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, hes won fans among the worlds most prominent risk-takers. Through it all, Kamler remains fascinated by the human bodys 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

A scientific thriller and adventure book in one! My wife bought me this book in 2008 so I am only 1 year late in writing a review (actually opinion). I reread it last month so the details are still fresh.

First off, the writing is superior in style and content. In fact, some of the lines in the book feel as if they were composed more for a classic piece of literature than a book on survival.

Next, the credentials of Dr. Kenneth Kamler - surgeon and explorer - are beyond dispute, therefore what he writes, I truly believe. His education and experience provides him with a unique voice in this genre. I really appreciated his behind the curtain look at different indigenous cultures. This greatly added to the book.

The book is divided into six sections:

1. Jungle
2. High seas
3. Desert
4. Underwater
5. High Altitude
6. Outer Space

Using firsthand, documented accounts, these tales show us how complex and sadly fragile the human body actually is. At its essence, this book gives us a broad stroke view of the source of the will to survive. It opens the door for us to peer into and question why some survive and others perish far too soon. Tapping into this knowledge and becoming aware of the fine line between success and failure should benefit everyone. Indeed, the lessons in this book can be used in other areas of our lives.

I would like to also recommend The Survivors Club: The Secrets and Science that Could Save Your Life and Extreme Encounters: How It Feels to Be Drowned in Quicksand, Shredded by Piranhas, Swept Up in a Tornado, and Dozens of Other Unpleasant Experiences--

I hope you find this review helpful.

Michael L. Gooch

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Surviving the Extremes: A Doctors Journey to the Limits of Human Endurance by Kenneth Kamler - 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price!