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Autobiography & Memoir

Amazing Adventures of a Nobody
Leon Logothetis
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The line between television and real life, never clear to begin with, has grown a bit foggier with the release of Leon Logothetis' new memoir, *Amazing Adventures of a Nobody*. Based on the reality-television show by the same name, Logothetis' book offers a look inside the mind of either the savior of America's reputation or the greatest flimflam man since Ponzi to cross the Atlantic.

Haunted by a growing sense of disconnectedness and isolation, and stuck at an unsatisfying job, Logothetis's idea is as simple and naive as it is endearing and heartwarming. As many people have wanted to do, he left his job, cell phone, and home to travel across the United States. Logothetis landed in New York with an allowance of $5.00 a day and a camera crew, got advice from a pimp, a blessing from a wrestling priest, and was on his way.

America has a rich tradition of supporting those wonderful heroes who break away from the norm regardless of where they are from. As a people, Americans are known for their hospitality, warmth, and willingness to open their hearts and doors to complete strangers. And Logothetis, pilgarlic and unassuming, brings out the best in those around him. Like pulling a strand of mismatched pearls out of a Cracker Jack box, *Amazing Adventures of a Nobody* is a string of one unexpected drop of kindness after another. It's a heartland meal of chicken fried steaks, quaint college pranks, and busy people taking time from their day to do something nice.

But in the context of today's shaky economy with its double-digit unemployment percentages and libraries doubling as impromptu day shelters for the homeless, *Amazing Adventures of a Nobody* may leave some readers a bit queasy. Consider Logothetis's ride out of Gallup, New Mexico. After finding out where he stayed, his survival shocks a good Samaritan. "The area is renown for the … . darker elements of Gallop: rapes, fights, drug deals happen all the time," Logothetis is told. "So many, the newspaper stopped covering it. Last week there was a murder at one of the motels."

The juxtaposition of a person accepting a festering, blighted area within his or own community alongside that same person helping a stranger who doesn't truly need help preys on the reader's mind. It feels uncomfortable. And that is the key to Leon Logothetis's entire con. While offering other people the chance to help him, he's really providing the opportunity for people to help themselves, to reexamine those around them with slightly less skepticism, and feel a little bit more connected.

Joseph Thompson