

## Chapters 1-7 Character Analysis

### Marina

Marina is the main character in this book, as it is a memoir of her life. She is a very smart, intriguing, intelligent, well informed, brave woman. She is extremely mature. She is Christian, and was arrested January 15<sup>th</sup>, 1982, she was accused for plotting against the government when she spoke out in Math class and asked her teacher to teach her Calculus instead of talking about Politics. Marina's mother tells her she should think before she speaks because she tells the truth. She also was different to most girls in Evin who were Muslim. "Most Muslim girls from traditional families – quiet, shy and submissive – but I didn't have any of these qualities." Marina is a very charismatic woman, and very easy to like.

### Marina's Mother

Marina's mother has her own hair dressing salon under the apartment, Marina's mother is very disciplined on Marina and used to lock her on Marina's balcony for hours to solitude her. "My mother's body was shaking and her face had turned white. She had covered her mouth with her hand, as if to muffle a never-ending cry." This is how she felt when Marina was taken by the revolutionary guards. Her mother is a funny character, she sleep in until 9, and is always grumpy with Marina, though she buys Marina books every month. She obviously loves Marina but is strict.

### Marina's Grandma /Fathers Mother

Marina's Grandma is a stereotypical Russian bahboo. Marina's Grandma is stubborn in the sense she knows how to speak Persian, though she will only speak Russian to people. Marina's Grandma moved to Iran at the start of Russia's communism. Marina and her grandma often went to the park and to the only Russian Orthodox church which was a 2 hour walk away. Though on the way she would by Marina treats, as she didn't believe in presents. When Marina was 7, her grandma died, though she left Marina a box of all her treasures.

### Marina's Father

Owned a dance studio, though after his mothers death he closed down his dance studio and found a job at a division of the Ministry of Arts and Culture, working with folklore dance groups. He got to travel to different countries with this job with the men and women dancers who represented Iran at different national events.

### Ali

[Was like marina's dark guardian angel, he was a revolutionary guard, who took an interest in](#) Marina when he had a discussion when being interrogated to find more information about plots against the government. They discussed the Koran, Communism, and Christianity. He was felt amused by this intriguing conversation with a young girl. He then became her savior in a disguise when he saved her from the execution of the firing squad. Ali had gone to Ayatollah Khomeini (dictator), who was a close friend of Ali's Father. He got Marina's sentence reduced from death to life in prison. She didn't want Ayatollah to save her, she wanted to die at this point in time.

### Albert

Albert is an Amernian secondhand book keeper, for three years Albert's bookstore were

the highlights of Marina's Junior High life. Albert allowed Marina to borrow out books in English to read and then bring back after she had read them. Albert had a wife and a son. His son had moved to America with his wife and 2 boys. Just after Marina's 12<sup>th</sup> birthday, Albert told Marina that he was moving to America to be with his son and grandchildren as Albert's wife of 51 years was dying and that was her last wish.

### **Sarah and Sirus**

Sarah had been Marina's best friend since the first grade. She has large, dark-brown eyes, thick curly black hair that fell on her shoulders. Sarah had a brother 3 years older named Sirus, he was apart of Mojaedin-e Khaigh, a leftist Muslim organization, that was revolting against Ayatollah Khomeini who was the dictator at the time. Unlike the rest of Sarah's family, Sirus was very shy. Sarah and Sirus were arrested on the 2nd of January, 1982, Sarah was 16 and Sirus was 19. Over the past months since the Islamic Revolution 100's of people were arrested accused for opposing the government.

Sarah and Marina re-united in Evin Political Prison after Marina was moved to the 246 women's ward. The Sarah informed Marina that Gita was executed and she had heard no news from her brother so she assumed he was executed as well.

Sarah's father was an engineer and a big man who always told funny jokes, laughed loudly and recited beautiful old poems. Sarah's mother worked at a bank and always wore elegant suits and very high heeled shiny black shoes, she was a small, round women with short, black hair, who always hugged Marina whenever she came over. Marina wished she lived in a house like Sarah's. It was on a street without cars, stores, vendors and beggars, it was quiet. Sarah's house was always colored with noise and laughter.

### **Gita**

Gita and Marina have been friends since she was 13. Gita and Marina met at cottage country, 5 hours north of Tehran. Gita was a few years older than Marina, but went to the same school. Gita was arrested in December and also went to Evin though she was executed for not cooperating early.

### **Arash**

Arash was Marina's second love and first kiss; they also met at cottage country, at Gita's birthday party. He has a brother Aram who was 16, 3 years older than Marina, though Arash was 18; 5 years older than Marina. Arash was at first year university to become a doctor Marina and Arash were in love spite the age difference, they shared there first kiss though he regretted it as it was against his religion and they could only kiss after they got married as it was disrespectful. Arash had dark eyes, slighty raised cheekbones, and somehow a childlike mouth which contrasted with his strong featured face. He was about 2 inches taller than Marina with short brown hair. They spent the summer together going for walks and bike rides on the beach, reading poetry sitting on the swing set in his back yard. Everyday Arash would play the flute to Marina, when Arash played the flute he felt closer to god. Arash was a practicing Muslim, he was part of the revolution and agreed with communism. He joined in the protests and revolts against Shah. Arash believe that Shah, his family and the government were all corrupt. They had been becoming wealthier by the day while most of the Iranian people had been struggling against poverty.

At the end of summer Arash left 2 weeks before Marina to go back to Tehran, though they were going to meet up again in Tehran. There was a protest against Shah, 2 days before Marina got back to Tehran. Shah soldiers opened fire and it was assumed that Arash died.

**Irena Arash's Grandma**

Irena which is Arash's grandma was also a refugee from Russia. She took a great like to Marina as Arash introduced them to each other and she spoke Russian to her. Irena reminded Marina of her own Grandma, she was a handsome old woman with silver-grey hair, she fussed the around the kitchen the same way her grandma did. For the summer Arash and his brother Aram stayed at the cottage with Irena. Irena always invited Marina to come for lunch with them.