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HOMOAMERICAN

By Michael Dane

★ IR RATING:

4.0

HOMOAMERICAN is a vividly-written biography that throws the reader directly into the emotional, intellectual, and physical life of a gay man growing up in homophobic times, told with vigor, charm, and heart.

★ IR Approved *Memoir, Nonfiction*

Posted by IR Staff | January 22, 2020

Synopsis:

In HOMOAMERICAN, Michael K. Dane tells the story of his life, including his mother's escape from an abusive household, a career built on showmanship that ranged from Iran to rural America, and a gay man's insistence on being himself in a world that wanted to shove him firmly into the closet and keep him there.

Michael Dane has had anything but a quiet, ordinary life. From his childhood, and his mother's sudden decision to leave a father whose addiction to gambling on horse races threatened the family's stability one too many times, to a rigorous and enthusiastic apprenticeship in ballet, to travels and performances around the world and relationships both devoted and dysfunctional, he has lived every moment with energy, vigor, and verve. He tells his story with the same life and energy, and an almost poetic way with words that brings the reader directly and vividly into every moment, every experience.

Dane is a man who does not do anything, or experience anything, halfway if he can at all help it. The enthusiasm and drive that he put into his career and his relationships romantic, familial, and platonic, is also the enthusiasm that went into writing this book, and it shows. He is particularly adept at descriptive language- characters and places leap from the page, immersing the reader in a vibrant and engaging world full of interesting people and exciting events. Most evident is the author's fierce determination to live authentically as himself without hiding, particularly difficult as a gay man in a homophobic world. He name-drops rather casually- this is, after all, someone who auditioned - successfully - for Maria Tallchief, studied at the American Ballet Theater while Baryshnikov was principal dancer, and knew Madonna when she had a last name - but he doesn't fawn on anyone for celebrity's sake, and the nonentities in the book are every bit as lively and interesting, perhaps more so.

HOMOAMERICAN is quite a long book, which might easily have been broken into two or possibly three volumes to make it easier to read, and can be repetitive in places. The choice to use bold fonts for quotes is both unnecessary and rather jarring to the eye - quotation marks and paragraph breaks alone are all that's really needed to set off dialogue. Still, this book remains an effervescent tribute to one man's life, fully lived.

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~Catherine Langrehr for IndieReader

