

a long way gone

'Unique . . . a remarkable book.'
WILLIAM BOYD,
NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW

memoirs of a boy soldier

'Everyone in the world should
read this book.'
WASHINGTON POST

ishmael beah



**THIS IS HOW WARS ARE FOUGHT NOW:
BY CHILDREN, HOPPED UP ON DRUGS AND
WIELDING AK-47S. IN THE MORE THAN
FIFTY CONFLICTS GOING ON WORLDWIDE, IT
IS ESTIMATED THERE ARE SOME 300,000
CHILD SOLDIERS. ISHMAEL BEAH USED TO BE
ONE OF THEM.**

What is war like through the eyes of a child soldier? How does one become a killer? How does one stop? Child soldiers have been profiled by journalists, and novelists have struggled to imagine their lives. But until now, there has not been a first-person account from someone who came through this hell and survived. Ishmael Beah, now twenty-six years old, tells a riveting story: how, at the age of twelve in Sierra Leone, he fled attacking rebels and wandered a land rendered unrecognisable by violence. By thirteen, he'd been picked up by the government army, and, though at heart a gentle boy, found he was capable of truly terrible acts.

This is a rare and mesmerising account, told with real literary force and heartbreaking honesty.

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A LONG WAY GONE

Memoirs of a Boy Soldier



ISHMAEL BEAH

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*To the memories of
Nya Nje, Nya Keke,
Nya Ndig-ge sia, and Kaynya.
Your spirits and presence within me
give me strength to carry on,*

*to all the children of Sierra Leone
who were robbed of their childhoods,*

and

*to the memory of Walter (Wally) Scheuer
for his generous and compassionate heart
and for teaching me the etiquette of
being a gentleman*