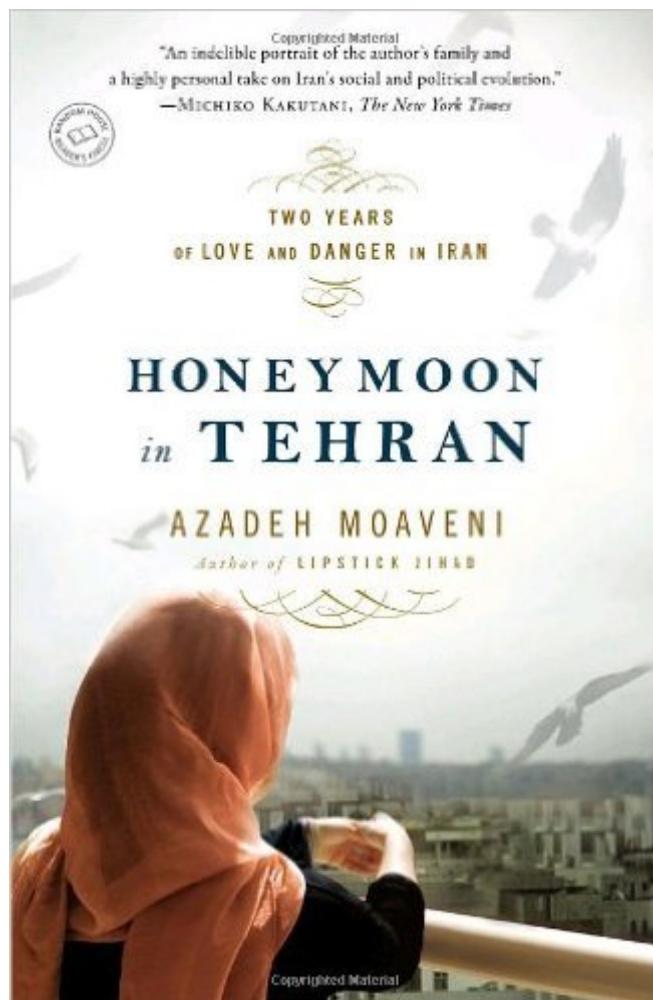


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Honeymoon In Tehran: Two Years Of Love And Danger In Iran



Synopsis

Azadeh Moaveni, longtime Middle East correspondent for Time magazine, returns to Iran to cover the rise of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Living and working in Tehran, she finds a nation that openly yearns for freedom and contact with the West but whose economic grievances and nationalist spirit find an outlet in Ahmadinejad's strident pronouncements. And then the unexpected happens: Azadeh falls in love with a young Iranian man and decides to get married and start a family in Tehran. Suddenly, she finds herself navigating an altogether different side of Iranian life. As women are arrested for "immodest dress" and the authorities unleash a campaign of intimidation against journalists, Azadeh is forced to make the hard decision that her family's future lies outside Iran. Powerful and poignant, *Honeymoon in Tehran* is the harrowing story of a young woman's tenuous life in a country she thought she could change.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

For the past two years, I've been reading a great deal about the societies, politics, and cultures of contemporary Islamic countries. I admit I've become fascinated by the subject. Therefore, it was with great eagerness that I looked forward to reading Azadeh Moaveni's new memoir, "Honeymoon in Tehran: Two Years of Love and Danger in Iran." The book did not disappoint. When it arrived, I intended to just browse around for a few minutes and then set it aside for reading later when I had more time. But before I knew it, I was almost half-finished. Page after page, I found the book answering so many of the questions I had stockpiled in my brain over the years about contemporary Iran and Iranians. The book was a genuine eye-opener--an intriguing glimpse inside the social and

political mind of a nation. The book is a memoir covering two years in the life of an American-Iranian journalist sent to Iran by Time magazine to cover its politics and culture. The book starts in the late Spring of 2005, when the Iranian presidential elections were in full swing. Over the next two years, the book covers the rise of Iranian President Ahmadinejad and the successes and failures of his administration in the eyes of the populace. In the background, and with equal insight into the social and cultural pulse of the nation, Moaveni covers her own personal life. During this period, Moaveni navigates the Islamic cultural minefields of falling in love, moving in with her boyfriend, getting pregnant, and getting married in that order. All the while, she must deal with her creepy and intimidating government "political handler," Mr. X--the man assigned by the Iranian Ministry of Intelligence to make sure that Moaveni's political reporting doesn't stray too far into areas that the government might find damaging.

I read Azadeh Moaveni's second memoir with the same pleasure that I got from *Lipstick Jihad*. Ms. Moaveni is an exceptionally honest writer. She tells the reader precisely who she is, what she is feeling and where she stands. Her story reflects the ambiguity felt by thousands of Iranians who love their culture and their country, but have to put up with the challenges of living in the Islamic Republic. The memoir also provides a rare glimpse into the everyday workings of a Western journalist in Iran, and how social and political conditions shape reporting and work. The book will be a challenge for some, because it requires some previous knowledge of the history and society of the country to fully appreciate Ms. Moaveni's observations. It is also important to note that, even though Ms. Moaveni tries hard to distance herself from her immediate family situation to present a broad picture of Iranian society, the truth is that she can not really escape from the privileges that accord to the wealthy and respected family of her husband--things that, for example, allow her to hold a wedding reception with mixed company, serving champagne without government interference. This is exceptionally privileged behavior unavailable to 99% of Iranians (of course, many would not want to hold this kind of celebration anyway). The insights into the rigors of planning a modern wedding in Iran are wonderful in their ethnographic detail. The book is also exceptionally useful as documentation of the first two years of President Ahmadinejad's term of office. The changes in restrictions on social behavior during this period are a precursor to the disturbances following the Presidential election of 2009.

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