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Dans le premier tome publié en 2014 et qui couvre la période 1978-1984, le petit Riad est ballotté, de sa naissance à ses six ans, entre la Libye, la Bretagne et la Syrie.

Le deuxième tome, paru en 2015, raconte sa première année d'école en Syrie (1984-1985).

Dans ce troisième tome (1985-1987), après avoir suivi son mari en Libye puis en Syrie, la mère de Riad ne supporte plus la vie au village de Ter Maaleh. Elle veut rentrer en France. L'enfant voit son père déchiré entre les aspirations de sa femme et le poids des traditions familiales...

L'Arabe du futur 3 : Une jeunesse au Moyen-Orient, 1985-1987 Details

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From Reader Review L'Arabe du futur 3 : Une jeunesse au Moyen-Orient, 1985-1987 for online ebook

Stewart Tame says

Oh my goodness ...what a place to end the book! I certainly did not see that coming.

The Arab of the Future books are some of the most highly entertaining autobiographical graphic novels around. Sattouf has a fine cartoony style going, and a real gift for portraying events without weighing them down with too much editorial baggage. He keeps the story focused on what seven year old Riad thought of events then rather than what forty year old Riad thinks about them now.

I'm still fascinated by the portrait of Riad's father that emerges from these books. In the previous two volumes, he seemed quite the dreamer, and slow to recognize harsh reality setting in. In this volume, I'm starting to feel a little less sympathy. He seems to be less interested in what's best for his family so much as what's best for himself. It's a subtle shift, and it may just be his increasing unwillingness to see how unhappy they are with life in Syria. I may be reading too much into it.

Anyway, volume 4 promises to be interesting. Highly recommended!

Carol says

I am a fan of the Arab of the Future series, a series of graphic novel memoirs, each focusing on 2 - 3 years (book 3 focuses on 1985 -87) of Riad Sattouf's childhood in Syria, Libya and France. He does a fine job of balancing humor with several serious topics and experiences. If you know that Sattouf's mother was French, he now lives in Paris and was an occasional contributor to Charlie Hebdo, you may have a better sense of how he approaches telling his life experiences, especially his grade school education in Syria.

The Arab of the Future 3 is enjoyable, but I wouldn't recommend that a reader new to the series seek or read it as a standalone. This third entrant seemed a bit lightweight to me in terms of substance compared to the prior 2 books; however, in the end, Sattouf is telling one cohesive tale that is being broken up into several volumes without intending that any of them stand entirely alone. Saying that the main theme was circumcision doesn't do it justice, even though it's an accurate statement. If the description interests you, my recommendation is to buy all 3 books that have been translated into English to-date and read them consecutively over a weekend then, join me in awaiting volume 4.

Thanks to NetGalley and Metropolitan Books for providing a review copy.

Eric Anderson says

The third part of Sattouf's graphic memoir begins when Riad is seven years old and living in a small village in Syria. While reading Parts 1 & 2 in this series, I've grown increasingly distressed about the uncomfortable position his mother's been cornered into living in a crumbling home with two small children far from her native France and in a culture very different from her own. Added to this is the father's increasing stubbornness, reactionary views and snobbishness. It's not surprising to find his parents locked into a battle

which grows increasingly hostile as further developments are revealed over the course of this book. One of the most alarming changes in the book is Riad's own domineering attitude directed at his younger brother Yahya. It shows how the violence he witnesses and (at times) experiences is shaping his character in a disturbing way. However, as with the previous books, these darker issues are presented in a way that allow you to feel the comic absurdity of the characters' egotism and insecurities. It's heartening to see as the series progresses that Riad isn't a saint either. Nevertheless, I deeply feel for the precariousness of his position as a child in difficult circumstances who feels caught between Eastern and Western cultures.

Read my full review of The Arab of the Future 3 by Riad Sattouf on LonesomeReader

Elizabeth A says

This is the third installment in this graphic memoir series, and while not as good as the first two, there is still much here I loved.

This installment covers 1985-1987, and we pick up where the last volume left off. Riad is 7 as the book opens, and this is really a character study of the life and times of this biracial/bi-cultural kid. The family has settled in Dad's home town of Ter Maaleh, Syria. Riad is in school, his Dad works at the university, his younger brother and Mom stay at home. While Riad has adapted/adjusted to this life, his French mother has not.

There are no big bang moments in this one. We follow along as this 7 year old tries to make sense of his world. Listening to his father's lectures, is as usual, the spice of this tale. There is the innocence of childhood, and circumcision rears it's, ahem, head. Lots of dark comedy in this one, and the thing I found most annoying is how passive Mom is throughout. Dad is clearly the prominent character of his childhood, but Riad does not as yet understand the lottery card he won at his birth, and the advantages that are his. He is still a child, and is moved along by the currents of his parents making.

I'm not a huge fan of the art style, but do really like the use of color in these books. I continue to be baffled at this kid's memories from so young an age, and would be curious as to how he has such detailed recollections. The last page promises another "fun" adventure, and I for one will be there to see what happens next.

Rachel says

Honestly, if you haven't read The Arab of the Future, now is the time to start. Riad Sattouf was born to a French mother and Syrian father, spending much of his childhood growing up in the Middle East- these are his stories. The illustrations are simple, yet consistent, with writing that can run the gamut from humorous to disheartening, but always feeling honest, nonetheless. After three volumes, I feel like I really know these people and genuinely care about what direction their lives will turn. This is easily one of my favorite graphic memoirs to date. Can't wait for volume four!

Cecilebe says

J'ai peut-être un peu moins aimé que les deux premiers parce qu'un tantinet moins drôle. On arrive à quelque chose de plus dur et difficile, c'est tout aussi bien, on reste dans l'honnêteté. Ceci dit, là, on sent que Riad

Sattouf est en train de nous amener à quelque chose, qu'il prépare le terrain. À nouveau très hâte de lire la suite.

Ignacio says

El anterior volumen me había dejado un poco mosca con el tonillo de superioridad cultural en algunas situaciones que en este me ha parecido más atenuadas, sobre todo con ese breve viaje a la Francia rural que permite contrastar ciertos hábitos y posiciones. El personaje del padre sigue valiéndose por sí mismo para sacar adelante el relato, bien acompañado de esas estampas cotidianas donde el niño va a la escuela, juega con sus amigos y descubre (algunos) iconos culturales de los 80 en un lugar tan ajeno a nuestra experiencia como Siria.

David Schaafsma says

The third volume of Sattouf's memoir of growing up in the eighties in France and Syria with a Syrian father and a French mother who met in France while his father was earning a PhD. Riad is young, and his brother is younger, as they live in corrupt and chaotic small town Syria with few resources. Mom is ready to take off, she has so had it with Dad who seems less smart than passive and naive. The tone is really almost black comedy, their life there is so absurd.

Some remarkable moments:

- *Riad's observations about brutal corporal punishment in Syrian schooling and at one point having his Dad pay off his teacher so he wouldn't get caned.
- *Crazy Dad, well, whenever he is doing almost anything. He's the main character in Riad's coming of age farce. But an example: His planting fruit trees and waiting to get rich, year after year; or his teaching; he says he is a professor but he appears to be a part time adjunct with an office with one bare bulb for light
- *Filipino "slaves" in Saudi Arabia?
- *A branch stuck in a brick as Christmas tree, waiting for Santa to come in the desert
- *Watching Conan the Barbarian with his religiously observant cousins in Muslim Syria; a beheading scene near the end was "the most incredible thing we had ever seen."
- *Mother's call to her parents in France: "A Catastrophe: I'm pregnant."
- *I'll only say: The Circumcision story; augh!

Not much really happens in this particular volume, but by now you can't put down the story Sattouf has to tell of growing up bicultural, with an emphasis on Dad's half-hearted attempts at trying to be an observant Muslim, Mom watching in horror. Sattouf doesn't hide what he sees as the truth, whether it is telling stories of his father (he sides with his poor mother) or of his barbarous hypocrite cousins. Or Syrian poverty and corruption. Either way, at this point you are in for the duration of this tale, translated in to now more than 20 languages, winning international awards. There's tension in the family, but everyone here is interesting. Sattouf succeeds in helping us get to know these people, this time and place.

Rod Brown says

This series has won me over.

So much about Sattouf's childhood in Syria is alien and unpleasant to me. Adults treat children, animals and each other cruelly. Living conditions seem squalid at times. Corruption is rampant. And above all else, Sattouf's father is a narcissistic ass.

So much of this book is infuriating, but it is told in a captivating manner that kept me turning pages.

Somehow, Sattouf manages in his portrayal to make his father a lovable narcissistic ass. And though I wouldn't want to live there, Sattouf helps me understand the nuances of the complex love/hate relationship he and many of his characters have with Syria.

(Side note: Conan the Barbarian completists may want this volume for the 5-page recap of the 1982 Arnold Schwarzenegger movie included in Chapter 2.)

Sam Quixote says

Riad Sattouf's outstanding memoir series, *The Arab of the Future*, continues in this great third book which covers 1985-87. His mother becomes pregnant with her third child, Riad tries fasting for Ramadan for the first (and last!) time, and the question of circumcision rears its, ahem, head...

Though I enjoyed this book, I didn't think it was as good as either of the previous two volumes, probably because there wasn't enough new things going on. Riad's school-life in Syria carries on as before, he briefly goes back to France again, his father's family are still doing their thing – obviously there's more but the material still feels a little recycled.

However, Sattouf is such a consummate storyteller and talented cartoonist that this third book is still an entertaining and informative read regardless. His characterisations of his family are delightful and clearly very loving. His dad remains the star, from his rants about the brutality of life in Saudi Arabia to his double-standards in marking his students' papers while trying to ingratiate himself to the higher-ups in Syria's regime for the benefit of his family. Sattouf's portrait of him is complex and wonderful.

And of course it wouldn't be a childhood memoir without the childhood aspects. From wanting a giant robot toy to watching Arnie's first Conan the Barbarian movie with his cousins to learning about Santa, I enjoyed these parts of the book the most. I also liked that he showed "civilized" France to be as dark and savage as Syria – children may be beaten with sticks in Syrian schools but his French grandmother's country neighbour... I won't spoil what she does but it made my jaw drop.

I'm glad for the way the book ended which has done its job in making me look forward to the fourth book all the more. Book 3 wasn't as compelling as I'd hoped but it's a fine read nonetheless – fans of the series will doubtless find plenty to enjoy here.

Sebastien says

Fantastic autobiographical series. Loving it. Very nicely written, wonderful touches of humor, charming. Interesting insights cataloguing what it's like to live between two cultures. I experienced this but not to the same degree as Riad who lived and belonged to two cultures that had greater gulfs between them. Also love being able to peek through the window via the storytelling to get a feel of what its like growing up in the Middle East.

Particularly loved his bit on the "Tooth Mouse," which is the French version of the tooth fairy. I never could quite understand why a rat would sneak into my room at night to steal my teeth and give me payment. So many questions. What was Tooth Mouse's motivations? Why was this mouse/rat collecting childrens' teeth? where was Tooth Mouse getting all this money and capital? was Tooth Mouse making necklaces out of childrens' teeth and selling them on the blackmarket for huge markups? if so then I demand a larger cut. Also what kind of insane person creates a myth of this type? Anyways, it was disconcerting. Probably has disconcerted a lot of French children. Maybe this myth is why we are so weird and tortured? who knows. That said I love the tooth mouse. It's ridiculous and absurd and that's why it is great. I would like to congratulate the crazy peeps who came up with this thing.

Riad is a really great, natural storyteller. Recommend to friends who love comics and friends who don't usually read comics as well, this is just good storytelling period, very accessible, fun, interesting.

Marc says

Sattouf just follows his autobiographical chronology: in this third part he describes the period 1985-1987 and still the little Riad lives with his parents and brother in a remote Syrian village, full of "backward" habits, and still his father keeps on promising that they wait for a big future, but more and more the little Riad notices that a lot of things just are not right. Again, the illustrator Sattouf gives a lot of pedagogical explanations about Islam, about the strange habits in the country, the unbridled corruption, etc. And just like in the first part, France at first seems to be just the illustration of how backward Syria is, but on visits to Britany hypocrisy and backwardness also seem to reign there. In the end there's a big surprise, that is not going to be pleasant for the mother of Riad.

Tatiana says

My favorite way of learning about foreign countries is, by far, via reading graphic memoirs or travelogues. I've read Marjane Satrapi, Guy Delisle, Thi Bui, but Riad Satouff I like best. I think it's the humor that attracts me the most. In someone else's hands this would be a dark and dreadful tale of personal woe, but in his - it is funny and, by way of his father's occasional lectures, informative.

The terrain of this installment is familiar - Riad lives in Syria with his family, and his recollections mostly revolve around his torturous school, learning about religion, fasting, circumcision, "Conan the Barbarian" (there is a funny graphic recap of the movie in this book), and listening to his ridiculous dad. He has, it is clear, the major influence on Riad's worldview. I was, as always, endlessly annoyed by Riad's mom. In his depiction she almost a blank presence - she never seems to be able to stand up for herself and spends years meekly passing time and occasionally complaining. Because this autobiography is written from a child's perspective, I imagine Satouff's assessment of his mom (and dad for that matter) is slightly unfair and, at the same time, it probably underplays the extent of her unhappiness.

Riad Satouff must have a bear trap memory, because it's a 3rd book in this series, and he is only 7 in it! I can't imagine how many more installments he will have to draw/write to cover everything he wants to cover. But I predict I will continue reading Riad's stories as long as he writes them. The place they are going to next is bound to be a special type of "fun."

Didi says

I don't know what to say but this series is a must read if you haven't started yet. The saga continues.... and I can't wait for vol. 4.

Julie says

Toujours aussi bon. Lu (presque) d'une traite (encore). J'ai beaucoup d'affection pour ces personnages. Quelle vie, franchement !
