

Life in the Valley of Death: The Fight to Save Tigers in a Land of Guns, Gold, and Greed

Alan Rabinowitz



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Dubbed the Indiana Jones of wildlife science by *The New York Times*, Alan Rabinowitz has devoted—and risked—his life to protect nature's great endangered mammals. He has journeyed to the remote corners of the earth in search of wild things, weathering treacherous terrain, plane crashes, and hostile governments. *Life in the Valley of Death* recounts his most ambitious and dangerous adventure yet: the creation of the world's largest tiger preserve.

The tale is set in the lush Hukaung Valley of Myanmar, formerly known as Burma. An escape route for refugees fleeing the Japanese army during World War II, this rugged stretch of land claimed the lives of thousands of children, women, and soldiers. Today it is home to one of the largest tiger populations outside of India—a population threatened by rampant poaching and the recent encroachment of gold prospectors.

To save the remaining tigers, Rabinowitz must navigate not only an unforgiving landscape, but the tangled web of politics in Myanmar. Faced with a military dictatorship, an insurgent army, tribes once infamous for taking the heads of their enemies, and villagers living on less than one U.S. dollar per day, the scientist and adventurer most comfortable with animals is thrust into a diplomatic minefield. As he works to balance the interests of disparate factions and endangered wildlife, his own life is threatened by an incurable disease.

The resulting story is one of destruction and loss, but also renewal. In forests reviled as the valley of death, Rabinowitz finds new life for himself, for communities haunted by poverty and violence, and for the tigers he vowed to protect.

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