



Dreaming of Baghdad

Haifa Zangana , Ferial J. Ghazoul (Afterword)

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Book by Zangana, Haifa

Dreaming of Baghdad Details

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From Reader Review Dreaming of Baghdad for online ebook

Guneet says

Imprisoned at Abu Ghraib, tortured, beaten and self-exiled, the protagonist lives in London, trying to push off memories of torture through sleeping pills.

Nice read.

Brin says

This book took me what felt like a long time to finish, though it is short in length. I think the subject matter might have played a part in the time it took me to finish, in addition to the fact that I am completely clueless when it comes to Middle Eastern affairs. I have made it a point to become more educated on the Middle East and this book has helped. I grew up during many of the poignant events that shaped the Middle East into what it is now, but as a safeguarded American I know nothing of what has transpired and continues to transpire in the Middle East. This book was heavy and detailed, and I can't say I understood the context of a lot of what happened, but it gave me a raw, first person account of life during the Saddam Hussein reign.

Sukanto says

It's never easy to read first hand accounts of torture and the pain associated with war. But it's also necessary at times to embrace reality like this, in order to understand how hate spreads its tentacles. This is a touching narration by Haifa Zangana.

Jo says

I think all of our political leaders - globally - should be forced to read this book. It's an intense anti-torture memoir. Immediately from page one, I felt like this book captured me, threw me on a train, and forced me to undertake a fascinating, terrifying, and deeply sad journey, with release only at the end. The entire experience was gripping; all throughout, I felt as if I was being constantly dipped into the trenches of the psychology of the tortured. It's not pretty, but it's important to experience it. Pity the noble among us, who only serve to better humankind, and suffer cruelly for it. Well crafted and very well written. In art, there is some relief. Thank you, Haifa.

Joan says

A good piece of writing that shows the humanity of the war. I admit, I didn't know much about what's happening over there, and this work really humanized for me. It sounds awful to think that I didn't think of the Iraqis as humans, but in some ways I guess I didn't. So what did I think of them? I guess I kind of pitied them, but did I think of them as lesser than me too? I don't know, but I guess it's eye opening to think that

sometimes I don't think of humans as humans. I think of them more as connected to jobs or events. So do I think of my friends and family as not real? Well, I'm very grateful for them, and we do have great conversations, but maybe I need to work on seeing them in a more "humane" light.

Abhilash Bala says

Short and ironically written. Not a page turner, yet the struggle is described neat.

Nadia says

I didn't really know what to expect for a book I'd never heard anybody talk about-I think most people know Haifa Zangana as an activist and not a writer-but this is one of the best books I read in the last year. Really touching stories about ba'th regime oppression as experienced by women activists specifically.

I should probably just make an Iraq shelf I have more than enough books to put on it.

Alliyah says

A quick but often harrowing read, hauntingly beautiful with its poetic prose.

Aaron says

As the afterword to this book notes, this is an unusual book. It was written as someone remembers events -- haphazardly and in a funny order. There were some poignant parts of the book, yet overall I wasn't sure that the idea of writing a book as someone who remembers is actually that useful a exercise in prose production.

Rima says

This is the book that made me so tearful, I had to hold it to my chest and weep to myself.

~

Haifa Zangana writes about her history as a political activist fighting Saddam Hussein's reign in Iraq. Moving between three prisons, she shares the story of life as a woman, a daughter and an Iraqi who longs to return home but doubts it exists anymore.

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'That hot summer's day, Baghdad's back alleys witnessed four men chasing and shooting at a young man who thought he knew his beloved city as well as he knew himself. He fired back before collapsing to the ground, covered in blood.'

~

Have you read Dreaming of Baghdad?

Connie Burchfield says

A first hand account of a capture by occupiers of Iraq of a Kurdish women said to be a revolutionary by government forces and the torture that went with it. Obviously, a survivor yet reader not informed of details regarding of her "new life" in a new land. I am sure this was a therapeutic exercise for the author and I applaud that she could have even written about it even twenty years later but this reader was eager to learn more about how she came to heal.

Reemah Rose says

Originally published as "Through the Vast Halls of Memory," in 1990 "Dreaming of Baghdad" is a 2009 Feminist Press (CUNY) reprint of Kurdish-Iraqi activist Haifa Zangana's haunting memories of her 1970s activism and imprisonment under the Ba'ath party. Zangana's narrative shifts in time, place, and subjectivity, resulting in an illuminating/troubling remark on the nature of trauma and memory.
