

## My Fourth Time, We Drowned: Seeking Refuge on the World's Deadliest Migration Route

**Sally Hayden**

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Irish journalist Sally Hayden's *My Fourth Time, We Drowned* is a meticulous account of the horrifying North African refugee crisis.

In 2018, Hayden received a surprise Facebook message from an Eritrean man locked inside of a Libyan refugee detention center while armed conflicts broke out in the streets outside. This single message, sent from a secret cell phone shared by hundreds of refugees, led Hayden into an exhaustive investigation of how thousands of migrants ended up detained indefinitely, enduring inhumane conditions in multiple clandestine detention centers across Libya.

The book layers first-person testimonies from refugees whom Hayden built relationships with during her inquiry with a comprehensive history of the extraordinarily complicated situation, as well as sharp critiques of the egregious inefficiencies and corruption Hayden witnessed within the NGO and United Nations agencies purporting to provide support.

Following diverse refugees along a harrowing path, Hayden provides in-depth reports on a thriving modern-day slave trade; corrupt smugglers who kidnap migrants to crowdfund ransoms on social media; starvation; suicide; and the EU's bankrolling of Libyan militias tasked with preventing the refugees from landing on European soil. Hayden is thorough in her reporting and conscientious of her role as an information conduit between isolated, defenseless refugees and the outside world; she is telling their story because they begged her to.

This is a clear overview of the complex, disturbing situations of desperate people in desperate circumstances—crises that are still underreported. Painstaking details and a roundabout timeline make *My Fourth Time, We Drowned* informative, while the testimonies from the refugees themselves pulse with difficult truths that will shock (and maybe mobilize) conscientious citizens across the globe.

KARIN KILLIAN (March / April 2022)

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