

I Am Ariel Sharon

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Wayne Grady, Translator

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Yara El-Ghadban looks at the life of Ariel Sharon from a unique perspective in her novel *I Am Ariel Sharon*.

In January 2006, Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon—nicknamed “Arik”—falls into a coma from which he will never awaken. As his friends and family hope in vain for his recovery, a strange woman torments Arik’s spirit, reminding him of atrocities he committed while keeping herself hidden behind the specters of the women whose lives were changed by the choices he made.

After falling into his coma, Arik spends years wandering through his own mind. For perhaps the first time in his life, he is immersed in other people’s stories, other people’s pain. His mother Vera is disillusioned with the dream of Palestine and longs for her happy youth in Eastern Europe. His wife Lily, though portrayed as just as hard as her husband, has always loved him dearly. Each woman’s strong voice illuminates Arik’s strengths and shortcomings, as well as their own. Together, they paint a picture of a love-starved individual whose brutality and arrogance belied deeper insecurity.

Brief sojourns to the waking world show how Arik’s family and most loyal ally feel about his declining health. They also blur the lines of fantasy and reality, casting doubt on whether Arik’s journey is truly supernatural or a figment of his ailing mind. Intense, spellbinding prose brings life to dangerous and emotional moments. At the same time, it is chilling to see how easily Arik packs away his humanity and chooses to believe the grandiose stories about Arik the Lion, Arik the Butcher, and Arik the King of Israel.

Bold and emotional, *I Am Ariel Sharon* reimagines the final years of a ruthless military and political leader.

EILEEN GONZALEZ (September / October 2021)

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