



# Leap of Faith: Memoirs of an Unexpected Life

*By Queen Noor*

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## **Leap of Faith: Memoirs of an Unexpected Life** By Queen Noor

Born in 1951 to a distinguished Arab-American family, Lisa Najeeb Halaby became the fourth wife of King Hussein at age 27. With her husband being not only Jordan's monarch but the spiritual leader of all Muslims, Lisa was unsure what her role would be. This moving memoir provides a timely look at one woman's story against a backdrop of 30 turbulent years: the displacement of over 1 million Palestinians by the creation of Israel, King Hussein's frustrated efforts for peace, and the effect of Saddam Hussein and the Gulf War on Jordan and the royal family. Queen Noor offers intimate new glimpses of King Hussein, Saddam Hussein, Queen Elizabeth, Arafat, and many other world leaders.

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## Leap of Faith: Memoirs of an Unexpected Life By Queen Noor Bibliography

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## Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Anyone who loved The King and I will readily warm to the love story of Queen Noor and the late King Hussein of Jordan. Born in America in 1951 as Lisa Halaby, Noor came from a wealthy, well-connected family and was part of Princeton's first co-ed class. Her father's aviation business produced a chance meeting with King Hussein in 1976, and a year or two later Noor realized the king was courting her. He was 41, she was 26. The rumor mills buzzed: was she the next Grace Kelly? Before long, the king renamed her Noor (light in Arabic), and she converted to Islam. They were married in the summer of 1978. From this point on, her story is mostly his, mainly covering his attempts to broker peace in the Middle East. There are meetings with Arafat, Saddam Hussein, American presidents and other leaders. Noor details Hussein's struggles to create Arab unity and his vision of peaceful coexistence with Israel. Her own activities developing village-based economic self-sufficiency projects and improving Jordan's medical, educational and cultural facilities take second place to her husband's struggles on the world stage. And while she occasionally acknowledges her domestic difficulties, Noor is careful not to allow personal problems to become any more than asides. Her pleasing memoir ends with the king's death after his struggle with cancer, although readers may suspect that this smart, courageous woman will remain a world presence for years to come.

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From [Booklist](#)

The word *unexpected* in the book's subtitle refers to the fact that this American-born, Princeton-educated woman was in the beginning stages of a career in urban planning when, rather suddenly, she married the much older and thrice-married king of Jordan. Queen Noor offers a vastly informative and even fascinating memoir of her life from her childhood in an Arab American family, daughter of a very successful man in politics and business (including a stint as director of the Federal Aviation Administration), to her tenure as consort of the charismatic King Hussein, who died in 1999 of cancer. Her Majesty naturally adopts a Jordanian perspective in her reminiscences; we are not surprised when she posits, for instance, that "Jews, Muslims, and Christians had lived peacefully in the Middle East and indeed in Palestine for centuries. It was not until the rise of Zionism and the creation of Israel that animosities took root." As the woman who stood behind one of the major players in the Middle East in the second half of the twentieth century, Queen Noor brings a unique perspective to the contemporary history of the region. With this book's release, the articulate, engaging and photogenic author will undoubtedly be on the talk-show circuit, so librarians should be prepared for demand. *Brad Hooper*

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Review

"Candid...an affecting wifely portrait of King Hussein." -- *New York Times Book Review*

"Dynamic and readable ... a delightful blend of romance, chance adventure, merging of cultures, (and) 21 years of devoted marriage." -- *Liz Smith, New York Post*

"Extremely eloquent, very personal, very candid." -- *Diane Sawyer, Good Morning America*

## Users Review

From reader reviews:

**Allen Goehring:**

Nowadays reading books be than want or need but also work as a life style. This reading routine give you lot of advantages. The benefits you got of course the knowledge the actual information inside the book which improve your knowledge and information. The data you get based on what kind of publication you read, if you want drive more knowledge just go with education books but if you want feel happy read one together with theme for entertaining for instance comic or novel. Typically the Leap of Faith: Memoirs of an Unexpected Life is kind of reserve which is giving the reader erratic experience.

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