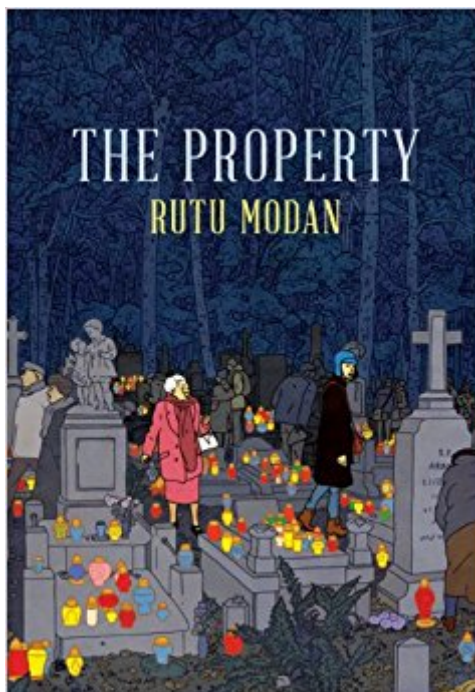


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# The Property



## Synopsis

INCLUDED ON MORE THAN TEN BEST OF THE YEAR LISTS, INCLUDING THE GUARDIAN, PUBLISHERS WEEKLY, SALON, , AND THE WASHINGTON POST!"Modan delights in bringing the subtlest emotional shadings to vivid and often comical life on the page...[The Property is a] wryly funny and ultimately wrenching graphic novel." -NPRThe award-winning author of *Exit Wounds* returns with a story about secrets, money, and the bonds of loveThe Property is a work that will inspire, fascinate, and delight readers and critics alike. Savvy and insightful, elegant and subtle, Rutu Modan's second full-length graphic novel is a triumph of storytelling and fine lines.After the death of her son, Regina Segal takes her granddaughter Mica to Warsaw, hoping to reclaim a family property lost during the Second World War. As they get to know modern Warsaw, Regina is forced to recall difficult things about her past, and Mica begins to wonder if maybe their reasons for coming aren't a little different than what her grandmother led her to believe.Modan offers up a world populated by prickly seniors, smart-alecky public servants, and stubborn women-a world whose realism is expressed alternately in the absurdity of people's behavior and in the complex consequences of their sacrifices. Modan's ever-present wit is articulated perfectly in her clear-line style, while a subtle, almost muted color palette complements the true-to-life nuances of her characterization. *Exit Wounds* made a huge splash for this signature combination of wit, style, and realism, and *The Property* will cement Modan's status as one of the foremost cartoonists working today.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

TV producer Mica Segal accompanies her grandmother, Regina, on the old lady's first return to Warsaw since she fled, pregnant by a gentile with Mica's late father, to Palestine in 1939. On the plane, the son of a friend of Regina's ebulliently accosts the women and thereafter seems to show up wherever they go, even separately. Mica shakes him by dodging into a café, where she meets a charming Pole who leads Jewish history tours. Not by chance, Regina comes on her own to the same café to meet an old man who lives in the building—yes, Mica's grandfather. While the purpose of the trip is to assert Regina's title to a building her parents had owned, what develops is an intrafamilial tiff, an ultimately fulfilling reunion, and the possible start of a romance. Modan's dialogue is smart and nuanced to match a drawing style awfully reminiscent of Hergé's Tintin and up to the most complimentary comparison with it. Nicely varied panel size and earth-tone coloration further distinguish this gratifying work of comics realism. --Ray Olson

“Modan is masterful at creating complex motivations, exploring the confusion her characters create in each other and, more fundamentally, in themselves.” Los Angeles Times “My comic book of the year, by a mile, is Rutu Modan's *The Property*... in which Mica Segal, a young Israeli woman, travels to Warsaw with her irascible grandmother to help her reclaim the apartment building she and her family were forced to give up in 1940... This, believe me, has everything you could possibly want in a comic: great pictures, a multilayered story, mystery, sharp wit.” The Guardian's Graphic Books of the Year “What *The Property* most resembles is an excellent independent film, full of nuanced performances and funny lines... Modan's artwork is lovely and understated; it's the cleverness of her storytelling that shines brightest here.” Salon.com's Unforgettable Graphic Novels of 2013 “Modan's clear line art delineates the complex web of loves, lies, and invented pasts. This beautifully realized narrative shows how history shapes us but cannot destroy us.” Publishers Weekly Best Books of 2013

Rutu Modan is an Israeli-born artist living with her family in London and "*The Property*" is her second full-length graphic novel. Her first was the wonderfully drawn and written book, "*Exit Wounds*". Curiously, "*The Property*" is the second graphic novel I've read and reviewed this week. The other one was "*Letting It Go*" by Miriam Katin. Both Katin and Modan's books are about Jewish women taking trips of discovery to the European countries that either they or a family member fled before or after WW2. Both books are about how the past can be integrated into the present, and

maybe even, the future. "The Property" is a story about a young woman who is accompanying her aged grandmother back to Warsaw from Israel in an attempt to straighten out some legal rights to a building the older woman may - or may not - own. The property, owned by her parents, who perished in the Holocaust, is never quite defined til the end of the book. Was it a mansion or a factory, or even, possibly, the current Warsaw Hilton! Legal title is up-for-grabs among various people; some family members, some Christian Poles who had been living in her parent's apartment since the war. Mica, the granddaughter, seems at loose-ends in her own life in Israel after her father's death. The father was the son of the grand-mother, Regina. I don't think I'm being dramatic when I write that for Polish Jews who fled the country during the war and afterward, returning to Poland - even for a visit as Regina and Mica are doing - can be quite emotional. What went on during the war, with Polish Christians often turning on their Jewish neighbors, has been thoroughly written about and I'm sure not getting into it in this review. The book begins with Regina and Mica traveling on an El Al flight from Tel Aviv to Warsaw. Also on the plane are teenagers who are going to Warsaw to see the city and the various concentration camps in a group organised in Israel. The teens are in typically high spirits as they start their trip; certainly on the return flight they are much quieter and pensive. A middle-aged cantor is also flying with them and he begins to intrude on the grandmother and granddaughter. There's a connection between the three of them which will be explained later. But if the cantor's business is somewhat murky, Regina's reasons for returning to Warsaw 70 years after leaving it as a young, unwed, pregnant woman sent off to Palestine to have her baby, are equally jumbled. After arriving in Warsaw, Regina's reasons for making the trip seem to change. A visit to a restaurant on the second floor of a building is disquieting and Regina wants to go home without making claim to whatever her parents have left her. Mica, fearing for her grandmother and her health - and possibly her sanity! - meets a young Polish Catholic artist. He helps her discover her grandmother's secrets, which in turn, affect her own life and future. This is a wonderful novel about how the tragedies of war can be sometimes be changed by revisiting the past. Because sometimes the past can explain the present, and the truth can provide a bit of comfort of those trapped in the past. Modan's quite a good artist and the book is excellent.

I love this. The story is along the same lines or related very closely to Modan's earlier book, *Exit Wounds*, where a journey or search is happening. The artwork and character development is better this time however for me. It feels like a film.

Sophisticated, well plotted story full of sly humor, non-banal wistfulness with a coolly matter-if-fact

tone about the underlying tragedies of history, drawn in Herge's clear line style. Too bad graphic novels this good only come by once or twice a year! The best thing that Modan's done so far, and that's saying something.

Such a unique art style; it kind of reminds me of the old Adventures of Tin Tin comics. The story is vastly different, though, obviously, being a combination memoir and look at family secrets. The characters are expressive with a minimalist style, and the landscapes she drew in the flashback sequences are intricate, too. The book itself (I have the hardcover edition) really feels well-made and like something you'd want to keep for a long time.

The graphics and story are wonderful and unpredictable. Rutu Modan continues to surprise and delight both the imagination and the eye.

Wonderful graphics, excellent read. I really enjoyed the discussion facilitated by this "comic book"!

One of my favorite graphic novels!

Touching, funny mystery, beautiful artwork!

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