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Exit Wounds



Synopsis

Set in modern-day Tel Aviv, a young man, Koby Franco, receives an urgent phone call from a female soldier. Learning that his estranged father may have been a victim of a suicide bombing in Hadera, Koby reluctantly joins the soldier in searching for clues. His death would certainly explain his empty apartment and disconnected phone line. As Koby tries to unravel the mystery of his father's death, he finds himself piecing together not only the last few months of his father's life but his entire identity. With thin, precise lines and luscious watercolors, Rutu Modan creates a portrait of modern Israel, a place where sudden death mingles with the slow dissolution of family ties. *Exit Wounds* is the North American graphic-novel debut from one of Israel's best-known cartoonists. Modan has received several awards in Israel and abroad, including the Best Illustrated Children's Book Award from the Israel Museum in Jerusalem four times and Young Artist of the Year by the Israel Ministry of Culture. She is a chosen artist of the Israel Cultural Excellence Foundation.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Starred Review. Tel Aviv-based Modan gives American comics readers a sharp sense of Israeli life in this brilliant and moving graphic novel. The story follows Koby Franco, a young taxi driver and lost soul, as he searches for his missing father, a man who long ago left the family and may or may not have been killed in a suicide bomb attack. Assisting and prodding him is Nuni, a young soldier who was romantically involved with the missing father. Modan takes her characters across Israel and through a variety of different Israeli social strata as the search progresses. Along the way it becomes clear that Koby's father's identity is in flux—he leaves all those that he

loves, but touches on everything it means to be an Israeli: family man, soldier, religious practitioner and, perhaps, victim. Modan is a deft and subtle storyteller, and her meditation on Israeli identity and the possibilities of love and trust (between father and son, woman and man) are finely wrought. Her loose, expressive drawing is both tremendously evocative and precise—always enhancing the plot. The stellar combination makes this one of the major graphic novels of 2007.

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Grade 10 Up
œThis first graphic novel from an award-winning Israeli illustrator tells the story of Koby Franco, a 20-something cab driver working in Tel Aviv. Franco's everyday life screeches to a halt when he receives a phone call from a soldier claiming his estranged father was killed by a suicide bomber at a train station. He and the young woman enter into a journey that takes them through cemeteries, train stations, and Franco's father's disheveled apartment to determine whether the man is dead or alive. The black-and-white artwork, with its thin lines accented by simple watercolor brushstrokes, combines with precise dialogue to convey subtle and powerful emotions throughout the story. Limited depictions of sex, nudity, and violence both in the story and the pictures make this a work that confronts mature themes in an emotionally complex manner. Franco's journey draws a portrait of modern Israel, showing how people cope with the violence around them as they go about their day-to-day lives. Modan doesn't shy away from criticizing some of the attitudes the state of Israel holds, hinting that these exacerbate some of the problems with the Palestinians. But the core of the story rests on Franco dealing with not only all the anger he feels toward his father, but also with the realization that he still loves him and has much to learn from him. An accomplished and moving book.
œMatthew L. Moffett, Pohick Regional Library, Burke, VA

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I would buy this for the art, but skip it for the story. The art is clear-line style, somewhat naive, but with evocative coloring and good architectural details. The story is about an angry 30 something who is looking for his absentee father, and suspects he may have been killed in a bombing. So he, and his father's mistress, try to track him down by interviewing people who survived the bombing. Think of it as a really boring mystery.

I did not enjoy this book. I have enjoyed other works by this author but this one was just so

uncomfortable to read. Awkward and tense story about deplorable people and their mundane lives.

Amazing book! It has a great story line to it and I've enjoyed the book since day 1.

A mature and insightful love story amidst the strange and sometimes crazy world of Israel. A tour of the protagonist's (one hesitates to call this young curmudgeon a 'hero') past relationship with his father, and of what the heart needs vs. the head (or the 'little head'). The art is good, though not great, but conveys the emotions and actions of the characters well.

Thank you!

This book draws you in and does not let you go until you are finished. I would recommend this to anyone, even if they are not into graphic novels. The artwork and story are both strong enough to stand on their own.

Exit Wounds was bought on impulse. It turned up on my Recommended List and the summary of the product made me curious. I'm quite pleased that I got it. The art is, as others have noted, rather bland, but once you get into the rhythm of the narrative and dialogue, you find that the blandness serves well the story of a young man, Koby, who is forced to face his father when a young woman, Numi, comes to tell him that his father may have been killed. What follows is a subtle love story and social commentary that happens on several levels that occurs while Koby and Numi try to find the answer of what happened to Koby's father and it is done in a style that is sparse and never overbearing. The only reason why I knocked it down to 4 stars is that there were a few areas that I wished had been lingered on more (ex: Ruth, his aunt) rather than devoting time to Numi's mother and sister, but that's a personal quibble that other readers may not find to be a distraction at all.

I picked this book up from a local comic expo after hearing a lot of praise. The art didn't immediately grab me but the first few pages I read did. The writing is quite excellent for someone who isn't strictly a writer. The book is basically about the main character coming to terms with his relationship with his father. It's also a sort of coming-of-age tale (then again, what graphic novel these days isn't?). It stands out from the pack due to its tightly plotted story, realistic dialogue, excellent pacing, and perfectly simple yet expressive artwork. The only reason I docked it a star was for the rushed

and somewhat cliche ending. Aside from that, this book is a treasure. *Exit Wounds* is definitely worth a purchase and has a deserving spot next to *Watchmen*, *Blankets*, and *Maus*.

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