

At the end, it was not all inside of my mind

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From the year that I was born, 2005, and even before, Lebanon has been going through large-scale violence, from internal disturbances to international armed conflicts; it experienced a lot of wars. And even if I did not live all of them, I have seen pictures, I have heard and read a lot of stories from these days, and how they impacted the Lebanese people from different ages to the way they act today, or to the way they perceive and go through any war or any idea of a conflict. These violences started even before 1975, and it has been proven by various studies, that ever since Lebanon got its independence and became its own state in 1943, there were at least two huge crises taking place in Lebanon, and influencing its people, government, and all the rest.

One thing about me is that I am so empathetic. Whenever I was around people and heard different versions of their stories, what they went through in these hard times. I always put myself

in their position, just like I did whenever I read a book. I liked to live the experience to the maximum. Except for this time, the experience was really scary, that I even had nightmares about it.

I remember my mom's stories of between 1975 and 1989, of always running to the living room and shouting "It's a bomb!" whenever she heard a sound. She was 3 or 4 years old, she lived in Beirut. I cannot imagine what a child would think or would feel when they had to go through such a thing. There is also the story of when she had to run away from school to her home with her younger sister, my aunt, because they suddenly told everyone to leave since the situation was very dangerous. I could not even begin to think how it must have felt like to live such tragic moments at such a young age. I am sure that this is one of the main reasons why she grew up as a strong woman who always counted on herself. She built her own self, and that is an image of her that I could never change. And it is





really unfortunate that she and her whole generation had to go through such a thing while growing up. No one deserves this, no one deserved going through all these wars in such a very short period of time.

Even Lebanon itself did not deserve this. Lebanon never deserved to be treated this way; like it is a large playground where all the other players or states want to have a role in, without even asking for its permission. It has always been like this, and Lebanon and its people are paying the price of all this. Despite its indescribable beauty and its incomparable territory, its geopolitical place on the map is one of the main reasons why it has been going through all that it has gone through until today.

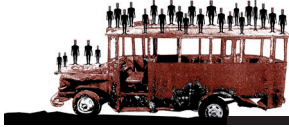
I have been told a lot of stories about the horrific war that took place the year after I was born, from July till August 2006. That the sound of bombing was everywhere, without any warning. People were completely afraid because no one knew where the next targeted spot was. It feels like every bone in my body felt and lived this because of being a sensitive and an empathic



person. When it unfortunately happened again recently, it was not only definitely terrifying, but also it felt like it was something that I've seen before, like constant déjà vu flashbacks. This is one of the major scary principles of feeling too much, how can anyone explain such a thing?

The most recent war, the "support" for the Gaza war cost the lives of thousands of Lebanese people, just because it is a task that needs to be done for the political agenda of states outside Lebanon. The first day the opponent state threatened to bomb Dahiyeh, in Beirut, was in mid-September 2024; That day they made us leave university early, especially since my university is really close to where they were going to bomb. I felt like something was wrong and that the situation





was actually escalating. I did not want to believe any of this. I was thinking that this must have been something to scare us. I wanted to convince myself of this. But deep inside I felt like I wanted to go smash something, lots of things. I just was not processing the fact that after all the progress of the world over the years, such things, meaning wars, were going to happen again.. But I knew that wars are essential in international relations, I just did not expect to actually live one. The horror movies were coming to life. As a person who did not even live that close to the places where they were bombing, I still felt every single bomb, every time the ground shook. I just keep thinking about the people who had to suddenly leave their homes, those who saw their buildings highlighted in the warnings; they lost their whole life's hard work and memories, with their literal home disappearing after a few minutes.

I felt everything, the shakes, the sounds, the real and imaginary sounds in my head; I reached a point where I could not even be able to tell which sound was real or if it was just all in my head. I really wanted my brain to help me find a way to escape but I could not help the fact that I was completely trapped inside

it. It is catastrophic that I can still picture and feel everything right now, even while writing this. This country's pain is unmatched. It is similar to a person who has a lot of great friends, but no one who truly cares about it. It keeps getting involved in toxic relationships with its government that it cannot let go of, and the same unhealthy attachment has been built between this country and its people who are trying their best to help it. But it never felt enough, because they were never this country's priority. And it is sad because despite the truth that their love for this land is unconditional, they never had the true control over it.

It is sorrowful to see the decrease of progress here in Lebanon, the lack of seriousness and trust in the government. There's not even one history book that is being taught in schools; from 1989 till today, the Taif Agreement at the end is still just a historic known written agreement. I do not know if I should laugh or cry when I last heard a politician saying a few weeks ago that «we should apply the Taif agreement.» Now it is finally the time, after more than 30 years? After all this unstoppable suffering among the people who chose to love their country? How can a state treat its own population this way? Is





this the kind of disregard they
deserve, even when they are one
of the fundamental principles of a
state?

To those who are still breathing
the dust of yesterday's war

To the hearts, filled with silence
echoes and lost dreams

Allow the wounds that speak
without words

Let your story be carried like the
veins between your bones

Let us be empathetic and keep
our faith

For the ones we lost, who we will
always appreciate

In our hearts, the love for this
country will never end

With everything left in us, this
place we will always defend.

