, and covered the duck's face so he didn't have to look at it. This could be Alvarenga's way of telling the truth about killing Ezequiel, because he talked to Ezequiel, slept with Ezequiel (not in a sexual way, geez people) and sang with Ezequiel. Ezequiel believed he would die. He had received a prophecy about dying at sea, and it made him very pessimistic. Ezequiel frequently wailed that he was going to die, and even attempted suicide at one point. Alvarenga may have killed Ezequiel after the suicide attempt, thinking it was a waste.If Alvarenga had eaten Ezequiel, he would have to kill him first -- as explained in the next point about mummification. If Alvarenga didn't kill Ezequiel, then Ezequiel wouldn't be worth eating. So, in this case, I think an argument for cannibalism is an argument for murder.The Case Against Murder-Cannibalism:Just because Alvarenga wasn't squeamish about food does NOT mean he'd kill his friend.Alvarenga perfectly describes a process known as "self-mummification" when talking about Ezequiel's death. It's a process that Alvarenga (who could barely read and write) probably didn't have any education on. According to "Ask A Mortician", a YouTube channel, self-mummification requires:1. Exercise Ezequiel continually burned more calories than he ate, by bailing water and hauling fish into the boat.2. Starvation Ezequiel stopped eating altogether. After poisoning himself, he began to fear food. Alvarenga said that he could see the outline of Ezequiel's skull, due to the lack of fat on his face.3. Dehydration This process is to rid the body of liquids. Already, Ezequiel was running on very little liquid. He refused to drink blood (saying it was a "sin"), and was therefore only drinking when it rained. Beyond this, he got desperate enough to drink his own urine, which further dehydrates. Towards the end, he ate poisoned food, which caused vomiting and sweating.It normally takes a monk five years to self-mummify, but the monks did it in a slow manner. They started exercising first, gave up food little by little, and dehydration was the last step before suffocation.Alvarenga said that Ezequiel's body did not start to stink, but turned leathery in the sun. If this process had lead to self-mummification, the body wouldn't have stunk.Being alone was one of the worst things Alvarenga faced. As long as he had Ezequiel, he was doing okay. He tried to convince the boy to live, even pulling him back from the brink of suicide. Alvarenga didn't want to be alone on that boat, even more than he didn't want to be hungry. I don't think Alvarenga murdered Ezequiel, and I don't think he could've eaten a mummified body. But maybe I'm wrong, maybe it's just like jerky or something.Footnote:Everything in this book comes from Alvarenga's POV. He could've lied about any number of things. He mentions hallucinatory like dream-states. For all we know, Ezequiel was successful in suicide, and Alvarenga didn't want Ezequiel's uber-religious family to know. There are hundreds of questions, to which, only Alvarenga knows the answer.1 www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/ce...2 14, 2019This was one of the most interesting, jaw dropping, and oddly inspirational stories I have read in a very long time. I have nothing but respect for this man. His will to survive, and mind over matter mentality was so inspiring to read about. His mental and emotional strength is unfathomable and reading about it makes you truly believe that if he made it through THAT, then you can make it through anything. I love a TRUE survival story and this is hands down one of my favorites. There is everything from domesticating a bird for a pet to using the massive amounts of floating garbage as tools for his survival. He even met a whale shark that hung out near his boat for 5 days..... I highly recommend this... I'm blown away. Also, if you have never listened to an audiobook, make this your first.... Your house will be spotless because you will refuse to stop listening to this.5-stars adult hard-hitting January 29, 2020Kudos, Jonathan Franklin. You've caught my attention with this remarkable account of survival on the open ocean with almost nothing.'438 Days' tells us the story of Salvador Alvarenga who left with a very green companion on a fishing trip and didn't return. After a storm killed their engine they were left adrift without any communication to mainland, left to face the elements with almost not food, no water and no shelter but an icebox.Franklin took a year interviewing Alvarenga, the only survivor, honing the unbelievable details of this harrowing adventure. Every bit of effort shows in his writing and I now consider myself a fan. 4 very solid stars.August 18, 2022I somehow hadn't heard about this! I just stumbled upon the audiobook and I love the narrator(the husby from The Arrangement series lol) and the author. I read Jonathan Franklin's most recent book(co-authored perhaps?) about the COVID cruise debacle and was really impressed. It was one of my favorite nonfiction books of the year.It's sad that the other family seems to be suspicious of the one that made it. I found him to be empathetic, credible, and emotional. I just don't think he murdered his mate out there alone and it seems cruel of them to suggest it, seemingly led by his former lawyer who's mad at him.. but who am I to say?! Very interesting story. I did get bored at parts and skim but I got the gist of it and afterward I searched for the articles and drama online. Would recommend any books by this author.October 15, 2016Stranded at sea for 438 days-that's crazy! Seriously! More than a year drifting in the Pacific Ocean. Castaway, Alveranga, reminds me of Zamperini in Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption. Why do some people endure great peril and suffering while others succumb? Survival and Marine experts weigh in throughout the book and give insight into the misadventure, but it's Alveranga's dogged determination and vivid recollections which make this a riveting read.December 11, 2019This book is a nonfiction biography about a man who was stranded at sea for 438 days. He left Mexico for a quick fishing trip with a friend and washed ashore on the Marshall Islands 14 months later. That is crazy. Since this was a biography, it dealt primarily with what happened to this man, Salvador Alvarenga, as reported to the author, during his ordeal and what steps he took to stay alive. There was some emotion and despair mentioned but not a lot. I thought it would encompass that as well, so to me, it felt like something was missing from his story. So 3 stars.July 18, 2018438 Days is an inspirational tale that is incomparable to any other non-fiction story I have ever read. Not only is the story itself noteworthy but Jonathan Franklin's deft handling of the tale is nothing short of exceptional.I picked this book up for the Popsugar 2018 Challenge. One of the book challenges was to read a book set at sea. I have to admit that I didn't have any interest reading a book set at sea but when I read the blurb on the back, the book jacket, and the amazing maps on the endsheets, I was sucked in. Salvador Alvarenga was a barely literate Salvadoran fisherman who fled to Mexico for safety. Alvaranega was a hard partier who spent money as soon as it came in. Although he kept his cards close to the vest, he was a generous friend and employee who would lend money or his time, such as when other fishermen went missing. How Alvarenga was able to survive at sea with no motor, GPS, radio, sunscreen, blanket, and only one knife is nothing short of miraculous.Although Alvarenga was not book smart, he was certainly street smart. Alvaranga used an ice chest to curl up in to avoid the hottest hours of the day. He used his patience and part of his food supply to catch fish. He used ocean flotsam to attract food and clothe himself. Alvarenga was able to survive through the imaginary stories he told his first mate, then told himself, then told whale sharks he encountered along the way. Alvarenga ended up drinking and eating some pretty disgusting things in order to survive, whether it was his own urine, turtle blood, raw fish and birds, or his own hair and nails. I ended up asking myself what I would do to survive and I'm not sure if I would have been able to do the things he did to survive. Alvarenga used his daughter as motivation not to give up on life.Alvarenga's first mate, 22-year old rookie fisherman, Ezequiel Córdoba, who was unknown to him at the beginning of their trip to see, had no ocean fishing experience and less than two years' experience as a fisherman. He wasn't developed enough as individual to dig deep and find the strength to get through the horrific nightmare he found himself in. He quickly gave into defeat and depression that he could or would not be able to overcome in the end. Alvarenga went through the five stages of grief along his journey and came out the other side intact (albeit changed). "Alvarenga had passed through fear, despair and terror to find peace and empathy.'" "Despite his physical and geographical solitude alone on his boat, Alvarenga found a deep happiness living 'without sin, without evil, just [him]self with no problems, no one to accuse [him] of anything. [He] was tranquil, and adapting to the ocean. This was [his] new life.'" I always avoid afterwards in books. But the after notes in this book answered some of my most burning questions, the most prominent of which was how did Alvarenga track his movements and miles made over a year and a quarter at sea. I most appreciated Franklin's writing style. Unlike many other nonfiction writers, he didn't invent dialogue, yet he managed to make the writing incredibly interesting, so much so that I couldn't put the book down. This is the best compliment I could give a book.adventure biography summer September 6, 2017Es ist der erst