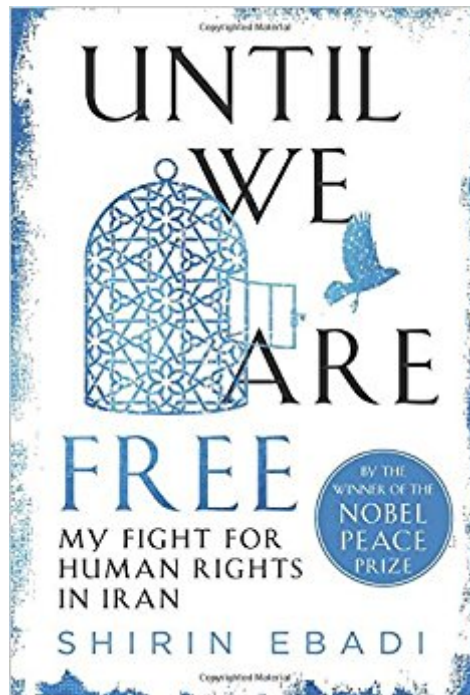




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# Until We Are Free: My Fight For Human Rights In Iran



## Synopsis

The first Muslim woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, Shirin Ebadi has inspired millions around the globe through her work as a human rights lawyer defending women and children against a brutal regime in Iran. Now Ebadi tells her story of courage and defiance in the face of a government out to destroy her, her family, and her mission: to bring justice to the people and the country she loves. For years the Islamic Republic tried to intimidate Ebadi, but after Mahmoud Ahmadinejad rose to power in 2005, the censorship and persecution intensified. The government wiretapped Ebadi's phones, bugged her law firm, sent spies to follow her, harassed her colleagues, detained her daughter, and arrested her sister on trumped-up charges. It shut down her lectures, fired up mobs to attack her home, seized her offices, and nailed a death threat to her front door. Despite finding herself living under circumstances reminiscent of a spy novel, nothing could keep Ebadi from speaking out and standing up for human dignity. But it was not until she received a phone call from her distraught husband and he made a shocking confession that would all but destroy her family that she realized what the intelligence apparatus was capable of to silence its critics. The Iranian government would end up taking everything from Shirin Ebadi—her marriage, friends, and colleagues, her home, her legal career, even her Nobel Prize—but the one thing it could never steal was her spirit to fight for justice and a better future. This is the amazing, at times harrowing, simply astonishing story of a woman who would never give up, no matter the risks. Just as her words and deeds have inspired a nation, *Until We Are Free* will inspire you to find the courage to stand up for your beliefs. Praise for *Until We Are Free*—Ebadi recounts the cycle of sinister assaults she faced after she won the Nobel Prize in 2003. Her new memoir, written as a novel-like narrative, captures the precariousness of her situation and her determination to stand firm. "The Washington Post" "Powerful . . . Although [Ebadi's] memoir underscores that a slow change will have to come from within Iran, it is also proof of the stunning effects of her nonviolent struggle on behalf of those who bravely, and at a very high cost, keep pushing for the most basic rights." "The New York Times Book Review" "Shirin Ebadi is quite simply the most vital voice for freedom and human rights in Iran." "Reza Aslan, author of *No god but God* and *Zealot*" "Shirin Ebadi writes of exile hauntingly and speaks of Iran, her homeland, as the poets do. Ebadi is unafraid of addressing the personal as well as the political and does both fiercely, with introspection and fire." "Fatima Bhutto, author of *The Shadow of the Crescent Moon*" "I would encourage all to read Dr. Shirin Ebadi's memoir and to understand how her struggle for human rights continued after winning the Nobel Peace Prize. It is also fascinating to see how she has been affected positively and negatively by her Nobel Prize. This is a must read for all." "Desmond Tutu" "A

revealing portrait of the state of political oppression in Iran . . . [Ebadi] is an inspiring figure, and her suspenseful, evocative story is unforgettable.â Publishers Weekly (starred review)â Ebadiâs courage and strength of character are evident throughout this engrossing text.â Kirkus Reviews

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

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story is unforgettable. • "Publishers Weekly (starred review) • Ebadi's courage and strength of character are evident throughout this engrossing text, which illuminates the power the few have had over the many, particularly the women and children of Iran. The captivating and candid story of a woman who took on the Iranian government and survived, despite every attempt to make her fail. • "Kirkus Reviews

Dr. Shirin Ebadi was one of Iran's first female judges and served as the first female chief magistrate of one of the country's highest courts until the 1979 Islamic Revolution stripped her of her judgeship. In the 1990s Ebadi returned to the law as a defender of women's and children's rights, founding a human rights center that spearheaded legal reform and public debate around the Islamic Republic's discriminatory laws. She has defended many of the country's most prominent prisoners of conscience and spent nearly a month in prison in 1999 for her activities. For many years she was at the center of Iran's grassroots women's movement. In 2003 she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her work. Since the election uprising of June 2009 she has lived in exile.

Iran has always been part, but never a big part, of the American life I've lived. When I was in graduate school in 1979 a friend and fellow student went home to Iran and never came back. Now, a close friend and native Texan treasures her Persian heritage by sharing it. And Iran has appeared and continues to appear, maybe too frequently, on the national news. Rarely is the news good. But for me, Persia is in the distant background, almost to the horizon. Or was, until I read this book. Rarely do I complete a book within 24 hours of the time the sack appears on my doorway. This one, yes. I cancelled plans, ate canned soup, and read. It is fascinating and eye-opening on many counts. I now have a clearer (clear may be out of the question) understanding of recent Iranian history and how it fits into world events and I now know the people (men!) behind the names in the news across the years. But more, I experienced the life of a woman of about my age living a life and losing a life there. Nobel Peace Prize winner Shirin Ebadi brings it all: Not only her personal memoir, but the role of women in the Iranian world and in the world at large--She unapologetically presents both. I did not agree with some decisions, but I wasn't standing her shoes and I certainly appreciate her logic.

The truth about Iran might be another subtitle to this memoir by Shirin Ebadi. What does Valerie Jarrett (born in Iran and closest adviser to the Obamas) have to say about this expose on the

contemporary government of Iran? How can the USA deal with a country lead by blatant and evil abusers of human rights? How does Ebadi find the strength to focus on her dream for a humane Iran? How could the threats to her person, her family, and her friends get any worse? Thank goodness Ebadi can write and publish.

This is a very informative book about Iran and Iranians, especially the relationship between the people of Iran and their radical, corrupt Islamic government (who hijacked a popular uprising against the Shah, and incorrectly hailed it an "Islamic Revolution.") The author does a masterful job of describing the corruption and hypocrisy of the Islamic government and its military puppets/protectors (ISRG). One reviewer has complained that someone made some mistakes in translation, "The most glaring one is replacing "Allah" with "God", clearly trying to emphasis a more relatable term and establish a more secular view point for Western readers but is still wrong and a cultural slur and actually creates an insult between both Eastern and Western cultures." This opinion is totally wrong; most Iranians are pretty secular, and prefer to refer to *Āhura Mazda* (historical pre-Islamic god) rather than Allah (*Allāh*). It is odd, however, how wedded Iranians are to Islam. This is despite the fact that perhaps their greatest poet Ferdowsi (*Abū al-Qāsim Ferdowsi*) complained that "Uncivilized Arabs have come and made me a Muslim". The fact remains, however, that most Iranians view the West and America favorably, while the radical Islamic government, and Khamenei in particular, absolutely hates the USA and UK, and the Great Satan becomes more evil in their eyes every day. These old-time hard-liners are so afraid of regime change (fomented by the West, of course) that they have their own, personal massive military forces (3 of them: the ISRG, the Pasdaran, and the Basiji) to protect them!!! And the old SAVAK of the Shah has been replaced by an even-more-vile SAVAMA. It is for this reason, among others, that we must continue a dialog with Iran, until a day when the old-line religious fanatics are gone and the younger, more open-minded populace takes charge. Thus, the title of Shirin Ebadi's book: "Until We Are Free..."

I could not put this book down - and it still keeps haunting me. Do you want to know what it's like to live in a police state? and yet still have hope? The whole topic of Iran, the Middle East, and the confluence of politics, religion, culture and human rights has been so confusing to me; Shirin Ebadi's own words have helped me more than any news broadcast. There is so much to learn here, I hope this book is read by many, near and far.

Fast and potent read. Well written and thought provoking look into the machinations of a police state and their effects on the innocent. Highly recommended.

Interesting read, and I learned a lot about women's/human rights in Iran. Alas, I have never found that changes in legislation change how people act. But I would recommend the book.

Iranian activist, a recipient of the Nobel Prize, tells her story of her opposition to the Iranian government which caused her to lose her marriage, her property, and her reputation.

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