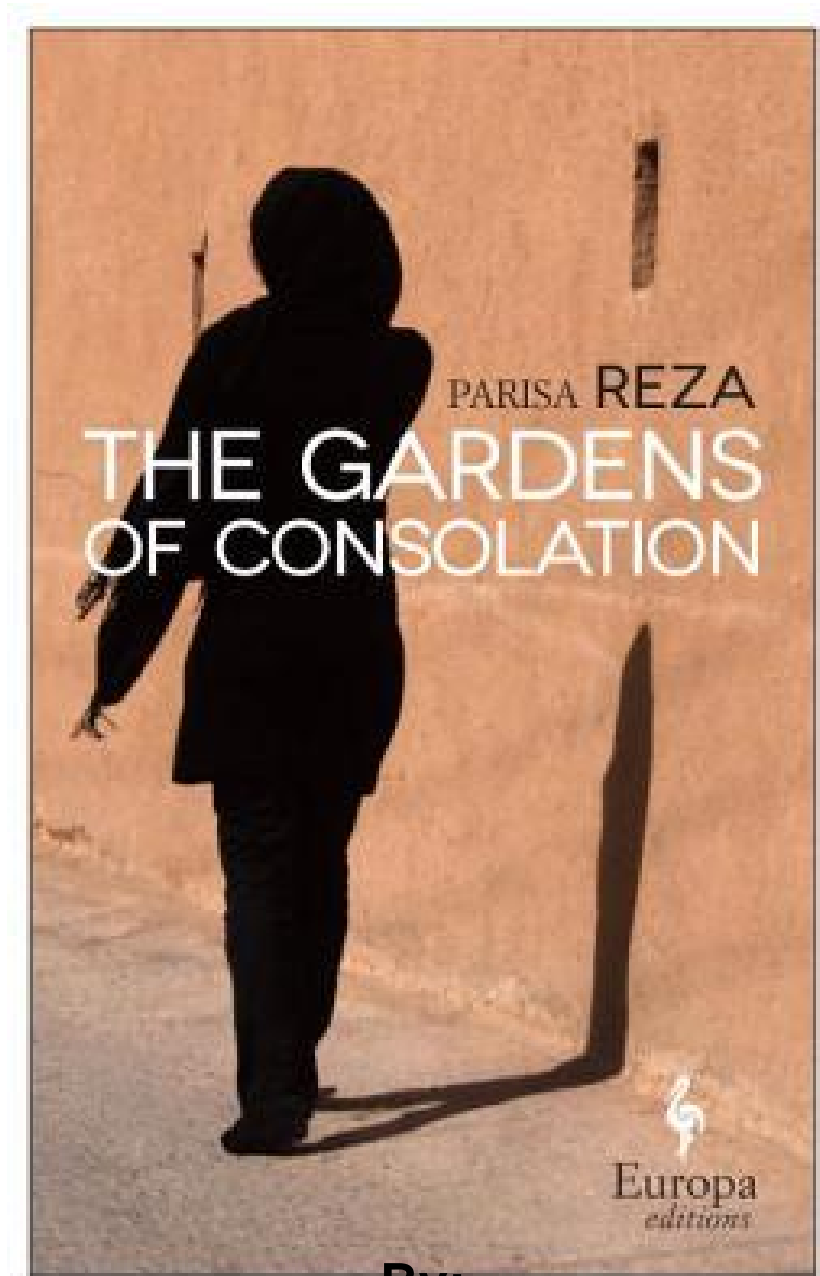


## The Gardens of Consolation Book PDF Download



**By:  
Parisa Reza**

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## What people Say:

### Terri Jacobson

This book takes place in Iran from about the years 1922-1953. It begins with the story of Sardar and Talla, a Muslim couple who begin life as peasants in the small village of Ghamsar, south of Tehran. This part of the book beautifully describes Iran--the vast deserts, the cool oases, the rose essence that scents the air during the harvest time of the flowers. Sardar goes to Iran to make a stable life before he marries Talla and takes her away. It is during this journey that Sardar asks Talla to

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I enjoyed this book because of the sense of Iran it gave me. It's a country I know only a little about from some reading, and from the hostage crisis of the late 1970s. This book covers the time period just after oil was discovered in Iran, and continues through the nationalization of the oil fields and the attempt to depose the Shah and change the form of government. These events are reflected mainly in the life of Bahram; his parents' lives change very little.

This is a calm and gentle book. I like the characters and the sense of history the book evokes. 3.5 stars.

### Vivek Tejuja

“The Gardens of Consolation” by Parisa Reza is a book about common people, literally caught up in conditions which are not ordinary “things happen around them, their country changes and they just hope and pray that things remain the same. It is the story of a family that sees Iran through the changes and what do those changes mean for them and their lives. Historical fiction isn’t easy to write. I mean there is so much already written about history timelines of a country “ that sometimes as a r

“The Gardens of Consolation” by Parisa Reza is a book about common people, literally caught up in conditions which are not ordinary “things happen around them, their country changes and they just hope and pray that things remain the same. It is the story of a family that sees Iran through the changes and what do those changes mean for them and their lives. Historical fiction isn’t easy to write. I mean there is so much already written about history timelines of a country “ that sometimes as a reader I wonder: what else is left to read about this? Then comes along a book like “The Gardens of Consolation” that defies my way of thinking and presents me with something new and exciting.

The book is set in 1920s with young newlyweds Talla and Sardar Amir travelling from their native village Qamsar to the suburbs of Tehran, where everything is new to them. Sardar is amazed at what he can do when it comes to work and Talla is slowly coping with the ways of the world “ a major change being with the Shah announcing that the chador must not be worn anymore. This is just one of the incidents but it leaves a huge impact on Talla’s life. The book then proceeds with them moving to Shemiran where they raise their son Bahram “ who is somewhat of a prodigy in school and after and how his political leanings (nationalist) change him and the family. The overthrow of Mosaddegh plays a prominent role in the book and of course how Iran progressed as a country from pillar to pillar, thereby also witnessing its decline in the coming years.

I don’t want to give away much of the plot, so this is the story in brief. Having said this, the characters of this book almost become family. I could empathize so much with Talla “ be it the situation of the chador to the time she is envious of the girlfriends her son brings home to also the time she goes back to her hometown and yet cannot recognize all that was left behind. Reza’s prose and Adriana Hunter’s translation does wonders to the prose. Sardar on the other hand is a content man (so is Talla by the way) and that’s why he is under constant fear of his world being torn apart one way or the other. I think so many of us can relate to this “ time doesn’t matter, neither does class, what matters is the common fear of feeling secure throughout your life. Bahram’s character on the other hand is immensely complexed “ he wants more and yet he doesn’t want more. We see him grow from a child to a teenager to an adult and see how his perspectives change as well.

Reza’s writing is compassionate. She makes you want to know a lot more about the characters and the situations they face on a day to day basis. “The Gardens of Consolation” makes you hoot for common people and hope and pray that all goes well in their world “ and when you start doing that in a book, it means you are hooked to it. Reza makes you weep (a little), smile (a lot) and makes you see a world that you never thought existed. A read not to be missed.

## Hannah

This is a beautiful book. From its quietly emotional first half to its increasingly political and complex second half, it is a story that feels above all supremely real. It's hard to say whether it's a book about the facts of a drastically changing politics and society or whether that is just a backdrop for an extremely human and humane tale, but either way you come out of it learning something about the history of Iran and something about being a person, which is all to the good on both counts.

## Nuha

Maybe it was the translator, but this book was simply beautiful. I loved the details and societal and personal insights the author wove into the piece all the while keeping it light and readable. The writing completely immerses you in the Iranian countryside, growing and changing as the country went through its tumultuous changes.

## Steve Schoenbeck

Excellent book! Conveys history I was not aware of with the immediacy of a novel.