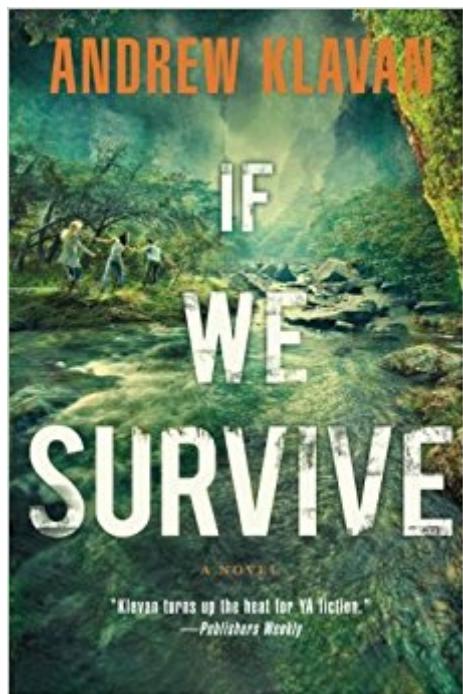


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## If We Survive



## **Synopsis**

They came on a mission of mercy, but now they're in a fight for their lives. High schooler Will Peterson and three friends journeyed to Central America to help rebuild a school. In a poor, secluded mountain village, they won the hearts of the local people with their energy and kindness. But in one sudden moment, everything went horribly wrong. A revolution swept the country. Now, guns and terror are everywhere and Americans are being targeted as the first to die. Will and his friends have got to get out fast. But streets full of killers . . . hills patrolled by armies . . . and a jungle rife with danger stand between them and the border. Their one hope of escape lies with a veteran warrior who has lost his faith and may betray them at any moment. Their one dream is to reach freedom and safety and home. If they can just survive.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Gr 8 Up-This gripping novel will hold readers' attention from the opening pages until the end. Will Peterson is one of five members of a team that has traveled to a fictional country with an unstable government in Central America. Their job on this Christian outreach mission was to rebuild a wall of the school that was destroyed by the Volcanoes, the local gang of rebels. The book opens with the team still in the small town waiting to go home after completing the mission. Just as ex-marine Palmer Dunn enters the cantina to pick the group up, the rebels rush into town to take over. Palmer, Will, and his friends are imprisoned and must find a way to escape. Gunshots, machine guns, and killing ensue. The group finds a way out of every harrowing situation, but there are consequences.

Not all of them make it home. Klavan's Christian bent comes through in the story as Will's thoughts are peppered with his feelings about God and the men who try to inflict violence upon his friends as well as death, which the group faces many times over during the course of their escape. This book will appeal to anyone who is looking for a fast-paced adventure story in which teens must do some fast thinking to survive.-Elizabeth Kahn, Patrick F. Taylor Science & Technology Academy, Jefferson, LA Â (c) Copyright 2011. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Will, Jim, Meredith, and Nicki have finished their Christian outreach program in the Central American country of Costa Verdes. But hours short of their flight home, revolution breaks out and they are held for execution by a murderous rebel named Mendoza. Thankfully, the teens' driver/pilot happens to be an ex-marine, and under his brutal leadership, they are able to escape into the jungle, where they must brave weather, snakes, raging rivers, crocodiles, and the pursuing rebels as they make their way to an airfield. Average teen Will, 16, narrates from a benumbed perspective as the abstract violence of his video games back home in California becomes real. Though Klavan's conservative messages aren't pushed as strongly here as they were in the *Homelanders* series, some supporting characters do feel purposeful. The prose veers between flippant ("I was hungry. As in: way hungry") and quite emotional, as when Will, about to be executed, envisions his enemies as beautiful. Klavan can certainly orchestrate action, making this a natural for fans of David Gilman's *Danger Zone* series. Grades 8-11.  
--Daniel Kraus --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This was my first Andrew Klavan book. I now look forward to reading others. I'm not a young adult, in fact I'm 66, a long way from the 16-year-old who tells this story, but it held my interest. The central character, Will, sees himself as a typical teenager, no hero, not that religious, just checking off his high school's service requirement. As the book unfolds he displays courage and decency in a variety of hair-raising situations, and still manages to sound and react in ways that are age-appropriate, to these old ears at least. The book is not only about what happens to Will and how he steps up, but about the pilot sent to retrieve Will and his small youth group after a week-long mission trip in a central American country ripe for yet another revolution. The pilot says he is an ex-Marine, never mind the saying, "once a Marine, always a Marine." The man has lost faith in pretty much everything, seemingly, but a young woman accompanying the teens isn't willing to

accept that. Church groups take trips like this all the time, and that part of the book is believable. The story opens in a cantina where the group and their youth pastor are waiting to be picked up to go home. The illusion of safety and security evaporates when their waiter is shot dead before their eyes on the first or second page, right after Klavan makes you start to like the guy. Be prepared for things to get a lot worse before they get better, but along the way Klavan tells a great story, manages to keep the suspense going, shows much about human nature, the nature of faith, and of what's still good about America.

The story -- a group of young missionaries who are caught up in a Latin American revolution and learn the hard way that the revolutionaries are even worse than the old, corrupt government -- moves along pretty well. The narrative gets a bit bogged down in introspection at a couple of points in the story, and the different characters are particular "types" (the flaky drama queen, the nerdy fan of "justice-seeking" socialists, and so forth). But the story is otherwise well-written, and suspense is expertly built, and the drawbacks are easily forgiven. The only ones who could absolutely dislike this book are the useful idiots who idolize Hugo Chavez and Che Guevara.

This was the first of Klavan's books that I've read and it won't be the last. Not knowing much about his work, I figured I'd start here and see where I ended up. If We Survive is definitely action-packed, from nearly the first page to the last and has a level of detail to the settings and situations that draw the reader in. Even with extraordinary situations, I could easily relate to the characters and their various back stories, which did not detract from the main plot.

Very well written and kept you turning the pages to see what was going to happen next. Characters were well developed and very believable. Mr. Klavan was very good at showing how the circumstances they faced helped each of the characters grow and mature in their faith and lives.

Great story, very suspenseful, well written. I can't explain it without giving a cool twist away. As a Catholic mom, I enjoyed it and nothing objectionable. My 8th grade son really liked it too - he's an advanced reader and into the dystopian genre and edgier/darker future ideas. This isn't futuristic, but seems fictional for most of the story. Content is more geared to 8th grade at the younger end, into high school and college, but definitely a great read for adults too. Leave having enjoyed it and with "stuff" to think about. .

I literally couldn't put this book down! Anyone who loves a good adventure book and wants a book that puts you on the edge of your seat would definitely enjoy this book!

In general a very good book. Good themes like turn the other cheek, courage, trusting God, and making the most of your life before death. Nice character development, a couple characters I really admired. And these kids are getting chased by gunmen for most of the book, so yeah it's exciting enough. It had nice elements that made me think, like the fact that a lot of times it's not just unambiguously good vs evil. The whole concept of the revolution led by rebels against a brutal government is a very relevant repurchase days, too.

I have a 13 year old son who reads books in a couple hours. We're always trying to find new Authors and new series to introduce to him. He loves the books by Andrew Klavan. I buy everything he writes.

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