



Rooftops of Tehran: A Novel

By Mahbod Seraji

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From "a striking new talent" (Sandra Dallas, author of *Tallgrass*) comes an unforgettable debut novel of young love and coming of age in an Iran headed toward revolution.

In this poignant, eye-opening and emotionally vivid novel, Mahbod Seraji lays bare the beauty and brutality of the centuries-old Persian culture, while reaffirming the human experiences we all share.

In a middle-class neighborhood of Iran's sprawling capital city, 17-year-old Pasha Shahed spends the summer of 1973 on his rooftop with his best friend Ahmed, joking around one minute and asking burning questions about life the next. He also hides a secret love for his beautiful neighbor Zari, who has been betrothed since birth to another man. But the bliss of Pasha and Zari's stolen time together is shattered when Pasha unwittingly acts as a beacon for the Shah's secret police. The violent consequences awaken him to the reality of living under a powerful despot, and lead Zari to make a shocking choice...

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Rooftops of Tehran: A Novel By Mahbod Seraji Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #84945 in Books
- Brand: Seraji, Mahbod
- Published on: 2009-05-05
- Released on: 2009-05-05
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.26" h x .81" w x 5.50" l, .90 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 368 pages

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Set in 1970s Iran during the shah's regime, this earnest, semiautobiographical debut novel is told from the perspective of bookish 17-year-old Pasha Shahed, who, along with his best friend Ahmed, plays soccer, goofs off and thinks about girls. But Pasha pines for one girl in particular—his neighbor Zari, betrothed since birth to Pasha's mentor, the neighborhood radical, Ramin Sobhi, whom everyone calls Doctor. Over a summer Ahmed orchestrates daily meetups with his own beloved, Faheemeh, and includes Pasha and Zari. [...] The prose has the simplicity of a nonnative English speaker, which could be seen as clichéd (treasure of love, dark winter of my life) or charmingly romantic. Seraji captures the thoughts and emotions of a young boy and creates a moving portrait of the history and customs of the Persians and life in Iran during this period. (*May*)

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From [Booklist](#)

Pasha Shahed is a typical teenage boy who likes hanging out with his friends on the rooftop terrace of his house, dreaming about life, love, and what the future holds. What makes this 17-year-old different is that he is living under the harsh reign of the shah in Iran during the summer of 1973. With his biggest worry being his feelings for Zari, the girl next door who has been promised to another since birth, Pasha has a rude awakening[...] Told in Pasha's unique voice and partially in flashback, Seraji's wonderful coming-of-age story is at times funny and sweet as well as thought-provoking and heart-wrenching. --Carolyn Kubisz

Review

"A stirring story about the loss of innocence, *Rooftops of Tehran* reveals a side of Iran understood by few Westerners. An ambitious first novel—full of humor, originality, and meaning."

- John Shors, author of *Beneath a Marble Sky*

"*Rooftops of Tehran* is a richly rendered first novel about courage, sacrifice, and the bonds of friendship and love. In clear, vivid details, Mahbod Seraji opens the door to the fascinating world of Iran and provides a revealing glimpse into the life and customs of a country on the verge of a revolution. A captivating read."

-Gail Tsukiyama, Author of *The Street of a Thousand Blossoms* and *The Samurai's Garden*

"In his haunting debut novel, Mahbod Seraji brings humor and humanity to a story of secret love in the brutal last days of the Shah. Set against the background of repression that launched the Iranian revolution, Pasha's and Zari's story shows that love and hope among the young thrive even in the most oppressive of times. Seraji is a striking new talent."

- Sandra Dallas, author of *Tallgrass*

"*Rooftops of Tehran* evoked many memories, along with tears and smiles, of starry nights on rooftops, long lost loves, and intense, passionate feelings of anger at the injustices... of the Pahlavi regime."

-Nahid Mozaffari, editor of *Strange Times, My Dear: The PEN Anthology of Contemporary Iranian Literature*

"Beyond being a bittersweet love story, *Rooftops of Tehran* is a story of Community. No reader will be unfamiliar to the situation of the alley--the neighborhood--where these characters are united and bound together by history, ritual, grief, respect, and by the bond of protection that arises under the brutality of an oppressive government. *Rooftops of Tehran* takes an uncommon and refreshing view of Iran and reveals how an American immigrant is born out of a young foreigner's desperation for self-determination and social freedom."

-Susanne Pari, author of *The Fortune Catcher*

"*Rooftops of Tehran* combines a coming of age love story with a compelling tale of struggle against dictatorship. You learn a lot about Iranian culture while coming to understand characters with universal appeal."

- Reese Erlich, author *The Iran Agenda: The Real Story of US Policy and the Middle East Crisis*

"What a profound pleasure to discover such solid storytelling and splendid prose in a debut novel. With the voice of a poet, Seraji has told a universal tale of love, loss, and ultimately of hope. It is this hope, most of all, that will linger long after the last page is turned. Thank God for authors like Seraji, who show us that no matter how distant apart our worlds may be, in the humanness of our hearts we are all united."

-William Kent Krueger, author of *Red Knife* and the award-winning *Cork O'Connor* series

"Repression and revolution provide the background for a deeply felt love story that gives outsiders a rare look inside modern Iran. This is a gripping account of a nation's violent lurch from one kind of tyranny to another, and also a delicately insightful portrait of how ordinary people react when their worlds suddenly collapse. At a time when we urgently need to know more about Iranians, *Rooftops of Tehran* introduces both the complexity of their political history and the richness of their emotional lives."

-Stephen Kinzer, author of *All the Shah's Men: An American Coup and the Roots of Middle East Terror*

"Seraji's wonderful coming-of-age story is at times funny and sweet as well as thought-provoking and heart-wrenching. A powerful tale of the universal longings of teenagers compounded by the horrors of tyranny."

-*Booklist*

"...charmingly romantic...Seraji captures the thoughts and emotions of a young boy and creates a moving portrait of the history and customs of the Persians and life in Iran."

-*Publisher's Weekly*

"Refreshingly filled with love rather than sex, this coming-of-age novel examines the human cost of political repression."

-*Kirkus*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Dana Gallo:

Typically the book *Rooftops of Tehran: A Novel* will bring someone to the new experience of reading a book. The author style to elucidate the idea is very unique. Should you try to find new book to learn, this book very suitable to you. The book *Rooftops of Tehran: A Novel* is much recommended to you to read. You can also get the e-book through the official web site, so you can quickly to read the book.

Doreen Williams:

The book untitled *Rooftops of Tehran: A Novel* is the book that recommended to you you just read. You can see the quality of the e-book content that will be shown to an individual. The language that article author use to explained their ideas are easily to understand. The article author was did a lot of research when write the book, hence the information that they share to your account is absolutely accurate. You also could possibly

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Paul Kindig:

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