

An Enduring Love: My Life with the Shah: A Memoir

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Farah Pahlavi has lived a life of extremes: a loving marriage to the Shah that ended with his death in 1980; a period of luxury in the court followed by years of exile and loss. Her story has been covered in the press and in countless books, but here she speaks out for the first time, and tells her own remarkable story. The only child of an Iranian army officer, Farah Diba was an architecture student in Paris when she became engaged and married the Shah. Pitched from her ordinary existence into a maelstrom of paparazzi and international attention, she quickly became an icon for her age—a beautiful, serene young woman, romantically married to one of the most powerful men in the world. She writes about her early years and about Iran itself and her profound love for it, of encounters with world leaders, of family life in the palaces of Tehran. She describes the divisions of Iranian society and the gradual shift of public opinion, fuelled by the rise in religious fundamentalism, which led to the sudden overthrow of the Shah in 1979. *An Enduring Love* includes a moving account of the year the Shah and his Queen spent wandering the globe, rejected from the United States and shuttling between Egypt, Morocco, the Bahamas, Panama, and Mexico. Farah Pahlavi details the years of exile after the Shah's death, as she rebuilt a life for herself and for her children in the United States. Written with an affecting simplicity and directness, this is both a powerful human document and a fascinating perspective on an especially turbulent period in Middle Eastern history. Her Majesty Queen Farah Pahlavi divides her time between Paris, France and Washington, D.C. The memoir of Farah (Diba) Pahlavi, widow of the Shah of Iran, seems, at first glance, like a clone of Noor's bestselling *Leap of Faith*. Both queens were intelligent young women when they met and married their older kings; both remain discreet about their intimate lives with their husbands (who both loved piloting planes and playing with their children); both immersed themselves, as new queens, in cultural programs and social betterment work for their people; and both end their memoirs shortly after the deaths of their husbands. The parallels are almost uncanny — at least until midway through Pahlavi's story, when the real differences emerge. In 1963, the Shah began his "white revolution" to modernize Iran by instituting land reform, women's rights and workers' rights; Communists and fundamentalist clerics vehemently opposed these changes. In Pahlavi's eyes, the monarchy stood for liberalization, even if its enforcement agencies were condemned worldwide for human rights abuses. To her, criticism of the monarchy only supported Khomeini's Islamic fundamentalist opposition. As the insurgency gained strength and the royal family weighed exit strategies, Pahlavi shouldered a new, personal burden: the Shah's concealed battle with cancer. Asylum offers were few. Sadat welcomed them to Egypt, but their stays in the Bahamas, Mexico, the United States and Panama were politically difficult. The Shah's medical treatments, meanwhile, were so bungled, so shaded by political maneuvering, that Pahlavi resorts to quoting extensively from one doctor's records. She ends her account with the Shah's death in 1980, their youngest daughter's death and the Iran-Iraq War, while Pahlavi's life has continued in Paris and Washington, DC. Readers seeking a female perspective on Iran's turbulent recent history will enjoy this candid, straightforward account.

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شاهزاده فراه پهلوی . Ali Behzadi, Šebh-e kâ'er (Likeness of a memoir) I, Tehran, 1997, pp. 789-93. ... Farah Pahlavi, *An Enduring Love: My Life with the Shah*, New York, 2004, p.

288 ; she offers a brief account of the meeting where the de- ..."