

# SPANISH CROSSINGS

By John Simmons

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- Book coincides with 81st anniversaries of Guernica (26<sup>th</sup> April) and Basque children. The novel keeps those important events in public memory through fiction based on real history.
- An engaging, human story that is absolutely relevant to many of the political issues of today: Europe and national identities, rise of nationalism, plight of refugee children as result of war.
- The boat Habana with 4000 Basque child refugees landed in Southampton on 23 May 1937 - another 81st anniversary. This is such an incredible yet hardly known story
- John's parents Jessie and Frank Simmons were politically active in 1930s – anti-fascist. When the 4000 Spanish children were evacuated from Bilbao in 1937 to England, they adopted a Spanish boy. He returned to Spain in early 1938.
- Perfect for fans of Pat Barker, William Boyd and Sebastian Faulks.

**SPANISH CROSSINGS** is an epic tale of love, politics and conflict. We meet Lorna in London, 1937 as she falls in love with Harry, a member of the International Brigade who had been in Spain at Guernica when it was bombed. Harry is killed in the fighting and Lorna fears she might have lost her best chance of happiness. Can she fill the void created by Harry's death by helping the child refugees of the conflict? She finds a particular connection to one boy, Pepe, and as he grows up below the radar of the authorities in England their lives become increasingly intertwined. But a different kind of heartbreak looms again for Lorna as Pepe remains deeply pulled towards the homeland and family that have been placed beyond his reach.

Highly original, challenging and emotive, **Spanish Crossings** is a moving and tender exploration of the search for hope in a time of great historic and human upheaval.



## About the Author

For much of his career John Simmons has worked in the creative industries at senior levels – including Newell & Sorrell and Interbrand. He was also the co-editor of 'Economist Guide to Brands and Branding'. John also founded the writers' organization 26 that has a membership of over 300 writers from business and other backgrounds. Having read English at Oxford University, he has also been Writer in Residence for London Kings Cross Station and Unilever. His first novel, 'Leaves' was published by Urbane in 2015. He is based in London.

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