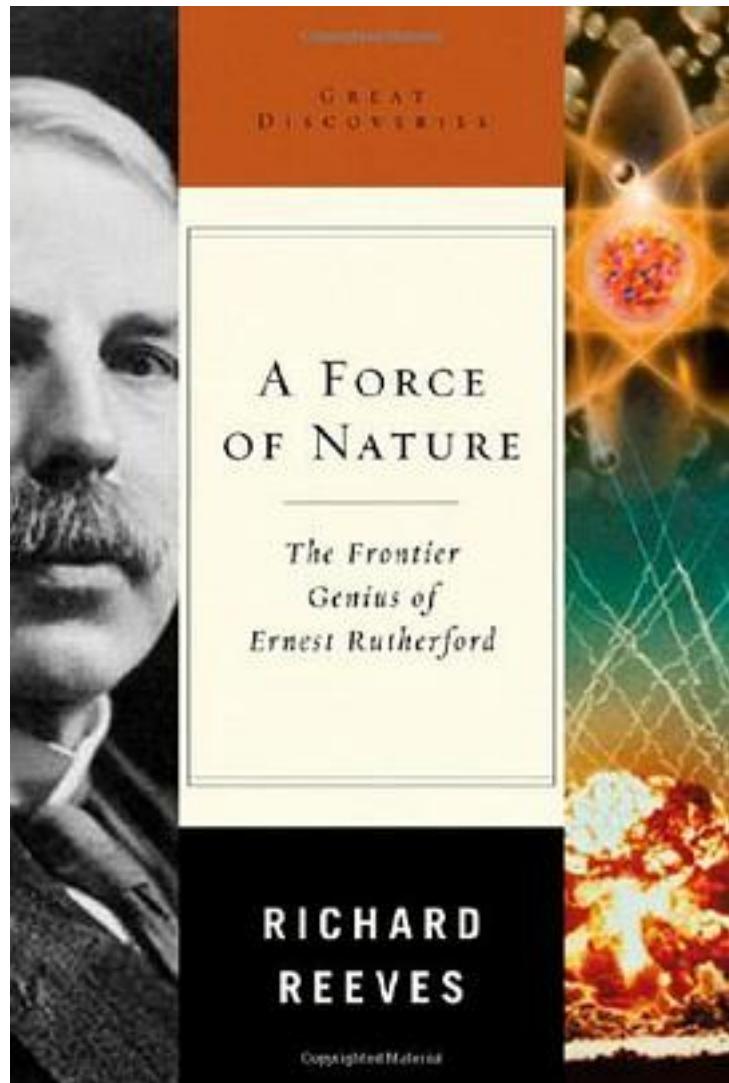


A Force of Nature



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Ernest Rutherford, who grew up in colonial New Zealand and came to Cambridge on a scholarship, made numerous revolutionary discoveries, among them the orbital structure of the atom and the concept of the half-life of radioactive materials, which led to a massive reevaluation of the age of the earth previously judged just 100 million years old. Above all, perhaps, Rutherford and the young men working under him were the first to split the atom, unlocking tremendous forces forces, as Rutherford himself predicted, that would bring us the atomic bomb. Rutherford, awarded a Nobel Prize and made Baron Rutherford by the queen of England, was also a great ambassador of science, coming to the aid of colleagues caught in the Nazi and Soviet regimes. Under Rutherford's rigorous and boisterous direction, a whole new generation of remarkable physicists emerged. In Richard Re's hands, Rutherford leaps off the page, a ruddy, genial man and a towering figure in scientific history.

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