

WHY WE LOVE *In the Time of Our History*

Dear Reader,

Our latest spotlight is an unforgettable novel about family duty and the immigrant experience written by Iranian American author Susanne Pari. Inspired by her family's experiences following the 1979 Islamic Revolution, *In the Time of Our History* is a captivating story of generational cultural clashes and long-held secrets.

A layered portrayal of trauma and grief, this beautifully written novel follows two women in the Jahani family—Shireen, an obedient wife dominated by her overbearing husband, and Mitra, her rebellious first-generation American daughter—as they gather in their family home in New Jersey to observe the Iranian custom of “The One Year,” the first anniversary of the death of Anahita, Mitra's younger sister. In their present-day experience of being together again as a family and in flashbacks to their past, both Shireen and Mitra experience tensions—between family and duty, tradition and identity, expectations and desires—and must each determine how to navigate those tensions in a way that is, hopefully, true to themselves.

In the Time of Our History is a story about home and the roles women play within it and what happens when we release cultural expectations about those roles. It explores the complexities of family dynamics with tenderness yet never shies away from the difficult topics that arise, including ones that may be triggering for some readers. Although this novel focuses on the specific tensions experienced by the Jahani women, it is also a story that is timely and relevant now: a story that can help us think about how such tensions still play themselves out in society today, from what generational cultural clashes are happening now to questions surrounding women's rights in both the US and Iran.

By weaving together the intricacies of family life with a deeply personal yet universal story that touches on so many aspects of the Iranian American experience, this character-driven gem of a novel allows readers to connect with characters who may have a different cultural background than they do. We highly recommend it to anyone looking for an intimate yet powerful story and hope you read along with us. Let us know what you think @hoopladigital and join the online discussion using #hooplalbookclub.

Andi Paris, hoopla Digital

Trigger Warning: contains mentions of rape and emotional abuse

