



Surviving the Extremes: What Happens to the Body and Mind at the Limits of Human Endurance

By Kenneth Kamler

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"*Surviving the Extremes* brings personal experience and scientific knowledge together beautifully, giving us narrative that are powerful, moving, and very real." -Oliver Sacks

A true-life scientific thriller no reader will forget, *Surviving the Extremes* takes us to the farthest reaches of the earth as well as into the uncharted territory within the human body, spirit, and brain. A vice president of the legendary Explorers Club, as well as surgeon, explorer, and masterful storyteller, Dr. Kenneth Kamler has spent years discovering what happens to the human body in extreme environmental conditions. Divided into six sections—jungle, high seas, desert, underwater, high altitude, and outer space—this book uses firsthand testimony and documented accounts to investigate the science of what a body goes through and explains why people survive—and why they sometimes don't.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Medical case studies can be fascinating to read, full of drama, heroism, and sometimes tragedy. Most doctors' tales take place in clinics or hospitals, but those pedestrian settings are not for Kenneth Kamler, who practices medicine outside, patching people up with surprising success under harrowing conditions.

Surviving the Extremes starts with open-air surgery in the steamy jungles of the Amazon River, moves to disturbingly detailed descriptions of the many ways humans can die at sea, and from there takes white-knuckled readers through the rest of Earth's extreme environments. Krakauer fans will gasp at the book's best chapter, covering the high-altitude medical feats Kamler has performed on Mt. Everest and other peaks. "No course in medical school taught me the proper mixture of oxygen, IV fluids, and Tibetan chants to treat a subdural hematoma in below-zero temperatures on a 3-mile-high glacier," Kamler writes. Instead, he has learned the fine art of adventure doctoring by doing it, and in the process, he's won fans among the world's most prominent risk-takers. Through it all, Kamler remains fascinated by the human body's ability to heal under horrifically dangerous conditions. His medical adventures are inspiring and thrilling, as well as occasionally bloody and disgusting. In short, perfect stories of human survival. --*Therese Littleton*

From Publishers Weekly

Ever since Jon Krakauer's *Into Thin Air*, books about human survival have captured readers' imagination. Add this book to the list. Kamler is no office-room doctor, preferring to use his skills on survival missions. As he puts it in his prologue, "I practice medicine where I don't belong." He takes the reader along on his explorations—be they on the Amazon or on Mt. Everest. While on the former, he used his medical techniques to save locals; on the latter, he saved climbers, including some of those threatened during the ill-fated 1996 climb chronicled by Krakauer. But Kamler's book is far more than just a story of his own explorations. He uses his journey as a launching point for investigating the nature of survival. In a style reminiscent of Oliver Sacks, he details remarkable stories of human endurance in adverse conditions—adrift at sea in a raft, lost in an unknown desert—while simultaneously educating the reader in the science of survival. For Kamler, the secret lies in the brain, which provides the key to survival: "If the will is there, the brain initiates actions that are appropriate responses to the environmental stress." Even readers who aren't survivalists themselves will find their brains stimulated by Kamler's fluid writing and lively stories.

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Review

"An absorbing account combining science and exploration as humans confront environmental extremes..." —**Los Angeles Times**

"Powerful, moving, and very real." —**Oliver Sacks**

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Dorothy Waddell:

Surviving the Extremes: What Happens to the Body and Mind at the Limits of Human Endurance can be one of your beginner books that are good idea. We all recommend that straight away because this reserve has

good vocabulary that can increase your knowledge in vocab, easy to understand, bit entertaining but delivering the information. The copy writer giving his/her effort to put every word into delight arrangement in writing *Surviving the Extremes: What Happens to the Body and Mind at the Limits of Human Endurance* but doesn't forget the main level, giving the reader the hottest along with based confirm resource details that maybe you can be one among it. This great information can easily drawn you into brand new stage of crucial imagining.

Angela Hampton:

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Katherine Wilcoxon:

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