



Lions in the Balance: Man-Eaters, Manes, and Men with Guns

Craig Packer

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If you are a morani (warrior), you have your spear at the ready—you could be the hero, but you will have to wait until the morning light before you can go out and prove yourself. If it is a lion, you want to be the first to spear it—and if the lion turns on you, make sure it mauls you on your chest or stomach, on your face, shins, or throat. Any place where you can show your scars with pride, show the incontrovertible evidence of courage. A scar on your back would be a permanent reminder of cowardice, an ineradicable trace of shame.

Monsters take many forms: from man-eating lions to the people who hunt them, from armed robbers to that midnight knock at the door of a cheap hotel room in Dar es Salaam. And celebrated biologist Craig Packer has faced them all. Head on.

With *Lions in the Balance*, Packer takes us back into the complex, tooth-and-claw world of the African lion, offering revealing insights into both the lives of one of the most iconic and dangerous animals on earth and the very real risks of protecting them. A sequel to his prize-winning *Into Africa*—which gave many readers their first experience of fieldwork in Africa, of cooperative lions on dusty savannas, and political kidnappings on the shores of Lake Tanganyika—this new diary-based chronicle of cutting-edge research and heartbreaking corruption will both alarm and entertain. Packer's story offers a look into the future of the lion, one in which the politics of conservation will require survival strategies far more creative and powerful than those practiced anywhere in the world today.

Packer is sure to infuriate millionaires, politicians, aid agencies, and conservationists alike as he minces no words about the problems he encounters. But with a narrative stretching from far flung parts of Africa to the corridors of power in Washington, DC, and marked by Packer's signature humor and incredible candor, *Lions in the Balance* is a tale of courage against impossible odds, a masterly blend of science, adventure, and storytelling, and an urgent call to action that will captivate a new generation of readers.

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