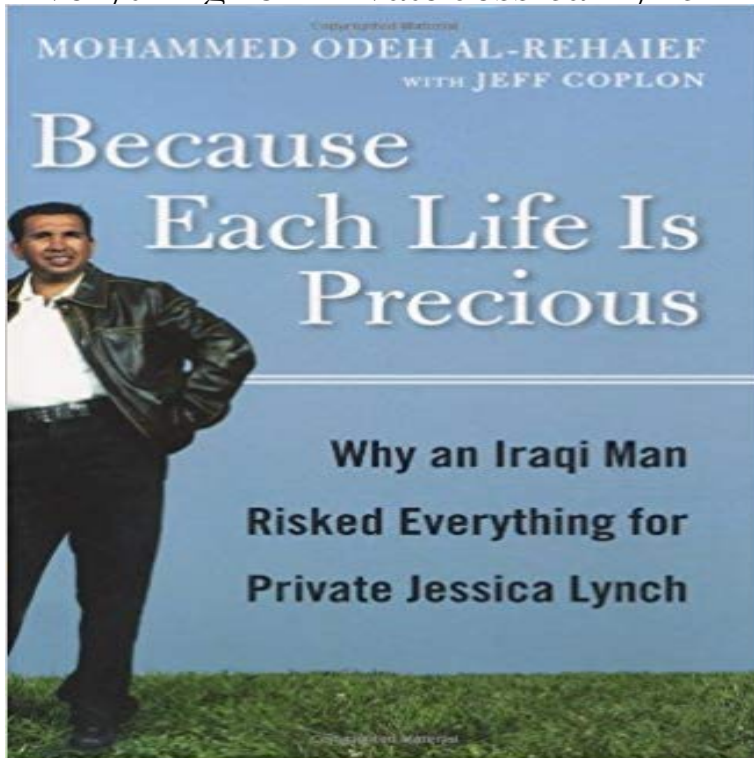


# Because Each Life Is Precious: Why an Iraqi Man Came to Risk Everything for Private Jessica Lynch



For thirty-three-year-old Mohammed al-Rehaief, this decision -- whether to risk his life and everything he held dear to save Private First Class Jessica Lynch, an American soldier he did not know -- was more than the everyday reckoning with death that permeates wartime. It was the culmination of a life spent at odds with the repressive regime that held his country. Mohammed's story is the tale of what it was like to come of age in a society where violence and betrayal were everyday events, where one in five adult males worked for the state's security apparatus, where a president-for-life demanded absolute loyalty and adulation. Despite his affluent upbringing and a well-connected uncle, Mohammed was hardly sheltered from the surreal cruelties of Iraq. He was arrested and beaten for owning a satellite dish. His young daughter lost a lung to misdiagnosis and unnecessary surgery. An idolized cousin was hanged for joining an Islamic political group. A favorite teacher was carted away for making subversive statements and was never seen again. Yet even as he navigates a culture tarnished by brutality and corruption, Mohammed also reveals unexpected sides of Iraq, scenes of surprising tenderness and stubborn generosity. He writes with insight and humor about the Iraqi schools, the vagaries of its divorce law, the poignant dynamic between its fathers and sons -- between tradition and jolting change. As Mohammed offers his powerful perspective on the most publicized story of this controversial war, he emerges as an unlikely hero, a complex and charming character whose values transcend ideology: honor, compassion, and an unshakable belief in the sanctity of human life.

Because Each Life Is Precious : Why an Iraqi Man Risked Everything for Private Jessica to risk his life and his family to save Private First Class Jessica Lynch -- an Mohammed's story is a coming of age tale in a society where violence

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