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Choosing the Hero: My Improbable Journey and the Rise of Africa's First Woman President

K Riva Levinson

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Literary Nonfiction. Memoir. Women's Studies. Politics. African Studies. The rise of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf to become the president of Liberia and the first woman elected to lead an African nation is one of the most inspiring stories of our time. But Sirleaf could not have done it alone. Among the people who worked tirelessly to help her achieve her victory was Washington, D.C.-based international consultant and lobbyist K. Riva Levinson.

"A wonderful book about the extraordinary camaraderie between Africa's first woman president Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and her loyal friend and political ally, Riva Levinson... a must- read for all those interested in... Liberia's recent and turbulent history, and the immense power of friendship and loyalty."—Johnnie Carson, former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Africa Affairs

"A deeply moving story of two extraordinary women, from very different backgrounds, who worked together through thick and thin and achieved so much... I would highly recommend this book to all."—Joyce Banda, former President of Malawi

"A riveting and compelling story that restores one's faith in humanity... a profound lesson to all of us on the vital importance of courage and perseverance to the pursuit of a life of purpose."—Tony Elumelu, Chairman of Heirs Holdings, Nigeria

"A deeply personal and thoughtful book on some of the most important foreign policy issues of our time and a great read!"—Lloyd Pierson, former Director, U.S. Peace Corps, former President, African Development Foundation

"A compelling set of stories... about how political capital was built by addition, multiplication, patience, and strategy by Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and Riva Levinson."—William R. Sweeney Jr., President and CEO, International Foundation for Electoral Systems

"Riva's story reminds us that often the best, most challenging work comes to us when we least expect it and most need it. Her connection with President Sirleaf helped Liberia turn an important page in its history and further cemented the long existing bond between our countries."—U.S. Senator Chris Coons

"Peace and democracy seemed far, far off to Liberians when brutal warlord Charles Taylor ruled. This fast-paced, crisply told story of Liberia's rebirth under Ellen Johnson Sirleaf is inspiring and impressively honest."—U.S. Representative Ed Royce

"Riva Levinson gives us a peek behind the curtain of how American foreign policy is formulated and practiced. A thoroughly engaging read from cover to cover."—U.S. Senator Jeff Flake

"The inspiring story of two brilliant women who overcame the odds to make positive change in Liberia. A must-read for any aspiring global change maker!"—Dr. Rajesh Panjabi, CEO, Last Mile Health, associate

physician, Harvard Medical School, one of *Time*'s 100 Most Influential People, 2016, and one of *Fortune*'s World's 50 Greatest Leaders

"A book that reads like Le Carré, if Le Carré was a combination of killer politico and Tina Fey... smart, heartbreaking, funny, inspiring, and an unbelievably entertaining read."—Dan Gordon, screenwriter of *The Hurricane*

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Anthony Tipton:

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