

# QUEEN FARAH

(Continued)

is shown out, and the Queen receives her personal secretary, whose title is "Master of the Court of the Queen." He then submits his reports on all current matters that concern her.

His office, along the street from the palace and patrolled by armed guards, is the nerve center of Farah's public life.

Around one o'clock, Farah leaves her office to join the Shah for lunch. Ten minutes before the Shah departs by car from the nearby Marble Palace, his place of work, a message is sent to the Queen that he is on his way. But they seldom lunch alone, being joined either by visiting officials or members of their family.

After lunch, the Queen is free to rest until her official duties start again at 5 o'clock, when she will visit orphanages, hospitals, or schools, inaugurate exhibitions, or attend other public functions.

In her spare time she takes English lessons and practices the piano. Lately, she spends most of her time painting.

Dinner is late and is followed invariably by visits to a concert, a theater, or a film at the private cinema in the palace. Occasionally, Farah and the Shah spend an evening at home alone. Then they will play bridge or chess.

"Of course, there will be some changes in my routine after the baby is born," she told me. "I want to devote as much time to my child as I can."



*I was just thinking...*

**N**uts to the English language. Nuts to condition contrary to fact. Nuts to collective nouns which take singular verbs. Nuts to words such as read which is "reed" and read which is "red" and tear which is "teer" and tear which is "tair."

I never say "ain't," but it's easier than "am not." "Ain't" was once proper as petticoats. Now it's a dirty word.

My mood is never subjunctive, regardless of the pundits. I don't like to say "If I were to play the piano, you would go home." You probably would, but that's not the point. It seems to be that I'm not playing the piano, so you stay. What's so bad about "I was"? Nobody, but nobody, ever says "I were walking down the street."

I get defiant on occasion and announce "It's me" when I know darn well "It's I" is the only way to keep in good graces instead of good gracious. I do, however, bow to propriety and confide "This is a secret between him and me" when it sounds just plain lousy. Between is a preposition, so it's not nice to say "This is a secret between he and I."

Why not?

I took all the English I could—and some

"I know how much a child needs its parents because my father died when I was only 10. I want to have at least three children. The Shah has told me how much he loves children and how happy he would be if we had a big family of our own."

Farah has relieved the Shah of many of the duties which formerly were his alone.

"I was more than a little worried before my marriage as to whether I would be competent to deal with the problems and tasks which the Shah might entrust to me," she confessed. "But everyone has been so helpful that I was soon able to learn."

The Queen, it seemed to me, was now fatigued. As I prepared to take my leave, she asked: "Are you interested in art?" Then she told me about an exhibition which she had planned to visit the next day.

**F**OR ME it was an opportunity to see her for the first time in public among her people, and I said that I would be happy to go along.

I made my way to the exhibition next day, and we toured it together.

As news of the Queen's visit spread through the town, hundreds of people, old and young, lined the pavements to cheer her. "Your Majesty," I said, watching the crowds, "it has not taken you long to win their hearts."

Farah smiled graciously, and said: "It makes me so happy I could cry." Then she entered her car and drove back to the palace amid her idolizing subjects.

Clearly, Queen Farah is a success on the Persian throne.

I couldn't—in high school and college. I'm supposed to know every aged rule and regulation. Well, I don't and I make mistakes. Sometimes I'd like to make more of them.

Sometimes I'd like to wrap up a batch of phrases and clauses and moods and tenses and send them off to Dr. Bergen Evans. Of course, any fool, including me, knows we can't run around sounding like the immortal immigrant H\*Y\*M\*A\*N K\*A\*P\*L\*A\*N.

If one were (get that, Mr. English Usage) to speak as one ought, one would never be able to communicate the fact that the house was on fire until after it had been razed. That's pronounced the same as "raised," of course, which means the opposite.

How it's said doesn't seem as important as what's said. Both George Washington and a millionaire I knew ate with their knives. They were scarcely social outcasts.

But I suppose every language, even French, has its goofy moments. So de rien. Or pas de quoi. Both of those mean the same thing colloquially. And both of those are "Never mind."

So I ain't going to.

*Patty Johnson*

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