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James Curry

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James Curry : Seven Years in Ukraine: Even the gods themselves throw incense before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Seven Years in Ukraine: Even the gods themselves throw incense:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Even the Bears have Goats, and they're SmellyBy 7 Foot Squirrel`Some of us must be banished from the dance in order to make a more spacious music,' it has been said. That is what happened to this poor guy, the book's author. The title, I think, is half-stolen from some other famous title, because the `7 years' thing doesn't add up mathematically. And the author is a mathematician. Go figure.Anyway. This

is a weird book. It's a travelogue sandwich with personal narrative and philosophical musings for bread and mayo. I can't speak to the other condiments and sliced vegetable items, but I'll share what I think I understand. Ukraine is a little island of insanity that Russia abandoned when they couldn't be a superpower anymore. Everybody cheats, lies, and acts out of some venal self-interest. Okay well not everybody. Some of the women (including the one the author fell in love with) retain a sense of dignity, decorum, and respect. There is horror, heartbreak, humor and adventure here. Drunks throw things at the author, and wonder why he won't drink with them. They don't get why he might want his own space even while renting from them. Or why the TV is too loud while he is trying to read and write. He dances with she-bears, crosses international borders at night without an escort, and lives to tell about it. This book is probably a warning, more than anything else. If you don't like backpacking in the desert in Summer, or strolling slowly across an icy lake in late January to play kickball with the wolves, you might want to read this, and give thanks you're safe at home, with nobody threatening you except for the government.

The author left his life in America teaching Mathematics to write and study in Ukraine. A trip that was intended to be an escape for perhaps a year to study unfettered by work, turned into an ordeal involving nuns and gangsters.