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Martyrs Never Die: Travels Through South Lebanon (Warscapes Longreads)



Synopsis

“One could sometimes learn more as a wanderer than as a journalist.” Belén Fernández hitchhiked through Lebanon in 2006 and again in 2016. Her travelogue, *Martyrs Never Die: Travels through South Lebanon*, weaves today’s Lebanon through the time and space of a decade, in a country where no space is left unpoliticized. Fernández leaves her meandering route to the fate and goodwill of her drivers, and her journey leads to encounters with fishermen, Hezbollah fighters, grandmothers, United Nations soldiers, Lebanese intelligence officers, and a Syrian bread delivery man. Asking everyone she meets along the way, “Were you here in 2006?” Fernández bears witness to varying accounts of the previous wars and the current violence in Syria, memories of each war now colored by all the others since. Many of the small border villages Fernández visits are described in the *New York Times*, often with one-liners like “Hezbollah stronghold.” In *Martyrs*, the bird’s-eye view of the *Guardian* and *BBC* are exchanged for a granular view of Lebanon that belies Western media depictions. Fernández wades into the milieu with observant humor and a soft touch. *Martyrs* lays one snapshot of southern Lebanon over another, and finds light in between. Belén Fernández is a contributing editor at *Jacobin Magazine* and the author of *The Imperial Messenger: Thomas Friedman at Work*, published by Verso. She has written extensively for the *Al Jazeera English*, *The London Review of Books* blog, *Middle East Eye*, *Telesur English*, *VICE*, and *Warscapes*. She studied political science at Columbia and the University of Rome La Sapienza.

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Customer Reviews

BelÃ©n FernÃ¡ndez's "Martyrs Never Die: Travels through South Lebanon" is hard to classify - it's a travelogue, it's journalism, it's an honest and clear-eyed encounter with South Lebanon. What was surprising for me, in spite of my familiarity with the region's history and politics, was the level, scale and frequency of Israeli violence in that part of the world, such that its presence is deeply imprinted on both the South Lebanese landscape and people. A must read.

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