

INFORMATIVE— LITERARY ESSAY

Persepolis Comparison: Ebi and Anoosh

What would you do if your entire world turned to chaos? If everywhere you looked, you saw war, torture, and a corrupt government? And how would you protect your family? The graphic novel *Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi is a young woman's story of her struggles growing up during the Iran-Iraq war and the Islamic Revolution. Marjane, or "Marji," recounts her childhood with stories and pictures of important times in her life, and the many invaluable lessons she learns. Ebi and Uncle Anoosh are two key characters and influential figures in Marji's life.

Ebi, as Marji's father, loves her, protects her, and guides her through the hardships of the times. He is most concerned with keeping Marji educated and out of trouble; for example, when Marji expresses that she wants to participate in a demonstration, her father warns, "It is very dangerous. They shoot people!" (pg 17). Uncle Anoush is equally loving, treating Marji as his own: "You are the little girl I always wanted to have," (pg 69). He also does his job to teach her about the country's situation, but in different respects. He shows her the dark side of the war, and the power and punishment of revolt. Uncle Anoush also pushes her to stand up for her beliefs and the important of sacrifice for what's right.

Ebi and his brother share the same views on the war, but differ in how they choose to involve themselves. Ebi does his part by photographing the rallies: "My father had gone to take photos of the demonstration...

he took photos every day, though it was strictly forbidden" (pg 29). However, he knows the consequences of war, and rebellion, and above all wants to keep his family safe. Ebi is always pretty removed from the protests because despite his passion for change, his love for his family is stronger. It's not worth it to Ebi to be constantly putting himself in danger for the sake of rebellion when he knows his family is home, anxiously awaiting his return.

While Ebi does participate in a few demonstrations, his action in the revolution is not nearly as great as Uncle Anoosh. As a teenager, was directly involved with the attempted gain of Azerbaijan's independence from Iran. After fighting and rebelling and running from the Iranian police, he was finally caught and sent to prison for nine years. When he is let, he comes to live with the Satrapis because he has nowhere else to stay. Because of his impressive background, Marji sees Anoosh as a hero and her father as unpatriotic in comparison. "So my father was not a hero... if only he'd been in prison." (pg 54).

Overall, Ebi and Anoosh are prominent characters in the story and in Marji's life. Though they share the same blood, they are different in their attitudes and reactions towards the events taking place in Iran. But one thing is certain—they are fighters. Despite the punishments they face or the judgements of others, these men strive for what is right—ultimately bettering their country, and enriching Marji's life.