

Venomous Earth (MacSci)

Andrew A. Meharg

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Venomous Earth is the compelling story of the worst chemical disaster in human history - unfolding now. It explores the geology, politics and biology of why tens thousands of people are dying, hundreds of thousands developing cancer and tens of millions of people are at risk in Bangladesh, India and beyond, from arsenic-contaminated well water. Andrew Meharg compares this scenario with that in other arsenic-rich zones of the world where drinking water is tainted, such as extensive areas of South Western USA, the Alto Plano of South America and New Zealand's volcanic regions. He details historical precedents spanning thousands of years in mining and smelting communities, and due to the widespread use of arsenic in alchemy, farming, medicine and manufacturing. His tale takes in William Morris, Paracelsus, Nero and a cosmetic that killed two popes. Finally Venomous Earth looks at how the current arsenic crisis is to be tackled and highlights new challenges to our ongoing struggle with the toxic element.



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