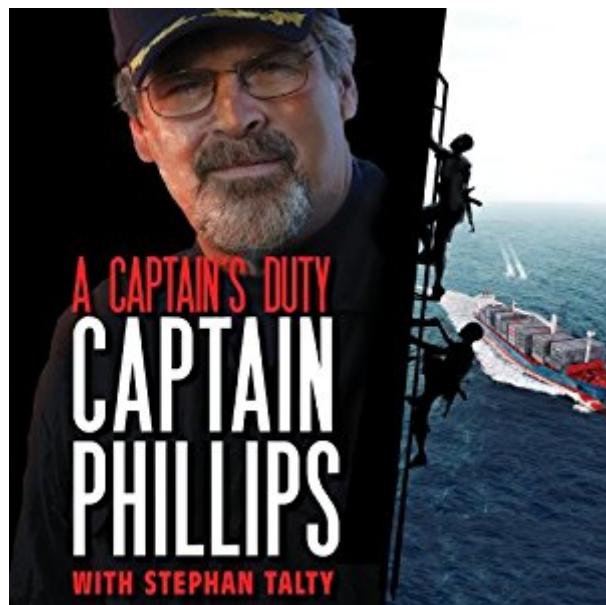


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A Captain's Duty: Somali Pirates, Navy SEALs, And Dangerous Days At Sea



Synopsis

"I share the country's admiration for the bravery of Captain Phillips and his selfless concern for his crew. His courage is a model for all Americans." -President Barack Obama It was just another day on the job for fifty-three-year-old Richard Phillips, captain of the Maersk Alabama, a United States-flagged cargo ship that was carrying, among other things, food and agricultural materials for the World Food Program. That all changed when armed Somali pirates boarded the ship. The pirates didn't expect the crew to fight back, nor did they expect Captain Phillips to offer himself as a hostage in exchange for the safety of his crew. Thus began the tense five-day standoff, which ended in a daring high-seas rescue when U.S. Navy SEALs opened fire and picked off three of the captors. "It never ends like this," Captain Phillips said. And he's right. A story of adventure and courage, *A Captain's Duty* provides the intimate details of this high-seas hostage-taking—the unbearable heat, the death threats, the mock executions, and the escape attempt. When the pirates boarded his ship, Captain Phillips put his experience into action, doing everything he could to safeguard his crew. And when he was held captive by the pirates, he marshaled all his resources to ensure his own survival, withstanding intense physical hardship and an escalating battle of wills with the pirates. This was it: the moment where training meets instinct and where character is everything. Richard Phillips was ready. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 8 hours and 42 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Tantor Audio

Audible.com Release Date: April 23, 2010

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B003IX37R4

Best Sellers Rank: #31 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Nonfiction > Transportation #131 in Books > Engineering & Transportation > Transportation > Ships #235 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Nonfiction > True Crime

Customer Reviews

I had the very great privilege to see Captain Richard Phillips speak in person at a university and I

have to say, it was thrilling. His talk started out a tiny bit stilted and rehearsed and he seemed a tad nervous (kind of ironic that an audience would make him at all jittery after what he went through at sea), but as the talk went on, it got much more intense. For some reason he couched the talk in a sort of "business achievement" format (which I gather was probably suggested to him by his booking agency) and those parts were OK, but again, a bit stilted. But once he got back into the memories, once he began to relive his fears and his accomplishments (and failures) those five days at sea, the talk got very exciting. I had bought this book before the talk but didn't get a chance to read it all the way through. But the next day I sat down and read the entire book and I'm so glad that I had it right there. I was able to use the book to relive parts of the talk and to better understand some of the fine points of his very brave adventure. When you see a movie of an event like this, you have to wonder how much is Hollywood and how much is reality, but after having seen him talk and having read this book, that movie is extremely close to portraying exactly what happened. In the Q&A after the talk, in fact, someone asked him that very question: How much of the movie was invented for drama? His reply was that while certain bits of the timelines were altered in small ways and certain events that happened weren't actually shown (in the movie and news stories there were only three shots fired, for example, but in reality many were fired), most of the movie was a very accurate reflection of actual events. If that's the truth, and I believe it is, this is one very brave guy. In the face of near certain death, he put his ship's cargo and his crew ahead of his own life--and he figured out a way to outwit the pirates very early on. It was a gamble, but it saved everyone's lives. I highly recommend both this book and the film. Books like this always have a ghost author involved because, let's face it, he's a sea captain not a writer, but it is his voice that comes through. And I really hope that the writing bug will get ahold of the Captain, because I'd love to hear more about the sea and about his life as a Merchant Marine. If you get the chance to see Captain Phillips speak, do whatever you have to do to get there. In the meantime, what a great summer read this is--I can't wait to read it a second time. My only regret is that I didn't get an opportunity to ask him to sign my book! Next time.

I loved this story and so enjoyed reading it. He truly is, as I suspected, genuine and down to earth, he could be your neighbor, your brother, or the guy that coaches the softball team in town. I think that is what has drawn most people to this story, it could have been any one of us. I hung on this story from the minute I heard about it and felt terrible he was in that situation and was absolutely OVER THE MOON when he was rescued. It was a victory for all of us and told the world that we still care about our citizens, enough to send the Navy Seals in to rescue one in trouble. I've been

doubting who we are for a long time now, but this gave me heart. The book itself is easy reading, it is such an interesting career choice and you learn so much about being a Maritime sailor. Add to that the touching relationship with his wife and children and of course the amazing rescue and wonderful job by the Navy SEALs makes this a great read. I couldn't put it down, even though I knew the result! I love the part where he says we are all much stronger than we know. Very uplifting. You did great, Captain Phillips, I'm proud you're one of us and that people like you still exist. Loved the "Irish" tribe thing, too!! Those Irish roots go deep and definitely give us strength when times are tough. Thank you for a wonderful read.

Extremely interesting book. Gives a different view of the pirates than was shown in the movie. In the movie you were made to feel kind of sorry for the pirates, like they were just products of their environment and isn't that sad. In the book Captain Phillips tells it like it is; whatever happened to the pirates to make them total scum, I don't really care, because they were nothing but self-serving, brutal animals. Phillips used his brain to keep his crew alive and it's very interesting to learn the details of how he managed it all. I don't understand why cargo ships aren't loaded with guns and ammo to do away with any pirate that tries to pull the crap they do.

I first saw the film, then read the book. Only someone with a strong will and a highly developed ego could have behaved in the way Captain Phillips behaved, and survived. He was, and is, clearly a "by the book" ship's officer. His type are rarely universally popular with ships' crews. The ordeal Phillips underwent at the hands of the sometimes unstable pirates tested every fibre of his physical and mental being, and it is evident that he drew strength from however submerged his spiritual beliefs may be. The book captures well the tensions, the heat, and the awfulness of the claustrophobic space in the small boat in which he was held captive. The high seas will never be fully devoid of pirates and piracy, but it is only by active resistance to their illegal operations and brutality that freedom of the seas will have any hope of continued existence. Phillips, and those who came to his rescue, combined to say something very strong about the value of coolness, fortitude, and a refusal to be overwhelmed by overwhelming forces. The quality of the writing isn't all that it might have been, but it is a story that in all its absence of a polished style, deserves to be read, and is ultimately uplifting and rewarding.

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