



The Natashas: Inside the New Global Sex Trade

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On the black market, they're the third most profitable commodity, after illegal weapons and drugs-the only difference being that these goods are human, though to their handlers they are wholly expendable. They are women and girls, some as young as 12, from all over the Eastern bloc, where sinister networks of organized crime have become entrenched in the aftermath of the collapse of Communist regimes. In Israel, they're called Natashas, whether they're actually from Russia, Bosnia, the Czech Republic, or Ukraine, no matter what their real names may be. They're lured into vans and onto airplanes with promises of jobs as waitresses, models, nannies, dishwashers, maids, and dancers. But when they arrive at their destinations, they are stripped of their identification, and their nightmare begins. They are sold into prostitution and kept enslaved; those who resist are beaten, raped, and sometimes killed as examples. They often have nowhere to turn; in many cases, the men who should be rescuing them-from immigration officials to police officers and international peacekeepers-are among their aggressors.

The Natashas: Inside the New Global Sex Trade Details

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Melanie says

This was an amazing yet terrifying book: Victor Malarek offers an overview of the third biggest illegal world industry - human trafficking. He interviews the women - the "Natashas" (Natasha being what the johns call any slavic woman they buy) - who are raped every day after having been sold into sexual slavery.

The majority of the women interviewed are from the Eastern European countries after the fall of the Soviet bloc, and as we get insight into their lives, one cannot help but be shocked by the magnitude of the industry.

The fact that a large majority of peace-keeping organizations or soldiers not only closes their eyes to the growth of such a plague, but actually *participates* in the propagation, is appalling..

I finished this book slightly ill at the thought of all those young women my age who are being raped every day, but commending the bravery of Malarek, who actually had the... um, let's say "courage" to break open the code of silence that seems to surround the subject.

Erik Graff says

This was my first book about prostitution, so I don't have much to compare it to. The author, however, doesn't expect much from the reader and the book is written like a long article from a magazine like The New Yorker.

Malarek is a Ukranian-Canadian and his focus here is on that chapter in the history of prostitution following the breakup of the Warsaw Pact, in other words, on Eastern European women and girls desperate for work. Reference is made to previous periods, such as the prior dominance of Asian women in the trade, but the focus is on the nineties.

The style of reporting is matter-of-fact rather than sensationalistic or purient. Not all women who sign up for jobs overseas end up as sex slaves to rich Arabs--or NATO troops or Hassidic Jews etc.--though that does happen. Not all women are lied to. Some know precisely what they will be expected to do. However, a large percentage of women do get into situations far worse than they imagined when they ostensibly "borrow" the money for transportation, legal or illegal, to foreign work locations. Although few are literally enslaved, their oft-times illegal status, their dependence upon their employers and their indebtedness to them results in many of them finding it difficult to impossible to escape their circumstances. This dilemma is exacerbated by the fact that many legal systems, including our own, take an adversarial stance towards these women.

Malarek's book appears to cover the range of possible experiences and ends with some practical suggestions as to how to protect the victims of such practices and to abolish such exploitative businesses.

Antigone says

There is an inclination with books like this to rate on the subject matter. Were I to follow that urge, I'd be

five-starring this.

Human trafficking is a horrific reality that could benefit from far more attention than it is receiving. The latest surge in the peddling of flesh comes as a result of the break-up of the Soviet Union. Women from several of the former states (chiefly Moldova, Romania, Bulgaria and Ukraine) are flooding the market - most of them victims of cleverly-crafted advertisements for employment as maids, nannies, models and the like in foreign lands. Some are coerced by acquaintances or actual family members into taking a trip which results in a hand-off for cash. A few are kidnapped outright from buses, cars, or the side of the road as they're innocently walking home. Organized crime is a growth industry in the former Soviet republics, and it doesn't require a college degree for most of these thugs to recognize women, as a commodity, are free for the taking and lucrative in use. There is no moral compunction present on the part of the provider or the client. The johns who patronize the trade prefer to view themselves as charitably assisting the downtrodden - turning a convenient blind eye to the truth of their sex partner's inescapable captivity; a captivity through which she's been forcibly reduced to prostituting herself under threat of death, torture, starvation and abuse.

This said, I think there *must* be a better book on the subject than the one I just read. A 5-star horror deserves 5-star treatment, which certainly didn't happen here. And this is a surprise considering Victor Malarek is a noted journalist and broadcaster. My sense, if I'm to be kind about it, is that Malarek's outrage got the best of him and this shallowed things up a bit. You can only bring so much gravitas to the table when you're sputtering, and his stridency did his writing no favor at all. In addition, his arguments are not fully developed. I got the feeling, frequently, that he was short-handing the issue in his rush to thrust home his points. And you have to build these things - fact by fact, brick by brick. It's a painstaking endeavor requiring the kind of tolerance a blistering rage simply won't supply.

And so, while I absolutely recommend learning more about the issue of human trafficking in the world today, I suggest you make a better choice than I did on the road of that investigation.

Devina says

Miris, ngeri, marah.. Itu yang aku rasakan waktu baca buku ini. Sekarang diseluruh dunia banyak wanita diperdagangkan, dijual belikan untuk dijadikan wanita malam. Mereka diculik dari keluarga mereka, atau dijanjikan pekerjaan dg iming2 gaji besar diluar negri.. Namun mereka semua berakhir sama, menjadi wanita malam..

Pada awalnya wanita tsb tertarik dg pekerjaan yang diiklankan di koran, yang menawarkan pekerjaan di luar negri spt Jepang, Amerika, Inggris, dengan iming2 gaji besar, pekerjaan santai, libur diakhir pekan, dsb.. Sesampainya di negara tujuan, mereka malah dikumpulkan disatu hotel atau apartemen, dan dimulailah perdagangan manusia disini. Mereka disuruh melepaskan seluruh pakaian mereka, (bener2 naked) lalu mulailah para Mucikari memilih2 wanita-wanita tsb. Serem, seperti pedagang memilih hewan ternak, dilihat-lihat, dipegang, bahkan sampe bisa dicoba.. Astaga.. Alangkah rendahnya wanita dimata mereka.. Setelah sampai ditangan mucikari pun hidup mereka nggak lebih baik. Wanita-wanita tsb diperlakukan spt binatang, dikurung dalam kamar yang kotor dan bau atau gudang bawah tanah yang lembab, tidak diberi makanan yang layak, di paksa melayani 15-20 lelaki hidung belang tiap malamnya..

Sulit untuk membrantas bisnis haram ini. Misal saja Polisi/Relawan sudah berhasil menggrebek sebuah bar, dan bisa membebaskan 20 wanita, tidak sampai beberapa hari Bar itu sudah bisa beroperasi lagi. Sang Mucikari tinggal menghubungi nomor tertentu, dan mengeluarkan sedikit uang untuk membeli gadis-gadis baru, yang tidak sampai 1minggu Gadis-Gadis tsb sudah bisa mengembalikan modal yang dikeluarkan oleh

si Mucikari untuk membeli mereka. Dengan modal \$2.500 seorang Mucikari bs meraup untung mulai dari \$75.000 sd \$250.000 per tahunnya dari Gadis tsb.. Jumlah yang fantastis namun tak sebanding dengan penderitaan yang Gadis2 tsb alami. Bisnis prostitusi ini mrpkn bisnis yang paling menghasilkan saat ini di dunia..

Jika kita bertanya-tanya, dimana polisi? Pemerintah? Atau aktivis HAM? Walaupun bukti-bukti sudah ada di depan mata, tak ada satupun dari mereka yang mencoba untuk bertindak.. Kalaupun ada itupun sangat minim jumlahnya.. Mengejutkan.. Bahkan ada sarang Prostitusi yang terletak didepan kantor polisi. Tapi kenapa nggak ada yang bertindak? Kenapa nggak dibubarkan? Sulit untuk memutuskan rantai tsb jika kita sendiri tidak pernah berusaha untuk merubahnya.. Mulailah pada diri sendiri, keluarga, dan lingkungan sekitar kita..

Deanna says

Very informative and damning of international efforts to quell the sex trade. Reading this first definitely would have given The Johns more context. The writing isn't stellar but this is an important subject for people to be aware of and not a bad place to start to understand the problems contributing to and stemming from international sex trade. I guess the most important thing to mention taking away from this is that I was not sure exactly my stance on legalizing prostitution before but this makes a very compelling argument (in combination with The Johns) for instead decriminalizing prostitution and going after the people that purchase sex instead.

Jessica Podruchny says

Eye opening. I just wish it was more current. Everything referenced for research was 2004 and earlier.

Chris says

Have to wonder why Malarek doesn't offer as much insight into Canada as he does the other countries, but still a powerful read. Should be read with Sex Trafficking: Inside the Business of Modern Slavery, which offers hard detail. Malarek's is less economically based but does present much information and detail. Malarek also focuses on one group as well as lesser known trafficking areas.

I also liked the section about Kosovo, especially since I had recently seen the Whistleblower.

Carmen says

I really disliked Malarek's writing, but the book is full of urgently important and highly damning information nonetheless. It will leave you depressed, furious, and in no doubt about three things: Men who buy women and girls for sex (including vast numbers of Western military, UN, and policemen) are a scourge upon human society, the U.S. government is shamefully cynical, and prostitution apologists (including women) are racist assholes.

Kaitlyn says

Great book I started reading it after I had seen a presentation by a community group who works closely with Victor Malarek when it comes to the global sex trade. The book was so hard to get through and so depressing. I think though it is important to read these kinds of texts because it allow readers access the information and experiences that they may not have always known to have existed.

Ginny Hanson says

saddest part about this book is that in the 9 years since it was printed, human trafficking has now surpassed weapon & drugs as the single most profitable trafficked trade.

Jonathan says

As a hardcore libertarian, I used to support the notion of legalized prostitution. However, this book made me change my mind. If the only people who did this kind of work did so by choice or through a desire to provide a service, then why bother? After all, it's not up to me to tell anyone how they should earn a living. However, this book reveals the chilling reality: prostitution is largely run by organized crime and the women who participate in it are usually nothing more than slaves. Some of the stories will break your heart or flat out disgust you. In fact, it's extremely depressing. These kind of books are extremely important, though.

Prostitution is not the victimless crime libertarians try to make it out to be.

Krista Bunny says

Wow. I can't express it any deeper. It's not a "That book was so awesome!" kind of wow, even though it did knock my socks off. It's more like a "Wow, I think I just threw up in my mouth and then swallowed it back down because the truth this book just hit me with is so disgusting and terrifying".

I first heard Victor Malarek talk when he was promoting his newest book "The Johns" which I intend to read as well. Here was this man I'd never heard of before standing up in front of Catholic Social Services, including the Grey Nuns talking about how Men are the cause of sexual slavery. The man has balls, I will give him that. This book proves just how big they are too.

Incredibly well written, to the point and spot on, Malarek makes you think, makes you cry, vomit, hate, hope and pray. Pray for the Natashas of the World, someone has to.

Geku says

Hopelessness. That's all this book really made me feel. But it also made me change my almost-made-up mind about being supportive of legalized prostitution - unexpected but appreciated. It could have been written better, it was repetitive and I found the second half of it quite dull, but it was well researched and "necessary" in that I believe everyone should read this book and really think about it.

Fhily says

This book is 2nd book I've read about sex life-style after Jakarta Undercover ...

But it's so different...

In this book, the author tells us about women in world trade...

woman like a doll, that sold and bought freely.

initially, I was confused. Why the book titled NATASHA? It's similar to my name, Anastasya... LOL XD

But, after I've read this book, I know that...

Natasha is a name all women in world trade.

quotations of two initial chapters in Indonesian, I've write:

"Kehidupanku bukan milikku lagi" - Lida, seorang anak yatim piatu dari Romania.

"Aku tahu aku tak akan kuat menanggung apa yang akan terjadi bila aku melawan" - Sophia, yang 'dilatih' setelah tiga hari disekap.

they sounds like in hell...

"Kamu bisa membeli satu perempuan seharga \$ 10.000 dan uangmu akan kembali dalam seminggu kalau dia muda dan cantik. sesudahnya tinggal meraup untung"

What the hell? It sounds so cruel... I wanna kill the people who says like that!!! Go to hell!!!

Elin Eriksson says

This should be required reading for all libertarian assholes.
