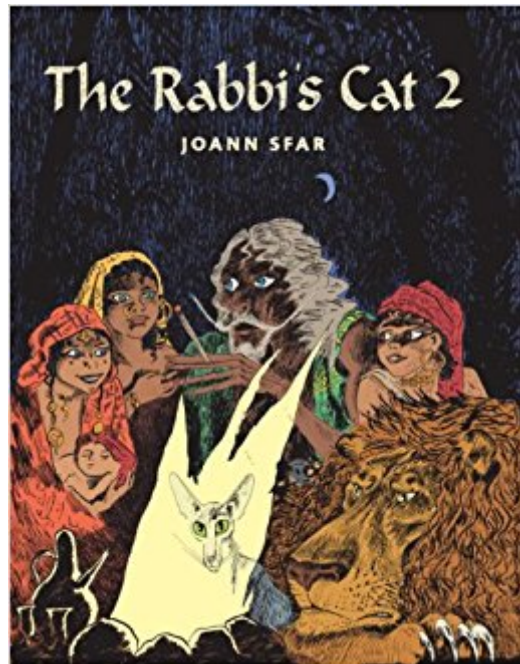




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The Rabbi's Cat 2 (Pantheon Graphic Novels)



Synopsis

Joann Sfar's beloved, humorous, and wise talking cat is back for more beautifully illustrated adventures in Algiers and across Africa in the 1930s. While the rabbi is away, his cat tags along with Malka of the Lions (the rabbi's enigmatic cousin), who roams the desert with his ferocious-on-demand lion. Some believe Malka to be a pious Jew, others think he's a shrewd womanizer, but the cat will be the one to discover the surprising truth. Back in Algiers, the rabbi's daughter, Zlabya, and her new husband fill the house with their fighting, while the city around them fills with a rising tide of anti-Semitism. On a whim, the rabbi's cat, the rabbi, a sheikh (also a cousin of the rabbi), and a very misplaced Russian painter set out on a fantastic journey (even encountering a young reporter named Tintin in the Congo) in search of an African Jerusalem. It turns out to be very fortuitous that the rabbi's cat is not just a talking cat, but a multilingual talking cat.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The Japanese graphic novel here receiving its first English-language edition was radically different from mainstream manga in looks, content, and procedure when new in 1970. It remains so, though Veronique Tanaka's *Metronome* (2008), while structurally and stylistically less adventurous, shows related cinematic influences. To intensify a simple, easily understood, universally sympathetic story of love battered by poverty and mercurial youthful emotions, Hayashi

employs the extreme viewing angles, jump cuts, and visual allusions of French New Wave movies and the interpolations of fantasy to evoke the characters' moods that Fellini exploited so brilliantly in *8½*. Turn the page from a lovers' clinch or one lover's emotional funk, and a Hiroshige-like wave, a Godzilla poster, or a building corner with phone lines out of Ozu's great films of urban middle-class matchmaking appears to both point up and gently mock the protagonists' passions. Such commentary images are realistically rendered, while the protagonists are barely more than wavy outlines with thatch hair and black-patch clothes. Everyone won't like it, but this is a genuine work of art. --Ray Olson --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"Sfar's words and pictures mingle in a dance both sacred and skeptical, perfectly graceful and clumsily human. I'm so grateful that his brilliance has finally been brought to America."--Craig Thompson, author of *Blankets* "He draws faster than his shadow. He comes up with new stories as if he were drinking a glass of water. He talks more than anyone I've ever known. He's extremely talented, extremely funny, extremely smart. I guess this is the description of a genius. And I don't say such things because he's my friend. Joann Sfar is not a rabbi, but he describes better than anyone the religious dilemma with a tenderness, intelligence, and humor. *The Rabbi's Cat* is a book that everybody should read."--Marjane Satrapi, author of *Perspolis* "[*The Rabbi's Cat*] is rich in historic and cultural detail and filled with great stories."--*The Washington Post* "As fanciful as Mark Haddon's *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, a whole lot shorter than *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay*, and a good deal more Jewish than Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis*, Joann Sfar's graphic novel is hilarious, poignant, and wise. And now that I'm done reading it for the first time, I'm going to read it again."--Adam Langer, author of *Crossing California* "An affecting, fraught, and--yes--sometimes hilarious tour de force about the complexities of living faithfully in a godless world."--*The Boston Globe*

This applies to both Vol 1 and Vol 2 of *The Rabbi's Cat*. I rented to animated movie version and my wife and I both fell in love with it. Sfar's artwork is both original and also a bit on the wacky side, which really appeals to me. Anyway, I Googled the guy after watching the movie and found that he had several books. So, being a collector of graphic novels (especially off-beat ones) I promptly ordered both volumes from . The characters are just so vivid and illustrations are sensational. I especially love the way he draws the cat (me also being a cat-person). It's so slinky it's almost half snake, and boy is it clever. My only problem with these books is that there's so much dialogue that

the print is almost microscopic in places and I actually need to use a magnifying glass to read some of it, which is the only reason I gave it four stars instead of five. I should also add that the story and settings are so vivid and touching. It really gave me a sense of a culture and place that have pretty much vanished forever. If you have any interest in the Algerian Jewish community pre WW II, rent the movie first, and if you want more stories about these characters get the books. Just be prepared for a little eye strain.

I absolutely love the rabbi's cat and his snarky comments on life. In this book life goes on. He goes on a adventure with his master's cousin, Malka, and meets a snake who offers his bite as a gift and release from the miseries of life. Then he travels with his master, another cousin who is an Arab, a Russian painter who escaped the pogroms of Russia by hiding himself in a crate of holy books shipped to Algeria, and a crazy, rich Russian who doesn't believe in anything but drink and sex. They are off on an expedition to find the Falasha who live in a hidden city in Ethiopia called Jerusalem. The cat must learn to keep his mouth shut in sticky situations or he could get everyone killed as sorcerers. Peoples in the African deserts can be superstitious and dangerous. True love intervenes, there is a singing donkey and gigantic black Jews with absolutely no sense of humor. Another wonderful book about the rabbi's cat.

I am not much of a graphic novel reader, but after seeing the movie based on this book and the one that follows (The Rabbi's Cat 2), I had to get both books. This one contains storyline not in the movie, but also differs in that it is a little less cheery, slightly more sad. But overall still delightful, and just as good, just in a different way. The illustration is a little unusual as it changes in detail and flavor a lot, even from frame to frame, but after a while it seems to actually work very well, and the more I think about it, I am surprised this is not done more often.

As a Jewish American, I've always been fascinated by the experiences of our people in the Diaspora. The lives of American, British, French, and Algerian Jews are all different. We can be found in the unlikeliest of places; Cuba, Mexico City, Rio, Mumbai, Dublin (I'm not joking, there are Jews in Ireland). I once boarded with a Jewish family in Strasbourg. Their lives were much different from those of New York Jews; they kept a lower profile, avoided gentiles, and their eating habits were more like those of their neighbors (no bagels, herring, or kugel on their table). British Jews, respectively, make a greater effort to appear "English" while avoiding non-Jews. You won't see cockneys eating in Jewish delis (not that I saw any Jewish delis in London aside from Bloom's). The

Rabbi's Cat has a very quirky story that's not easy to summarize. A scrawny cat gains the power of speech and engages his master, a Rabbi, in debates. The Rabbi's gorgeous daughter, having no interest in philosophy (and having no work to do) loves this cat as if he were an irritating younger sibling. Zlabya is your typical Arabian-Nights-Fantasy though she happens to be Jewish. She marries a French Jew of Turkish origin, and some funny conflicts arise; he bores her, she feels self-conscious of her background, and her father isn't sure why the French Jews lack vitality. Or is he just too... full of life? I'm glad that graphic-novel fans will learn about the Jews of France thanks to this book. The Jews have been an important part of French society for years, but with the way things are going now, it may not last. Jews have been leaving France in greater number since 2001, and I hope they don't all leave for Israel, UK, or the USA. It would be a shame for France to lose such a great part of its culture.

I never laughed as much when reading a book as I did when reading The Rabbi's Cat. It is absolutely hilarious. The cat eats a parrot, acquires speech and he has an awful lot to say. He learned to read along with the rabbi's daughter so he has learned much over the years. He argues about religion, science, philosophy, love and anything he can think of. He is a smart cat and a smart-aleck cat. And he wants to be bar-mitzvahed so he can be a good Jewish cat. That fact alone causes nothing but trouble for the rabbi. I absolute love this book and its sequel and will give copies to my son-in-law who will love them as much as I do. Highly recommended.

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