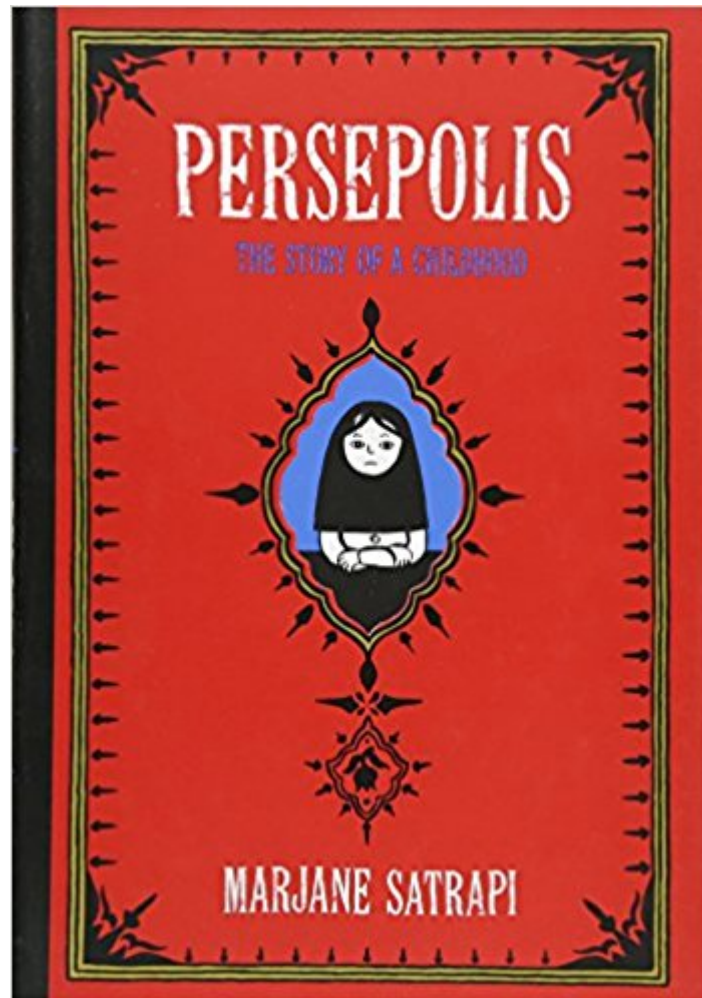




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# Persepolis: The Story Of A Childhood



## Synopsis

Originally published to wide critical acclaim in France, where it elicited comparisons to Art Spiegelman's *Maus*, *Persepolis* is Marjane Satrapi's wise, funny, and heartbreaking memoir of growing up in Iran during the Islamic Revolution. In powerful black-and-white comic strip images, Satrapi tells the story of her life in Tehran from ages six to fourteen, years that saw the overthrow of the Shah's regime, the triumph of the Islamic Revolution, and the devastating effects of war with Iraq. The intelligent and outspoken only child of committed Marxists and the great-granddaughter of one of Iran's last emperors, Marjane bears witness to a childhood uniquely entwined with the history of her country. *Persepolis* paints an unforgettable portrait of daily life in Iran: of the bewildering contradictions between home life and public life and of the enormous toll repressive regimes exact on the individual spirit. Marjane's child's-eye-view of dethroned emperors, state-sanctioned whippings, and heroes of the revolution allows us to learn as she does the history of this fascinating country and of her own extraordinary family. Intensely personal, profoundly political, and wholly original, *Persepolis* is at once a story of growing up and a stunning reminder of the human cost of war and political repression. It shows how we carry on, through laughter and tears, in the face of absurdity. And, finally, it introduces us to an irresistible little girl with whom we cannot help but fall in love.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Satrapi's autobiography is a timely and timeless story of a young girl's life under the Islamic Revolution. Descended from the last Emperor of Iran, Satrapi is nine when fundamentalist rebels

overthrow the Shah. While Satrapi's radical parents and their community initially welcome the ouster, they soon learn a new brand of totalitarianism is taking over. Satrapi's art is minimal and stark yet often charming and humorous as it depicts the madness around her. She idolizes those who were imprisoned by the Shah, fascinated by their tales of torture, and bonds with her Uncle Anoosh, only to see the new regime imprison and eventually kill him. Thanks to the Iran-Iraq war, neighbors' homes are bombed, playmates are killed and parties are forbidden. Satrapi's parents, who once lived in luxury despite their politics, struggle to educate their daughter. Her father briefly considers fleeing to America, only to realize the price would be too great. "I can become a taxi driver and you a cleaning lady?" he asks his wife. Iron Maiden, Nikes and Michael Jackson become precious symbols of freedom, and eventually Satrapi's rebellious streak puts her in danger, as even educated women are threatened with beatings for improper attire. Despite the grimness, Satrapi never lapses into sensationalism or sentimentality. Skillfully presenting a child's view of war and her own shifting ideals, she also shows quotidian life in Tehran and her family's pride and love for their country despite the tumultuous times. Powerfully understated, this work joins other memoirs-Spiegelman's *Maus* and Sacco's *Safe Area Goradze*-that use comics to make the unthinkable familiar. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Adult/High School-Marji tells of her life in Iran from the age of 10, when the Islamic revolution of 1979 reintroduced a religious state, through the age of 14 when the Iran-Iraq war forced her parents to send her to Europe for safety. This story, told in graphic format with simple, but expressive, black-and-white illustrations, combines the normal rebelliousness of an intelligent adolescent with the horrors of war and totalitarianism. Marji's parents, especially her freethinking mother, modeled a strong belief in freedom and equality, while her French education gave her a strong faith in God. Her Marxist-inclined family initially favored the overthrow of the Shah, but soon realized that the new regime was more restrictive and unfair than the last. The girl's independence, which made her parents both proud and fearful, caused them to send her to Austria. With bold lines and deceptively uncomplicated scenes, Satrapi conveys her story. From it, teens will learn much of the history of this important area and will identify with young Marji and her friends. This is a graphic novel of immense power and importance for Westerners of all ages. It will speak to the same audience as Art Spiegelman's *Maus* (Pantheon, 1993). Susan H. Woodcock, Fairfax County Public Library, Chantilly, VA Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc.

This type of book is usually not my come of tea. However, when I heard some of the schools in the

Chicago area were attempting to ban the book from their reading list, I decided to see what all the fuss was about. I discovered this book was a memoir from a woman who grew up in revolutionary Iran. This book was obviously designed for a younger group because it is in a comic book type of format, which actually made it an enjoyable read because of the illustrations on each page. The Complete Persepolis by Marjane Satrapi is a 341 pages long and the story begins in 1980 when the author was 10 years old. It tells about when the Islamic revolution took place in 1979 and how all women had to wear a veil. The story moves on to explain the many changes that occurred in Iran while she was growing up. The author relates how close she was to her family and how they did their best to protect her from the changes going on in Iran over the years. Her parents sent her to Austria to learn French and she also learned some German as well. This is basically an autobiography of the author and I think it is a book American youths should also read in order to understand the dangers of religious extremism. The author now lives in Paris, France and is still writing. In conclusion, even though I think this book will appeal to women more than men, I still think it was a good read. If you want to find out how women (and anyone else who did not follow every rule) were treated for breaking any of the very strict religious rules in Iran, you might want to read this book. Rating: 4 Stars. Joseph J. Truncale (Author: Haiku Moments: How to read, write and enjoy haiku)

Persepolis 2 by Marjane Satrapi is a graphic memoir detailing her high school years away from Iran and her eventual return to the country of her birth. This book is a follow up to her Persepolis and pretty much starts off where the first book left off. Once again Satrapi uses the graphic style to tell her story and the visuals really add to her words and in a few places taking the place of words altogether giving weight to the phrase that a 'picture tells a thousand words.' In this part of her story Satrapi chronicles the isolation she felt while going to school in Austria. The uncertainty of never really fitting in to any one group and the search of trying to figure out just who she was. While in Austria she experienced so many freedoms that she never could have dreamed of while living in Iran. She also had to deal with peoples misperceptions of what it meant to be Iranian. In the end, once she graduated from high school she felt that the only way to learn who she was, was to return to the country of her birth. Once back in Iran Satrapi faces a new struggle. The one of trying to fit back into a box that she no longer fit into. It was a hard reality for her to face when she realized that she had become so adjusted to the freedoms she had in Europe that she forgot what living in the repressive atmosphere in Iran was like. Satrapi had fled back to Iran looking for a place to belong and instead she found that even there she didn't have an identity. She was too westernised now to

fit comfortably back into her old skin. Satrapi does a wonderful job of telling her story and in conveying all the emotions and the struggles that she faced both at school in Austria and back home in Iran. Her search to find out her identity was at times tragic and at others times amazingly beautiful. Her style of writing and drawing really conveyed all the emotions that she must have been feeling at the time. I thoroughly enjoyed this additional glimpse into Satrapi's life and will be on the look out for any additional works that she might come out with. What can I say....sometimes I'm a horrible voyeur! See my other reviews at [tickettoanywhere.blogspot.com](http://tickettoanywhere.blogspot.com)

I had never read a graphic novel before and wasn't sure if I would like it. I found that it was easy and very enjoyable. The story is very good and keeps your attention. I am old enough to remember the overthrow of the Shah of Iran, but this gives a new perspective. The story is from a little girl's perspective. Worth the read.

The author tells her story of growing up in Iran during tumultuous government changes. What drew me to this book was the author's choice of expression. This story is not comical and yet the author writes these comic strips of her story; Capturing her funny memories from her childhood and the violence her family endured. I think this should be a required reading.

Really fantastic. Couldn't put it down. If you like personal stories or have any interest in Iran and/or even the complexity of what's going on now in the Middle East, I highly recommend. It won't explain all the history, etc. to you per se, but it offers an inside account of being a child and young adult from a smart, endearing, politically aware family (and more, a family whose history is intertwined with Iranian politics) who's experiencing the effects of the Revolution throughout her childhood and young adult years. Also offers a super interesting account of young adult counterculture Vienna in the 80s. Graphics and writing are both great. Satrapi is a gifted story teller. Her parents (who are a big part of the story) must be very proud. Was sad when it ended....

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