

## The Wishing Shelf Book Awards

17th January 2023

**TITLE:** The Buddha and the Bee: Biking through America's Forgotten Roadways on a Journey of Discovery

**AUTHOR:** Cory Mortensen

**Star Rating:** 4

### CATCHY QUOTE

'A compelling jumble of facts, feelings, and dodgy hotel rooms. Highly recommended!' The Wishing Shelf

### REVIEW

I must begin by saying how much I enjoyed this 'travel book' by Cory Mortensen. I put 'travel book' in inverted commas as, to be honest, it's probably not the best way of summing it up. The book is, in fact, many things. Firstly, it's often reflective, the author happy to focus on his life and how he got to where he is. Saying that, it's not particularly deep; it's too light for that. Still, there's honesty there, and I like that. Secondly, it's a highly amusing look at forgotten America; the towns (and hotel rooms) not listed in any tourist book. And it was this part I enjoyed the most, particularly as the author has excellent comic timing!

In terms of the writing style, you'll find a lot of short paragraphs, and a tendency for the author to jump from topic to topic: what he sees, how he feels, how tired he is. In many ways, the structure of the book reflects the author's slightly haphazard planning of the trip; everything's a bit muddled, facts here, facts there, a bit of a ramble. But I'm

not criticising the author for this as, in many ways, the unpredictability of the journey and the unpredictability of how the author puts over that journey is what kept me turning the page. In this book, you'll never know what's going to happen next!

All in all, this is a compelling story of a man who suddenly finds himself on a cycling trip he's in no way prepared for. It's a bit like Forest Gump when he suddenly decided to run across America! But it's that lack of 'being prepared' and, indeed, the lack of planning in the book, which helped to make it that little bit different.

**A 'Wishing Shelf' Book Review**

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