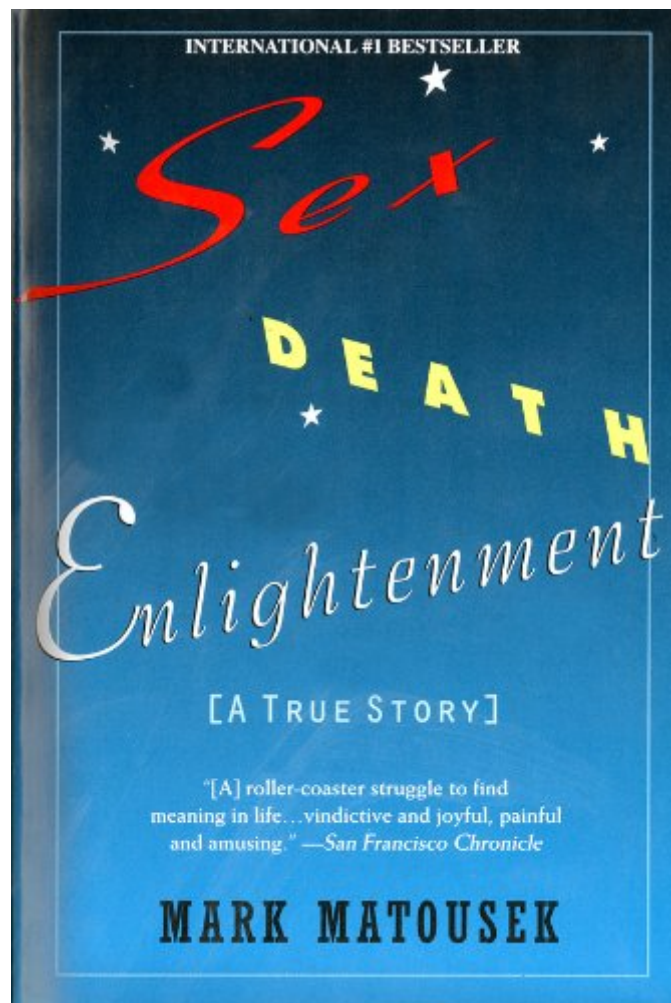




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Sex Death Enlightenment: A True Story



Synopsis

It's hard to know when you're having a breakdown in New York City. The symptoms of living here, succeeding here, and losing your mind here are almost identical. So begins Matousek's 1996 breakout memoir about leaving a fast-track publishing life (working for pop artist Andy Warhol at Interview Magazine) and hitting the dharma trail in search of a meaningful life and spiritual wisdom. Hailed by Publisher's Weekly as "brave, beautiful, and brilliantly observed," Sex Death Enlightenment became an international best seller (published in 10 countries). Like Elizabeth Gilbert in Eat Pray Love and Paul Monette in Borrowed Time, Matousek takes the reader on an insightful, rollicking search for answers to life's deepest questions in this landmark memoir. "A mesmerizing account" Utterly down to earth, even inspiring. Kirkus Reviews

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Customer Reviews

What I realized while reading Mark Matousek's gripping story of his childhood and early adulthood is

that although we seekers come from vastly different backgrounds, our passion for seeking the Truth of who we are and why we're here is universal and remarkably similar. The raw honesty with which Mark writes (he is a very gifted writer) was, in fact, quite shocking to me in places; however, I was not offended. I think it's Mark's integrity as a teacher and writing coach, because he never makes assumptions that his story is your story. He helps us shine the light of awareness on our own unique life experiences, enabling us to see and feel how much alike we all are as human beings having a spiritual experience rather than the other way around. I've taken several e-courses with him that have opened me up to my own story in ways I never dreamed possible. I believe this memoir of his will become a book of hope and healing for anyone who may be conflicted about their sexuality and their search for the Truth of who they truly are. Mark has certainly found his place in the world and in doing so has helped me find mine. God bless you, Mark!

First, the book is so absorbing, I can't put it down and the quality of the book is good and all that I need.

An easy and entertaining way to narrate a story of coming into the light. A heartfelt honest story on how the hardships in life is what turns us to look inside to the mystery of life and the sense of our existence.

I must admit that I am a fan of Matousek. The first book I read was his conversations with a modern mystic--Andrew Harvey. This stems from an interest in his works(meaning Andrew Harvey's broad scope of teachings, as well as how he embodies such a wide-ranging spectrum of the spiritual path). Later, I have become equally enthralled, and appreciative of Mark Matousek's full exposure-full disclosure writings of his experience. What makes Matousek such an engaging read is the combination of raw honesty; the sheer power of his descriptions. He combines the greatest sense of honesty; combined with writing that is captivating; with a strong pinch of humor. His story is full of passion; full of weaving the various elements of a childhood which would have traumatized most. There are so many mini-stories that each has its own lessons. It is one of those books that keeps you reading; a can't put me down sort of read. And after, you want to re-read it, and savor it. I highly recommend the book as both a "good read," filled with lessons about the spiritual path; along with the story of a person driven to succeed; achieve success; and then leave it behind for something more.

I approached Sex Death Enlightenment with both fascination and trepidation. As the in-house editor at a hip graphic design firm in the 1980s, I recall how staff coveted every new issue of Andy Warhol's Interview. But even working in what felt like a center of the 'alt' cultural universe, Toronto's Queen Street West, I just didn't get it. Warhol's 'work' was all cribbed surfaces and celebrated vapidness, his persona a hellish vortex. So it's amazing that author Mark Matousek, who for a time thrived in Warhol's Manhattan madhouse, survived for something better. What a thread of grace it is that runs through Matousek's life. Even as he was searching, either slumming around or slowly etching away at the terrible family dynamic from which he came, there was another deeply alive bit of soul that would be pulled up and redeemed. At each juncture where he betrays himself, he is more and more leavened, broken open to possibility. And as the hubris drains away, a beautiful humility begins to shine through. I loved Sex, Death, Enlightenment. I loved the fearless honesty with which the author relays his journey. His ups and downs, the agonies before the epiphanies are heroic, his transcendent moments, glorious. And he pays grateful tribute to those relationships that helped him along. My only caveat is that some readers might be squeamish about the more graphic sex bits, which jar one away from the subtler tone of the narrative, but this is a small complaint about a compelling read. [...]

Mark Matousek is a brave man and a generous heart. This true story of his tragic childhood, his escape into trading/selling his body for semblances of love, his entry into the chaos of the corporate world of New York with all the attendant sings of dermal pain and empty heart, his jogging into AIDS territory personally and in the loss of loved ones.....all of this journey must have been difficult to tell. But then he begins his odyssey of finding spiritual enlightenment and everything written before appears as preparation for his enlightenment. That Matousek writes well is a given here, and has been further substantiated in his subsequent books (like The Boy He Left Behind), and because of his finely honed skills this book steps beyond the too frequently published "self-help genre". SEX DEATH ENLIGHTENMENT could easily be a novel, so interesting and beautifully developed are all the characters at play here. The fact that this is one man's true journey toward entry into the spiritual world just makes it that much more engrossing. Though once on the bestseller lists around the world, it seems that there should be a word of mouth campaign to bring people back (and find new readers) to this very special book. This writer has given us what really could be the discovery of a truly brave new world. Recommended as an inspiring guide to those who seek to truly know life and the connectedness of us all.

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