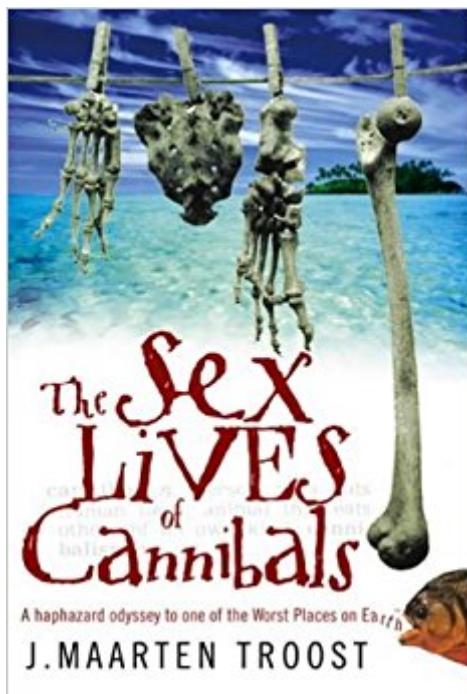


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The Sex Lives Of Cannibals



Synopsis

Let me say at the top that I didn't have a particularly good reason for moving to Tarawa, a small island in the Republic of Kiribati. There was nothing Quaker-ish, Thoreau-ish or even Gaughin-ish about my taking a little leave from western civilisation which I thought was fine mostly, particularly as manifested in certain parts of Italy...To picture Kiribati, imagine that the continental US were to conveniently disappear, leaving only Baltimore and a vast swathe of very blue ocean in its place. Now chop up Baltimore into 33 pieces, place a neighbourhood where Maine used to be, another where California once was, and so on until you have 33 pieces of Baltimore dispersed in such a way that 32/33 Baltimoreans will never attend an Orioles game again. Now take away electricity, running water, toilets, television, restaurants, building and aeroplanes (except for two very old prop planes tended by people who have no word for 'maintenance'). Replace with thatch. Flatten all the land into a uniform two feet above sea level. Toy with islands by melting polar ice caps. Add palm trees. Sprinkle with hepatitis A, B and C. Stir in dengue fever and intestinal parasites. Take away doctors. Isolate and bake at a constant temperature of 100[degrees] Fahrenheit. The result is the Republic of Kiribati, a hard paradise, where despite an unwavering fondness for continents, I soon found myself at home.' J. Maarten Troost spent two trying years in his island paradise. This is his story.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

J Maarten Troost Born of Czech and Dutch parents, J. Maarten Troost was educated in the US and Canada and holds degrees in International Relations from Boston University and George Washington University. He spent two years in Kiribati in the Equatorial Pacific and upon his return

was hired as a consultant by the World Bank. He currently lives in California with his wife and son.

There's no real plot here, no through line that makes you curious what will happen next. But it is a charming account of remote island life - realistic, quirky, disease-ridden, lively. - from an outsider's point of view. It also has some interesting history about the area that will make you shake your head in shame over the way we treat this planet.

Personally, I only got as far as Hawaii, but this book about Kiribati echoes what I intuited while there. In brief: the natives are NOT happy and it is NOT paradise, at least for them! This book also captured more accurately than most the dissolute atmosphere of the South Pacific and the ennui of the place. You can't get this stuff in the official guidebooks which scream "aloha" and "paradise". This is what real life is like in this part of the world and in this part of a very large, isolating ocean. The brief section on gender relations was, to my mind, especially revealing.

Hilarious. Highly recommended for those who appreciate adventurous travels and living around the world.

The Sex Lives of Cannibals is a terrific recap of Maarten and Sylvia's adventure to life in the equatorial pacific. This a very well written, humorous, and honest portrayal of a young couples move to Tarawa (Sylvia takes a government job, Maarten joins her to "write"). Troost makes you feel as if you are actually there going through the daily trials and tribulations of their minimalist, island life. From bathroom relief in the ocean, to replay of la macarena, learning about non-pet vs. pet dogs, and island food this book kept me thoroughly entertained. It's impressive that these 2 survived 2 years and even more so that they endeared themselves to the natives and the natives and island to them! Though it may have ended appropriately, I felt the end was a bit rushed-- I would have liked more of a look at their return and subsequent move (attempting to avoid a spoiler alert with any more details). I will definitely read another one of Troost's books!

I liked this book, I found myself laughing out loud a few times. I enjoyed the lessons learned by the author and his wife....the simple life isn't so simple, but ultimately it's better than chaos.

This book with the fetching title introduced me to J. Maarten Troost. Like his, my childhood began in Mitteleuropa. Although he doesn't know me from Adam's house cat, I immediately felt a bond with

him. He has the kind of humor that appeals to Europeans. He's also exceedingly well read and intelligent.

the title pulled me in, the entertaining writing kept me engaged, and in the midst of it all, I learned geography, cultural history, and anthropology. As a former peace corps volunteer, I could completely relate with the author's shock at the heat and filth that awaited him on a tropical island. Adventure fantasies quickly turn into a living hell, and fortunately for us, Mr. Troost has a witty, charming style that converts it all into hilarious reminiscence. He reminds me of a younger, trendier, more succinct Bill Bryson. Buy the paper copy and share it; you'll be finished with it before you know it.

Funny book

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