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### Loneliness and the Misplaced Identity

The idea of hiding behind one's shadow is better than dealing with the loneliness of having a misplaced identity. We all have our own individual journeys when it comes to finding an identity but for Marjane Satrapi, the narrator of *Persepolis*, it became about trying to fit in rather than being true to herself. It is never easy adapting to new environments especially when someone is doing it on their own in a foreign land. Under extreme circumstances, Marjie did her best to adapt to any new ideas that came her way but yet she always ended up not fitting into society. As humans we do our best to conform to society's standards but for others it can be hard to do the way society wants them to. Marjie forms a displaced identity because of her need to fit in every environment, therefore, Marjie's identity crisis becomes a form of rejection to every culture she surrounded herself in.

Marjie's association to every environment became an obstacle for her true identity to form. Marjie's adjustment to the differences of culture affected the way she wanted to present herself to others. The adjustment of the culture in Vienna made Marjie distant herself from her own culture in Tehran. She did not leave her homeland to go on an adventure but for survival. Marjie just wanted to be her own self in a new land but it became a problem when her presence became a burden to others. Marjie's arrival to a new land affected her placement of being in a permanent home. Marjie's presence of being in her first of home of many, overpowered the lives of her host families, forcing them to push her out (Satrapi 7). Marjie is without the nurture and the guidance from her parents which leaves her in isolation when communicating with others. As she adjusts to one culture it became a form of disgrace to her own culture. Marjie leaves her

home under extreme circumstances which threw her off course when it came to fitting in as “normal” in Vienna. Marjie’s misplaced identity became affected by every environment she associated with, leaving her with the disability of never forming her true self because of that rejection from society.

Society emphasizes the idea of forming a proper personality is crucial to conform with the beliefs of others. Marjie’s independence carves her pathway to forming an identity but she struggles with forming one because of the differences of the environments in Vienna. Marjie’s constant effort to change her character always seems to backfire because her identity does not satisfy the expectations of others or herself. As she would try to blend in, a part of her unconscious would always remind her of home (40). Marjie’s development of her identity keeps constantly changing because of her effort to fit into every environment. Marjie feels that if she does not fit in, she will be alone but the constant change leaves her in isolation. Nobody in Vienna can relate to Marjie’s sense of identity and because of those constant changes to her identity, it makes them look at her with confusion. She faces backlash and disrespect because of her misplaced identity. Marjie separates her identity and her own culture in order to start fresh but it never works and consequently, the constant changes to her identity backfires in her homeland.

The unknown identity tends to give certain misconceptions, which creates the belief that those certain individuals are lacking. Marjie did her best to carve her own path towards society in Vienna but because of her decisions, she faces even more of a backlash in her homeland of Tehran. The effort to create an identity in Vienna forms the same effect in her homeland with an even greater burden. Marjie’s friends have no experience with the westernize culture, but with Marjie’s displaced of an identity they seem to think she embraces most of the westernize culture

(105). Marjie's friends have a unique perspective towards the westernize culture which is the opposite of Marjie's experiences. There is a contrast between reality and fantasy, in which, Marjie knew that difference. Marjie's constant transformation of her identity causes her friends to judge her. The world may be small but it is vastly different when it comes to people. Marjie seems to struggle with an identity because of society in both locations. People will tend to have different beliefs and understanding towards others and Marjie became affected by those mentalities at a young age. Society put that burden on her and it became a struggle for her to fight it without any help. Marjie became trapped in her own world in which she combatted every day for her misplaced identity to be freed. The idea of not being free affected Marjie in ways other people could not comprehend. We all battle conflicts but sometimes others combat greater battles that involve their individual self.

An identity puts the journey of every individual into perspective because it is something that takes a lifetime to create and cherish. Marjie develops a sense of perspective for every identity that she creates for herself, even though most of the time it became a rejection from her surrounding society. Everybody contributes to society in one way or another. We all have contrasting opinions about one and another, sometimes it affects people and sometime it does not. Marjie became affected by various individuals who created distinctive qualities about her. Home or abroad, she faced criticism and no young adult should go through those circumstances. Nobody understood Marjie because she did not stand with the status quo, she became rebellious and independent in her own way. The continuous changes in culture and identity took a toll on Marjie because it affected her personality. As the world conforms to certain standards she fought it with intelligence and independence, even though it did not work often, she became the person she is due to her own self.

## Works Cited

Satrapı, Marjane. *Persepolis Volume 2: The Story of A Return*: 1<sup>st</sup> ed, New York: Pantheon,  
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