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Ben Granby

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Ben Granby : Welcome To The Bethlehem Star Hotel: An Account of Life in Palestine with Descriptions of People, Places and Incidents before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Welcome To The Bethlehem Star Hotel: An Account of Life in Palestine with Descriptions of People, Places and Incidents:

Ben Granby, frustrated American food service worker, takes a multifarious, back roads ramble through the combat

zone of Israel/Palestine, circa 2002. His motivation? To throw himself headlong into other people's problems.

From Publishers Weekly Granby, a "frustrated American food service worker," insinuates himself ever closer to violence during his travels in war-ravaged Palestine, but is less interested in the conflict or the people fighting it than being able to brag about having been there. Part thrill-seeker and part humanitarian, but mostly home to a crippling case of liberal guilt inflamed by a life lived sans capital-e Event, Granby fled his post-college ennui for human rights work in Gaza City, where he quickly dismisses the Israeli and American governments and mainstream journalism (though he frequently posed as a journalist to gain access and safety), travels from one shelled-out locale to another with his camera and notebook and offers readers ethereal quips such as "It's a difficult thing to comprehend a willing descent into a place of mass suffering. Usually, such things are random and so temporary that one cannot plan for it." Readers may feel riveted or queasy when Granby writes, "I finally felt like I was now in this conflict," or laments "I winced as directly above us another white light marked a missile launch-and I was denied my photo." Intriguing characters populate these pages, but Granby's too intent on gazing at his soiled-with-the-grime-of-war navel to do them, or their myriad causes, justice. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. Ben Granby presents a penetrating look at life in the Palestinian territories. Through his eyes we encounter Palestinians as people their dreams and their anguish. We see the resilience of people living under trying circumstances and their love for a land called Palestine. Granby's account is itself a compelling call for serious and sustained efforts to bring peace to this troubled land for Israelis and Palestinians and the generations to come. (Ambassador Edward Gnehm, George Washington University) About the Author Ben Granby has traveled through the Balkans, Lebanon, the Palestinian Occupied Territories and Syria, including meeting Albanian guerillas in Macedonia. Granby also spent a month in IRAQ before the current war. He resides in Washington, D.C.