



Postales desde Grecia

Victoria Hislop

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Week after week, the postcards arrive, addressed to a name Ellie does not know, with no return address, each signed with an initial: A.

With their bright skies, blue seas and alluring images of Greece, these cartes postales brighten her life. After six months, to her disappointment, they cease. But the montage she has created on the wall of her flat has cast a spell. She must see this country for herself.

On the morning Ellie leaves for Athens, a notebook arrives. Its pages tell the story of a man's odyssey through Greece. Moving, surprising and sometimes dark, A's tale unfolds with the discovery not only of a culture but also of a desire to live life to the full once more.

Postales desde Grecia Details

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Author : Victoria Hislop

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From Reader Review Postales desde Grecia for online ebook

Paula Sealey says

I have to say, I was immensely disappointed with this book. From the synopsis, I was led to believe that it was a story about Ellie, who has been receiving postcards from various places in Greece, meant for a previous occupant of her property. Intrigued by these and a notebook from the same sender that arrives, she goes off to Greece to discover the country for herself.

However, Ellie's part in the story is practically superfluous, being shunted in at the very beginning and end, as is the rather dour character of Anthony, the sender of said postcards, who essentially just bombards the reader throughout with facts about Greek islands. It really feels that both characters were an afterthought to try and turn what is essentially a strange collection of little Greek stories of wisdom into a complete tale. The grainy, black and white pictures throughout were also a miss. Such a shame, as I have previously enjoyed books from this author.

Wendy Greenberg says

I heard Victoria Hislop talking about this book on the radio and it sounded fascinating so I rushed out to buy. What a disappointment (despite loving Greece). It read to me like a succession of poorly written essays on "What I did in the holidays" joined together by the equivalent of the worst sort of radio links. Safe to say that this writer is not for me.

Anne says

Everyone who knows me knows that I am a huge fan of Greece. I fell in love with that beautiful country, and its people twenty years ago and have been lucky enough to visit twice a year ever since. I haven't really gone off the beaten track, sticking to the islands such as Corfu, Crete, Zakynthos, Kos, Rhodes, Ithaka, Kefalonia, Lefkada and Kos. We always travel early in the season, and then later on and as it's usually fairly quiet, we get to know the locals. Our friends in Arillas, in north-west Corfu are almost like family, we've been visiting them for ten years.

During our late-night discussions, usually over countless glasses of village red wine and shots of Metaxa, or Ouzo, but never, never Tsipoura (evil stuff!), we talk about the economy, politics, family, tradition and generally put the world to rights. In *Cartes Postales From Greece*, Victoria Hislop brings to life those people that I've come to love, with their incredible hospitality and their zest for life. Their anger at what is happening to their country, their despair about the past, are quite perfectly portrayed.

"Everywhere I stopped strangers talked to me, and many of them told me a story. Their voices poured into

the void, filling the silence that you had left.

You will recognise some of the places in the stories, from the postcards.

Who knows if the tales people told me are true or false? I suspect that some of them are complete fabrications, others are exaggerations - but perhaps some of them are real. You can decide."

The story begins with Ellie, and the mysterious postcards that arrive through her letterbox. Addressed to S Ibbotson, and each signed with just an initial - A. Ellie realises that S Ibbotson was the previous occupant of her dreary flat in London, and wonder who A is, and what was their relationship, and why do the messages on the back of the cards sound so sad? The cards are all from Greece. Ellie pins them up in her kitchen, they bring a splash of sunshine into her otherwise dull life.

On the spur of the moment, Ellie decides that she will travel to Greece. She wants to experience the places on the front of the postcard, she's desperate for something more than her boring job, in wintry London. On the morning that she leaves, a notebook is delivered to her flat, she stuffs it into her bag and departs for Athens.

From there, *Cartes Postales From Greece* becomes the story of 'A', his stories of his travels through Greece, all detailed in the notebook. He recounts how he meets the locals, he re-tells the stories that they share with him. He opens his heart to S Ibbotson, with honesty and quite painfully at times.

Cartes Postales From Greece is beautifully illustrated with scenes from the places that A visits. Victoria Hislop worked with Greek photographer, Alexandros Kakolyris to create beautiful photographs to go with her words, they are stunning and add so much to this gorgeous story.

The author has brought together stories from Grecian history and modern-day tales and has created a novel that will delight her readers. Anyone who has been to Greece will recognise these characters, those sunsets, those smells. She does not shy away from the troubles that this country has suffered, now and throughout history, and her words go some way to explain why the Greek people are angry, but also why they continue to love their homeland so much.

Wonderful storytelling. *Cartes Postales From Greece* evokes such a brilliant sense of place. Rich, vivid and beautifully told.

<http://randomthingsthroughmyletterbox...>

Kyriakos Sorokkou says

Αντ? ε?ναι το πρ?το βιβλ?ο της Χ?σλοπ που αγ?ρασα, π?ρσι Ιο?λη μ?να, αλλ? το δε?τερο που δι?βασα, πρ?λαβα και δι?βασα την Ανατολ? τον Μ?ρτη.

Ε?ναι γνωστ? πως η συγκεκριμ?νη Αγγλ?δα συγγραφ?ας δεν ενδιαφ?ρεται για την Αγγλ?α και τον παγωμ?νο Β?ρειο Ατλαντικ? αλλ? για τη Μεσ?γειο και τις ηλι?λουστες χ?ρες της, ?πως η Ισπαν?α (1 βιβλ?ο), η Κ?προς (1 βιβλ?ο) και κυρ?ως η Ελλ?δα (5 βιβλ?α).

Το συγκεκριμ?νο βιβλ?ο το π?ρα π?ρσι απ? ?να παζαρ?κι στα Public ?που ?παιρνες καινο?ρια και μεταχειρισμ?να βιβλ?α για μ?νο €1,00δ?νοντας ?μως και ?να δικ? σου βιβλ?ο που ?θελες να ξεφορτωθε?ζ.

?τσι ?ταν ε?δα αυτ? το βιβλ?ο με τιμ? €17,99και ?ξερα ?τι θα γλ?τωνα €16,99το π?ρα.
Ε?ναι ?να ?μορφο βιβλ?ο, γεμ?το εικ?νες, φωτογραφ?ες απ? τα μ?ρη που εξελ?σσονται οι ιστορ?ες, και ωρα?α μυρωδι? (αυτ? πο? το β?ζετε).

Μπορε?ζ να το πεις και συλλογ? διηγημ?των, τα οπο?α διηγο?νται στον κοιν? πρωταγωνιστ? οι δι?φοροι ?νθρωποι που συναντ?, σε Να?πλιο, Καλαμ?τα, Θεσσαλον?κη, ?νδρο και λοιπ?.

Αυτ?ζ ο πρωταγωνιστ?ζ με ?λλα λ?για ταξιδε?ει σε ?λη την Ελλ?δα, μαζε?ει ιστορ?ες και εμπειρ?ες και τις καταγρ?φει στο ημερολ?γι? του, το οπο?ο ταχυδρομε?ται κατ? λ?θος στην ?λλη πρωταγων?στρια η οπο?α κατεβα?νει απ? Αγγλ?α Ελλ?δα για να βρει αυτ? τον αποστολ?α.
Αυτ? η ?λλη πρωταγων?στρια ταξιδε?ει μ?νο μ?σω των ιστορι?ν στην Ελλ?δα, εν? επισκ?πτεται μ?νο Να?πλιο και Αθ?να, τις δ?ο πρωτε?ουσες της Ελλ?δας.

Με ?λλα λ?για ?ταν ?να αρκετ? συμπαθητικ? και αν?λαφρο βιβλ?ο, χωρ?ζ β?θος και φιλοσοφ?α β?βαια αλλ? με το οπο?ο π?ρασα καλ?, και λ?τρεψα τις ?μορφες φωτογραφ?ες με ?ρωμα απ? ελλ?δα, αλμ?ρα, πε?κο, και φ?τα.

Αυτ?ζ ε?ναι ?λλωστε και ?νας κ?ριος λ?γος της λογοτεχν?ας, να περν?ζ καλ?, κι ?χι να κ?νεις διατριβ? σε ?να συγκεκριμ?νο θ?μα:
«Η ψυχογεωγραφ?α των ελληνικ?ν προαστ?ων και το αντ?κτυπ? του στον μ?σο ?γλο τουρ?στα»

Βαθμολογ?α: 7/10

Dominique says

In my view this book is another no-no by Victoria Hislop.

The last no-no was The Sunrise, a story filled with bland characters. Cartes Postales from Greece is yet again about nobodies, and this time it's about a lot of nothing. The previous book she wrote with short stories, (The Last Dance: And Other Stories, was really good. I liked the stories and I liked her storytelling.

This time she tried to make the short stories part of a bigger story, which I don't think worked. Postcards and finally a notebook are sent to Ellie's address in London which are all addressed to a different person unknown to her. She can't help herself and reads all the postcards, and allows herself to dream about the places in Greece that are shown on them. She's unhappy with her life and with her job and she decides to visit these places for herself. Then she receives the aforementioned notebook, through which she gets to know the person sending the postcards a bit better.

It sounds promising, but it's not really. She's unhappy, the person (Anthony) sending the postcards is unhappy, the people that Anthony meets tell him either depressing or happy stories but all-in-all they seem quite unhappy. And finally it all wraps up to nothing. Hislop tries to somehow make the stories (which range from a female artist, a couple in an unwelcome town, to Daedalus & Icarus) link in with the main story, but it

doesn't work.

I'm always happy to read novels about Greece. I'm always happy to see Greek words I know pass the pages of the book but at the end of the day; the words spoken by Anthony about his book towards the end of the story are completely true for this novel as well:

"It won't change anyone's life. I have no illusions about that. It's not so unlike these stories. I had nowhere else to put them except on these pages, and there was nowhere for them to go except to your address."
(Hislop 423)

Stephen says

Interesting set of short stories based around a set of postcards and a notebook around Greece and a mixture of novel stories and retelling of the classics as it takes the reader on a trip

Tea Jovanovi? says

Well written stories from Greece, in recognisable Victoria's style, combined myths, legends and true stories that at the same time bring you knowledge of landscape, Greek history, culture, way of living, family relationships, traditions, customs... Pure pleasure!

Ne verujem da ?e biti srpskog prevoda... :(

kagami says

No, Victoria Hislop does not appear to have learned to write better since her first book. If anything, this one is even worse in its writing. Admittedly she is observant, and the grains of interesting-ness scattered through the pages were just enough to keep me hanging in there and reading until the end. Skipping whole paragraphs but still reading. Silently cursing and getting annoyed with the writing but still reading. V. Hislop sees things but does not seem to know how to present them with good enough style.

So. "Cartes Postales from Greece" starts with obvious preparation for a cozy adventure: first a Welsh woman in London with no ties (no close family or friends, no serious job) leaves everything behind on a whim and goes off on a solitary tour of Greece.

Then a man with no obvious ties (no family or friends, no job) abandoned by his beloved, embarks on a solitary tour of Greece.

They are both without a plan, simply drifting around the country. Their thought processes are expressed in very similar writing, without any distinct individuality; the lives of both of them are portrayed in the same way, by piling descriptions of repetitive routines paragraph after paragraph:

"In the following weeks and months, everywhere I stopped people talked to me. Most were warm and kind and, if they were not immediately so, then my attempts to speak Greek would often break the ice. Many of them told me stories. I listened and noted it [sic] down, each day learning surprising things about this country, and new things about myself. The voices of strangers poured into the void, filling the silence you'd

left." (p.19) By the way, who writes a diary immediately or shortly after the events but makes them sound as if they took place years ago?!

All of this is the groundwork for the unrelated stories that will be taking place within stories within stories (top score is 5 if you count the reader reading about Ellie reading about Anthony writing about Ariadne narrating about Icarus's dad). As I've said elsewhere, I am not a fan of the story-within-a-story approach: I think it shows an inability to maintain a plot which is sufficiently interesting in itself.

As for the sub-stories, the opening one is based on the premise that a bride runs off with another man while the groom waits for her with the guests in the church. Well, I don't know about Greece but I know how these things are traditionally conducted in its neighbouring (and culturally very similar if a bit less religiously extreme) Bulgaria: the groom DOES NOT wait in the church. He goes to the bride's home with the best man and a bunch of mates, plus a gypsy orchestra for good measure, and "abducts" his bride. There is no waiting around for her to turn up at the church; he barges into her parents' house and takes her to the church himself so there is no chance she can run away on the morning of the wedding. From that nonsense onwards I was not convinced by this tale.

The story of the violinist had some promise: "Antonio S-t-r-a-", and I thought, yes please, please leave it at that, let there be a bit of subtlety, but then, like a bull in a china shop, Victoria Hislop screams it out loud in case some reader's been dumb enough not to work it out. It's like this throughout the book: there is no room left for the reader's imagination; everything is told once in the sub-stories and analysed over again by Anthony.

Je Reviens - This is for me the best story, about belonging to a nation and about national identity. The problems I have with it though are two: 1. I can't understand why Penelope of the present day would decide to tell this story to a total stranger; and 2. How does she know the intimate details of what exactly happened inside the taverna during the German occupation between two people, or in the head of the grandmother Evangelia at the flag-waving parade. The story itself is good, or shall I say both sub-stories in it are good, but they are clumsily inserted in the frame of Anthony's collection of anecdotes. This recurring problem has been spoiling the whole book, even more irritatingly than it did in "The Island".

There are some continuity errors among the stories too, which also undermine the value of the whole work. In "Honeymoon" (which stems from the highly unlikely scenario in which a rented "top-of-the-range" Landrover runs out of petrol before the passengers notice!), the first night it's "gone nine thirty" (p.296) but the woman notices the pastel colours of the buildings and the pots of basil hanging from the balconies. Later on we read that the streets are unlit that night, so how does she see the colours and the basil if there's no daylight? The second night, it's only 9 p.m. but it's already too dark (p.314)

In the beginning of Anthony's notebook, the Turkish occupation of Greece lasted for almost five hundred years, and yet on p.240 it is "nearly four centuries"! A hundred years here or there, free or occupied, what does it matter, hey?

The monasteries of Meteora are at six hundred metres on p.217 but next thing we read is they are a thousand metres up (p.225). Remarkable!

I shall remember not to go anywhere near Victoria Hislop's books again, for they are not worth the time. Hopefully I've saved someone else a day or two so they can read something better.

Joanne Robertson says

I don't know why we chose Corfu as our honeymoon destination in 1988 but that first trip to Greece for both of us has led to a yearly holiday to a country that has adopted us as the years have gone by and welcomed our family as it has expanded. We just seem to fit there and now our grandchildren are also experiencing the culture and way of life-capturing the hearts of the Greek people with their willingness to try their food and their language. So I was overjoyed to see that a favourite author had written this absolutely stunning book that is written in one of the most unusual formats I have ever seen. Does it work? Totally!

This is really a series of short stories set within a story...that is set within a story! And it is accompanied by the most stunning photographs throughout that lift this book to another level! When Ellie starts to receive a series of postcards from Greece she becomes obsessed by them. Although obviously for a previous tenant of her flat, she keeps them on her pin-board to gaze upon as they lift her spirit daily and she makes a life changing decision to go to Greece. On the day she leaves for the airport she finds a notebook in her post box which she hurriedly picks up to take with her. Once in Tolon, on her self contained holiday, she starts to read. It's the story of A and his love for S and how, after she stands him up, he travels the country meeting interesting locals who tell him stories.

I just loved these little snatches showing the real Greek people. In such a beautiful country they really do seem to have struck on some terrible hardships both economically and socially. But this strips back the recent revelations to the core with its mix of darkly atmospheric conversations and historical observations, like a set of Greek fables. My personal favourite was *In Love With Love* which I found rather mournful and brought in an archaeological twist. And I loved the mention of the funeral notices as well as I have only just learned of them after spending half an hour this year trying to translate them for my family when we visited one of the oldest villages in Crete. I found them fascinating!

This would make a beautiful present for any lover of Greece. The whole concept of the photographs within a fictional novel is just genius especially when combined with the natural storytelling of Victoria Hislop. This is a country that always seems to have its people at its heart as much as its stunning countryside and scenery so both are photographed to great effect here. It has also encouraged me to maybe move off the beaten track a little more next time (although possible not to the village mentioned in one of the tales!) and just take it all in. There's nothing more relaxing than an ice cold Mythos and a plate of fresh olives as you watch the world go by.

Thank you to Headline for providing my review copy of this glorious book.

Lindsey Preston says

I expected a novel, with a story line. It starts well, I had hope, but I felt disappointed on both counts. Basically a book of short stories .. maybe I should have done my research before reading this. For me Victoria definitely peeked with *The Island*. I haven't enjoyed any of her other books since

Stephanie Wood says

An interesting read of short stories giving a taste of Greek life and culture. It was nice to dip in and out as

time allowed but I prefer Victoria Hislop's novels where the characters are more fully explored.

Mairead Hearne (swirlandthread.com) says

‘Who knows if the tales people told me are true or false? I suspect some of them are complete fabrications, others are exaggeration – but perhaps some of them are real.

You can decide.’

There are certain books that land through my letterbox that result in a funny dance and a scream of joy!! *Cartes Postales from Greece* is one such book.

Written by the wonderful Victoria Hislop, *Cartes Postales from Greece* will be published on the 22nd of September by Headline Review, in Hardback, Ebook and Audiobook.

I was honoured and overjoyed to receive my copy from Caitlin Raynor, Deputy Communications Director with Headline Review, in return for my very honest review.

If I never read one page of this book I would still love it for the amazing photographs taken by Alexandros Kakolyris. The pictures he has captured are a thing of beauty.

‘This is a book conceived under Greece’s unique light, a light that Victoria wanted me to capture. Her imagination is unstoppable. From her reaction I realized what my part in this venture was. It wasn’t only interesting and demanding.....it was fascinating!

I had to capture the story as it was created.’

Cartes Postales is more than just a book.

It is a series of interwoven stories written in a notebook about one man’s journey through Greece. The stories both inform and inspire the reader, with descriptions that surpass anything I’ve read. I have always loved Victoria Hislop’s books but this one is extra special. With paragraphs and stories reminiscent of Paulo Coelho’s writing, the reader is taken on a journey through the history of Greece.

A, the author of these stories, has suffered quite a traumatic breakup and as a writer, decides to catalog his journey on the back of postcards and in a journal. He imagines he is writing to the person he has lost in love and continues to post them to where he thinks she lives.

Ellie, now living at that address, looks forward to receiving these *Cartes Postales* and creates a montage of the photos with dreams of her own. When the cards stop coming, Ellie is bereft. Unhappy with her own life, Ellie decides to go to Greece to follow the path of some of the places identified on the cards.

Before her departure, she receives a very unexpected parcel. It is the journal, written by A.

As Ellie soon realises, she is looking into the private but beautiful thoughts of a man on a journey of discovery. The book takes us on this journey with A as he meets with local people and they recount their stories and the shared stories of others with him.

Documented in the journal, A's writing is that of a man unraveling his thoughts and undertaking a life transforming experience. As I turned over each stunning page, I became totally immersed in the journey with A. In truth I did not want the book to end.

A note from Victoria Hislop:

*'Whenever I create characters, or describe places, or form a plot, I always begin with the photographs that I have taken. I have done this with all my books, from *The Island* onwards. I surrounded myself with visual images once I was back in the UK writing – a huge board with hundreds of photographs.*

And it often occurred to me that it would be wonderful if I could actually use the photographs within a book, the only problem being that mine might not be good enough.

I explored bookshops in England and in Greece to see if anyone was using colour photographs with adult fiction. There was not a single example. It seems that there is a moment in a child's reading life when somebody decides, suddenly, "No more pictures! Words only from now on!" Poor grown-ups.

With Greek photographer, Alexandros Kakolyris we decided together to create a book with words and pictures – a visual story book for grown-ups. Alexandros agreed to travel with me, taking photographs all over Greece with his own idiosyncratic perspective on his own country.

Many of the photographs provided my inspiration.

*The pictures themselves are not purely illustrations, they are the starting point, the *raison d'être* in some way, of the story.'*

In case you haven't guessed it already.....I loved this book.

Cartes Postales from Greece is an evocative collection of inspiring and poignant stories that will awaken your senses and take you on a pilgrimage away from the mundane side of life. It is a book I highly recommend.

Dana Al-Basha ????? ?????? says

Almost in the middle of the book and as much as I adored the beginning, I wasn't expecting short stories without the main one. Here's what I want, I want the girl who traveled from England to Greece to vacation and meet a postal sending guy to actually meet him. The stories are not weird, the author says they are but to me they are normal. I felt really sorry for the state of modern Greece and its economic situation. This is a country that depends entirely on tourism, so I expect that things are going to get even worse for them if the people remain silent.

Vassiliki says

3,5*

Well.

Victoria Hislop is one of my favourite authors ever. For those who don't know, she's an English woman that fell in love with Greece, and has produced several novels set here.

This is a story that contains a lot of stories - a young woman living in London, Ellie, receives a bunch of postcards from Greece, and decides to visit the country. Before she leaves she receives a notebook containing a few Greek stories, written by a man who believes he's sending them to the woman that left him.

The stories are about Greek hospitality, the recent crisis, religion, family, finding yourself, history, customs, and beautiful landscapes. Between them we get snapshots of Ellie's life and the conclusion of the novel is beautiful and inspiring.

I found that the depiction of Greece was quite fair - while I believe Hislop is off the mark on some things (which may just be a matter of perception), it's clear that she both loves this place AND wants to depict it accurately. She's critical and stern at times, affectionate and admiring at others.

I keep trying to pick a favourite story, but I really can't. The last one is the only one I didn't like that much (probably because I've heard the myth of Deadalus and Icarus a bazillion times). They were all beautiful (or haunting, or disturbing, or simply moving) snapshots of Greek life and culture.

All in all, I really loved this book and I am always so touched whenever people write about Greece, ancient or modern or any time in between. She does it so well, and I am truly grateful for that.

PS. This book contains photographs, which is an awesome idea, but the photography lover in me was a bit disappointed. SOME were spectacular and really fit the theme, but lots were uneven or not that well thought out. I suspect this was intentional, and to make them feel amateurish and ~spontaneous, but still.

PS2. I have shelved this book as queer because, even though no story explicitly focuses on queer culture in Greece, there's inclusiveness throughout. I've also shelved it as historical because it has many references to historical events and places.

PS3. Gonna research Lord Byron now, bye. (We love Lord Byron, tis true).

Agi says

I can't actually believe it myself but "Cartes Postales from Greece" is my first book by Victoria Hislop - but what an introduction to this author it was! I've read this book in one day, which for me is like a world record, not because I am reading so slowly or something but because life always gets in the way. However, this time, I put everything aside as this book has just drawn me in and I didn't want to put it down for a single second.

This novel doesn't contain a storyline per se, as it consists of short stories. It starts introducing us to Ellie who is receiving postcards from Greece - postcards addressed to someone other but still coming through her letterbox, postcards signed with "A". Ellie pins all of them on her wall - they are a real sunbeam in her otherwise grim and cloudy life. But one day, on the spur of the moment, she decides that she will travel to Greece - there is nothing that keeps her in London. On the day of her departure, a notebook arrives - a notebook that she takes with her on her travels and discovers that it is also written by "A". And here is where the short stories, told by A, start - stories of his travels through Greece, recounts of his meetings with the Greek people and his re-telling the stories that the locals shared with him after offering him a place to sleep and something to eat.

This book only confirmed my beliefs that I want to see Greece. It was like reading partly myths, partly fiction and partly non-fiction and I loved this perfect mix. The stories were so different, funny, sad, heart-breaking, seeming possible or not possible to happen. It deals not only with feelings, relationships, family bonds, tradition but also with the very present state of economy or politics, and the powerlessness and anger of the characters are so realistically portrayed.

What is also so exceptional for this book is the fact that it is full of photos, illustrating the scenes or places that A visits. The photos are beautiful and they helped me to imagine and see the places even better - it was great to not only imagine things but also see them how they really are.

The author has a brilliant way describing the nature, places and bringing all the scents, sunsets to life. You could easily see that Victoria Hislop loves Greece and Greek people and that she very well understands them, their history and their tradition and that she has a lot of respect to all of the above mentioned.

This book is written in the most unusual way and it worked incredibly well for me. It is like reading stories within a story. They are so different and they are about different issues but I think that there are some things that they have in common - there is always a message in them, there is always love and hope and that in the battle of good against evil it is usually good that wins. They are inspiring and they are beautiful, those stories, and they are written in incredibly vivid and descriptive way. I think I can't say that I have my favourite story as I loved all of them. They are all unforgettable, poignant and so true to life. It was quite emotional, unique book and I am incredibly happy that I was able to read it - it is for sure going to stay with me for a long time and I will be getting back to it. Highly recommended, not only if you love Greece!

Copy provided by the publisher in return for an honest review.
