



# The Wisdom of the Bones: In Search of Human Origins

*Alan Walker, Pat Shipman*

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In 1984 a team of paleoanthropologists on a dig in northern Kenya found something extraordinary: a nearly complete skeleton of Homo erectus, a creature that lived 1.5 million years ago and is widely thought to be the missing link between apes and humans. The remains belonged to a tall, rangy adolescent male. The researchers called him "Nariokotome boy."

In this immensely lively book, Alan Walker, one of the lead researchers, and his wife and fellow scientist Pat Shipman tell the story of that epochal find and reveal what it tells us about our earliest ancestors. We learn that Nariokotome boy was a highly social predator who walked upright but lacked the capacity for speech. In leading us to these conclusions, *The Wisdom of the Bones* also offers an engaging chronicle of the hundred-year-long search for a "missing link," a saga of folly, heroic dedication, and inspired science.

"Brilliantly captures [an] intellectual odyssey. . . . One of the finest examples of a practicing scientist writing for a popular audience."

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"A vivid insider's perspective on the global efforts to document our own ancestry."

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