A REPORTER AT LARGE

THE MONKEY AND THE FISH

Can Greg Carr save an African ecosystem?

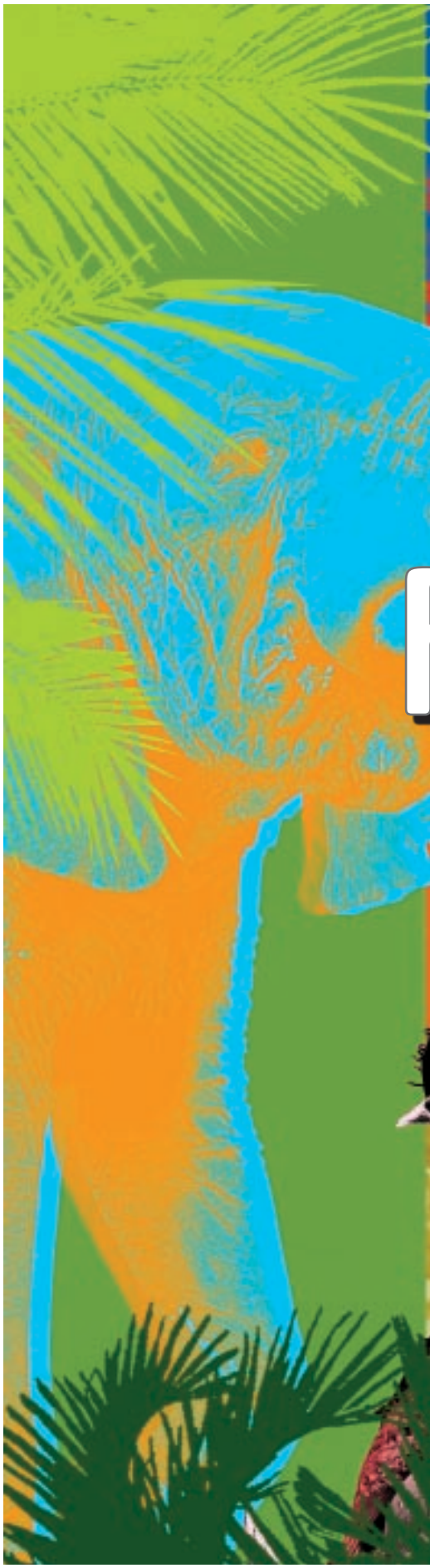
BY PHILIP GOUREVITCH

Back in the nineteen-eighties and nineties, Greg Carr made a couple of hundred million dollars developing and marketing voice-mail and Internet services. Carr came from Idaho, and he lived in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and in 1998, just before he turned forty, he decided that he would become a full-time philanthropist. He didn't just want to give his money away; he also wanted to give himself to his projects—body and soul. So, for instance, a few years later, Carr was out walking in Cambridge with a friend, the theatre director and critic Robert Brustein, and they passed an old building that used to house Grendel's bar, on J.F.K. Street, and Brustein said it would be fun to turn that place into a sort of laboratory theatre, and Carr fell in love with the idea. He put more than a million dollars into converting the place into a proper, ninety-nine-seat theatre, and began producing plays. "What I would do is spend all summer in Idaho, a lot of it by myself, with stacks of plays, just reading," he said.

Alongside what he called "new, strange" work, Carr read ancient Greek drama, and he became obsessed with Euripides. In contrast to Aeschylus and Sophocles, whom he saw as paragons of the Athenian establishment—"apologists for the current order"—Euripides, he said, "is writing these plays about slaves, and women taken captive in war, and non-citizens, and crazy people, all the outsiders. And he's writing these plays about—well, what if you were an outsider? What would it be like?" The play that really blew Carr away was "The Bacchae," in which the women of Thebes rebel against the city's Apollonian order (sunshine and rationality) and turn to worshipping Dionysus (night and debauchery). The leader of these women is called Agave, and her son Pentheus is the king of Thebes, and one night, in a Bacchanalian frenzy, the women set upon him, and Agave tears his head off. "And she's holding this bloody head in her hands," Carr told me. "And she kind of looks at him, and she goes, Oh, that's my son. And then she has this moment of recognition, like, Who am I? What have I become? I've been fever-following a god and, um, I don't know who I am anymore. Maybe I've been following the wrong god. What path am I on?"

Carr became obsessed with such moments—the moment when one fever breaks and gives way to a new fever, the moment of self-regard when one calls oneself into question and reverses course. He commissioned a filmmaker, Jessica Yu, to make a documentary about people who experience an "Agave moment"—a terrorist, for instance, and a bank robber, who suddenly saw themselves engaged in action of a kind that they wanted to believe they stood against. In Carr's own life, there was no severed head, no drama worthy of Euripides, but the chapter that was at odds with the way he thinks of himself was, he said, the years he spent as a "crazed businessman"—and after he cashed out he had gone through a long period of not knowing what to do. His theatrical venture, the Market Theatre, belonged to that period. After just two seasons, he shut it down. He had fallen in love with a national park in Africa, which is where we met, a few months ago, and he told me this story.

Gorongosa National Park is a wilderness at the southern tip of the Great Rift Valley, in central Mozambique, and when Carr showed up there, five years ago, it had been all but abandoned to ruin. The park is the size of Rhode Island, and was established in 1960, by Portugal, which had dominated Mozambique for nearly five hundred



Carr's challenge is all-consuming: "I didn't want to be the philanthropist that writes a check and comes back next year and says, What did you do with my money?"

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years. For a time, it was one of the top safari parks in Africa: choked with big herds of big game, served by commercial airlines, equipped with a headquarters—Chitengo Camp—that boasted modish accommodations, including a pool, and provided Volkswagen microbuses for exploring the bush. But in 1975 a Marxist liberation movement called FRELIMO drove the Portuguese out of Mozambique, and independence was soon followed by sixteen years of civil war. It was an epoch of appalling national devastation: a million Mozambicans killed, five million driven from their homes, tens of thousands tortured or maimed, the national infrastructure effectively dismantled, the ground sewn with a seeming infinitude of land mines.

Gorongosa District, which includes the park, was the scene of much of the heaviest fighting. Both district and park take their names from Mt. Gorongosa, a six-thousand-foot rain-forested peak that rises fifteen miles west of the park and that served, throughout the civil war, as the military and political stronghold of RENAMO, the anti-FRELIMO insurgency, which was sponsored by the white-supremacist regimes in South Africa and Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). Gorongosa was a full-tilt battlefield, a zone of terrifying close-range combat, with tank battles and air raids adding to the maelstrom, as towns and villages were repeatedly overrun by one army only to be reclaimed by the other, back and forth, year in and year out.

The war was even more unsparing of the wildlife than it was of people, as soldiers from both sides slaughtered game for food and commerce. When the fighting finally ended, the park was left a no man's land. Local trappers desperate for meat, along with organized and heavily armed poaching syndicates, moved into the breach, and the hunt only accelerated, until the fields shimmered with bleaching bones. Between 1972 and 2001, the number of cape buffalo counted in the park fell from thirteen thousand to just fifteen; the wildebeest count fell from sixty-four hundred to one; hippos went from thirty-five hundred to forty-four; and instead of thirty-three hundred zebras there were twelve. Elephant herds and lion prides, too, were reduced, by eighty to ninety per cent. Of hyenas, black and white rhinos, and wild dogs, there were none.

In 2004, Carr said, you could walk or drive all day without seeing any other living thing but some birds. That was when he committed much of his fortune and much of the rest of his working life to resurrecting the park. Now, when we rode out from Chitengo Camp, we routinely saw lions, elephants, any number of species of antelope (oribi, impala, nyala, eland, sable, Lichtenstein's hartebeest, reedbuck, waterbuck, duiker), and sometimes even the rare buffalo. Vervet and green monkeys popped up here and there. Baboons and warthogs were everywhere. In Lake Urema, pods of hippos milled in the shallows, and shoals of giant crocodiles crowded the muddy banks. Once, I nearly stepped on a spitting cobra, and later I watched a giant monitor lizard lumbering along the edge of a pond. At night, we saw civet cats and water mongoose, and listened to the cries of bush babies against the general clamor of bugs and frogs. The bird life was stupendous. Carr, who has never married and has no children, takes a patriarchal pride in every animal he sees in the park. "You give nature half a chance and it's resilient," he said.

The ecology of Mt. Gorongosa is changing fast because of slash-and-burn agriculture.

Mozambicans generally express surprise on meeting Greg Carr, because he likes to dress like a bum, and projects none of the grandeur of his wealth. His uniform at Gorongosa is a couple of days' growth of beard, a rumpled short-sleeved shirt or T-shirt, tattered cargo shorts, and Timberland boat shoes with no socks. Carr is happy with the look—it's comfortable, and it's disarming. Although he is not in Gorongosa for profit, he considers giving to be a form of entrepreneurship, and he retains a fast belief that private enterprise is the surest instrument for positive change in the world. His idea in Gorongosa is to use his philanthropy to create the conditions and set the example that will attract for-profit ecotourism businesses to the park, insuring its economic self-sufficiency, and benefitting the impoverished rural communities that surround it. He has already spent more than twenty million dollars on revitalizing the park and its environs, and he expects to spend at least as much again before Gorongosa will no longer need him, which is his definition of success.

So far, Carr's team of a hundred and twenty game scouts has dismantled hundreds of thousands of poachers' snares and gin traps in the park, and confiscated nearly a hundred poachers' guns. As a result, more animals have survived and multiplied, and those animals have grown less chary of human presence. But the scouts keep finding more traps, and making more arrests, and for every poacher they thwart they have to assume that several more are prospering.

The big animals that the park has lost are not only valuable as tourist attractions but essential to sustaining its ecosystem. If grass is not eaten in sufficient quantities, forest encroaches, and the inevitable

MIKHAEL SUBOTZKY/MAGNUM

dry-season fires that flicker across the savannahs and woodlands rage out of control. There were never fewer than half a dozen—and at times there were more than forty—sizable burns going in the park during the two weeks I spent there in the wicked heat (frequently more than a hundred degrees at midday) and desiccation of early October. Similarly, in the wetlands, lakes, and rivers that keep the land alive, hippos are needed to churn the muddy bottom and prevent excessive silting; and they are needed, too, to shit in the water to fertilize the rainy-season floods, which begin in December.

Half the water that flows into Gorongosa National Park comes from the mountain.

So Carr is not just leaving nature to replenish itself. Three years ago, he started bolstering Gorongosa's depleted species with animals donated from parks that can spare them, elsewhere in Mozambique and in South Africa. So far, he has brought in a hundred and eighty wildebeest, a hundred and thirty-nine buffalo, six elephants, and five hippos, and he figures that he needs at least as many more again of these species before the park has the breeding stock it requires. "We're probably twenty thousand bulk grazers short of what we need to keep the grass down," he said.

Carr is particularly keen to get more zebras, but his chief conservationist says that the subspecies that is endemic to the park can be had only in Zimbabwe, and in the current political crisis it's impossible to get them from there. "We're going to have to get the President of this country to call Mugabe," Carr told me. "That's next year's challenge." And he'd like some rhinos. And he wants predators: hyenas, leopards, maybe some more lions. And he wants Africa's top safari-tourism operations to lease concessions—Carr's staff of ecologists, tourism consultants, and engineers have carved Gorongosa into nine huge tracts—and to develop environmentally correct lodges that will generate thirty million dollars a year of business (ten per cent of which will go to the park's budget), in addition to park entry fees. And then there is what Carr calls the "greater Gorongosa ecosystem" to attend to—the ten-kilometre-wide buffer zone around the park, where the species in most immediate need of attention is humankind.

In the buffer zone, upward of thirty per cent of the population is afflicted with AIDS, and most people subsist on less than a dollar a day, with an average life expectancy of between forty and forty-five years. Here Carr has created hundreds of jobs; he has built two schools, and two clinics, and a handful of computer centers; he has had wells drilled. He sends a nurse out from his base, at Chitengo Camp, four days a week to provide basic medical care to nearby villages. He has funded a factory in the regional capital, Vila Gorongosa, where local produce is carefully rendered into fancily packaged dried-fruit snacks. He has sponsored scientific research to develop conservation-minded agricultural practices for the buffer zone, and medical teams to conduct epidemiological studies. He has brought in the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to distribute mosquito nets for every one of two hundred and fifty thousand people in and around the buffer zone—the first large-scale attempt to provide universal malaria protection to a population.

In 2007, Carr signed an agreement with the government of Mozambique to oversee the park and to run community and conservation projects in its buffer zone for the next twenty years. He seeks official advice and consent for each move he makes in Gorongosa, but he recognizes that, by giving him charge of the park, the government is basically saying that it recognizes conservation as a necessity that it cannot afford. "I'm not faulting them for this," Carr told me, but he felt the attitude was: "Some dude wants to work on that, let him, because the truth of the matter is, educated Mozambicans, for the most part, want to be in the capital city. The most educated Mozambicans, for the most part, are not clamoring to run a national park."

Carr likes to say that his project is strictly apolitical, but Gorongosa District, where RENAMO sympathies linger, has been largely left behind in Mozambique's postwar recovery, and he understands that his value to the government is not simply as a conservationist. "It wants to show RENAMO it's doing a good thing here," he told me. "Absolutely. And the President's been here three times. He dedicated the school. He dedicated the health clinic. He got his own name on that. I mean, the political aspect of this is key and the economic aspect of it is key." In fact, Carr told me, "I don't think what I do is that different from what the mayor of any small town faces every single day. You're just juggling. O.K., we need better schools, we need a better police department—oh, how's the revenue doing? How are the roads? How's everybody?"

So Carr was excited, a few days after I arrived, in early October, that Mozambique's Minister of the Interior was coming to visit the park, with an eye to becoming a minority partner in one of the tourist concessions. "We gotta knock his socks off," he told Rob Janisch, a South African who runs a tented camp, Explore Gorongosa, which is the first private

safari operation to come into the park under Carr's scheme. Janisch suggested that the minister be taken to a watering hole called Paradise Pond. Go and watch elephants drinking, he said, "because (a) it cools you off, and (b) it just is cool."

But Carr didn't want to take any chances: the minister didn't have much time and what if there were no elephants? "Last thing we want is he drives around and says, Oh, I guess they don't have animals yet in Gorongosa." After a minute, he said, "O.K., he lands at Chitengo, we do all our greetings, we put him in the heli, we give him the lake tour, where he will absolutely see tons of stuff, we land near the crossing, because there's a hippo pod there, and because that's where—that's a camp he wants, what we call Dingue Dingue. So we need to show him that and say, This is yours."

An hour later, Carr was clean-shaven, in a gingham dress shirt, fresh chinos, and black loafers. At the approach of the minister's plane, a Land Cruiser was dispatched to run up and down the Chitengo airstrip, broadcasting the hunting calls of hyenas to scare off strolling baboons, warthogs, and antelope. The minister, a young-looking man, was dressed in the same fashion as Carr, with a Leatherman bush knife in a holster on his belt. As he and Carr flew over the park in the chopper, he exclaimed over the landscape—"These palms and acacias, so beautiful"—and he told Carr, "You have really saved lives here." Carr said it was his honor, and the work had given his life meaning. The minister said it was a greater honor for Mozambique "that you leave all the comforts and come here." Carr told him, "I am extremely comfortable sleeping in the bush." The chopper banked over Lake Urema, where pelicans, fish eagles, and yellow-billed storks cruised over hippos and crocs, then out over the grasslands, where big herds of antelope galloped below. Elephants appeared as if on cue. "Paradise," the minister said, and Carr, sitting behind him, nodded avidly, cracked a big sideways grin, and gave a double thumbs up.

Greg Carr had never been involved in conservation work before he came to Gorongosa. He was not an ecologist, or a zoologist, or even much of an outdoorsman. Nor was he an old Africa hand, much less an economist. His only knowledge of the tourism business was as a customer, and he spoke no Portuguese. For that matter, he had never had a conscious interest in making money before he got around to it. "I was taught at an early age to look for deeper meaning in life," he said.

He was the seventh of seven children, the son of a practicing Mormon and a practicing physician. "The Golden Rule and the Beatitudes and Matthew—great stuff," he said. "And then you'd have Dad pitching in with a little rationalism." He never felt compelled to choose between faith and reason, since both had such obvious appeal and such obvious limitations. In politics, too, he considered himself a centrist. The way he put it was: "Conservatives want to make a good person and liberals want to make a good society. Which of those two do you not want to do?" In college, he thought he might major in biological anthropology—Darwinism, paleontology, primatology—even while he saved up, as a freshman at Utah State University, in Logan, to spend the next two years in Japan as a Mormon missionary.

Carr allows that he made some converts, but, as he tells it, what really excited him in Japan was learning about Zen Buddhism. "I was very much a questioner," he said. And his interests were fluid. When he returned from Japan, he read poetry and majored in history, and had no idea what to do with his life. He applied to graduate school, leaving his options open: Asian studies at Stanford, the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard, international relations at Yale, or public policy at Princeton. He got in everywhere. The Kennedy School brochure had some stirring lines from J.F.K. about making a better world, so he went there. In his second year at Harvard, he applied to and was accepted in the Ph.D. program in linguistics—"because I wanted to know, Why do we speak? What is a human?"

That was how his mind worked, with an earnest bent toward the forever debatable. So Carr was as surprised as anyone else, during the winter of that year—1985-86—when he developed a sudden and all-consuming conviction that he should be making and selling digital voice-mail systems to telephone companies. "It's a funny thing," he told me. "I just had this idea. I was in my dorm, and I was kind of just looking at my phone, and I was thinking about how little it did, really."

Carr had never studied computer science or telecommunications, let alone business or marketing, but he met an engineer named Scott Jones, at M.I.T., and they started a company called Boston Technology. They maxed out their credit cards buying gadgetry, set up shop in Carr's room, and by summer had a prototype of their product up and running.

"I don't care who's naughty or nice anymore—I only keep track of who's crossed me."

Carr was twenty-six, Jones twenty-five, and three years later they were tycoons.

In 1992, Carr brought in a C.E.O. and became chairman of the board. He had enough money to support forever the life of boyish wonder that had made him the money to begin with—and he still had to figure out what to do with that life. Only now that meant figuring out what to do with the money. He audited classes at Harvard; for three years in a row, he attended a summer course on Homer, Dante, and Joyce's "Ulysses" taught by a professor called Theoharis Theoharis. He read omnivorously and restlessly; he watched movies; he moved into a grand apartment atop the Charles Hotel, in Cambridge—room service suited him—and he suffered from insomnia. He spent most of his time with a friend he met in one of Theoharis's classes, Larry Hardesty, who had moved up to Boston from New Haven as the keyboard player for a rock band that took its name, the Young Man Carbuncular, from a line in "The Waste Land." Carr and Hardesty started a film-production company, Bowerbird Productions, that never produced a film but tried for a time to work with the former Navy Secretary (now Senator) Jim Webb, on an adaptation of his Vietnam novel "Fields of Fire." More successfully, Carr served a stint as publisher (with Hardesty as the managing editor) of a magazine of ideas, *The Boston Book Review*.

It seemed clear to Hardesty that Carr was gratified by his wealth as a measure of achievement, but, he said, "I think he was trying to find something to devote his energy to that would be more satisfying on more levels than success in business had been." Still, in 1996 Carr went back into business, as the chairman of the pioneering global Internet service provider Prodigy. Then, after just two years, he sold his share of the company to the Mexican media mogul Carlos Slim and quit all his other for-profit ventures. That was when he decided to commit himself to a life of philanthropy. In 1998, he gave Harvard eighteen million dollars, to establish the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy, at the Kennedy School. In 2000, he co-founded the Museum of Idaho, in Idaho Falls, and created the Market Theatre Company, and the next year he bought the former compound of the Aryan Nations in northern Idaho, which had been confiscated from the Nazi group by court order, and donated the land to a local college as a peace park.

Then a friend introduced him to the Mozambican Ambassador to the United Nations, and the Ambassador invited Carr to come and help his country. At the same time, Carr began spending a lot of time online, reading compulsively about threats to the earth's biodiversity. He was alarmed by the prospect—widely considered likely among environmental scientists—that as many as a quarter of the species now alive will cease to exist by the end of this century. The problem was generally described as a conflict between humanity and the rest of nature. As usual, Carr didn't see how you could win by taking sides; it made more sense to try to remove the conflict, make people and the ecosystems they lived in serve each other better. Thinking like that, he flew into Mozambique, hired a helicopter, and toured the national parks.

He told me that when he came to Gorongosa he knew he'd found his place. Until then, he said, "I'd cast about a lot—yeah, I think it was a hard time—because I wasn't completely fulfilled by any means, and didn't know what was next. I wanted it to be all-engrossing, challenging, and I didn't want to be the philanthropist that writes a check and comes back next year and says, What did you do with my money?" He said, "I mean, I have to actually be pushing against something." He decided to push against extinction.

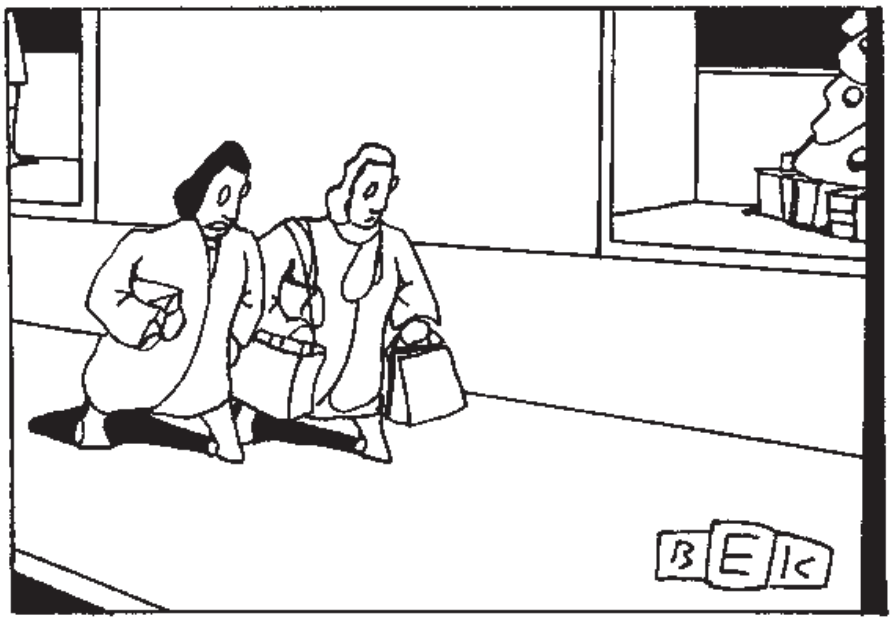
In 1968, the Department of Fauna of the Portuguese government hired a young South African ecologist named Ken Tinley to study wildlife conservation in Gorongosa National Park. In establishing the park, the colonial authorities had driven out the African villagers who had lived there for as long as anyone could remember, and they were prepared to displace more people in the name of preserving the wild land. Tinley had been asked by his Portuguese employers to identify the full parameters of the Gorongosa ecosystem, with the aim of redrawing the park's boundaries accordingly. He picked up his official Land Rover in the Mozambican capital, Lourenço Marques (now Maputo), and with his wife, Lynne, an artist, and their infant son set out for Chitengo. The drive, which can now be done in about eight hours, took them three days, and, once they settled in to their cottage, they stayed for six years, until the liberation war drove them out. Tinley then spent several years writing up his research in a Ph.D. thesis, which runs to nearly five hundred pages and remains one of the most comprehensive analyses of an African ecosystem ever produced.

Tinley sought, to the degree that the technology of the time allowed, to record every aspect of the park's natural order: the flora and fauna, of course, but also the geology, the hydrology, the wind patterns, and the intricate complexity that made all the elements of Gorongosa—every living thing and every physical property—inextricably part of the larger system. What emerges from his technical scientific prose and no end of charts, maps, drawings, and diagrams is an image of the park as one big organism, and of Tinley as its anatomist.

Mia Couto, Mozambique's preëminent novelist and also one of its leading ecologists, told me that Tinley was "a genius," and that view is pretty universal among people with sufficient scientific knowledge to plow through his thesis. For the rest of us, Lynne Tinley wrote a memoir of the family's life in Gorongosa and of the life of the park, a book called "Drawn from the Plains," which distills the essence of her husband's findings, with the artful and honest immediacy of the best nature writing. Here, for instance, is how she describes the annual rainy-season scene when Lake Urema overflows and submerges hundreds of square miles of the surrounding grasslands:

> Thousands of water birds arrive on the plains during the flooding to take advantage of the rich shallow waters. Egret, ibis, spoonbills, herons and divers nest in the tall *Acacia albida* (called winterthorns because they bear leaves in winter and shed them in summer) that hang over the water. The ancient, sleazy-looking Marabou stork in his funereal dress waits in the shallows under the trees for fledglings that fall out of the twig platforms above or for fish dropped by the parents during feeding. Crocodile also gather under the nesting trees to pick up the dropped food and to feed on fish attracted to the water enriched by birds' dung.

Lake Urema's yearly flooding was the engine that sustained the teeming animal life of Gorongosa, and even before he arrived in the park Ken Tinley had surmised from maps that the distant, cloud-shrouded massif of Mt. Gorongosa was,



"This year, we just decided to give money to ourselves."

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in turn, the engine of those floods. His research on the mountain confirmed this hypothesis: the mountain was the main water catchment for the park, the source of roughly half the water that flows into it. The primordial forests on the mountain slopes received two and a half times as much rainfall each year as the valley floor, and passed it down through a network of streams and rivers to the lake, providing water essential to human communities on the way. It was obvious to Tinley that the mountain belonged in the park, and, as he studied the opposite side of the park, he concluded that the ancient game-migration routes and wetlands that ran east from the park to the mangrove swamps lining the mouth of the Zambezi River delta where it opens into the Indian Ocean were the final piece to complete the Gorongosa system. In his thesis, which he finished in 1977, Tinley laid out a scheme for such an expansion of the park, indicating, as his wife summarizes it, "how the whole area could be planned, in the simplest possible manner, for tourist viewing, for research and education, for wilderness areas, and for the cropping of game as a source of protein for the surrounding tribal peoples."

By then, of course, Gorongosa was a civil-war battleground and the mountain was RENAMO's. But Tinley's dream of a park that ran "from mountain to mangroves" held fast in the lore of the place, and when Greg Carr came along it quickly captured his fancy.

Like Tinley, Carr is what his former Kennedy School professor Herman (Dutch) Leonard calls a "system thinker." Leonard, who also teaches at the Harvard Business School, had worked with Carr on his voice-mail venture, and he told me, "Greg realized that what Boston Technology was trying to do was to become a component of a much larger system"—the national telephone network—"and that if the company didn't think about the rest of the system, if it just designed its piece, it was unlikely to be able to find space in that larger system." In other words, Leonard said, "to him it wasn't just a product, and you go and sell this product. It was an intervention in a pretty big, complicated game. And he was able to simultaneously be focussed on the individual tree, if you will, and also keep his eye on the forest and think about the nature of how we operate so that we're going to fit in a natural way in this forest." And speaking of trees and forests, Leonard said, "That's not so different from what he's trying to do in Gorongosa."

Indeed, no sooner had Carr grasped the significance of Mt. Gorongosa than he discovered that the rain forest that covered the mountain—simultaneously capturing the water that fell from the clouds and, through evaporation, replenishing it—was being destroyed, piecemeal but steadily, by local practitioners of slash-and-burn agriculture. People had been living in that forest forever: a few thousand people who speak a distinct language, chi-Gorongosi, and adhere to a distinct spiritual order, which holds the mountain to be sacred and its forests to be inhabited by the spirits of their ancestors, who look out for them. But during the civil war other people began arriving on the mountain, followers of RENAMO and displaced people seeking refuge. After the war, more people arrived from the lowlands at the base of the mountain, and began clearing land to grow crops—chopping down old-growth hardwoods, burning them for charcoal, and planting potatoes, or corn, or sometimes marijuana between the stumps. After a few crop cycles, the soil—the accretion of perhaps ten thousand years of compost and sedimentation—was depleted, or after a few rainy seasons it would simply wash away, and these farmers would clear a new patch of forest. The trees they cut did not grow back.

Carr's scientists told him that the mountain's value as a water catchment was in peril: if the killing of trees could not be stopped, the mountain could be lost in just a few years. "To save the park," Carr said, "we have to save the mountain." But he had no authority over the mountain, which stood well outside the buffer zone. It seemed to him that the best solution was Ken Tinley's proposal: to have the mountain, or at least the vital, forested part of it above seven hundred metres, designated a satellite of the park. After all, the rain forest and the high alpine meadows up there were unique in southern Africa; it was the only place in the region where one could find a certain bird—the green-headed oriole—and no doubt countless species of plants. It was a landscape ripe for ecotourism, dotted with clear pools, riven by deep canyons, flanked by waterfalls. Carr and his team worked their government contacts in Maputo, lobbying hard to have the mountaintop added to the park, and at the same time they sought the permission of the traditional leaders of the mountain communities to start conservation programs and lead tours in their jurisdictions.

Most of Gorongosa Park's mountain water comes from two administrative

zones, Canda and Sadjunjira. Canda is the turf of a hereditary chief, known by his Portuguese title of *régulo*, and, as Carr paid court to him, he found the Régulo of Canda to be negotiable: if Carr's people hired Canda people to work in Canda, the Régulo didn't mind them running a reforestation program on his side of the mountain, and if they brought tourists to see him, to pay a small visitor's fee and to conduct a ceremony of respect for the ancestors, they could take the tourists there, too. In Sadjunjira, on the other hand, the traditional keeper of the mountain was a kind of shaman, known as the Samatenje, and when Carr paid him a visit everything went wrong.

Nobody had told the Samatenje of Sadjunjira that Carr would be arriving by helicopter, a vehicle known to the mountain people chiefly as an instrument of war, and the noise of the thing as it descended near his compound outraged his entourage. What's more, the helicopter was cherry red, and in the Gorongosi culture red is the color of violence and conflict, so it is strictly forbidden to appear before the Samatenje with any trace of red on one's person. Then the helicopter touched down on the wrong side of a stream that demarcated the sacred ground of the Samatenje's domain. And, as the helicopter's doors opened, a truly astonishing thing happened: a pale, snakelike lizard, of a sort that nobody had seen before, popped out of a hole in the ground right beside it—a ghastly omen. The only thing that could be worse was for someone to touch the creature, and so that's what happened: a herpetologically inclined member of Carr's party, delighted by what he recognized to be his first ever sighting of a blind skink, snatched it up to have a closer look. All the Samatenje could say was: Get out of here—go!

"Look," Carr said, when I asked him about that visit. "Everybody is always talking about wanting to save a rain forest. I'm actually trying to do it—trying to see what it takes. And I'm finding out."

Carr spends as much as half of each year in Mozambique these days, and the rest of his time in America, where he lives in baronial luxury. He loves his big homes, but in Gorongosa, at Chitengo, he loves an equal and opposite extreme of sparse accommodation. For his first few years there, he slept mostly in a tent and sometimes in the back of a truck. He didn't even bother with mosquito netting, an adventure that resulted in more than one case of malaria. Since Chitengo was rehabilitated, two years ago, Carr has taken to staying in one of the tourist bungalows, but when those beds are fully booked—a situation that pleases him—he crashes on a mattress on an office floor. On one such night, as he headed off to sleep, he said, "You've seen my houses. One of the things I've really gotten out of being here is discovering that this is all I need." I pointed out that he had a million acres of game park, a fleet of trucks, a staff of hundreds, and a hotel and restaurant at his command. "Yeah," he said. "But seriously—it's like an eight-year-old boy's dream come true."

The one luxury Carr does allow himself in Gorongosa is to keep a chartered helicopter (a blue one now) on standby—another eight-year-old's dream, but a supremely practical one, as I understood when Carr took me in it to see the mountain. The Chitengo restaurant was full of tourists that morning, and all of them had been happy with the game drives they'd been on. "We've got a tourism product, we're ready for safaris," Carr told me before takeoff. "I can see that happening now. So I can turn my mind to the next big thing—like expanding the park." Two years ago, just before Carr signed his twenty-year agreement with the government, the mountaintop above seven hundred metres had been added to the park's buffer zone. Carr was still eager to have it brought fully into the park. But RENAMO remained a force on the mountain, and nobody in Maputo wanted to rile up the old guerrillas by appearing to take their turf out from under them.

The helicopter touched down briefly in Vila Gorongosa to pick up the head of Carr's forestry team, Regina Cruz. Our next stop was on the mountain, in a patch of tall grass beside the forested banks of a river, where we continued on foot, climbing through reeds and high grass into the sudden damp, dark cool of forest until we came out on a broad slab of rock at the base of a three-hundred-foot waterfall called Murombodze Falls. It was months since the last heavy rains had replenished the land, and, even so, the falls were spectacular—shelf upon shelf of interweaving cascades roaring into a deep, clear pool. "This is a key tourist point," Carr announced. "There are waterfalls all over this mountain. A hiker could spend three

"Hang in there. If you win this bout, you get to fight his mother."

or four days hut-hopping here." As with the park, Carr envisioned such tourism paying for the conservation of the mountain. "The thing I never stop marvelling over in Africa is the economic scale," he said. "While on Wall Street a couple-billion-dollar merger goes down and no one really bats an eye, you can make a fifty-thousand-dollar business on this mountain and save an entire ecosystem."

In fact, Carr was spending a hundred and sixty thousand dollars a year for Cruz to run sixteen nurseries on the mountain—each of which produces, from locally gathered seed, fifteen hundred saplings a year, which she and her team plant in denuded areas—and the ecosystem was far from saved. Near the foot of the falls, Cruz showed us one of her nurseries, a simple bamboo shed, where her seedlings were barely six inches tall, and right out in front of it we encountered a lively older woman whom Cruz recognized as an avid illegal tree cutter. "She's been warned, but keeps at it," Cruz said, and Carr said, "So bring the police." Cruz said that the previous week the police had come to arrest two illegal cutters, but she would rather see conservation-education programs on the mountain than cops. "We have to teach the people, because they grow up with nature and they do not understand that one day the trees can disappear," she said. "They say to me, 'The trees come from God.' I say, 'O.K., so if God put it and you take it we all have to put God's trees back.' They laugh, but maybe they start to understand."

The question of whether to use persuasion or coercion to save the mountain divides Carr's staff sharply. Franziska Steinbruch, the park's manager of science, told me that she had been studying the deforestation of the Gorongosa water catchment in satellite photographs, taken annually since 1972, and that the damage had been increasing exponentially. Her attitude was: the law is the law, no excuses, and the government has to uphold it to defend the rain forest. "If that's not coming as a force from the top, the forest will be gone in two years maximum," she said, and she added, "I'm actually losing hope."

Carr himself takes a hard line when he talks about the mountain, but, as we returned from the falls to the helicopter, we found a young man waiting for us, whom Cruz identified as another illegal tree cutter. He wore a ragged shirt, decorated with images of subway stations in Brooklyn, and he bowed his head coyly as Carr lectured him about leaving the trees alone. Then the young man asked for money to buy salt. Carr's anger evaporated. "It's all about poverty," he said, and he told Cruz, "The next time you hire people to work in your nurseries, you should hire this guy—that's a twofer, one less tree cutter and one more tree planter."

From the helicopter, it was easy to see what the worry was. Terrain that appeared from a distance, or even from a slight angle, to be a dense tangle of unbroken rain forest looked from directly overhead like moth-eaten fabric, where small and medium-sized clearings opened up to reveal a field of charred tree stumps, interspersed with crops or, at least as often, simply abandoned.

"We need Regina to have a hundred nurseries," Carr had said when we took off. "Because we can do it. We've proved the concept." But as we buzzed over smoldering fires in fresh cuts, and fields of rocks laid bare by the washing away of topsoil, he said, "Another hundred nurseries—that's not enough." To be sure, large swaths of the forest stood solid and inviolate, but these areas only made the despoliation elsewhere more obvious. The damage ran all the way to the cloud-shrouded summit, a wild place of craggy rock pillars and low, tangled vegetation, and as we crossed from Canda to the Sadjunjira side the trashing of the forest only got worse.

On several nights at Chitengo, we had watched Ken Burns's recent documentary mini-series on the history of America's national parks. After the screening of one episode, a visiting safari guide said, "It's interesting seeing those American national parks—how they were set aside in the name of the many for the many. Here it's really the national land being set aside in the name of the people for the very few, to be honest. The masses here aren't going to come see these animals, because really they're afraid of them, and they'd rather have the land to farm." But, the guide said, the land would be useless without the mountain to feed it. So, he said of the park, "why save all this land for a couple of thousand whities if it's just going to disappear? That's why, if you ask Greg, he'll tell you the mountain is the first priority."

Carr rarely expresses discouragement directly; instead, he betrays the feeling by proposing ever more extravagant solutions to the dilemma that's bothering him. By the end of our helicopter survey of the mountain, he had begun talking about planting "enormous avocado orchards" at the foot of the mountain to lure the tree cutters down from their backbreaking assault on the forest. But Cruz didn't see any reason to believe that people wanted to abandon the mountain.

"They say, 'No—it's the white people coming to take our land,'" she said. "'Where will we go? Where will we live? What will we eat?'"

"We'll give them jobs," Carr said. "We can give a lot of them jobs."

Cruz remained unconvinced. She had no difficulty expressing her discouragement. When we landed back in Vila Gorongosa to drop her off, she told Carr, "I'm sorry. I'm very sorry. Really, I never realized that the situation was as bad as that. It's really worse this year."

"We can fight it," Carr told her.

"Yeah," she said. "Maybe."

The mountain was a problem. "It has to be a national park above seven hundred metres," Carr told me. "We have to get to the point where you don't live up there." He said as much on nearly every day of my stay. And nearly every day he flew one or another important visitor over the mountain to make his case. Carr was in the process of trying to sign up the first three safari-lodge operators to run concessions in the park, and he wanted them to understand, as well, the potential value that the mountain could add to Gorongosa tourism. He was encouraged that the Minister of the Interior had described the harm to the mountain as "an environmental catastrophe." But Carr placed his highest hopes for the mountain in a South African named Dave Law, whose company, Barra Resorts, runs a string of Indian Ocean lodges in Mozambique. Carr wanted Law to build a lodge at Murombodze Falls, and when he took Law to see the spot, he invited a young woman, a Portuguese graduate student who was doing research in the park, to ride along in the helicopter and to visit the swimming hole beneath the spilling water. "A girl in a bikini—who doesn't like that?" he said. Law loved the falls; he loved the whole mountain. Over drinks


GROAN! IS THIS REALLY MY LIFE? OR AM I JUST TRAPPED INSIDE THE HOLODECK?
ZZZZZ
COMPUTER: END PROGRAM. COMPUTER: END PROGRAM. COMPUTER...
ZZZZZ
WAIT WHAT? I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS! HE "DEFRIENDED" ME!
HE'S THE ONE WHO PERSUADED ME TO JOIN FACEBOOK IN THE FIRST PLACE.
CALL ME IDEALISTIC, BUT IF EVERYBODY ON THE PLANET AVOIDED BEING JERKY FOR 5 SECONDS A DAY IT WOULD REALLY ADD UP.
OVER AEONS, WE'D ACHIEVE WORLD PEACE. LIKE ONE OF THOSE WEIRD FRACTAL EQUATIONS THAT LOOP AROUND THEMSELVES.
I'LL HAVE TO WRITE AN E-BOOK ON MY THEORY OF MICRO-MORALITY. OR, NO, NANO-ETHICS.
I'M SURE THAT IDEA'S ALREADY BEEN TWEETED INTO THE GREAT COLLECTIVE UNCONSCIOUS HIVE-MIND.
SOMETIMES I THINK THE ENTIRE INTERNET IS AN ELABORATE PONZI SCHEME OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE.
WHERE'S IT ALL GONNA END? WEREN'T TOILET BOWLS AND MYLAR AND YOU BORN ENOUGH FOR EVERYBODY?
THEY COULD PUMP FREE VALIUM INTO THE ATMOSPHERE AND SOME PEOPLE WOULD STILL COMPLAIN THEY DIDN'T GET XANAX.
WHAT IS THIS SUPPOSED TO BE? MONO-GRUEL?
CAFETE
STALE HUMMUS WITH YELLOWING BROCCOLI
I'M TELLIN' YA, 5 SECONDS A DAY OF NON-JERKOSITUDE TIMES 6 BILLION, AND EVENTUALLY THE EARTH WOULD GET PRETTY CHILL.
I SHOULD START MY OWN SCIENTOLOGY.
"DEFRIENDED." WHAT A STUPID TERM.
I OUGHTA SEND HIM A HATEFUL TELEGRAM: "DEAR STOP. DEAD, STOP."
I WONDER IF THEY ACTUALLY STILL HAVE TELEGRAMS.
YOU'RE THE DAUGHTER I NEVER HAD. YESSIR, JUST LOOK AT YOU!
COMPUTER: END PROGRAM. COMPUTER: END PROGRAM. COMPUTER...
I FEEL LIKE I'VE ACCIDENTALLY STEPPED INTO THIS GUY'S MOVIE.
HMMM... THIS "EASY MAC" DOESN'T LOOK SO EASY.
GREAT, NOW HE'S "BLOCKED" ME... WHATEVER.
"MICRO-ETHICS: A MEMOIR" WOULD MAKE A PRETTY GOOD TITLE.

on the evening after his visit, he spoke of running horseback trips over the summit, of stringing zip lines through the rainforest canopy, of building a spa that looked out from his lodge onto the falls.

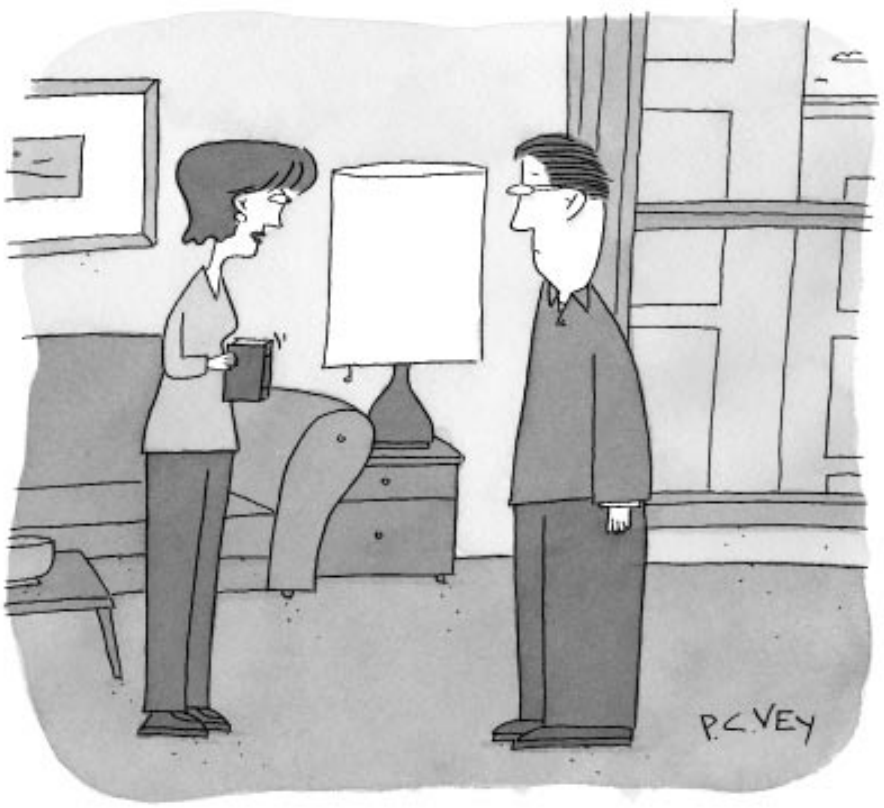
It sounded nice. But, while Law and Carr were up on the mountain, I had paid a visit to Eugénio Almeida, the Régulo of Canda, and he had told me that although he wanted more tourists to visit the waterfall, he didn't want anybody going there, or even taking pictures of it, without first coming to see him at his compound to pay a fee, have a certificate stamped, and conduct a ceremony in honor of a spirit whom he called the Owner. Never mind that the Régulo's compound lay nearly two hours' drive away from the falls: the same went for the rest of the mountain, he said. "No one should go on the mountain without my consent—I, the Régulo," he said. He was particularly concerned about anyone tampering with the waterfall. "It is a holy place," he said. "Long ago, no one lived very close to that place. In the evening, the Owner would move around the place. Even here we would hear him walking. He made a lot of noise. And he climbed from the waterfall high up in the mountain. Now many people have built their houses around the waterfall. By settling their houses around the waterfall, these people closed the way the Owner would use. He doesn't have any path to move from the waterfall into the mountain."

The Régulo, a slender man in his sixties, wore an orange polo shirt and shimmering green trousers, and periodically he tapped a bit of snuff from a plastic vial into his palm, then raised it carefully to his nose and snorted it. "Long ago, things weren't like this chaos we experience these days," he said. The Régulo wanted his office to be respected. The problem, he said, was that there were too many people trying to lead the community. "Everyone leads and no one listens to the other," he told me. He blamed the war. If there was lawlessness and destruction on the mountain, it was because people had been addled by what he called "the gun effects." I took that to mean shell shock. "These people inhaled a lot of gunpowder from guns and bombs during the war," he said. "This gunpowder affected people's brains, and mixed them up. Good sense was replaced by war-related ideas."

He told me that Greg Carr was his friend—"We are like brothers"—and that the people of Canda were dependent on the Carr Foundation for jobs. In fact, he said, the thirty-six people whom Regina Cruz employed on her forestry team were the only people in all of Canda, an area of some four hundred square miles, who had regular salaried jobs. The rest lived by the hoe; they were subsistence farmers. "Here, in my area, people suffer a lot," he said. So they were also grateful to Carr for building them a school. But none of that made them ready to accept the upper mountain's being turned into a park.

In colonial times, the Régulo reminded me, many people had lived in the area that is now the park, and when it became the park the Portuguese burned their homes and scattered them. These were the associations that the word "park" carried, he said. In fact, a number of people had resettled in the park during and after the civil war, and Carr was now working on getting them out. He has budgeted a million dollars to resettle some seventy families from the shores of Lake Urema, and he said that there would be no coercion, only enticement: better homes, better social services, better economic opportunities. The Régulo saw it differently. He thought it was bad enough that locals could no longer hunt for meat in the buffer zone, as everyone used to do in the past. "Now you claim all that area to be yours," he told me. By "you" he meant the *muzungu*—the white man. He explained, "*Muzungu* means tomorrow he cheats us and then he takes our property."

The Régulo said that park workers had held a meeting at his house "to persuade people to leave the top of the mountain." When the people up the mountain heard that, he said, they came and protested in his yard. Three times, they came—two hundred people, then ninety people, then seventy-five people. "All of them refused to leave those areas on top of the mountain where they live," he said. These "complainers," as he called them, had even accused the Régulo personally of selling out to the park, and he didn't like that. He told me that Mozambique's land law was clear, and everyone knew that it said people cannot be removed from where they live—they have to agree to move voluntarily. "This was the only disagreement we have ever had with Mr. Greg Carr," he said, and he added, "We don't want foreigners to control our area. We want to control our land ourselves." He took credit for the recent arrests of illegal tree cutters. "The two men were beaten, then jailed,"



"You've just been copying things from my sex diary into your sex diary."

the Régulo told me. After all, he said, "we know that this mountain and its trees attract rain. You see, rain is becoming scarce now, and later no rain will fall at all."

Carr, however, said it was untrue that anybody from his project had told people on the mountain that they would have to move: that was not his policy, and it never would be. In fact, he said, he had insisted, in his agreement with the government, that "traditional people" be allowed to dwell in the park, and he told me that that would apply to the mountain, too, if it was given park status. He placed the blame for the Régulo's troubles on agents provocateurs from RENAMO, who had gone around accusing him of being a rich American *muzungu* land grabber, in order to make some political hay at a time of municipal elections in the Gorongosa District two years ago. I heard the same thing from people in Maputo who had nothing to do with Carr's project, and Carr provided me with a local newspaper clipping describing the smear campaign.

Carr was much more interested to hear that the Régulo had said he wanted to see more tourists on the mountain, and to control deforestation. The logistical details didn't trouble him. "Basically, what you do is, you introduce Dave Law to Eugénio the Chief, and they sort it out," Carr said. "Eugénio wants jobs and he wants tourism money, and Dave Law wants the same thing." Frequently, when Carr sought to explain his mission, he would recite facts and figures about the global threat to biodiversity and about the glorious past of the Gorongosa ecosystem. But when he talked about the how, rather than the why, he could sound more like a ward heeler. He said, "Economics will solve the problem faster than any public policy." He said, "Every private-sector entrepreneur has this incredible bias toward letting enlightened self-interest pull things forward, and I fully believe that will happen." And he said, "It's all about jobs. It's all about jobs. It's all about jobs."

Carr's disarming faith in the power of his own good intentions to render confrontation insignificant has served him well in Mozambique. Following his initial catastrophic red-helicopter-and-blind-skink encounter with the Samatenje of Sadjunjira, Carr issued the shaman an invitation to visit Chitengo, gave him a grand welcome and free use of the bar, and sent him home a buddy. In fact, he posted a photograph of the two of them together as his head shot on his Facebook page. The Samatenje, however, had never come around to coöperating with the Gorongosa team, so I went to see him, too.

"Tonight, the part of the sea bass will be played by the chicken."

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Unlike the Régulo of Canda, the Samatenje of Sadjunjira lived well up the mountain, far from the last paved road, a four-and-a-half-hour journey from Chitengo. Along the way I learned from Inácio Júlio Tomás, a member of the Gorongosa forestry crew, who had agreed to drive and translate for me, that the Samatenje I thought I was going to meet—the Facebook Samatenje—had died in the past year, and that I was going to meet the new Samatenje, his brother. Tomás wanted me to comprehend the incredible powers that this new Samatenje and his other brother, the witch doctor of Sadjunjira, were believed to possess. There was even a local legend, he said, that the brothers had killed the Facebook Samatenje, by working some fratricidal magic on him. It sounded farfetched to me, and Tomás allowed that the dead Samatenje had spent a lot of time drinking at the tavern in Vila Gorongosa, and fooling around with the ladies there, which was a more routine cause of death in the area. "But people here don't believe in AIDS," he told me, and Tomás himself was not prepared to discount the powers of the two surviving brothers: their father, he said, had had awesome powers.

Not long ago, Tomás had had recourse to a witch doctor on account of a lame foot. He still wore the dark-green fetish thread the healer had fitted his ankle with as he cast his spells, and Tomás had no complaints about the treatment: he had been up and walking again in no time. It seemed everyone had such stories, even the science-minded. Carr told me that every year, at the end of the flood season, in mid-April, Gorongosa Park officially reopens, and all the local shamans convene under a hallowed "miracle tree" at Chitengo to call on the park's lions to show their favor to the park. Lo and behold, after one such ceremony Carr saw a lion stroll by the Chitengo restaurant—an unheard-of sighting in the fenced compound—and he found that five more lions had gathered by the camp gate.

The day before my trip to Sadjunjira, I had made another long drive to visit a network of underground bat caves that were known to be guarded by spirits, one of whom took the form of a leopard. Shortly before we reached our destination, my guide had stopped so that we could stretch our legs and eat a sandwich. It was a stupefyingly hot, still day, but, as

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we stood with our lunch by the tailgate of the car, the trees around us began to rattle in a burst of extreme wind that gathered suddenly into a slender twister, blackened with dust, and ripped between us, snatching a sandwich wrapper, which sailed a good seventy feet into the air and was gone forever. Later, in the caves, I stood on a ledge overlooking a deep black pool of water and a snake rose to the surface—some kind of cobra, at least five feet long—and stared straight at me until I turned away and it sank from sight. My guide had no doubt that both twister and snake were visitations. But, as Tomás regaled me with similar stories of the powers of the Samatenje and his brother—the brother, he said, was a very good doctor, who could give you medicine that would make you so rich that "you'll go to America and buy a helicopter"—he mentioned in passing that the Samatenje had nevertheless lost two children the year before to cholera, by modern medical standards one of the most preventable, and treatable, maladies.

After leaving the last graded road on the way to Sadjunjira, we spent the next hour climbing the mountain in four-wheel drive on a road that was properly a footpath, and a badly washed-out one, too. On either side, large patches of the mountain were stripped bare of trees, and ragged fringes of flame licked up the grassy slopes. Then for long stretches there was no grass to burn: the topsoil was entirely gone, and all that remained was a waste of boulder fields. The last few miles of our approach was made on foot, and for the final hundred yards we had to remove our shoes and socks, as we had entered hallowed ground.

Tomás had been anxious that we were arriving around noon, for fear that we might not find the Samatenje at home or sober so late in the day. But he was both—a slight, bearded man, clad in the ragged remains of several denim shirts and matching pants. He squatted at the sight of us, cupped his hands, and clapped them rhythmically—*pock*, *pock*, *pock*, *pock*, *pock*, *pock*, *pock*—finishing with a half-beat flourish. This was a ritual that he repeated frequently throughout our visit, and which we returned in kind each time. He gave us straw mats to sit on in the shade of a vast, fruit-laden mango tree, and left us there for well over an hour before he commenced our audience. By then, he had assembled an entourage of local elders to join us—because, Tomás explained, such a leader cannot meet alone with a white man lest he later be accused of having betrayed the interests of his community.

Throughout our visit, fires crackled through the surrounding bush, and fine ribbons of sooty ash drifted down around us. A steep flank of the mountain rose behind the Samatenje, bare and burning, and I asked him if it had been forest when he was a boy. He said, "Now it's worse, because people are destroying and cutting the trees." The ancestors felt the same way, he said: "They feel that something's going wrong. They're warning the people, but the people don't take care."

So would it be a good idea to plant new trees?

"No," the Samatenje said.

Why?

"Tradition."

What about jobs?

"No."

So no more trees?

"The trees will grow themselves."

What if the police come and arrest tree cutters?

"No problem."

What if tourists come?

"No."

That was what the Samatenje had to say. His power, it seemed, lay entirely in refusal. There was more clapping: *pock*, *pock*, *pock*, *pock*. Then we left. As soon as we were outside the shaman's sanctuary, and had put our shoes back on, Tomás, who had spoken so admiringly of traditional ways on the journey in, erupted in a tirade against the Samatenje's stonewalling of the modern world: his people needed trees, his people needed jobs—to deprive his people of trees and jobs was murder! "They're killing a lot of people," Tomás said.

Back at Chitengo, I found Carr drinking gin-and-tonics with a new group of safari operators. "I don't think I would ever sort out the micropolitics—or that it really needs it," he told me when I described my excursion, and he said, "I see it more as just a we-give-them-opportunity, we-give-them-jobs, we-may-end-up-saving-Canda-and-losing-Sadjunjira sort of thing." It was the closest I ever heard him come to resignation.

The novelist Mia Couto told me a story, when we met in Maputo. During Mozambique's first national elections, in 1994, he attended a campaign rally in a small village, where a politician from the city gave a speech. The politician said, "I'm here to save you, and we will bring hospitals, schools"—the usual boilerplate. When he got to the

end of it, a villager stood up and said, "We are very happy, very touched, because you came from so far away to save us, and that reminds me of the story of the monkey and the fish." The villager didn't say anything more, and Couto realized that he and the politician were the only people there who didn't know the story. Finally, the politician confessed his ignorance, so the man told him the story, and it went like this: A monkey was walking along a river, and saw a fish in it. The monkey said, Look, that animal is under water, he'll drown, I'll save him. He snatched up the fish, and in his hand the fish started to struggle. And the monkey said, Look how happy he is. Of course, the fish died, and the monkey said, Oh, what a pity, if I had only come sooner I would have saved this guy.

"Anyway," Couto said, "this is the traditional point of view. But you cannot just say, This is wonderful and don't touch it. Because it is being touched. You can't avoid bringing modernity. It's happening."

He was right that the story took the fish's point of view. But, I wondered, how could it be told to make the monkey look good? I got my answer, the next day, when I met Terezinha da Silva, who runs a women's-rights organization in Maputo. Nine years ago, da Silva was a fellow at the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy, at Harvard, and later, when Carr told her that he was going to invest in Gorongosa Park, she said, she urged him to please be sensitive to the rights of the peasants. But this past summer she went to Gorongosa District to lead seminars, and she had to call into question all her assumptions about the sanctity of traditional culture. "I was so shocked and depressed with what I heard during the course," she told me. Specifically, she was appalled to hear about a practice that was called "early marriage," but which she properly called "forced unions": impoverished parents in remote rural areas would give their five- or six- or seven-year-old daughters to middle-aged men in exchange for a monthly stipend. She said that she was told of schools that had no girls at all, because they were all married. Mozambique had good laws against such things, but they were often not enforced, out of respect for culture and tradition. And the thing was, da Silva said, she later learned that in the past, in these same areas, the cultural tradition was for women not to marry until eighteen.

The traditional position—the fish's position—was: Don't save us from ourselves. But what if the tradition itself was corrupt, or if the culture had already been lost? Carlos Pereira, Carr's director of conservation in the park, said of Gorongosa District, "This is a terrible place, psychologically. To keep alive, in the morning they had to help RENAMO, in the afternoon they had to help FRELIMO. That was every day. Now, imagine this person that had to collaborate with one side and the other side. What does he do in life? That's what he tries to do in life. He says yes on this side, but says yes on that side. He goes in the middle, talks a lot, says nothing. You can never be entirely loyal, you never entirely trust."

"So what are my choices?" Greg Carr said. "Absolutely do nothing, never go anywhere near the mountain in twenty years? O.K., fine, what do you have then? A bare stripped mountain washed away. We lose half of the perennial water system of the park. But I respected them and didn't go there, because there's old RENAMO-FRELIMO wounds and old colonial wounds, so I didn't go there. O.K., so that's Plan A. That's just really bold on my part. What's Plan B? Go there and start talking to them. Gosh, can we put up some nurseries? O.K., let's do it. Gosh, can we do tourism? No, we don't want you on the Sadjunjira side doing tourism. O.K., we won't. What else am I supposed to do?"

After all, he said, "that Gorongosi culture is gone when the last tree gets cut down up there. And, furthermore, you've got people up there—the kids don't have schools, the women are basically slaves, and the Régulos are not looking out for their people a lot of the time. We all know that traditional societies look out for themselves. What are my choices? I'm a human-rights guy and a conservation guy trying to do both at the same time. The best idea I've come up with is those nurseries. I like it, I think it was a good thing, I'm proud of myself and my team for doing it."

Carr hasn't given up hope that the mountain will become part of the park, but he told me recently that it might be just as well if the mountain were designated a "forest reserve"—a status that insures higher conservation status but makes greater allowances for human habitation. "That's a change in tactic, not a change in goal," he said, and he added, "But if 'forest reserve' is still so politically sensitive, look, I can keep my goal and continue to change my tactics." At the same time, he has asked the park's conservationists to draw up contingency plans to insure that water keeps coming in even if the mountain is lost. His staff talks about diverting the flow of nearby rivers to feed Lake Urema or drilling wells to supply watering holes for animals. Carr didn't like the prospect, but he liked grappling with the problem. "It makes it interesting for me—a person who could be anywhere in the whole world," he said.

One afternoon at Chitengo, as we sat by the pool, where tourists were splashing, Carr told me that he has made provisions for the park in his will. He had said repeatedly that before he found Gorongosa he had lived in dread of becoming "a dabbler." Now he told me, "The way I see it is this: I may not be a serious person, but Gorongosa is a serious project." When his friends speak of his hunger for purpose, they always tend to mention that he was once a Mormon, although they generally can't say how or why this is significant. But Larry Hardesty took a stab at it. "When you've been that committed to a religious ideal when you're young, I think that that kind of gives you a taste for what it's like to have some big thing in your life that organizes it and gives it meaning," he said. "I think he was looking for that thing again, trying to replace that monolithic thing at the center of his life."

I told Carr what Hardesty had said, and he said, "I think that's right." Sometimes when he felt that everything was going well in Gorongosa, Carr said to me that he might have to find something else to do with himself in a few years. But then he said, "I have a lot of these weird things in my life where I've gone headlong into something and later I look at it and just go, That was strange. But I get the fever, right? You know, I like getting older and calmer. I don't really want a lot more of those fevers. It's just too much. This is my last fever." ♦