

# White Devils



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Chapter  
Nicholas Hyde is working late and alone when Tremaine Thompson comes up  
the hill to ask his question. The setting sun throws Tremaine's shadow ahead  
of him as he climbs through strip fields on the slope above the shallow  
tributary of the Congo River and the ruins of the village. The day's stored heat  
beats up from the red African dirt. Dry stubble crackles under his boots. In  
the gallery forest at the edge of the fields—  
mobs of butterflies—  
their wings—  
printed with the blue—  
red—  
and white logo of a famous soft drink—  
are love—  
bombing flowering vines—  
as indifferent to what happened here as to what has  
been done to their genes.  
Fourteen months ago—a ragged gang of armed men burst out of the forest  
and seized control of the village. They were soldiers loyal to Sergeant Samuel  
Nyibizo's military dictatorship—in headlong retreat from the victorious forces  
of a democratic coalition supported by Obligate—the biggest and brashest of  
the new wave of environmentally conscious transnationals. The soldiers shot  
two men who tried to resist and rounded up the rest of the villagers and  
forced them to undress. They killed the village's pigs and chickens—  
set fire to the huts and the little tin-roofed schoolhouse—  
smashed the solar-powered water pump and the satellite dish.  
Then they marched the naked men—  
women—  
and children up into the

fields.<br>A young woman who had been collecting wild ginger in the forest saw<br>>something of what the soldiers did before she lost her nerve and ran away. She<br>>said that they killed the women firstï¼Œ because they had been makin~ the most<br>>

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目录:

[White Devils 下载链接1](#)

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