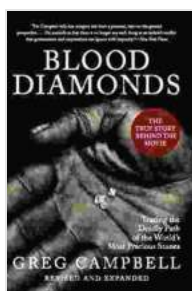


Tracing the Deadly Path of the World's Most Precious Stones

In the heart of Africa, where the sun beats down relentlessly and the land is scarred by war, there lies a treasure that has been coveted by mankind for centuries: diamonds.

Diamonds are the hardest natural substance on Earth, and they are also one of the most beautiful. They have been used to adorn the crowns of kings and queens, and they are a symbol of love and commitment. But behind the glittering facade of diamonds lies a dark and bloody history.



Blood Diamonds: Tracing the Deadly Path of the World's Most Precious Stones by Greg Campbell

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

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For centuries, diamonds have been mined in Africa, and the industry has been plagued by violence and exploitation. In the early days, African miners were forced to work in dangerous conditions, and they were often beaten or killed if they failed to meet their quotas. As the diamond industry grew, so

did the violence. Warlords and rebel groups fought for control of the mines, and innocent civilians were caught in the crossfire.

In the 1990s, the world finally began to wake up to the horrors of the diamond industry. A United Nations report exposed the widespread use of child labor in the mines, and consumers began to demand conflict-free diamonds.

In response to the pressure, the diamond industry created the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, which was designed to prevent conflict diamonds from entering the legitimate market. However, the Kimberley Process has been criticized for being ineffective, and conflict diamonds continue to circulate.

Today, the diamond industry is still plagued by violence and exploitation. In the Central African Republic, rebel groups are fighting for control of the diamond mines, and innocent civilians are bearing the brunt of the violence. In Angola, the government is accused of using diamond revenues to fund its military, and human rights abuses are rampant.

The diamond industry is a global problem, and it requires a global solution. Consumers must demand conflict-free diamonds, and governments must do more to regulate the industry. Only then can we end the bloodshed and ensure that the world's most precious stones are truly a symbol of love and beauty.

The Deadly Path of Diamonds

The journey of a diamond from the mine to the jewelry store is often a long and bloody one. Here is a brief overview of the steps involved:

1. **Mining:** Diamonds are mined in a variety of ways, including open-pit mining, underground mining, and alluvial mining. Open-pit mining is the most common method, and it involves digging a large hole in the ground to expose the diamond-bearing rock. Underground mining is more dangerous and expensive, but it can be used to reach diamonds that are located deep beneath the surface. Alluvial mining involves sifting through riverbeds and other water sources for diamonds that have been washed away from their original source.
2. **Sorting:** Once the diamonds have been mined, they are sorted by size, quality, and color. The largest and most valuable diamonds are typically used for jewelry, while the smaller and less valuable diamonds are used for industrial purposes.
3. **Cutting and polishing:** The diamonds are then cut and polished to give them their final shape and brilliance. This is a delicate process, and it can take several weeks to complete.
4. **Setting:** The diamonds are then set in jewelry, such as rings, necklaces, and earrings. This is a skilled process that requires a great deal of precision.
5. **Sale:** The finished jewelry is then sold to retailers, who sell it to consumers.

Each step in this process is fraught with danger and abuse. Miners are often forced to work in dangerous conditions, and they are paid a pittance for their labor. The sorting and cutting process is often carried out in sweatshops, where workers are exposed to harmful chemicals and forced to work long hours for little pay. And the sale of diamonds is often controlled by criminal organizations, who use the profits to fund their illicit activities.

The Human Cost of Diamonds

The diamond industry has a devastating impact on the lives of the people who work in it. Miners are often exposed to dangerous chemicals and machinery, and they are at risk of injury or death. The working conditions in the mines are often appalling, and miners are often forced to work long hours for little pay.

The diamond industry also has a negative impact on the environment. Mining operations can pollute the air and water, and they can destroy forests and other natural habitats. The use of heavy machinery can also damage the land, and it can make it difficult for people to grow crops.

The diamond industry is a global problem, and it requires a global solution. Consumers must demand conflict-free diamonds, and governments must do more to regulate the industry. Only then can we end the bloodshed and ensure that the world's most precious stones are truly a symbol of love and beauty.

What You Can Do

There are a number of things you can do to help end the bloodshed in the diamond industry:

- **Demand conflict-free diamonds.** When you buy diamonds, ask your jeweler if they are conflict-free. If they are not, do not buy them.
- **Support organizations that are working to end the diamond trade.** There are a number of organizations that are working to end the diamond trade, such as the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme

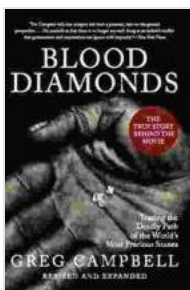
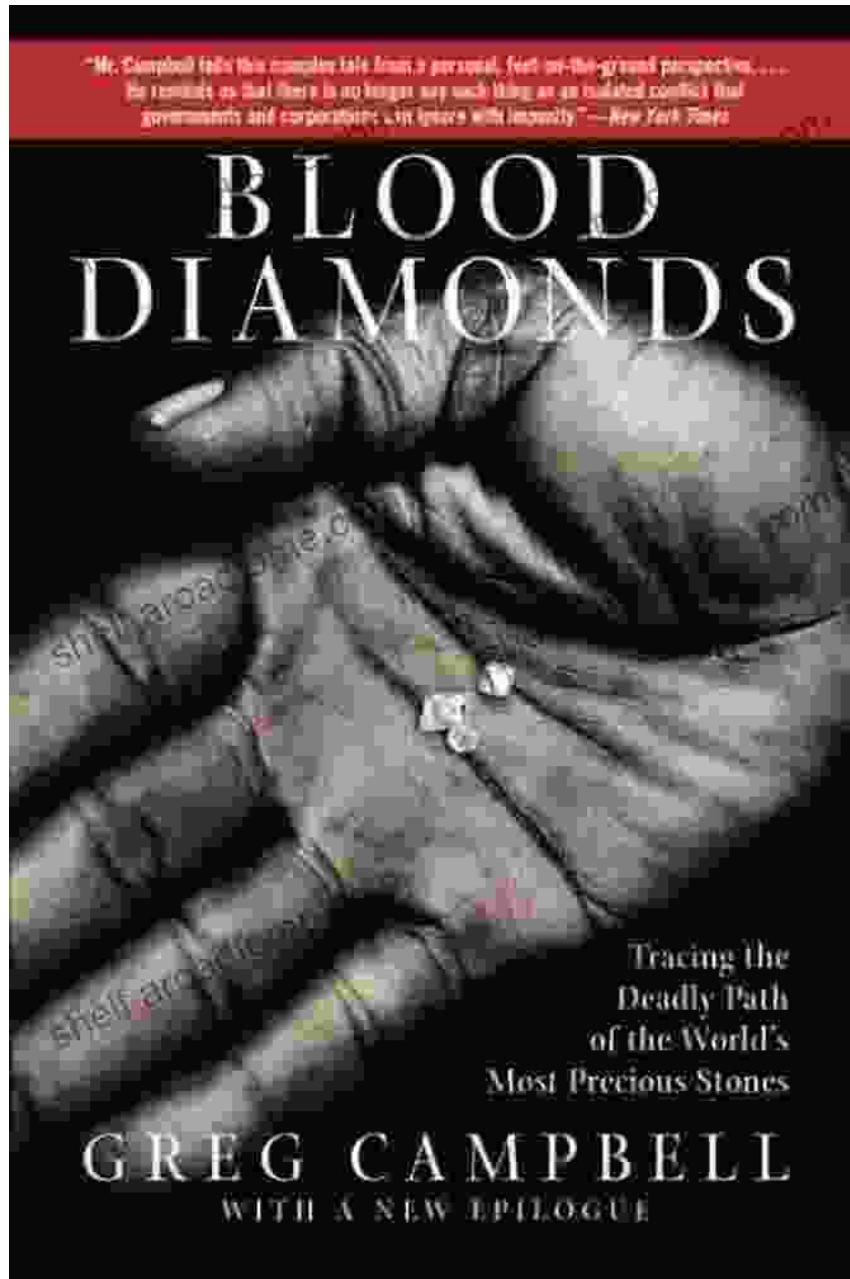
and the World Diamond Council. You can support these organizations by donating money or volunteering your time.

- **Educate others about the diamond trade.** The more people who know about the bloodshed in the diamond industry, the more likely we are to end it. Talk to your friends and family about the issue, and share information about it on social media.

Together, we can end the bloodshed in the diamond industry and ensure that the world's most precious stones are truly a symbol of love and beauty.







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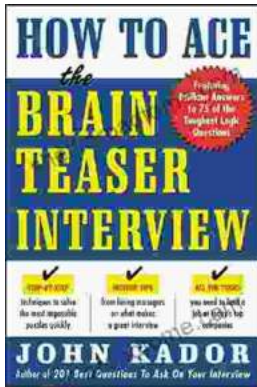
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