



Beloved Land: Stories, Struggles and Secrets from Timor-leste

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At the stroke of midnight on 20 May 2002, the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste became the first new nation of the 21st century. From that moment, those who fought for independence have faced a challenge even bigger than shaking off Indonesian occupation: running a country of their own. *Beloved Land* picks up the story where world attention left off. Blending narrative history, travelogue, and personal reminiscences based on four years of living in the country, Gordon Peake shows the daunting hurdles that the people of Timor-Leste must overcome to build a nation from scratch, and how much the international community has to learn if it is to help rather than hinder the process. Family politics, squabbles, power struggles, old romances, and even older grudges are woven into life in this land of intrigue and rumours in the most remarkable ways. Yet above all, *Beloved Land* is a story about the one million East Timorese who speak nearly 20 different languages, and who are exuberantly building their nation. Written with verve and deep affection, the book introduces a set of colourful Timorese and international characters, and brings them to life unforgettably.

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