



Before the Next Bomb Drops

Remi Kanazi

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we are the boat / returning to dock / we are the footprints / on the northern trail / we are the iron / coloring
the soil / we cannot / be erased
—from “Refugee”

Remi Kanazi's poetry presents an unflinching look at the lives of Palestinians under occupation and as refugees scattered across the globe. He captures the Palestinian people's stubborn refusal to be erased, gives voice to the ongoing struggle for liberation, and explores the meaning of international solidarity.

In this latest collection, Kanazi expands his focus outside the sphere of Palestine and presents pieces examining racism in America, police brutality, US militarism at home and wars abroad, conflict voyeurism, Islamophobia, and a range of other issues.

Before the Next Bomb Drops Details

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Author : Remi Kanazi

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From Reader Review Before the Next Bomb Drops for online ebook

Yasmkn says

Before the Next Bomb Drops was refreshing and inspiring. Kanazi presents a perspective we hardly, if ever, hear in mainstream media. Reading his words stimulated my curiosity to read more about Palestine, the "War on Terror," racism, the Black Lives Matter movement, and other important issues of the day. When I finished the book, I felt more informed and more engaged with the world than before. I can't recommend this collection highly enough. I also think it would make a good gift for politically-engaged/curious friends and family.

???? ???????? says

Moving and striking!

Ramzi says

While it may be easy to recognize this book largely for its focus on Palestine, it contains messages that resonate with those who have suffered injustice, universally. Indeed, whether facing different intersections of oppression or even struggling with day-to-day issues, Kanazi's poetry illustrates understanding, not just of injustice, but of life--in general--and through that allows people to find optimistic paths towards resolution.

Sarah says

Powerful and insightful.

Caroline says

2 stars

Here's the thing: I am totally with Kanazi when it comes to his politics/message. Where he loses me with this book is the fact that the poems are just not poetic enough for me. Sometimes I'll read a collection and think "okay, this works more as slam poetry" and can appreciate that it's just a type of poetry that I just don't really care for, but I really didn't think the poems here even live up to that standard. I would echo what another reviewer said about Kanazi's writing is more suited to a sharply worded essay. His poems are just like blunt objects--even though the subject matter is very intense and personal, I wasn't particularly moved, not like I have been by poetry from other Palestine-adjacent poets. It's really awkward to be reading about the horrific suffering of the Palestinian people and somehow just be bored. Kanazi would probably write a poem about how that statement exemplifies my white privilege--which, yes--, but it's not my fault his collection is so

unceasingly monotone. I mean I feel like I read several poems that were mirrors of each other. On a different note, I thought it was admirable that Kanazi tries to link the Palestinian movement to that of Black Lives Matter but it was pretty sloppily done. There are plenty of parallels, but he didn't always connect them persuasively (not that I think it's the job of poems necessarily to be persuasive... again, this book should have been an essay/essays). And he really stretched my patience in the poem where he compared Mike Brown's death to that of Natalee Holloway's, as if to say "why did people care more about her death than his?" It's such an apples to oranges situation... someone who was murdered by a racist police officer vs. a sensationalized civilian murder that had more to do with misogyny and the dangers of traveling while female than anything else. Like... why did he think that was a strong argument? It was so off-topic and illogical that it really put me off and made the rest of the collection a slog.

It really does pain me to be so critical of a book that in theory, I should have really appreciated, but I needed so much more from these poems for them to *feel* like poems to me. But I truly wish him luck with all his activism because his cause is definitely one I support and believe in.

If you would like to read poems about similar subject matter, where the poets channel their grief and rage and frustration into something that actually engages with the tradition of poetry and do so very skillfully, I recommend *Water & Salt and Look*.

Rozina says

I loved this collection and I read a lot of poetry. Honest, direct, and passionate. Some poems seem written like they are meant to educate, while others sit on the page like a call to action. As someone who has spent time in Palestine and organized on campus, the different themes covered (the Nakba, BDS, anti-normalization, Israeli occupation) really captivated me. But the collection goes beyond Palestine, articulating a platform for liberation for all peoples facing injustice.

Before the Next Bomb Drops is a critical read for anyone committed to developing a deeper understanding of social justice in a global context.

Nahid Soltanzadeh says

1. As I was reading the heartbreaking descriptions of Palestinian struggle, I realized this is the first time I'm reading a narrative of Palestine issues by a Palestinian author. Growing up in Iran, I used to hear a lot about Intifada, Aqsa, Nakba, Israel regime, ... but everything I know comes from a narrative offered to me through the political agenda of Islamic Republic of Iran. I feel awful. I wrote a freaking master thesis about narrative critical literacy and the necessity of having access to multiple narratives. Yet, I had never even tried to find a first hand narrative of Palestinian people. *Before the Next Bomb Drops* reminded me of the gaps in my understanding of the issue.

2. I think the entire book could've been written in the form of a sharp, passionate, and candid essay. An essay that you cannot walk away from and be the same person you were before. I read all of the poems in one sitting and at some point it felt like I'm reading the same statements over and over again. Too direct and straightforward for a book of poetry.

3. Still, I do really appreciate Kanazi's unapologetic anger and rage. Such a great wake-up call.

Andrew Kadi says

Remi Kanazi is brilliant. This book is filled with both moving and empowering verses. The hashtag poems are brilliant.

Overall great to buy and dig into my 2nd book by Kanazi.

For those of us who know about so many of the issues mentioned, this book materializes many of the things we want to articulate at times but cannot (for one reason or another). It speaks in a voice raised to represent our frustrations, anger, and empathy.

For those who don't know as much about issues like Palestine, bombing of Iraq & Afghanistan etc, stop & frisk and police brutality, etc - this is a poetic introduction that will get you reading. Kanazi's lines betray the extensive reading he's done (whether by Palestinian, Iraqi, Afghani, black or other authors).

Justin Yun says

Wow. What a powerful book. Supposed to be studying for my midterms, but I said, "nah, forget that...I wanna read some poetry." Picked up this book thinking it was nothing more than one hundred pages of poetry that will only gouge my interest amidst my monotonous studying session... Kanazi reminded me poetry is beautiful as much as it is tragic, for one will never know what one will find around the next corner. Poetry doesn't have to make you weep or dance in order for it to be considered great. It doesn't matter what you feel after you have read this book. This book isn't about you. It's about the Palestinians. It's about the Iraqis. It's about all those who have been racially targeted and killed by police brutality. I highly recommend this book to anyone, though with a caveat that one should not underestimate or judge this book simply by its size or cover. Thanks Kanazi for giving texture to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as visceral and raw as it was.

Andrew says

Full disclosure: I received this book as part of a Goodreads giveaway. Thanks to Remi, Haymarket Books, and Goodreads for the book!

And another disclaimer while I'm at it: going into this book, I had next to no knowledge of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Pretty much nothing, to be honest. Which is absolutely inexcusable. Which made this book all the more eye-opening. He employs a very direct style to his writing, which makes every poem in this collection incredibly powerful. His anger, his disillusionment, just leaps off of the page, and makes you feel every single word that he's written. It can be exhausting to read this sometimes, but that's the point. As I said, this was my first time learning about this conflict, but it's certainly not going to be my last. A collection that is both absolutely important and absolutely brilliant.

Martin Kennedy says

So intense

Karim Anani says

For the next 24 hours, Haymarket Books is giving away the ebook for *Before the Next Bomb Drops* for free, so here's a super quick review for anyone interested (written while I figure-out a way to cut down the number of books I'm picking-up during this sale):

Before the Next Bomb Drops is a slim but powerful collection of poetry. Like so much modern poetry, it foregoes rhyming for flow, and, like so much socially and politically-minded poetry, it's written to provoke impassioned feelings, not calm ones. (For reasons beyond my understanding, I tried reading *Before the Next Bomb Drops* before bedtime once. It was like getting hit in the vein with a coffee.) It might help to have a basic understanding of Palestinian-Israeli history, though there are no references (Nakba, Irgun, Haganah) that a quick Google search wouldn't adequately explain.

Are all the poems excellent? No, of course not. Some of them are "merely" good. But you'll keep coming across lines as powerful as Kanazi's most famous verse:

We will return.
That is not a threat
not a wish
a hope
or a dream
but a promise.

It's even more powerful in context.

(I haven't managed to knock off a single book from my shopping cart. First world problems, amiright?)

Bob says

Damn, this is really good and intense. Obviously it has a lot to say about the Palestinian/Israeli situation/conflict/etc., but it has a lot to say about place like Ferguson, and issues like Stop And Frisk. I happened up Remi when I discovered Haymarket Books, and saw a video of him reciting one of these poems and it was powerful. I got no answers to the problems in Palestine - too ignorant to really comment with any intelligence - but man people all over sure have the capacity for too-simple answers and injustice, as well as good.

Shirien says

I personally really enjoy reading poems not just for pleasure but for a dose of reality. And that's what Remi Kanazi's poems give us. His poetry is social-justice oriented, calling out for justice, freedom, and equality here in the U.S., in Palestine, and elsewhere. Really brilliant and eloquent. Very inspiring. Highly recommended!

Laura says

Holy shit.

This is the kind of book where you have to stop, breathe, and process after each poem. The kind that breaks your heart and then sets the pieces on fire with rage about the injustices of the world, all while being utterly beautiful.
