

# Azar Nafisi

## Quotes

*Iran, People, Reality, Imagination, Islamic, Dream, Past, Heart, Art, Lying, Pain,  
Writing, Evil, Needs, Rights, Book, Passion, Order, Country, Believe*

Every great work of art ... is a celebration, an act of insubordination against the betrayals, horrors and infidelities of life.

~Azar Nafisi

I see people who talk about America, and then undermine it by not paying attention to its soul, to its poetry. I see polarization, reductionism and superficiality.

~Azar Nafisi

Once we know of atrocities we cannot remain silent, and knowledge inevitably leads to an urge to protect the innocent.

~Azar Nafisi

Living in the Islamic Republic is like having sex with someone you loathe.

~Azar Nafisi

That, of course, is what great works of imagination do for us: They make us a little restless, destabilize us, question our preconceived notions and formulas.

~Azar Nafisi

I no longer believe that we can keep silent. We never really do, mind you. In one way or another we articulate what has happened to us through the kind of people we become.

~Azar Nafisi

It is amazing how, when all possibilities seem to be taken away from you, the minutest opening can become a great freedom.

~Azar Nafisi

You need imagination in order to imagine a future that doesn't exist.

~Azar Nafisi

The negative side of the American Dream comes when people pursue success at any cost, which in turn destroys the vision and the dream.

~Azar Nafisi

I am suddenly left alone again on the sunny path, with a memory of the rain.

~Azar Nafisi

I eat my heart out alone.

~Azar Nafisi

We in ancient countries have our past- we obsess over the past. They, the Americans, have a dream: they feel nostalgia about the promise of the future.

~Azar Nafisi

When I walked down the streets, I asked myself, are these my people?, is this my hometown, am I who I am?

~Azar Nafisi

When I first left Iran at the age of 13, Iran had become such a shining star - it was the point to which all my desires and dreams returned.

~Azar Nafisi

Unfortunately for governments like that of Iran, when they forbid something, people become more interested.

~Azar Nafisi

None of us can avoid being contaminated by the world's evils; it's all a matter of what attitude you take towards them.

~Azar Nafisi

Reality has become so intolerable, she said, so bleak, that all I can paint now are the colors of my dreams.

~Azar Nafisi

It takes courage to die for a cause, but also to live for one.

~Azar Nafisi

Do not, under any circumstances, belittle a work of fiction by trying to turn it into a carbon copy of real life; what we search for in fiction is not so much reality but the epiphany of truth.

~Azar Nafisi

Every fairy tale offers the potential to surpass present limits, so in a sense the fairy tale offers you freedoms that reality denies.

~Azar Nafisi

America was based on a poetic vision. What will happen when it loses its poetry?

~Azar Nafisi

What we search for in fiction is not so much reality, but the epiphany of truth.

~Azar Nafisi

With fear come the lies and the justifications that, no matter how convincing, lower our self-esteem.

~Azar Nafisi

those who judge must take all aspects of an individual's personality into account.

~Azar Nafisi

Lots of times you can feel as an exile in a country that you were born in.

~Azar Nafisi

A novel is not moral in the usual sense of the word. It can be called moral when it shakes us out of our stupor and makes us confront the absolutes we believe in.

~Azar Nafisi

Empathy lies at the heart of Gatsby, like so many other great novels-the biggest sin is to be blind to others problems and pains. Not seeing them means denying their existence.

~Azar Nafisi

She was one of those people who are irrevocably, incurably honest and therefore both inflexible and vulnerable at the same time.

~Azar Nafisi

I have a recurring fantasy that one more article has been added to the Bill of Rights: the right to free access to imagination.

~Azar Nafisi

I would like to say how much I resent people who say of the Islamic Republic that this is our culture - as if women like to be stoned to death, or as if they like to be married at the age of nine.

~Azar Nafisi

When I was teaching at the University of Tehran we were struggling against the implementation of the revolution rules.

~Azar Nafisi

We all had to pay, but not for the crimes we were accused of. There were other scores to settle.

~Azar Nafisi

There is little consolation in the fact that millions of people are unhappier than we are. Why should other people's misery make us happier or more content?

~Azar Nafisi

Khatami is a symptom and not the cause of change in Iran.

~Azar Nafisi

If I turned towards books, it was because they were the only sanctuary I knew, one I needed in order to survive, to protect some aspect of myself that was now in constant retreat.

~Azar Nafisi

Thus the regime has deprived Iranian women not just of their present rights, but also of their history and their past.

~Azar Nafisi

I'm a perfectly equipped failure.

~Azar Nafisi

Art is as useful as bread.

~Azar Nafisi

The more we die, the stronger we will become

~Azar Nafisi

My passion has always been books and literature, and teaching.

~Azar Nafisi

Poor reading, like poor writing, is imposing what you already know on texts. You should go into reading to discover, not to reaffirm what you know.

~Azar Nafisi

I think Islam is in a sense, in crisis. It needs to question and re-question itself.

~Azar Nafisi

The existence of the writer is to write, and to write is to tell the truth.

~Azar Nafisi

I finally returned to Iran in 1979, when I got my degree in English and American literature, and stayed for 18 years in the Islamic republic.

~Azar Nafisi

A bad author can take the most moral issue and make you want to just never, ever think about that moral issue.

~Azar Nafisi

Every culture has something to be ashamed of, but every culture also has the right to change, to challenge negative traditions, and create to new ones.

~Azar Nafisi

The dearer a book was to my heart, the more battered and bruised it became.

~Azar Nafisi

For more than 30 years the Islamic regime and its apologists have tried to dismiss women's struggle in Iran as part of a western ploy.

~Azar Nafisi

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