

# Hassan Blasim

## Quotes

*Country, Iraq, War, World, Writing, People, Years, Thinking, Mother, Stories,  
Secret, School, Girlfriend, Play, Imagination, Publishing House, Running,  
Children, Art, Careful*

Knowledge and imagination are the life buoy and the extra lung for breathing outside the walls of a tainted reality.

~Hassan Blasim

It's ridiculous and painful to use the Arabic of an Iraqi poet who lived centuries ago to describe what we in Iraq are suffering today.

~Hassan Blasim

I'm talking about the essence of humanity. Hope is mixed into the blood of every human being, everywhere and in every time.

~Hassan Blasim

I studied at the Academy during the years of economic sanctions. Life was almost dead because the sanctions imposed on Iraq by the civilized world were so strict.

~Hassan Blasim

One of the Baathists once told me, "If you're not careful, I'll have you put away," and those words meant death.

~Hassan Blasim

In fact I didn't think about fear much at the time. I felt angry about everything that was happening around me: the violence of the dictatorship and the violence of society.

~Hassan Blasim

The trail of "secret migration" was a shock to me. I knew a little about the difficulties, just bits of news in the media.

~Hassan Blasim

The Iran-Iraq war began the same year that I went to primary school, at the age of six.

~Hassan Blasim

I live in a small country in Europe - Finland - and I don't speak English well and I had nothing to do with publishing houses in the West. I lived in complete isolation.

~Hassan Blasim

I've been working on the margins and I was aware of this choice from the start. I buy most of what's written and produced in the Arab world and I don't much like it.

~Hassan Blasim

Losing hope means ceasing to love my son and my girlfriend and many friends and people around the world.

~Hassan Blasim

The people in Arab countries are now speaking out and asking many questions about human rights, minorities, religion, democracy, "the other," and so on.

~Hassan Blasim

"Secret migration" across borders is a form of human degradation and evidence of the depravity of the human conscience.

~Hassan Blasim

I didn't start publishing literary texts until I had left Iraq. At the Academy [of Cinematic Arts] I was busy with short films.

~Hassan Blasim

I still write in literary Arabic but I try to rid it of the rhetoric, the symbolism, and the stuff that ordinary people don't understand.

~Hassan Blasim

I'm not much interested in prizes, whether from the Arab world or from the Western world. Writing is a very difficult process and I want to continue my work.

~Hassan Blasim

You learn something from the classics but your feelings and your imagination operate in the domain of the colloquial. We need to think seriously about reforming the Arabic that we use today.

~Hassan Blasim

We in Iraq have not descended from another planet. Just as people in many other countries have gotten over the tragedy of war, Iraq will get over its ordeal.

~Hassan Blasim

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