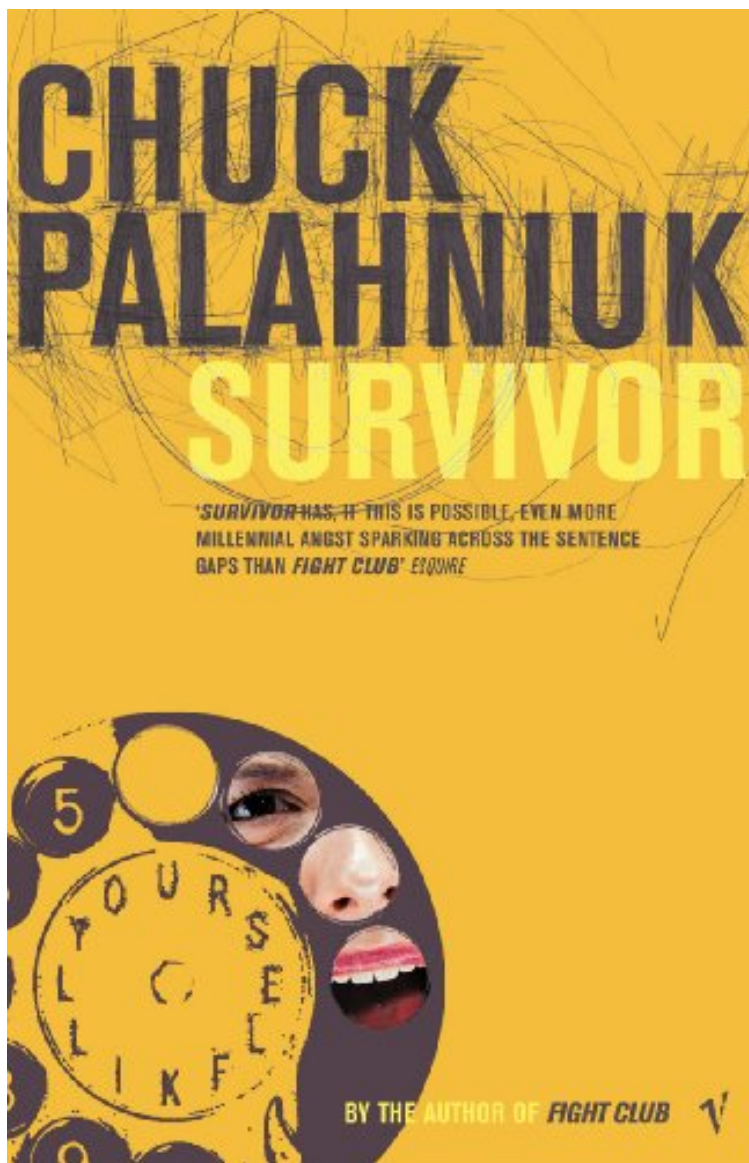


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Survivor



Par Chuck Palahniuk
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Par Chuck Palahniuk : Survivor
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Description : Description du produitFrom the author of the underground sensation *Fight Club*, a mesmerizing, unnerving, and hilarious vision of cult and post-cult life. Tender Branson-last surviving member of the so-called "Creedish Death Cult"-is dictating his incredible life story into the flight recorder of Flight 2039, cruising on autopilot at 39,000 feet somewhere over the Pacific Ocean. He is all alone in the plane, which will shortly reach terminal velocity and crash into the vast Australian outback. Before it does, he will unfold the tale of his journey from an obedient Creedish child and humble domestic servant to an ultra-buffed, steroid- and collagen-packed media messiah, author of a best-selling autobiography, *Saved from Salvation*, and the even better selling *Book of Very Common Prayer* (*The Prayer to Delay Orgasm*, *The Prayer to Prevent Hair Loss*, *The Prayer to Silence Car Alarms*). He'll even share his insight that "the only difference between suicide and martyrdom is press coverage," and deny responsibility for the Tender

Branson Sensitive Materials Landfill-a 20,000-acre repository for the nation's outdated pornography. Among other matters both bizarre and trenchant. Not since Kurt Vonnegut's *Mother Night* and Jerzy Kosinski's *Being There* has there been as black and telling a satire on the wages of fame and the bedrock lunacy of the modern world. *Survivor* is Chuck Palahniuk at his deadpan peak, and it marks him as a blazing talent for the new millennium.

Prsentation de l'diteurTender Branson, the last surviving member of the Creedish death cult, has commandeered a Boeing 747, emptied of passengers, in order to tell his story to the plane's black box before it crashes. Brought up by the repressive cult and, like all Creedish younger sons, hired out as a domestic servant, Tender finds himself suddenly famous when his fellow cult members all commit suicide. As media messiah he ascends to the very top of the freak-show heap before finally and apocalyptically spiralling out of control..comSome say that the apocalypse swiftly approacheth, but that simply ain't so according to Chuck Palahniuk. Oh no. It's already here, living in the head of the guy who just crossed the street in front of you, or maybe even closer than that. We saw these possibilities get played out in the author's bloodsporting-anarchist-yuppie shocker of a first novel, *Fight Club*. Now, in *Survivor*, his second and newest, the concern is more for the origin of the malaise. Starting at chapter 47 and screaming toward ground zero, Palahniuk hurls the reader back to the beginning in a breathless search for where it all went wrong. This time out, the author's protagonist is self-made, self-ruined mogul-messiah Tender Branson, the sole passenger of a jet moments away from slamming first into the Australian outback and then into oblivion. All that will be left, Branson assures us with a tone bordering on relief, is his life story, from its Amish-on-acid cult beginnings to its televangelist-huckster end. All of this courtesy of the plane's flight recorder. Speaking of little black boxes, Skinnerians would have a field day with the presenting behavior of the folks who make up Palahniuk's world. They pretend they're suicide hotline operators for fun. They eat lobster before it's quite... done. They dance in morgues. The Cleavers they are not. Scary as they might be, these characters are ultimately more scared of themselves than you are, and that's what makes them so fascinating. In the wee hours and on lonely highways, they exist in a perpetual twilight, caught between the horror of the present and the dread of the unknown. With only two novels under his belt, Chuck Palahniuk is well on his way to becoming an expert at shining a light on these shadowy creatures. --Bob MichaelsExtrait47 Testing, testing. One, two, three. Testing, testing. One, two, three. Maybe this is working. I don't know. If you can even hear me, I don't know. But if you can hear me, listen. And if you're listening, then what you've found is the story of everything that went wrong. This is what you'd call the flight recorder of Flight 2039. The black box, people call it, even though it's orange, and on the inside is a loop of wire that's the permanent record of all that's left. What you've found is the story of what happened. And go ahead. You can heat this wire to white-hot, and it will still tell you the exact same story. Testing, testing. One, two, three. And if you're listening, you should know right off the bat the passengers are at home, safe. The passengers, they did what you'd call their deplaning in the New Hebrides Islands. Then, after it was just him and me back in the air, the pilot parachuted out over somewhere. Some kind of water. What you'd call an ocean. I'm going to keep saying it, but it's true. I'm not a murderer. And I'm alone up here. The Flying Dutchman. And if you're listening to this, you should know that I'm alone in the cockpit of Flight 2039 with a whole crowd of those little child-sized bottles of mostly dead vodka and gin lined up on the place you sit at against the front windows, the instrument panel. In the cabin, the little trays of everybody's Chicken Kiev or Beef Stroganoff entrees are half eaten with the air conditioner cleaning up any leftover food smell. Magazines are still open to where people were reading. With all the seats empty, you could pretend everyone's just gone to the bathroom. Out of the plastic stereo headsets you can hear a little hum of prerecorded music. Up here above the weather, it's just me in a Boeing 747-400 time capsule with two hundred leftover chocolate cake desserts and an upstairs piano bar which I can just walk up to on the spiral staircase and mix myself another little drink. God forbid I should bore you with all the details, but I'm on autopilot up here until we run out of gas. Flame out, the pilot calls it. One engine at a time, each engine will flame out, he said. He wanted me to know just what to expect. Then he went on to bore me with a lot of details about jet engines, the venturi effect, increasing lift by increasing camber with the flaps, and how after all four engines flame out the plane will turn into a 450,000-pound glider. Then since the autopilot will have it trimmed out to fly in a straight line, the glider will begin what the pilot calls a controlled descent. That kind of a descent, I tell him, would be nice for a change. You just don't know what I've been through this past year. Under his parachute, the pilot still had on his nothing special blah-colored uniform that looked designed by an engineer. Except for this, he was really helpful.

More helpful than I'd be with someone holding a pistol to my head and asking about how much fuel was left and how far would it get us. He told me how I could get the plane back up to cruising altitude after he'd parachuted out over the ocean. And he told me all about the flight recorder. The four engines are numbered one through four, left to right. The last part of the controlled descent will be a nosedive into the ground. This he calls the terminal phase of the descent, where you're going thirty-two feet per second straight at the ground. This he calls terminal velocity, the speed where objects of equal mass all travel at the same speed. Then he slows everything down with a lot of details about Newtonian physics and the Tower of Pisa. He says, "Don't quote me on any of this. It's been a long time since I've been tested." He says the APU, the Auxiliary Power Unit, will keep generating electricity right up to the moment the plane hits the ground. You'll have air-conditioning and stereo music, he says, for as long as you can feel anything. The last time I felt anything, I tell him, was a ways back. About a year ago. Top priority for me is getting him off this plane so I can finally set down my gun. I've clenched this gun so long I've lost all feeling. What you forget when you're planning a hijack by yourself is somewhere along the line, you might need to neglect your hostages just long enough so you can use the bathroom. Before we touched down in Port Vila, I was running all over the cabin with my gun, trying to get the passengers and crew fed. Did they need a fresh drink? Who needed a pillow? Which did they prefer, I was asking everybody, the chicken or the beef? Was that decaf or regular? Food service is the only skill where I really excel. The problem was all this meal service and rushing around had to be one-handed, of course, since I had to keep ahold of the gun. When we were on the ground and the passengers and crew were deplaning, I stood at the forward cabin door and said, I'm sorry. I apologize for any inconvenience. Please have a safe and enjoyable trip and thank you for flying Blah-Blah Airlines. When it was just the pilot and me left on board, we took off again. The pilot, just before he jumps, he tells me how when each engine fails, an alarm will announce Flame Out in Engine Number One or Three or whichever, over and over. After all the engines are gone, the only way to keep flying will be to keep the nose up. You just pull back on the steering wheel. The yoke, he calls it. To move what he calls the elevators in the tail. You'll lose speed, but keep altitude. It will look like you have a choice, speed or height, but either way you're still going to nose-dive into the ground. That's enough, I tell him, I'm not getting what you'd call a pilot's license. I just need to use the toilet like nobody's business. I just want him out that door. Then we slow to 175 knots. Not to bore you with the details, but we drop to under 10,000 feet and pull open the forward cabin door. Then the pilot's gone, and even before I shut the cabin door, I stand at the edge of the doorway and take a leak after him. Nothing in my life has ever felt that good. If Sir Isaac Newton was right, this wouldn't be a problem for the pilot on his way down. So now I'm flying west on autopilot at mach 0.83 or 455 miles per hour, true airspeed, and at this speed and latitude the sun is stuck in one place all the time. Time is stopped. I'm flying above the clouds at a cruising altitude of 39,000 feet, over the Pacific Ocean, flying toward disaster, toward Australia, toward the end of my life story, straight line southwest until all four engines flame out. Testing, testing. One, two, three. One more time, you're listening to the flight recorder of Flight 2039. And at this altitude, listen, and at this speed, with the plane empty, the pilot says there are six or maybe seven hours of fuel left. So I'll try to make this quick. The flight recorder will record my every word in the cockpit. And my story won't get bashed into a zillion bloody shreds and then burned with a thousand tons of burning jet. And after the plane wrecks, people will hunt down the flight recorder. And my story will survive. Testing, testing. One, two, three. It was just before the pilot jumped, with the cabin door pulled inside and the military ships shadowing us, with the invisible radar tracking us, in the open doorway with the engines shrieking and the air howling past, the pilot stood there in his parachute and yelled, "So why do you want to die so bad?" And I yelled back for him to be sure and listen to the tape. "Then remember," he yelled. "You have only a few hours. And remember," he yelled, "you don't know exactly when the fuel will run out. There's always the chance you could die right in the middle of your life story." And I yelled, So what else is new? And, Tell me something I don't know. And the pilot jumped. I took a leak, then I pushed the cabin door back into place. In the cockpit, I push the throttle forward and pull the yoke back until we fly high enough. All that's left to do is press the button and the autopilot takes charge. That brings us back to right here. So if you're listening to this, the indestructible black box of Flight 2039, you can go look and see where this plane ended its terminal descent and what's left. You'll know I'm not a pilot after you see the mess and the crater. If you're listening to this, you know that I'm dead. And I have a few hours to tell my story here. So I figure there's maybe a chance I'll get this story right. Testing, testing. One, two, three. The sky is blue and righteous in every direction. The sun is total and burning and just right there in front. We're on top of the clouds, and this is a beautiful day forever. So let's us take it from the top. Let me start at the start. Flight

2039, here's what really happened. Take one. And. Just for the record, how I feel right now is very terrific.
And. I've already wasted ten minutes. And. Action.