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“Hope Dies Last is a book of heroism, courage, and selfless love. Every story is a way forward. This is one of the most exciting books I’ve ever read, full of innovation. Alan Weisman has written the exact book we need to fight for our place on Earth.”
—Louise Erdrich, author of *The Mighty Red* and Pulitzer Prize-winning *The Night Watchman*

HOPE DIES LAST

Visionary People Across the World, Fighting to Find Us a Future

Alan Weisman

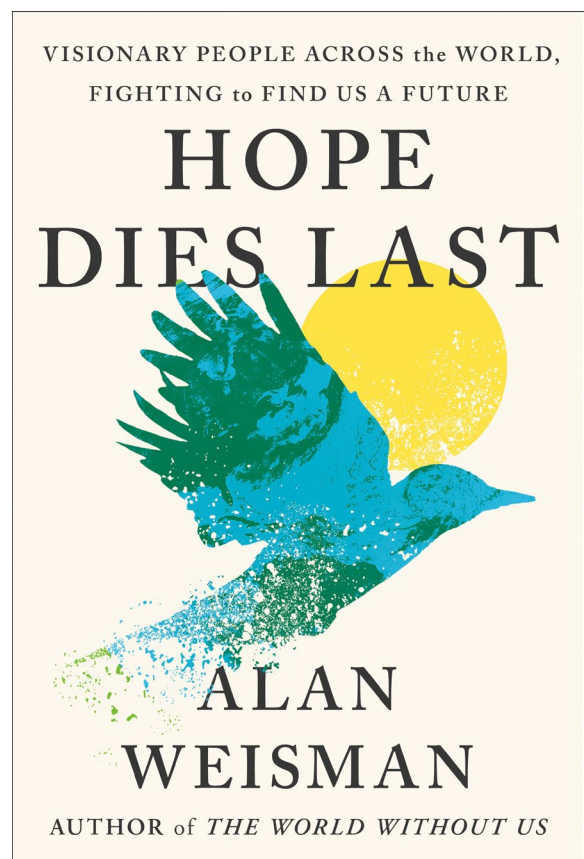
With books like the bestselling *The World Without Us*, a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award and translated into thirty-four languages, and *Countdown*, winner of the *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize, environmental journalist **Alan Weisman** established himself among the most prophetic voices on humanity’s relationship to the Earth. For his latest, **HOPE DIES LAST: Visionary People Across the World, Fighting to Find Us a Future (Dutton, April 22, 2025)**, he returns with a book ten years in the making: a study of what it means to be a human on the front lines of our planet’s existential crisis.

To write this book, Weisman traveled the US and the globe, witnessing climate upheaval and other devastations. From the flooding Marshall Islands to revived wetlands in Iraq; from the Netherlands to Mexico, Bangladesh, and the Korean DMZ; to cities and coastlines in the Americas and beyond, he has encountered the best of humanity battling heat, hunger, rising tides, and imperiled wildlife.

In **HOPE DIES LAST**, Weisman profiles stubborn, clear-eyed, brave visionaries around the world, determined to find how we can stop burning the past to preserve our chance at a future; stop extinguishing species on which our own depends; power civilization without broiling it; and, without sacrificing more nature, grow as much food by 2050 as in all human history to avoid calamitous famines and torrents of refugees.

Their idea of hope is an action verb—they don’t wait for miracles: they set out to make them. At this unprecedented point in history, as our collective exploits on this planet may lead to our own undoing, they refuse to quit.

Engineers, scientists, conservationists, architects, agronomists, artists, indigenous elders, medics, eco-warriors, Gen Z future strategists, the military, and even a three-star Michelin chef: all



with wildly creative, imaginative responses to the challenges we face as a species. In **HOPE DIES LAST**, among many others, readers will meet:

- Iraqis who defied international experts by resuscitating the Middle East's biggest wetland, civilization's cradle and the presumed site of the Garden of Eden, a decade after Saddam Hussein drained their beloved Mesopotamian marshes to flush out Shi'ite rebels.
- A plasma physicist who challenges his MIT students to design a commercial-scale, mass-producible, clean fusion reactor to harness inexhaustible starlight on Earth—and, to his astonishment, they do.
- A world-famous crop breeder who decides that the future of agriculture is no longer plowing forests into farmland, but pulling food from thin air.
- A Dutch activist who sues her government for endangering its citizens by ignoring international climate agreements it signed—and, when she improbably wins, shows her nation and the world just how to proceed.
- Corn growers and microbiologists, teaming up to break global agriculture's toxic addiction to synthetic nitrogen fertilizer.
- An alliance of scientists and attorneys battling a major extinction event by saving one species at a time—with startling success.
- A new class of farmers in Spain, Alaska, New England, and New Zealand, raising vegetables and even grains in the ocean.
- Solar wizards discovering how to power nearly all Bangladesh with EV rickshaws.
- A French Polynesian engineer, a Zimbabwean executive, and a Danish architectural firm, building cities that will rise with seas rather than be engulfed by them.
- A Korean artist determined to succeed where politicians have failed by literally bridging the chasm that divides her homeland.
- Disaster relief specialists preparing young Pacific islanders to lead their people into the diaspora.
- A president who dares to wean his oil-and-coal-rich country, Colombia, from fossil fuel and challenges the world to follow.

Profoundly human and moving, this rejoinder to climate anxiety asks: Having reached a point of no return in our climate confrontation, how do we feel, behave, act, plan, and dream as we approach a future decidedly different from what we had expected? It shows how people with bold concepts can envision and create a new relationship with the Earth. A literary evocation of our current predicament, **HOPE DIES LAST** is an uplifting portrait of the core resolve of our species, courageously responding to the most precarious odds we have ever faced.

HOPE DIES LAST

Alan Weisman

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About the Author | Alan Weisman has reported from all seven continents and in more than sixty countries. His books include the *New York Times* bestseller *The World Without Us*, translated into thirty-four languages and a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award and winner of China's Wenjin Book Prize; and *Countdown*, winner of the *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize. His work has appeared in *Harper's*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The New York Review of Books*, *Vanity Fair*, *Orion*, *Mother Jones*, *Discover*, and *Salon*, among others, and on NPR. A cofounder of the journalism collective Homelands Productions, he has also been a laureate professor of international journalism at the University of Arizona. He and his wife, sculptor Beckie Kravetz, live in western Massachusetts.



ABOUT DUTTON

Dutton is an imprint of the internationally renowned Penguin Random House, the world's largest trade book publisher. Dutton is home to many bestselling and award-winning fiction and nonfiction authors such as Sean Carroll, Robyn Crawford, Abi Daré, Fiona Davis, Eric Jerome Dickey, Joseph Finder, Lisa Gardner, Steven M. Gillon, Hank Green, Tami Hoag, Andre Iguodala, Jonathan Karl, Alex Kershaw, Denise Kiernan, Bernice McFadden, Jason Mott, Megan Mullally, Nick Offerman, Mark Owen, Riley Sager, Adriana Trigiani, Jonathan Tropper, Jeff Tweedy, Craig Unger, and Carl Zimmer, among others. Penguin Random House is dedicated to its mission of nourishing a universal passion for reading by connecting authors and their writing with readers everywhere.

A conversation with Alan Weisman...

Q: Climate Change and existential crises are challenging topics. How did you decide to focus on hope and defiance for **HOPE DIES LAST**?

A: Years of discussion with my editor over what should be my next book invariably ended with the question: "Do you think there's any hope left?" Eventually, we realized that was the question in everyone's mind, so I set out to look for our best realistic hopes for making it through this make-or-break century.

Q: You traveled around the world for **HOPE DIES LAST**. Can you share some of the personal experiences you had in reporting for the book?

A: Among the most memorable were traveling with a scientist through the Sundarbans, the world's largest mangrove forest and biggest tiger habitat, on the Bangladesh-India border; being held in solitary confinement in a northern Minnesota county jail after being arrested while witnessing protesters chain themselves to pumps, while Ojibwe women lay in front of an oil pipeline being rammed through their wild rice harvesting region; Dutch engineers who showed me the ingenious ways their country avoids drowning, but who wonder how long that can last, even as the world turns to them to stop rising waters everywhere; finding a revolutionary energy solution in a Rohingya refugee camp; and following the Mesoamerican Reef, the world's second longest, from Honduras to the Yucatán, where coastal engineers took me to Chicxulub: epicenter of the asteroid strike that ended the Age of Reptiles, giving us mammals our chance—unless, of course, we blow it.

Q: What can readers take away from **HOPE DIES LAST** and implement in their own lives in our quest to prevent the worst outcome?

A: As an engineer in Iraq said me, "How do we know it's impossible until we try? Because if we don't, it surely will be." It was an attitude I heard everywhere I went from valiant people who refuse to quit, and who sometimes

pulled off miracles. (“I believe in miracles,” NASA climatologist Kate Marvel, who never gives up charting us a course through the coming decades, told me. “I live on one.”) So whenever we fear there’s no hope, we must keep on until we create our own.

Q: How do you view your work, and the work of the people you profile in the book, in light of the new US administration?

A: As a journalist, I deal in facts: facts corroborated and verified through research. But these days, with media shattered into a zillion shards, people can choose news sources that seductively are geared to how they feel or what they wish, not necessarily to facts they need to know. The incoming president himself has admitted that his idea of truth is whatever serves him, not necessarily what actually is. In shaky times when fears abound—deep down, even climate deniers know what’s going on—people are easily attracted to someone who promises to return them to a supposedly “great” past without such existential worries, and without unfamiliar-looking refugees from overheated, overpopulated lands threatening to underbid them for their jobs.

During such times, when truth is muddled and journalism challenged—as one of his spokeswomen once put it, by “alternative facts”—or even silenced, as some of his cabinet choices threaten—we need journalists more than ever. So my colleagues and I will keep on, just as the people in this book do so inspiringly, no matter the odds. Ultimately, truth will emerge: the laws of physics and nature aren’t subject to personal whims, even of billionaires. Before long, cracks will riddle this administration’s gilded façade, and with luck people will come to their senses in time to get back to building a realistic, hopeful future.

Meanwhile, there are cunning, even stealthy ways to keep doing what’s needed and to keep speaking truth—and we will.

More praise for HOPE DIES LAST...

“Hope Dies Last is a deeply reported investigation into what it means to be alive on a rapidly-warming planet. Weisman travels the world to meet with scientists, scholars, activists, and religious leaders who understand that the fate of the world as we know it is at stake and who are driven to do something about it. What Weisman discovers is not just brilliant minds and heroic deeds, but a kind of desperate love for this miraculous planet we live on. *Hope Dies Last* is one of those rare books that makes you proud to be human.”

—**Jeff Goodell, author of the *New York Times* bestseller *The Heat Will Kill You First***

“Consider this a non-fiction companion to Kim Stanley Robinson’s *Ministry for the Future*: Alan Weisman has traveled the world to find the people doing what they can to slow down the greatest tragedy in our history. You’ll be inspired—maybe even to become one of these people yourself.”

—**Bill McKibben, author of *The Flag, the Cross, and the Station Wagon***

“In *Hope Dies Last*, Alan Weisman takes us on a global journey to witness both humanity’s impact on our planet and our extraordinary resilience in the face of environmental crisis. Through vivid portraits of flooding islands, revived wetlands, and imperiled coastlines, he introduces us to the engineers, scientists, and visionaries working to imagine creative solutions for an uncertain future. Weisman masterfully captures the human spirit as we confront perhaps our greatest challenge: how to adapt to and persist in a world fundamentally altered by climate change. This profound narrative offers not just a clear-eyed look at our predicament, but a testament to the remarkable human capacity for hope even in extraordinarily challenging times.”

—**Neil Shubin, author of the national bestseller *Your Inner Fish and Ends of the Earth***

“What a wonderful, exhilarating, life-affirming book! The people, creatures and ambitions Weisman introduces us to are ingenious, revelatory, and awe-inspiring, and the wider world needs to know about them. Reading this book made me not only glad to be alive, but proud to be human, and deeply grateful for the extraordinarily brilliant and generous souls inhabiting these pages, not least Alan Weisman himself.”

—**John Vaillant, author of *Fire Weather*, Finalist for the Pulitzer Prize**