NONFICTION

The story of the first Western Muslim suicide bomber

# Peace Be With You, Sister

## CHRIS DE STOOP

'Peace Be With You, Sister' is the story of Muriel Degauque, a Belgian who became the first and only Western woman to carry out a suicide attack. She drove her white Mercedes from Brussels to Baghdad in order to blow herself up in the name of Allah.

It is also the story of the young, unemployed Muslims associated with Muriel. Almost all of them experienced life on the seamy side before making a sudden switch, converting to radical Islam and falling prey to fanaticism. They talk about holy war as though it were football and go to Iraq as others go on holiday to the sun, until the horrors of armed conflict catch up with them. This is a story about the banality of terrorism, about the commonplace nature of radicalism and about the great challenges that Europe now faces.

> A book and a study of a kind of which there are all too few
>
> DE STANDAARD

Chris de Stoop spent many months studying the life led by Muriel – also known as Maryam, her chosen Muslim name. He spoke to those involved with her, studied the files and travelled in her wake to Iraq, where he found the wreck of her car bomb and recorded the end of her story.

## AUTHOR

**Chris De Stoop** (b. 1958) is an author and a journalist for the Flemish weekly Knack. In 2004 he was awarded the Golden Owl Readers' Prize for 'She Came from the East'. In 2010 he wrote Peace Be With You, Sister, about the first Jihadists to leave for Syria and Iraq. With his debut 'They're So Sweet, Sir' he became the first to write the inside story of the international trafficking of women, a bombshell of a book that caused great commotion at home and abroad. *Photo © Lenny Oosterwijk*

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