

Tami Oldham Ashcraft knows this feeling. At the age of 23, while she was sailing the South Pacific, Ashcraft was caught in a violent hurricane. The 50-foot (15-meter) waves overturned her boat. Ashcraft, who was below deck, was knocked unconscious. When she awoke 27 hours later, the boat had turned right side up again, but the storm had been so violent that the sails were destroyed, the motor was dead, and the radio was lost. Only the rudder, which steers the ship, was intact. Ashcraft was badly injured and disoriented.. Determined to survive, Ashcraft created a sail from scraps of material and charted a path to Hawaii, which was 1,500 miles (2,400 kilometers) away. Traveling only two miles an hour, Ashcraft reached her destination 41 days later. Having lost 40 pounds (18 kilograms) during her ordeal, Ashcraft was thin and haggard when she arrived. However, she was happy and grateful to have beaten the odds. Ashcraft, who still sails, eventually told her tale of survival in a book called Red Sky in Mourning.