

“If fashion photographs could talk, and felt like telling the truth, you’d have *Wildchilds*—an accomplished and compelling first novel by a true insider. Only Eugenia Melian knows every side of that world of beauty, sex, greed, and lies, starting as a model, becoming a leading photographer’s agent and a force in Paris fashion and culture of the eighties, nineties and two thousands. With cool passion and great suspense, she denounces the cowardice of those men who manipulate the most beautiful women in the world. Melian tells the story of Iris, the daughter of a famous magazine editor exiled to New York, who becomes a model in Paris and falls into love and peril. Melian’s descriptions of the steamy rise of sexual attraction on a fashion shoot are matched only by her exquisite, enchanted descriptions of a dark and secret Paris unknown to visitors.” —Joan Juliet Buck, author of *The Price of Illusion*, editor in chief of French *Vogue* 1994–2001

“Eugenia Melian is a natural storyteller. I was always blown away by the many amazing stories she told me about, during her many years in Milan and Paris as a model and respected photo agent. Eugenia is a true insider, and she always seemed to know everybody! Her first novel, *Wildchilds*, will take you beneath the surface of the beautiful and seductive fashion world. It immerses you in a captivating dark tale where young beauties coexist with master manipulators. *Wildchilds* is a window into a world inhabited by many that don’t want to be exposed. Get on board, *Wildchilds* is a wild ride!” —Peggy Sirota, photographer/director

“As I was drawn through the slow, suburban American prelude of *Wildchilds* and into a darker place beyond, I became aware of feeling grubby and soiled because I had been involved in the world Eugenia Melian brings to life for the reader.

Wildchilds is a love story but successful love stories in our milieu are rare. We see plenty of marriages of convenience that function as efficiently as any well-managed business partnership and whose players might even end up liking one another. In a world where the line between self-love and illusion and self-hate and delusion is so thin, true love, to paraphrase Charles de Gaulle, might sometimes win a battle but it is all too likely to lose the war. Do Melian’s lovers win? Maybe, maybe not. That is for you to decide.

It is of course a novel because legions of lawyers stand ready to jump on any memoir containing excessive truth about the fashion industry. Some of Melian’s characters remind me of boys and girls I knew in the Paris she describes. Others remind me of the men who preyed on them and the women publishing the fashion shoots that led to the lucrative advertising contracts providing such a handsome living for the top 10% of Planet Fashion’s inhabitants.

Eugenia Melian and I used to meet for work-free lunches and dinners in Paris back in the day with other people who had crash-landed on Planet Fashion by accident. Condé Nast was still chic and still had room for misfits like me. Daily life was a little like being in one's own episode of *Absolutely Fabulous* and yet, there was a darker side to it all. Any milieu dealing in youth and beauty will naturally attract predators of various kinds. But we were all relatively insulated from this aspect of it.

We inhabited the drier areas of the swamp and only occasionally came into close contact with the bottom-feeders and bloodsuckers. We heard the stories about certain photographers, designers, agents and sundry movers in the business. We could turn a blind eye and we tended to do so as we dealt with individuals whose morals might have qualified them to run brothels and peg-houses in some of the seedier outposts of the French and British Empires in times past.

Despite the promises of industry poohbahs to clean it all up and the brief attention of the MeToo movement, Planet Fashion remains a dangerous place and Melian's debut novel ought to be compulsory reading for any young people considering a career in Fashion." —Prosper Keating, former *Vogue* and *Vogues Hommes International* editor

"*Wildchilde* is the juiciest fashion novel to date. Trust us, we could not put it down." —Book Marc. MarcJacobs.com

"This book is heartbreakingly beautiful." - ABCme / Goodreads