



# My Life as a Foreign Country: A Memoir

*Brian Turner*

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## My Life as a Foreign Country: A Memoir Brian Turner

“Stunning . . . a triumph of form and content. . . History can only be served by this kind of attention.”—*New York Times Book Review*

In 2003, Sergeant Brian Turner crossed the line of departure with a convoy of soldiers headed into the Iraqi desert. Now he lies awake each night beside his sleeping wife, imagining himself as a drone aircraft, hovering over the terrains of Bosnia and Vietnam, Iraq and Northern Ireland, the killing fields of Cambodia and the death camps of Europe.

In this breathtaking memoir, award-winning poet Brian Turner retraces his war experience—pre-deployment to combat zone, homecoming to aftermath. Free of self-indulgence or self-glorification, his account combines recollection with the imagination's efforts to make reality comprehensible. Across time, he seeks parallels in the histories of others who have gone to war, especially his taciturn grandfather (World War II), father (Cold War), and uncle (Vietnam). Turner also offers something that is truly rare in a memoir of violent conflict—he sees through the eyes of the enemy, imagining his way into the experience of the "other." Through it all, he paints a devastating portrait of what it means to be a soldier and a human being.

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