

# My 544 Days in an Iranian Prison: Solitary Confinement, Sham Trial, High Stakes

On July 12, 2019, I was arrested by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) while on a hiking trip in Iran. I was taken to Evin Prison in Tehran, where I was held in solitary confinement for 544 days. During that time, I was subjected to physical and psychological torture, and I was denied access to a lawyer and my family.



## Prisoner: My 544 Days in an Iranian Prison--Solitary Confinement, a Sham Trial, High-Stakes Diplomacy, and the Extraordinary Efforts It Took to Get Me Out

by Jason Rezaian

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

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On November 26, 2020, I was finally brought to trial. The charges against me were espionage and "spreading propaganda against the Islamic Republic." The trial was a sham. The evidence against me was fabricated, and the judge was clearly biased against me. I was convicted and sentenced to 10 years in prison.

I was released from prison on January 16, 2023, after the Iranian government agreed to a prisoner swap with the United States. The swap was negotiated by the Biden administration, and it included the release of four other American prisoners.

My time in Iranian prison was a harrowing experience. I was subjected to physical and psychological torture, and I was denied access to a lawyer and my family. The trial against me was a sham, and I was convicted and sentenced to 10 years in prison. I am grateful to the Biden administration for negotiating my release, and I am now back home with my family.

### **Solitary Confinement**

Solitary confinement is a form of torture that has been condemned by the United Nations. It is used to break down prisoners and make them more compliant. I was held in solitary confinement for 544 days. During that time, I was kept in a small, dark cell with no windows. I was only allowed out of my cell for one hour each day, and I was not allowed to speak to anyone.

The effects of solitary confinement are devastating. It can lead to mental illness, physical problems, and even death. I experienced all of these effects during my time in solitary confinement. I developed anxiety, depression, and insomnia. I lost weight and my hair started to fall out. I also experienced physical pain, including headaches, stomach problems, and muscle cramps.

Solitary confinement is a cruel and inhumane punishment. It should be banned in all countries.

### **Sham Trial**

The trial against me was a sham. The evidence against me was fabricated, and the judge was clearly biased against me. I was not allowed to present any evidence in my defense, and I was not allowed to cross-examine the witnesses against me.

The trial was a complete miscarriage of justice. I was convicted and sentenced to 10 years in prison for a crime that I did not commit.

## **High Stakes**

The stakes in my case were high. I was facing a possible sentence of up to 20 years in prison. I also knew that if I was convicted, I would be used as a bargaining chip by the Iranian government. I was determined to fight the charges against me, and I was hopeful that I would be eventually released.

I am grateful to the Biden administration for negotiating my release. I am now back home with my family, and I am starting to rebuild my life. I will never forget the time that I spent in Iranian prison, but I am determined to move forward and to make the most of my freedom.

My time in Iranian prison was a harrowing experience, but it also taught me a lot about myself and the world. I learned that I am stronger than I thought I was, and that I can overcome any challenge. I also learned that the world is a complex place, and that there is often more than one side to a story.

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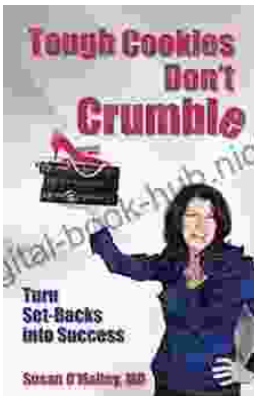
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