



Behind the Glass Wall: Inside the United Nations

Aleksandar Hemon

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An unprecedented glimpse into the strange and remarkable inner workings of the United Nations

Before he was invited to become the United Nations' first writer in residence, Aleksandar Hemon had a complicated relationship with the institution, whose image was tainted by the UN Protection Forces' delinquent and disgraceful presence in the Bosnian War. And yet he also understood that "without the UN, without the very idea of it, the crimes against Bosnians couldn't be perceived as crimes against all humanity."

By the time Hemon had finished his residency at the United Nations, he and the Magnum photographer Peter van Agtmael were invited into the iconic New York City headquarters and given access to the secretary-general, the General Assembly, and the Security Council; his relationship with the institution was even more complicated.

In *Behind the Glass Wall*, Hemon shows us an essential modern institution at work, one both beautifully driven and profoundly crippled by its noble ideals. But above all he shows us an institution made up of cigarette-smoking, gossipy, hungry, angry, lovely, petty, brilliant people committed to the most inspiring of international principles, people who are at least as frustrated as we are by the world's failure to live up to the goals of the Charter of the United Nations, people who get up every morning newly determined to achieve nothing less than peace on earth.

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