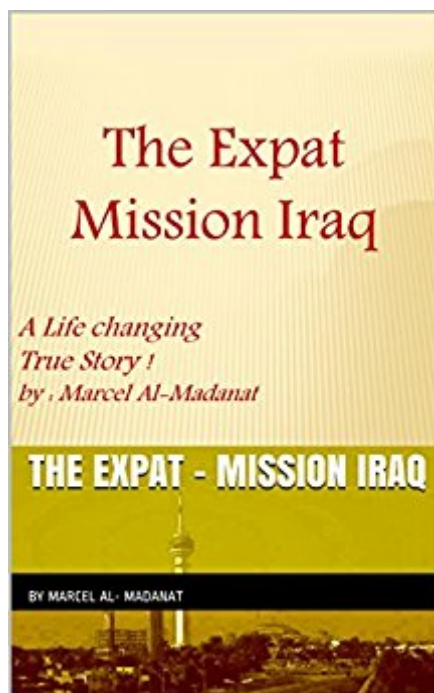


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# The Expat - Mission Iraq



## Synopsis

In the period between June 2012 and April 2013 I had the privilege to work as an expat - IT & telecommunications major incident manager in Baghdad, for a company looking after a mobile operators network. The experience was an such an eye opener , to the extent that I think I am now obliged to share it with the world. My hope is only that you enjoy reading this humble contribution, walk in my shoes and learn what I had learned. I hope the book will bring you realization, joy and help you in your own journey. This book has multiple aspects that are definitely worth , there is a strong motivational message the reader concludes to by the end of the book, it aims to help people change their perspective on life to the better, allowing them to attract all what is good in life and deal with any set backs along the way. The author has a sense of detail that makes the reader sort of walk in his shoes, allowing the grasp of the full experience and an element of thrill. The book as well reflects on the local Iraqi people mentality, traditions, human nature and the power of adaption. It sheds light on the role of Iraqi women in the society and as part of the working force. The book - as it could not have been ignored- also sheds light on the current daily life of the local Iraqi people and their struggle against the raging ongoing sectarian gang war that already harvested the lives of hundreds of thousands of innocent people. There is also an emphasis on the bright side of the culture and the writer has a particularly smart sense of humor that is guaranteed to make you smile. The book includes a history section for all to trace the political problem back to its roots and understand from where did the current miserable situation in Iraq raised from and how the normal people view it. The book as a true story includes many useful tips for the Expats out there, or those who are thinking to embark on their first expat journey. All in all definitely a book worth reading.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Western media the social butterfly that it is, once action in Iraq deflated from large-scale military offensive to scattered bombings and shootings, it fluttered elsewhere in search of human drama. A blank space left in Western awareness of the embattled country, had Iraq been completely destroyed? Were the people reduced to nothing—poverty, starvation, homelessness? Does the US military continue to dominate the streets? What is true public perception of the fall of Saddam Hussein and the introduction of a Western-friendly (most would say puppet) government? A lot of questions remain. Lured by the offer yet wary of the inherent risk (kidnapping insurance was involved), in 2012 Marcel Al Madanat moved to Baghdad for a two-year contract supporting a mobile phone provider. His time there both a life motivating and changing experience, in 2015 he decided to write a book, *The Expat: Mission Iraq*. Doing a good job of filling the blank space in Western awareness of contemporary Iraq, Al Madanat provides the insider's view of the reality of being a foreigner in Baghdad a decade since the coalition forces' offensive. Of mixed Jordanian and European blood and speaking Arabic, he straddles the cultural divide. An outsider by appearance yet privy to many details by privilege of cultural heritage and language, certain doors are open to him the average European or North American would find closed. Taking advantage, he is able to occasionally get beyond Baghdad's secure green zone and into what qualified for everyday Iraqi life—at least what it is left as well as converse with people the typical American or British tourist could not. Its citizens filled with an uncertain yet stolid determination to carry on as normal as possible, Al Madanat describes a Baghdad wherein random violence still occurs regularly but its people live on regardless. Religious sects, gangs, urban militias, rival political allegiances, avengers—all continue to imbue daily life with injury and death. So much so, in fact, it seemed every Iraqi acquaintance Al Madanat made was touched in some way, whether it be a bomb at their nephew's wedding or assassinated uncles. And yet the Iraqis bravely push ahead. Despite the fly-by-the-seat-of-the-pants electrical systems and varied availability of bathing and drinking water,

the people maintain a social presence. Everyone has at least two mobile phones (in case one provider goes down) and still go out on the streets to restaurants and markets, despite the mortal risk in every step taken. Al Madanat's occasions in public are kept few and far between by his overseers (and perhaps common sense?) but what he sees remains fascinating for the colors of everyday life in the face of random death and violence. A professional account as well, The Expat covers Al Madanat's work while in country. Leader of an incident management team working for a mobile phone provider, he dealt with incidents unseen in most other countries. Terrorism and explosive violence causing many unplanned network outages, Al Madanat had his work cut out for him keeping the patchwork infrastructure humming. From team response to getting reliable information in the field, a field likewise dealing with the chaos of post-invasion Iraq, he depends on building sensitive relationships to accomplish goals: the character descriptions of those he works with and meets are foundation stones of the account. For those concerned about the potential politics of The Expat, Al Madanat provides a balanced view. Knowledgeable of Middle Eastern culture as much as Western culture, he respects those who are interested in rebuilding Iraq rather than continuing to tear it down. There is some commentary on the larger socio-political situation (e.g. Saddam is given credit where credit is due, but taken to task for decisions and statements made), but as a whole the book remains a constructive rather than destructive effort. It's fair to say, however, the lion's share of The Expat is a liberation, a sharing, motivational experience. Al Madanat achieving numerous personal victories throughout the process of deciding to work in Baghdad to arriving there, living in the volatile city to working with cultural standards both familiar and foreign, he achieves a degree of positivity and satisfaction, a finding of "peace in a land of misery" that rubs off on the reader. Interested to explore Iraq, meet the people, and make something of himself while there, he achieves his goals, the last of which one must consider the writing of The Expat.

Interesting point of view from internationally traveled person. I enjoyed reading about his struggles, ups and downs.

I'm sure it was well meaning, but I couldn't get past the first few chapters.

Very interesting story. Worth to read.

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