

Survive: Stories of Castaways and Cannibals

Nate Hardcastle

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The Listen & Live Adrenaline series, by definition, haunts the listener. In this cassette audiobook, extreme survival stories cause lasting images of desperation, narrow escapes, cold, pain, fear, starvation, and yes, cannibalism. Excerpted are ten unabridged selections from some of the best storytellers, such as Mark Twain, Jack London, and Herman Melville. The listener is successfully lost in the story lines without being distracted by the narrating voice—a sure sign that one is listening to professional audio readers. For example, Telles brings alive Mark Twain's voice as the homespun storyteller whose tale grows in incredulity and ends with a shudder. It leaves the listener with ethical questions to mull over for days.

The chosen works of excellent writing depend on careful listening for the duration of the adventures. They are not modern, sound-bite shorts. Rather, the authors represented here take their time weaving realities with description and detail that require listeners to lay back and soak in the words and their full meaning. Shackleton's *Forgotten Men*, by Lennard Bickel, is a grueling tale of survival in the Arctic that will chill the listener on the hottest of summer days.

These stories bring up survival issues that always fascinate. What would one do if deserted on a wild, cannibalistic island faced with certain death? The psychological truths of dealing with basic human needs inevitably bring out the best or worst personal characteristics. These renderings give readers a glimpse into what possibilities exist. They showcase the ingenuity, inner strength, and wisdom it takes for folks to overcome being on the brink of their own death. The editor of this audiobook says that these stories “teach us deliverance is part of life.” Perhaps this is something everyone is seeking on some level.

This book will trigger soul-searching of one's own resolve and fortitude. It is a good match for people who have not been exposed to the classics of literature and to those who enjoy the thrill of survival in brutal, character-testing situations.

AIMÉ MERIZON (September / October 2002)

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