

The Finest Hours (Young Readers Edition): The True Story of a Heroic Sea Rescue (True Storm Rescues)

By Michael J. Tougias, Casey Sherman

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This adaptation for young readers of *The Finest Hours: The True Story of the US Coast Guard's Most Daring Sea Rescue* by Michael J. Tougias and Casey Sherman tells the story of the shipwreck of two oil tankers and the harrowing Coast Guard rescue when four men in a tiny lifeboat overcame insurmountable odds and saved more than 30 stranded sailors. Now a major motion picture from Disney, starring Chris Pine and Casey Affleck.

On the night of February 18, 1952, during one of the worst winter storms that New England has ever seen, two oil tankers just off the shore of Cape Cod were torn in half. With the storm in full force and waves up to 70 feet high, four coast guardsmen headed out to sea in a tiny lifeboat to come to the rescue. They were the only hope for the stranded sailors. Despite incredible obstacles, these brave men risked their lives, remembering the unofficial Coast Guard motto: *You have to go out, but you do not have to come back.*

This is a fast-paced, uplifting story that puts young readers in the middle of the action. It's a gripping true tale of heroism and survival in the face of the elements.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal
Gr 6 Up—This "young readers" adaptation of The Finest Hours: The True Story of the U.S. Coast Guard's Most Daring Sea Rescue (Scribner, 2009) tells the story of the 1952 rescue of 70 men (and the deaths of 14 more) aboard two oil tankers that were heavily damaged 20 miles apart during a fierce winter storm off Cape Cod. At times it reads as a character-driven narrative, with short, biographical sketches of many of the men; at other times, it speeds up with the pulse-pounding pace of a thriller. The authors ably capture the drama of the situation: seas at times reaching well over 50 feet, the "shudder and earsplitting crash" of a ship tossed on the waves, the pain screaming through the body of a man waiting to scramble out of the frigid water. On occasion, readers may get lost in some of the geographical details or names of crewmen that do not have a starring role. There are several pages of resources in the back matter, and a handful of them are available online. An inset containing 20 photographs is included. This poignant history should be an easy sell to readers of adventure, seafaring, or rescue stories. A Disney film is in development.—Bob Hassett, Luther Jackson Middle School, Falls Church, VA

From Booklist
This young readers' adaptation of the authors' The Finest Hours: The True Story of the U.S. Coast Guard's Most Daring Sea Rescue (2009) was probably readied in anticipation of the upcoming Disney Studios film, and it's no wonder—it includes the long odds, multiple young characters, and triumph of the human spirit that made films like The Perfect Storm and The Poseidon Adventure blockbusters. It's perhaps a tougher job to pull off in so few pages, as most of the characters go undefined beyond their courage. But what courage it is! In February of 1952, a violent nor'easter off the Cape Cod coast ripped in half not one but two tankers, leading to three separate and practically suicidal rescue attempts. The accounts of each rescue's logistics—for example, sailors trying to time their leaps from their destroyed tanker to the rescue boat amid rocking waves—are nail-biting, and they are relayed by the authors with an effectively sober, just-the-facts terseness. It's invigorating if frustratingly abridged; those truly interested would do well to check out the original, too. Grades 6-9. --Daniel Kraus

Review

"This poignant history should be an easy sell to readers of adventure, seafaring, or rescue stories. A Disney film is in development." ?*School Library Journal*

"*The Finest Hours* is a touching account, a sensitive rendering of what might be called four indescribably chaotic conditions. . . . Tougias and Sherman never sensationalize, never go beyond the facts, and yet capture all the pain, physical and emotional, of the survivors and their families." ?*Providence Journal on The Finest Hours (Simon & Schuster edition)*

"This book captures the wit, grit and sacrifice of Coasties and their boats." ?*Minneapolis Star Tribune on The Finest Hours (Simon & Schuster edition)*

"Tougias and Sherman reach their peak of tension in the sink-or-swim moments when mariners abandoned ship and chanced their lives on their rescuers' skill and bravery. . . . Excellent." ?*Booklist on The Finest Hours (Simon & Schuster edition)*

"Nearly 57 years later, it's a breathtaking story that still defies the imagination." ?*Cape Cod Chronicle on*

The Finest Hours (Simon & Schuster edition)

“It's good to know that real heroes exist. . . . Incredible.” ?*Concord Monitor on The Finest Hours (Simon & Schuster edition)*

“Gripping. . . . Tougias and Sherman ably narrate the desperate struggles of crew members on both the wrecks and the rescue boats. . . . Will make readers appreciate the bravery of the men who put their lives on the line. . . . Action-packed.” ?*Publishers Weekly on The Finest Hours (Simon & Schuster edition)*

“A gripping tale of Coast Guard heroism. . . . An action-packed account of rescue at sea.” ?*Kirkus Reviews on The Finest Hours (Simon & Schuster edition)*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Angela Drew:

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Rebecca Wheeler:

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