



Embroideries

Marjane Satrapi , Anjali Singh (Translator)

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From the best-selling author of *Persepolis* comes this gloriously entertaining and enlightening look into the sex lives of Iranian women. *Embroideries* gathers together Marjane's tough-talking grandmother, stoic mother, glamorous and eccentric aunt and their friends and neighbors for an afternoon of tea drinking and talking. Naturally, the subject turns to love, sex and the vagaries of men.

As the afternoon progresses, these vibrant women share their secrets, their regrets and their often outrageous stories about, among other things, how to fake one's virginity, how to escape an arranged marriage, how to enjoy the miracles of plastic surgery and how to delight in being a mistress. By turns revealing and hilarious, these are stories about the lengths to which some women will go to find a man, keep a man or, most important, keep up appearances.

Full of surprises, this introduction to the private lives of some fascinating women, whose life stories and lovers will strike us as at once deeply familiar and profoundly different from our own, is sure to bring smiles of recognition to the faces of women everywhere—and to teach us all a thing or two.

Embroideries Details

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Author : Marjane Satrapi , Anjali Singh (Translator)

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From Reader Review Embroideries for online ebook

Iwka says

Taká jednohubka pred spaním. Ob?as som sa ušk??ala a ob?as som sa rehotala, až kým mi neodšlo, že tie situácie sú síce napísane tak, aby boli smiešne, ale je to taký smiech cez slzy. Tie veci sa tým ženám dejú stále, nie je to len znamenie doby. Bohužia?.

Rebecca McNutt says

I rarely if ever read books on the subject of sex or marriage, but *Embroideries* is about much more than these things. It's about normal women who have adapted to oppression and learned how to expertly hide who they really are. It's about the thrill of secrets, the fear of being caught and the brief taste of freedom that comes along with living in such uncertain times. It's about fashion, fun and also fright. Told in beautiful illustrations from the author of the equally incredible *Persepolis*, *Embroideries* gives a face and a voice to Islamic women who wish to share a story that we can all relate to in one way or another, whether we're a man or a woman, whether we're religious or atheists, whether we're free or trapped or liberal or conservative, it doesn't matter as long as we're real and alive.

Mec says

Leggere "Taglia e cucì" trasporta il lettore (normalmente escluso in quanto maschio) e soprattutto la lettrice in un consesso in cui si parla e si parla liberamente, si ride e si beve.

Sono occasioni di incontro e di confronto in cui un'apparente leggerezza dei toni permette di affrontare temi complicati e di ottenere, quando necessario, un consiglio o una sgridata.

La Satrapi è molto brava a rendere sulla pagina una situazione universale (che in ogni Paese è declinata in maniera leggermente diversa in base alla cultura del luogo). Leggendo ho avuto l'impressione di sentire il cicaliccio delle donne e il profumo del tè.

leynes says

If you've read her graphic memoir you would already know that Marjane Satrapi was born in 1969 in Rasht, Iran. She grew up in Tehran, where she studied at the French school, before leaving for Vienna and then Strasbourg to study illustration. *Persepolis* provided insights into the social and political life in Iran during the Mohammad-Reza Shah regime and the subsequent Iranian revolution. *Embroideries*, however, couldn't be a more different take on illustrating her own experiences. Satrapi decided to only focus on the closed personal world of Iranian women.

Embroideries is a humorous and enlightening look at the sex lives of Iranian women. It gathers together Satrapi's tough-talking grandmother, stoic mother, glamorous and eccentric aunt and their friends and neighbours for an afternoon of tea-drinking and talk. Naturally, the subject turns to loves, sex and vagaries of men.

I was pleasantly surprised by how sex positive the comic was. It was good to see how freely all of these women talked about their sex lives and that guilt and shame weren't part of the equation. I had to laugh out loud numerous times at how unabashed and real some of the dialogue was. It was quite easy to relate to these women and their way of talking - gossip, after all, is the same all around the world.

Nonetheless, the comic lacked in depth and wasn't as well put together as *Persepolis*. In addition, I didn't like the illustrations this time around since they were printed in a larger format, which didn't suit them as well as the smaller format in *Persepolis*. Furthermore, the comic displays homophobic statements which are not called out. That totally rubbed me the wrong way and left a bitter taste in my mouth.

I read *Embroideries* at my local bookshop and am glad to leave it at that. I decided against buying it for myself since I don't think it's worth the money. Sure, it grants an interesting insight into Iranian culture (with a much needed focus on Iranian women) but, all in all, the comic is too short and superficial to have really satisfied me.

Hippo dari Hongkong says

Story about various Iranian women. They're sit back and relax in the afternoon while sipping a hot cup of tea. But not just that, they all have a tale to tell.

And the story begin...

"To speak behind others' backs is the ventilator of the heart."

Huwahahaha...

Pertama-tama ketika nge-mark as to read gw pernah komen "*Mari ngebordir*", yang dikasi komen sama Lita di message #1 dan saya ngasi komen "*wah, rok mini mah cepet keknya ngebordirnya, siap lah*" di message #2. Nah, setelah beres membaca bukunya, dengan ini saya nyatakan kalau saya **menarik kembali kedua komen saya itu.**

Kenapa? begini...

Dari dulu sayah bukan pembaca komik/novel grafis dan sama sekali gak ngeh sapa itu Marjane Satrapi. Iseng ke kaki lima nemu buku ini masih diplastikin, dan di plastikna ada stiker dengan tulisan gede & tebal "DEWASA". Wah, dewasa! adult entertainment kah? the evil hippo inside me begging & screaming like hell to take this book home. Dan setelah meriksa KTP buat ngecek umur dari tarik urat leher sama penjualna ahirna bukuna bisa di bawa pulang dengan harga 15 rebu. Soal isina apa samasekali gak tau, yang penting ada tulisan "DEWASA" nyah, hahaha.

Nah, setelah itu bukuna disimpan aja gak dibuka dulu sehari, niatna masukin aja dulu bukuna di rak gudrid tapi ahirna memutuskan baca dulu ripyu dari teman2 yang sudah ngerating buku ini dan muncul lah kalimat2 seperti ini:

Tomo Sesepuh Jaduler

Dan yang diomongin bukan soal ranjang ... tapi adegan di ranjang. Gituuu.....

Bujeng Bueuk

teteh..ceritain yg adegan ranjang

XD XD

gpp Yu, gep ajah tutorial..hiyahahaha

Kuwi

tapi yg silet ituh lucu tuh.. kasian suaminya XD

Indri

tersenyum geli, waktu adegan 'silet'..

Ibutio

juga menggambarkan santet di ranjang (haha) beneran aku ketawa guling-guling yang adegan kopi yang ada putih-putihnya itu jelas jadi penasaran>

trus Momo yang dilarang-larang baca buku ini karena masih kecil. Namanya juga anak-anak, tambah dilarang tambah nekat ama penasaran ;))

Pas baca....

*Gubrak, Tuing tuing, yaelah, aduh, hahahaha
pantes aku gak boleh baca...*

Ahirnya diputuskan merobek sampul plastikna dan baca bukuna dan setelah sekitar 30-40 menit baca.. ternyata oh ternyata... adegan silet..
yang dimaksud dengan bordir itu ternyata..
konci ama teh putih..

Ni buku kocak syekali ternyata, hiyahahaha.
nah segitu aja sih ripyu nya :D

Jadi kalo mengacu kembali ke "bordir" yang dimaksud disini dan komen sayah "mari ngebordir" jelas jadi ngaco jadina. untuk itu lah saya menarik kembali komen saya :D

Pelajaran yang saya tarik dari buku ini:

**kalo bikin kopi gak bakalan pake krimer lagi, cukup kopi item aja dah, hahaha*

**satu kalimat yang bakal terngiang-ngiang terus adalah ketika rumpian ibu2 ini sudah berpindah topik masih ada seorang ibu yang penasaran.. "putih2 itu apa sih?"*

Hwahahaha

gyahaha.. dapet juga bukuna dikaki lima

mari ngebordir

Valerie says

Reading this graphic novel was like being invited to tea with a group of Iranian women, except that the talk turned (interestingly enough) to arranged marriages, cheating husbands, and faking your virginity. The images strengthened the words in such a way that when I was done reading it I actually felt like I knew and had spent a little time with these women.

It's interesting, because their conversation makes it seem like they have some power (while living under harsh social restrictions) but as a Western woman reading this book, their idea of what constitutes power is hard to accept. Like many women, they talk about plastic surgery - nothing unusual there. One woman even goes so far as to admit that she had fat removed from her ass and injected into her breasts, which led to this comment about her husband: *Of course this idiot doesn't know that every time he kisses my breasts, it's actually my ass he's kissing...*

But to me, there's not a lot of power in that. More sadness that you'd have to take that small victory when you're more likely stuck in a marriage that you didn't (and don't) want.

It's hard to judge these women, though. Their stories are told in such a way that it's easy to just listen and admire them for having a voice and telling their stories. Many are in fact divorced, and share many of the same love concerns and troubles as women everywhere, as well as the same strengths and weaknesses. It's definitely worth reading as a reminder that women everywhere share a connection.

Sincerae says

Marjane Satrapi's Persepolis books came to my mind last week when I was thinking about adding in some lighter reads such as some more graphic novels and manga this year.

I read the Persepolis books several years ago and watched the movie. I wondered if the public library in my town might have some of her books on hand since they've just added in a collection of graphic novels upstairs for adult readers. I was happy to find this one and another of her works.

In Embroideries the art was not as carefully done (looked slapped together, too hectic at times) as in her Persepolis series, but I still enjoyed the story. It was a quick, light humorous read, a lighthearted look at serious topics.

that_scarlet_girl says

"To speak behind other's backs is the ventilator of the heart."

Το ?λο comics/graphic novel συνοψ?ζεται σε αυτ? τη φρ?ση. Τα κουτσομπολι? και οι πικ?ντικες συζητ?σεις που κ?νουν οι γυνά?κες με το χιο?μορ και την -ας την πο?με- ωμ?τητα του

Ceilidh says

A much more chatty account than Persepolis but one full of warmth, humour and a group of fascinating women sharing their wisdom. Through the eyes of a 21st century British feminist, the women's ideas of empowerment and control in relationships are a little tough to swallow, but there's something undeniably powerful in the way these stories are told to us: no mincing of words, just the truth, with all the sadness and humour contained within.

Kim says

My senior year in college I was introduced to a graphic novel memoir by Art Spiegelman entitled Maus. Spiegelman re-told his father's Holocaust experience in a way that a) indebted me to graphic novels forever and b) made me search out other memoirs told in this unusual format. That search produced another graphic novel entitled Persepolis by Marjane Satrapi. Satrapi told of her experiences growing up in Iran during the Islamic Revolution. I was enamored by her stories and the way her drawings helped illustrate the feelings she had about herself and those around her. Since reading Persepolis I've been introduced to some of her illustrated novellas, Embroideries being one of them.

When one first thinks of the conservative Islamic regime one does not associate it with any type of sexual openness. Therefore, Satrapi's Embroideries becomes that much more eye-opening when one discovers that it covers just that: the sex lives of a few Iranian women. Told from the point of view of an informal get together that includes Satrapi's grandmother, mother, aunt, and a few neighbors and friends, Embroideries touches on major problems and observations that are common to all of these women. Ranging from how to seduce a man to how to escape an arranged marriage, Satrapi's relatives and friends share their stories and insights from a unique and deeply personal point of view.

Persepolis was my first literary introduction to Iranian culture. In Persepolis we see a culture where women were treated in a vastly different manner than men. We're not introduced to a liberal culture where women go to bars on Friday nights and pick up men in the vein of Sex and the City. Knowing all this, the synopsis for Embroideries intrigued me greatly in the basis that it afforded me an opportunity to see the female Iranian culture behind closed doors. I was not expecting to read such liberal discussions of their sex lives. I was absolutely fascinated with their gossipy personalities and how comfortable they felt at poking fun at the men in their lives. I have to say that it actually made me happy in part to know that women the world over (no matter how repressive of a country they live in) still found time to be normal women. I sometimes feel guilty about being an American woman. I have the freedom to be what I want to be, say what I want to say, and love who I want to love. After reading this graphic novel it gives me hope for those that don't enjoy the public freedoms that I do. Knowing that they can be who they want to be behind closed doors with like-minded women increases my hope for a world where women are respected as equally as men are. In all, Satrapi's work is a refreshing and intriguing read that will leave you thinking about your own views on the female side of Iranian culture. I highly recommend it!

Kimberly (Reflections of a Book Addict)

<http://wp.me/p18IIL-VA>

Manny says

Hair-raising Iranian gossip. You keep wanting to join in. "Oh wow! What a great story! Now let me tell you about something that happened to a friend of mine..."

??Erica?? says

This author is great. Her graphic novel Persepolis is remarkable and hilarious, and her notable humor is present here as well. :) I enjoyed it.

an says

awal na bingung dengan judul na. bordir. kirain diskusi selama kisah ini berlangsung ketika acara membordir bersama, atau mungkin kegiatan membordir (yang notabene kebanyakan dikerjakan oleh perempuan) membuat para perempuan ini saling bercerita, ngobrol dengan peserta lain. ternyata... jauh banget hubungan na.

kegiatan ini dilakukan bukan saat membaut bordir tapi saat minum teh. dan bordir di sini menggunakan media yang berbeda. tidak hanya sekedar obrolan, tapi kalau dicermati lebih lagi...

1. perempuan hobi banget ngomongin orang
2. perempuan susah menjaga rahasia karena susah banget menjaga mulut
3. perempuan hobi banget menjaga penampilan na untuk memuaskan pria

untuk point ketiga, mungkin inilah kritikan yang ingin diangkat oleh penulis. saat keperawanan sudah bukan hal penting lagi dipertahankan. namun sebagian pendapat adat masih memegang na. sehingga memasuki gerbang pernikahan, hal ini yang kadang menjadi sorotan dan kekhawatiran mereka yang sudah tidak perawan. setelah masuk ke pernikahan, lagi-lagi perempuan yang harus kembali cemas. sebelum na khawatir masalah keperawanan, sekarang khawatir suami na selingkuh dengan wanita lain. mengapa suami selingkuh? karena alasan fisik yang tak lagi fit dari istri na. apakah sebagai perempuan mereka harus merasa rendah diri seperti itu? jika mereka aja memandang rendah diri mereka, bagaimana orang lain bisa menghargai mereka?

perempuan yang mencari penghormatan akan harga diri mereka dinilai sekedar dari ukuran fisik semata rela melakukan apapun demi tubuh indah na. ah, perempuan.. kenapa kalian masih saja mau menerima pandangan umum itu? bahwa kalian adalah makhluk yang lemah??

Nirav says

WHAT A FUCKING HILARIOUS QUICK READ. Damn, Satrapi never stops to amaze you and make you laugh at the same time. Persepolis was so good and Embroideries is no less. A conversation over a cup of tea

one afternoon in Tehran over sex and secrets being shared among the women in you family and neighbourhood. Who would not like to be a part of it or even get a glimpse of customs in Iran. Finished in one shot, that's how amazing and laughable this book was.

[illegible]

Nat says

There was talk of marriage, love, unfeasible men, sex, double standards, body image... simply put, **Embroideries** included everything I love discussing with my family and so much more.

Here are a few of my favorite talks between Marjane's tough-talking grandmother, stoic mother, glamorous and eccentric aunt and their friends and neighbors:

(I was cry-laughing at this part.)

...This is why I adored Marji's mother in Persepolis 2.

Her grandmother was as wise as ever.

I laughed out loud multiple times, which I truly wasn't expecting. And the one part I most vividly remember making me laugh too loudly was when 6-year-old Marjane was talking about her grandmother's nose:

I almost choked laughing so hard. This conversation really hit home for me.

Also, this:

This is seriously 100% like all the conversations I've had in the past with my family.

To put it plainly, **Embroideries** was all I could have wanted from Marjane Satrapi and yet... I long for more and more.

Note: I'm an Amazon Affiliate. If you're interested in buying **Embroideries, just click on the image below to go through my link. I'll make a small commission!**

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Pramod Nair says

"To speak behind others' backs is to ventilate the soul." – a dictum from Marjane Satrapi's grandmother.

Reading 'Embroideries' from *Marjane Satrapi* was like reading some missing pages from 'Persepolis', her renowned autobiographical series. In 'Persepolis' she gave much insights to the reader about the social and political life of Iran during her childhood, but through 'Embroideries' Satrapi manages to illustrate the closed personal world of Iranian women in an amusing manner.

In this slice of an autobiography, Satrapi let's the reader experience the joy, sorrow, disappointments and frustrations narrated from the personal viewpoint of a bunch of charming, highly spirited and intelligent female characters living in Tehran during early 1990s. The effortless gossipy manner in which they discuss their private lives, which Satrapi captures in her Spartan yet fluid black and white illustrations, are equally touching and a delight to read.

Observing a young Satrapi in the company of her mother, grand mother, aunts and other female friends sitting around their tea – *while the male members are enjoying a nap after a family dinner* – and gossiping, is an experience like the observer is right among them sipping tea – *at times even feeling like a voyeur* - and listening to their confidential lives, their anxieties, their own personal struggle against social and personal oppression and their intimate feelings of guilt and pleasure.

There is no inhibition among the members of such an intimate gathering – where Satrapi's grandmother takes the central stage and regulates the flow of this family chronicle – and *no topic is a taboo* on such an occasion and the reader is privileged to hear a string of anecdotes and ruminations, which can be funny and raunchy, at times sad or even provocative and controversial. They discuss their sex life, their fantasies, about keeping up the appearances for the sake of saving marriages, about getting an 'embroidery' done – *a slang term for a hymenorrhaphy or hymenoplasty* -, about performing plastic surgeries, about the obsessions of the society on the virginity of a girl, about homosexuality, about failed marriages, about extramarital affairs, all with a casual grace and traits of independence even under restraints imposed by their society.

The charm of the book is in its simplicity of narration. It merely narrates these thoughts as conversations aimed at the reader while offering no solutions, conclusions or judgments for the various issues discussed by its participants. It is left for the reader to think about. A perfect candidate for light weight reading, but if you are reading Satrapi's works for the first time, then I will recommend 'Persepolis' before enjoying 'Embroideries'.

Actual Rating: 3.5 / 5

Seth T. says

The embroideries of the book's title refer to the surgical restoration of one's vagina to a state similar to that of a virgin. Whether this includes hymen reconstruction or merely the tightening of an age-and-use-worn genitalia, Satrapi's book never makes clear. In the end, it doesn't really matter, probably. What is equally unclear is the reason for naming her extended anecdote in this way. Really, I just don't know.

Embroideries covers the ground of a single afternoon's conversation between ten women over tea. While the men of the household nap (after leaving the women to clean up the meal's remains), the women banter and gossip, releasing the tensions of days and weeks and lifetimes as they speak. Catharsis through ribald storytelling. The topic never veers even once from stories of sex and the veiled sexuality of the last several decades in Iran. These are women of Tehran, several generations, and the lives they've led are each unique in their own ways. These women have struggled under a society that in some ways doesn't value women as we do in the West—that is, as individuals with rights and hopes and dreams and desires. Their histories and choices have been hard and sometimes deeply unkind, yet as they unburden themselves, their souls find laughter.

The work is rather inconsequential so far as plot and character are concerned. Satrapi seems content to leave this as a series of Polaroid moments, an anthology of brief visits into the lives of women whose sexual history is sometimes dumbfounding, sometimes tragic, and almost always humorous if one is willing to find the humour in the horrors of a repressed culture's sexual hang-ups.

For instance, what about the elderly woman who though long-married and the mother of four has never seen a penis? Or the girl who feared her new husband would discover she wasn't any longer a virgin so she took a razor to their honeymoon bed and had it all go wrong? Or the girl who married an old man when she was thirteen years old? All the conversations are fairly explicit and that's really a breath of fresh air when one considers the world these women inhabit.

Despite being a rather inconsequential book in all the ways we commonly judge these things, there's still something rather valuable in the telling of these stories. Readers, especially Western readers, are given window into a world beyond their experience, into stories that aren't the mere fabric of imaginations but are the foundation of real lives. These women are not just the butts of *Embroideries*' jokes, they are its lifeblood. It's only because they are real that any of this book matters. That these stories are veritas is what grants them their gravitas.

And yet, the title still remains to me a mystery. Are these women's sexual natures revitalized by the surgery of words? Not really. I suppose one could stretch things a bit and say that their circle is stitched tighter by the histories and embarrassments they share, but that's still a bit unsatisfying. Or maybe the tight bond formed through their catharsis renders them refreshed and immune to the intrusion of men? Grasping here. Or perhaps there was something lost in the translation (from French to English) and I'll just have to leave it to the realm of mystery.

[review courtesy of Good Ok Bad]

Hilda says

I was disappointed by Marjane Satrapi's follow up to the fantastic two volume "Persepolis".

In "Embroideries", the setting is an after-dinner tea party between several women of different ages telling their stories about love and sex. The potential is fantastic to really delve into the beliefs and traditions surrounding these topics. But rather than tell the complete stories with depth, she merely flits over them, so that you get a taste but little substance. She tells the stories of about 7 women in 144 pages, but not narrative pages, comic-book style pages - this, like "Persepolis", is a graphic novel.

While the story left a lot to be desired, the drawings are wonderful. In this book, Satrapi didn't use the panel frames she uses in Persepolis and that are common in graphic novels, the drawings are all over the page, less constrained.

I'll still read her other book about Iran, "Chicken with Plums" and hope that she's returned to her evocative story-telling.

I would recommend the book only to Satrapi fans.

Serena.. Sery-ously? says

Dove ero io quando dovevo conoscere la Satrapi?

Io la amo già, sto aspettando trepidante che "Persepolis" arrivi a casa!

Una trama che può sembrare a prima vista banale e 'già vista', ma che permette al lettore occidentale di conoscere la situazione delle donne in Iran: il matrimonio, il sesso e cosa voglia dire nascere donna in questo paese..

Divertente, toccante e illuminante!

Marjane sei la mia nuova eroina!!

"To speak behind others' backs is to ventilate the soul."
