



My Name Is Iran

Davar Ardalan

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A century of family tales from two beloved but divided homelands, Iran and America

Drawing on her remarkable personal history, NPR producer Davar Ardalan brings us the lives of three generations of women and their ordeals with love, rejection, and revolution. Her American grandmother's love affair with an Iranian physician took her from New York to Iran in 1931. Ardalan herself moved from San Francisco to rural Iran in 1964 with her Iranian American parents who barely spoke Farsi. After her parents' divorce, Ardalan joined her father in Brookline, Massachusetts, where he had gone to make a new life; however improbably, after high school, Ardalan decided to move back to an Islamic Iran. When she arrived, she discovered a world she hardly recognized, and one which demands a near-complete renunciation of the freedoms she experienced in the West. In time, she and her young family make the opposite migration and discover the difficulties, however paradoxical, inherent in living a free life in America.

My Name Is Iran Details

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From Reader Review My Name Is Iran for online ebook

Jenny Hawley says

This was an interesting book, but it wasn't the most engaging to read. I have read a lot of non-fiction and memoirs, and some are just more page-turning than others. This one was a little slow. I felt a lot of it was just her style of writing. It's very straight-forward, factual, which, of course, is necessary in non-fiction, but it lacked some of the stylistic flair of other non-fiction accounts I've read

Taliya Ali says

i read it till i reached the middle of it and the i've stopped.. it was really boring but i used to tell myself to continue reading maybe it will change and becomes interesting.. but unfortunately it became worse so i stopped.. dont waste ur time, read another book ;)

Gaelle says

Very disappointing -- dropped it about 2/3 through, as I just didn't find it that interesting.

Colleen Clark says

The author, whose first name is Iran, was born of Iranian parents in San Francisco in 1964. Her parents had been brought up in the US, one of her grandmothers is an non-Iranian American. When she was still an infant, her architect father took a job in an obscure town named Suleyman's Mosque in southwestern Iran, much closer to Basra, Iraq than to Tehran. A lot of the book is about the complicated history of her family. She spent a lot of her early years going back and forth between the US and Iran and eventually had to choose whether she was going to live her life in Iran or in the US. Eventually she settled in the Washington, DC area and became a journalist with NPR.

I found her story very interesting - perhaps partly because I lived in eastern Turkey in my early 20's.

I see from the reviews that many readers did not like this book. I did. It certainly is relevant to religious and cultural issues facing our country and the world.

Cknot1sk says

i was expecting a lot more from this book. while i love reading about iran, i found her style jumpy, and i lacked empathy for her and her family.

Fadillah says

I was impressed how Davar managed to trace her lineal of both her grandparents in maternal and paternal side. This book, at first, failed to attract my attention. Iran has been one of my great interests among others. I may not have been there yet but i always try finding a reading materials that associated with the country but to be honest, this book would not be my first pick. However, i'm starting to get invested little by little when Davar start telling from her soul and shared her inner struggle in this book. As most people would say, learning never stop and thats exactly what Davar did. She tried to make sense of where she belonged, her sense of direction, her vast culture and her expericence in reconnecting with her faith. This is a good book if you are in the journey of soul searching and rediscovering yourself. I'm glad i finished the book though the beginning of it is a bit slow. Anyway, 4 stars from me.

Jamie says

Interesting perspective about life in Iran, if you don't know much about Iran this is book can help you understand what normal life is like. I didn't care much for the author's writing style, it seemed a little self conscious to me.

Colin says

Nice memoir of a revered journalist and family friend. Insightful to Persian culture, the way reality and folklore intertwine and the tension between tradition and modernity. Davar a pioneer, really enjoyed reading!

Slygly says

My Name is Iran by Davar Ardalan is an astonishing and inspiring memoir of three generations of Iranian-American women who wander repeatedly between the two countries and extremes of living, sometimes becoming key players in Iranian politics and history. The volume proves without a doubt that every daughter is destined to turn into her mother, eventually. This wasn't my usual sort of favorite book that keeps me up all night with sweaty palms and prevents me from eating on time, but I was nonetheless blown away and grant it a whopping five stars.

The memoir is so incredible at times that it is hard to believe it is non-fiction. It seemed as if every person in Ardalan's family could have become the focus of their own books; not a dud in the bunch. There was one bummer of a chapter early on where Arladan waxes at length about her childhood travels- nothing is so agonizing as listening about someone else's fabulous vacations- but the rest of the book made up for it.

Most of all, I loved this book because reading it felt like chatting with a friend over tea. Ardalan is a journalist- a senior producer at NPR- and her style of writing is reminiscent of that; straightforward and no literary dodging. And we both adore NPR, of course. Reading her casual references to NPR coworkers was like hearing about extended family- such as Nina Totenberg who gently prods me out of my morning haze and Robert Siegel who is my daily dinner guest.

One book leads inevitably to another: I'm adding to my staggering "to-read" list *Reading Lolita in Tehran* by Azar Nafisi. Anyone out there have suggestions for more in the genre to add?

Katie says

Davar Ardalan certainly has a unique, rich and complex family history. I appreciated her candor about her journey to know herself, and I enjoyed the window into her cultural experiences and perspectives. I was very interested in and impressed by her work with NPR. She is a lovely person who I would enjoy meeting someday!

Walker Lamond says

A lovely exploration of Iranian history, family, and personal identity. The story of the author's American grandmother and her journey to Iran is especially fascinating, as is the author's first hand account of Iran during the revolution.

Lynette Hague says

This is the first book I have read with insight into the history and culture of Iran. My only previous experience with Iran was back in Jr. High when we had to journal about the hostage crisis. I did enjoy the later part of the book when the author was able to relate more of the stories and impact of her great grandfather and his work.

Heidi says

Introspective and honest, if not occasionally self-indulgent and flighty.

Patricia says

Her story is fascinating and she does an admirable job of sharing the beauty of Iran and Iranian culture. However, I lost interest several times throughout the book as her writing style became more of a recording of events than a personal memoir.

Lori Mendenhall says

while I think this could have been a very interesting book, I just didn't care about the author's family details very much. I read the beginning and then started skimming through to the halfway point. didn't read the end so maybe it got better in the middle. anyway, was disappointed in this one didn't grab me at all.

