

Title: *Persepolis 2: A story of a return*

Author: Marjane Satrapi

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The Adult Life of Marjane Satrapi

Review by Michael C

WARNING: SPOILER WARNINGS ARE IN THIS REVIEW

Marjane Satrapi is an Iranian author who is famous for illustrated graphic novel books such as her *Persepolis* book series. After Marjane's very first and also successful book *Persepolis: A story of a childhood*, which talked about her childhood during the Iranian Revolution and leaving her country to travel to Europe, the sequel will tell you what you want to hear and see next. *Persepolis 2: A story of a return* features Marjane Satrapi becoming an adult and meeting interesting people that change her life. She faces trials that change her views of life and learn new lessons as well. The story is based on the events in the author's own life, and she tells it through an illustrated graphic novel done by her own artistic skills (as a writer). The book's feelings are a mix of romance, sadness, happiness, and some comedic twists that she adds to not make the story feel so dark for the readers.

Satrapi tells her readers many feelings of emotions in this book and leads up to the hard emotional feelings of her own life to make this feel and look more real in life. This book also teaches people to stand up for one another in an oppressing rule of government. Throughout the first and second book, Satrapi has been living in a government control society with fear and oppressing the citizens but her and her friends and family have stood up against it and have had a few victory. This would teach people lessons on how not to be afraid to say what they need to say. One example (spoiler warning), is when Marjane attended an art school and those in charge have decided not to let the girls wear makeup and those who they will draw have to wear a big veil over their body. Marjane stood up to them and explained how she felt about this which made her whole class led out a surprising gasp she believed it is not right and won't get the experiences of being an artist. This got her in trouble but not given any severe punishment. This shows how strong the character can be when dealing with situations that she does not approve of. This is a strong point for her in the book that even made her grandmother proud of her.

Also during her return to Iran (spoiler warning), she and her friends had illegal parties as a way to stand up against their government. However, during one of them they were found out by the police and were arrested but all the boys at the party were escaping through rooftops. One of her close friend died when attempting to jump from one of the rooftops. All the girls were sent to jail, but were all bailed out by their parents. The reason why the boys left (spoiler warning) was because they can't be around women for any reason except if they are married because of the laws that the Iranians had to live with during that time period. Some of her friends thought they should stop but some disagreed. Marjane disagreed against to stop and

she continued no matter what the government would do. This is another strong side to the character to still want to party after her friend had died because of this.

Though Marjane had some fun with standing up to her oppressing government she had faced many other problems and difficulties. During the beginning of the book (spoiler warning) she was living in Europe with her friends family but her friends have been having arguments about their living style which led to the mother deciding that it would be better for Marjane to leave and live in a boarding house owned by nuns in Vienna. They all spoke different languages that made it difficult for her to understand except for the nuns. She did meet good people there that she befriends and all she could eat was mainly pasta. This was difficult for her as she is in a new country and had to learn their customs. One time when she was there she was eating pasta out of a pot and one of the nuns felt disgusted and told her that her people have no education. She replied with a nastier comment that I would not say in this review that got her kicked out. To her, that was a non-strong moment that even the head-nun of the boarding school sent a fake letter to her parents telling them that she was kicked out for stealing a fruit yogurt even though she does not like yogurt. Another moment of weakness that I believe is when Satrapi (spoiler warning) goes through her first marriage but it doesn't quite end well as she decides to have a divorce. Her husband's name is Reza and his personality is different from Marjane's. They have more differences than similarities. Their relationship would have probably never worked out. This would be another weakness because she was unable to fix it or improve it. Actually she never had good luck in a relationship until later on in her life. She had some good and bad points but she did always manage to pull through no matter what happens which shows she is still strong.

Other than her book, she had made other plans in her life. She also had done other works such as the *Chicken with Plums* which talks about her relative named Nasser Ali Khan during his final days. This book has many similarities with first *Persepolis* book. Most of her other books have also become movies directed by her herself. She herself is currently living in Sweden and is married to a Swedish nationalist and does still continue in making wonderful stories. She is also created a film based off the *Chicken with Plums*. The title of her book *Persepolis* has an actual definition which means an ancient city that was the capital of the ancient Persian Empire; now in ruins. To the book it would mean her homeland is a controlled and oppressing government that was once great but now is no more and with more laws that just make everything worse. To her Iran is in ruins because of the oppressing government. I would recommend this book to high school grades 10-12 and older and his has strong adult theme and content that is not suitable for children. I would also rate this book 5 stars as it has a very well done story, illustration, and real life facts that would make you keep reading all day. This is a bestselling book so you get it. You should also see the 2007 *Persepolis* movie just for fun.