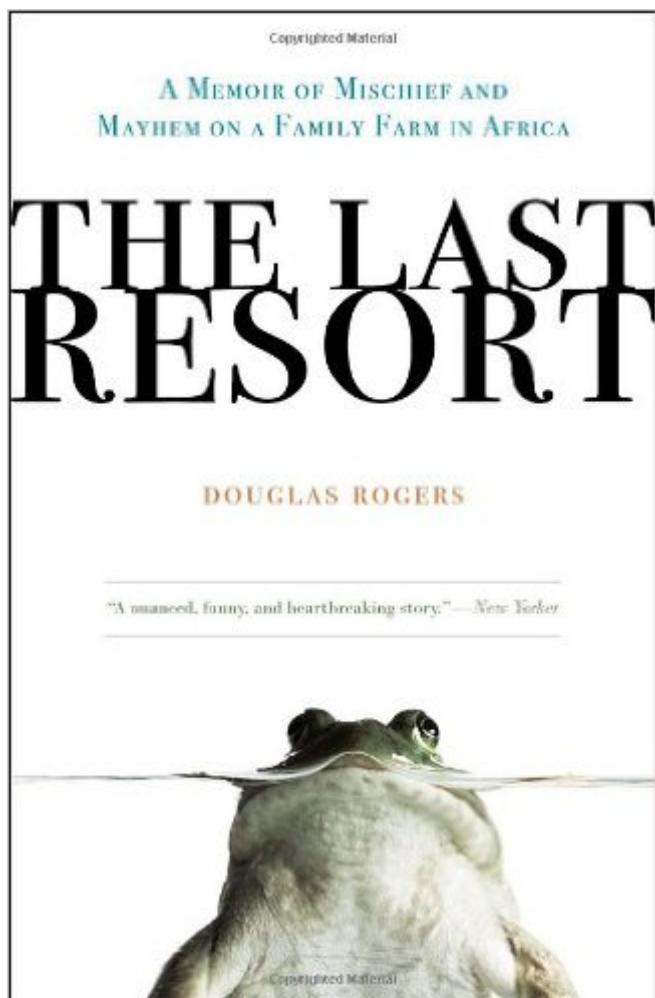


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The Last Resort: A Memoir Of Mischief And Mayhem On A Family Farm In Africa



Synopsis

Thrilling, heartbreaking, and, at times, absurdly funny, *The Last Resort* is a remarkable true story about one family in a country under siege and a testament to the love, perseverance, and resilience of the human spirit. Born and raised in Zimbabwe, Douglas Rogers is the son of white farmers living through that country's long and tense transition from postcolonial rule. He escaped the dull future mapped out for him by his parents for one of adventure and excitement in Europe and the United States. But when Zimbabwe's president Robert Mugabe launched his violent program to reclaim white-owned land and Rogers' parents were caught in the cross fire, everything changed. Lyn and Ros, the owners of Drifters, a famous game farm and backpacker lodge in the eastern mountains that was one of the most popular budget resorts in the country, "found their home and resort under siege, their friends and neighbors expelled, and their lives in danger. But instead of leaving, as their son pleads with them to do, they haul out a shotgun and decide to stay. On returning to the country of his birth, Rogers finds his once orderly and progressive home transformed into something resembling a Marx Brothers romp crossed with *Heart of Darkness*: pot has supplanted maize in the fields; hookers have replaced college kids as guests; and soldiers, spies, and teenage diamond dealers guzzle beer at the bar. And yet, in spite of it all, Rogers' parents "with the help of friends, farmworkers, lodge guests, and residents, "among them black political dissidents and white refugee farmers, "continue to hold on. But can they survive to the end? In the midst of a nation stuck between its stubborn past and an impatient future, Rogers soon begins to see his parents in a new light: unbowed, with passions and purpose renewed, even heroic. And, in the process, he learns that the "big story" he had relentlessly pursued his entire adult life as a roving journalist and travel writer was actually happening in his own backyard. Evoking elements of *The Tender Bar* and *Absurdistan*, *The Last Resort* is an inspiring, coming-of-age tale about home, love, hope, responsibility, and redemption. An edgy, roller-coaster adventure, it is also a deeply moving story about how to survive a corrupt Third World dictatorship with a little innovation, humor, bribery, and brothel management. From the Hardcover edition.

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Customer Reviews

You might want to wait for Robert Mugabe and his henchman to exit Zimbabwe before you visit this resort, but you won't be able to put down this riveting book about a spunky senior couple and their story of survival. Set at the edge of a country that has descended into economic disaster and official thuggery, this is about people who just want to hang on - and they do! Part adventure tale, part family memoir and trip into the mind of post-colonial Africa, this amiable but gripping story is also compelling business case study of sorts - a bush version of Who Moved My Cheese? The Rogers family, a white Zimbabwean couple with roots going back several generations, retire to a craggy estate near Mutare in the East which they turn into a backpacker lodge with chalets, a swimming pool and al fresco bar. They thrive for several years during the early benevolent period of the Mugabe regime when whites were welcome and the struggle against the old supremacist Rhodesian government forgotten. White emigrants even returned, many encouraged to buy and build in the new majority African-ruled Zimbabwe. That all began to change around 2000 when Mugabe saw his lifetime presidency challenged and he turned to sacking white farms as a way to maintain support. This took the life out of the economy and with it, the tourist business. Luckily for the Rogers, their craggy estate had little farm value - especially after poachers took out their modest game stock - so the shambling estate avoided the expropriation list. But that still didn't pay the bills, so the author's Dad, Lyn Rogers kept coming up with one survival scheme after another in a way that could make for a third-world-dictator version of the Harvard Business School case study.

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