



The Unwanted: Stories of the Syrian Refugees

Don Brown

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In the tradition of Don Brown's critically acclaimed, full-color nonfiction graphic novels *The Great American Dust Bowl* and Sibert Honor winning *Drowned City*, *The Unwanted* is an important, timely, and eye-opening exploration of the ongoing Syrian refugee crisis, exposing the harsh realities of living in, and trying to escape, a war zone.

Starting in 2011, refugees flood out of war-torn Syria in Exodus-like proportions. The surprising flood of victims overwhelms neighboring countries, and chaos follows. Resentment in host nations heightens as disruption and the cost of aid grows. By 2017, many want to turn their backs on the victims. The refugees are the unwanted.

Don Brown depicts moments of both heartbreaking horror and hope in the ongoing Syrian refugee crisis. Shining a light on the stories of the survivors, *The Unwanted* is a testament to the courage and resilience of the refugees and a call to action for all those who read.

The Unwanted: Stories of the Syrian Refugees Details

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Author : Don Brown

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R U D Y says

“The Unwanted Stories Of the Syrian Refugees”

“The Unwanted Stories Of the Syrian Refugees” is a nonfiction graphic novel. The book started in 2011 and shows how Syria became what it is today. In the book it explains what the syrian refugees had to deal with after they fled the country.

One thing that I really liked about this book was that it gave you the information so that you could have a grasp of what it was to be a syrian refugee and understand the struggles of their lives. Another thing that liked about the book was that it did not just have one perspective, it had many different experiences of other refugees which I thought was very cool because it gives you the whole picture of how it was. The pictures throughout the book were very good and related to the to the book.

One thing that I did not like in “The Unwanted Stories Of the Syrian Refugees” was that it talked more about statistics of the stories and when they happened rather than actually telling the story in detail.

The book overall this book was very good with giving the information. This book also opened my eyes to the understanding of how it was for the lives of the Syrian refugees. I would recommend this book to people who read graphic novels and to people who are very interested in non fiction books that want to learn something about the Syrian refugees. I would rate this book a four star.

Mrs. Krajewski says

I loved this book, just like many of Don Brown’s other graphic novels. This book sheds light on the Syrian refugees themselves, with various stories woven in between the history. I love that Brown stayed focused on the “refugee experience.” My students will want to learn more after reading this.

Liz says

Review based on ARC

I really loved all the information this book provided about they Syrian refugee experience. I am sure when it is finally published in color that will add to its appeal. However, it wasn't really a story so much as a timeline of facts with some pictures. I think Illegal by Eoin Colfer does a better job at portraying the refugee experience in a story form. Still, this gn is full of really important information so it's still worth picking up.

David Schaafsma says

Since I had just read Arab of the Future (Volume 3), Riad Sattouf's memoir of growing up in Syria and France in the eighties, with its especially interesting view of chaotic and corrupt Syrian small town life, I thought I would look and see what else in graphic was on my library's shelf about Syria, which had been so

much in the news a few years ago, and then the media largely seemed to largely forget about it. So everything's fine now in Syria? Well, the nightmare continues, as this book makes clear.

Don Brown spend time in three refugee camps in 2017 and did other research online to create this timeline of events beginning in Syria that erupted into a refugee crisis that continues today and doesn't appear to see any end to. Brown has done many books for young people, biographies, and also books on The Dust Bowl and Katrina. These are not comprehensive historical books, but they function as a good introductions/summaries of the recent history of Syrian refugees. As he says, he is not trying to create a definitive political history. He wants to focus on the refugee experience. He doesn't name these people or make intimate portraits of any of the refugees, but he does create a series of images, and we hear their voices. The artwork is really good, and this book stands as one of many witnesses to history, a snapshot of our time, so we don't forget.

Here's a link to a different kind of portrait, a film focused on one family who escaped Syria to reunite with family in Germany. We can use all kinds of approaches, for all kinds of audiences, to create a pastiche of the time, maybe.

<http://worldchannel.org/programs/epis...>

Tasha says

This graphic novel tells the stories of Syrian refugees in their own voices. Based on interviews and visits to refugee camps around the region, the book clearly tells the story of the basis of the refugee crisis in Syria. As the flood of refugees begins and then continues, the nations taking in the refugees see sentiments in their populations shift to be anti-immigrant due to the overwhelming costs and disruption. Still, the refugees need a place to live in peace, a place to make a home and a place to feel safe.

Brown returns with another gripping nonfiction graphic novel. He uses the refugees' own stories to really create a book that is heart-wrenchingly realistic. Young readers will benefit from hearing how the crisis began and will learn a lot about refugees, the dangers they face and the risks they are willing to take for freedom. The art in the book is done in limited colors, often filled with sandy yellows and deep browns. The faces of the refugees are compellingly depicted, often with expressions of deep fear, loss and grief.

A strong and important look at the Syrian refugee crisis in a format that makes the content very readable. Appropriate for ages 13-16.

emma says

Through comics, *The Unwanted* follows daily life within the refugee crisis of Syria.

I loved this book. It was a quick way to gain understanding and empathy for the refugee crisis. Comics seem to be a perfect medium for the heaviness of the topic; less words allows the reading to feel more light, while the comics pick up any slack, and then some. Not only is it informational, but also emotional. Brown tells the stories of the refugees through individual's snapshots, allowing the reader to see a whole, well rounded story covering the political and personal tragedy of war and fear. In a way, it is also easy to see oneself within the characters- of course, the refugees are just as human as I am, experiencing school and hunger and friendship,

or lack thereof. And the art? Sketchy and well made. It's a gently fierce and honest portrayal of Syrian refugees, and a must read for all ages.

Oh, and the diary and bibliography in the back? Hard to beat. Amazing.

Karin says

An "important" book, and one that is obviously carefully researched, but for me lacked the emotional punch of same author's 'Drowned City' (Katrina GN). Also recently read Colfer's Illegals gn and, though fictional, found that slightly more powerful.

R says

This graphic novel is really well done. If you want to see the effects of the conflict in Syria and the forced emigration of its citizens, this graphic novel really tries to highlight why people left (or were forced out). Although the graphic novel is pretty straight-forward and weighted more as non-fiction than a story, it's difficult to read about these Syrian refugees and not feel deep compassion.

DaNae says

Once again, Don Brown unflinchingly takes on overwhelming tragedy, gives it many human faces and parses out it's complexity, and manages to show a bit of hope. The difficult thing for me is, unlike Katrina and The Dust Bowl, this is far from existing in history.

Harry Brake says

Having encountered Don Brown's Dustbowl and Drowned City graphic novels, when I received this graphic, I knew it would be a must have.

Hearing the latest NPR podcast of a reporter delving into deep parts of the United States and interviewing citizens unaware of what a refugee is by definition, not believing the idea there are are refugees in other countries, as well as the unfinished business of refugee assistance and perspectives across the world - you realize the power graphic novels have to teach and educate, not just entertain.

The moral lessons as well as the history of a country are portrayed perfectly here and I love the fact that Don Brown focused on all United States issues and also has this third international perspective - my idea of what it means to be educated on a high level and pass it on to others. The International Rescue Committee receives a portion of sales and this is yet another means, other than being aware, of how to truly contribute to those in need and that will one day be able to reinvest in a future we all can share.

Marco Morano says

I was sent this by the publishers as a part of the teenreads.com Teen Board for review.

THE UNWANTED: Stories of the Syrian Refugees is a nonfiction graphic novel discussing the current refugee crisis going on in Syria. The book starts in 2011 and slowly shows us how Syria came to be to what it is today. It mainly focuses on what happens to the Syrian refugees after leaving their country, and the constant struggles they have to face due to their heritage. Don Brown is also known for his other graphic novels **THE GREAT AMERICAN DUST BOWL** and **DROWNED CITY**.

I really enjoyed this graphic novel! However, there was one thing that I feel like needs to be pointed out about this book. It is told to be stories of refugees' experiences, when in fact it was more of a nonfiction graphic novel; it talked about more statistics and set out a timeline of the crisis rather than just telling stories. I was actually really happy that it went into this different route since I feel like I've learned a lot more on the entire topic if it didn't. The author also adds some more information at the back of the book in his author's note, explaining some of the other experiences refugees had.

Nonfiction graphic novels are always interesting to read since they're able to represent different ideas that regular nonfiction novels can't. Don Brown's **THE UNWANTED** makes it extremely easy for readers to understand the refugee crisis through its heartbreaking portrayal of the past. The ability to help people get a better grasp of what's happening in our world is this book's biggest strong suit. Though it doesn't tackle everything about the crisis, it is an amazing introduction.

The art style is extremely simplistic. While this would usually bother me, I think that the artwork in this book went extremely well with the themes it was attempting to portray. The art in **THE UNWANTED** gives off the feeling of catastrophe that is needed for a book such as this. This isn't exactly the type of art style in the graphic novels that I enjoy the most, however, I still believe that most people will enjoy the art in this book a lot more than I did.

The biggest flaw in this graphic novel is its length. Despite being able to pack a punch in such a short time, I felt like 100 pages weren't enough to show all the information Don Brown was trying to explain to its readers. Despite this, **THE UNWANTED** would still be something I would recommend; it is filled with extremely important information about this tragedy that's helpful. Especially when there's so much misinformation and confusion right now on the current topic.

Overall, **THE UNWANTED** is a necessary and essential graphic novel for those who are still learning about the refugee crisis. Though it is a bit on the shorter side, it still is able to explain the situation in Syria with extreme ease. **THE UNWANTED: Stories of the Syrian Refugees**, is an easy to read graphic novel that still holds valuable information in it.

Albany High Library says

"The book shines some light on issues that aren't obvious to everyone." -- student review

This graphic novel provides an unflinching look at the Syrian refugee crisis through a series of vignettes. Brown uses his medium to great effect, helping readers develop their understanding of this humanitarian crisis -- an "accessible and heartbreaking primer, with its stirring simplicity and a note of hope." (SLJ)

Paul Hankins says

The author/illustrator of *THE GREAT AMERICAN DUST BOWL* and *DROWNED CITY* is back this fall (just in time for the new school year) to offer an almost eight-year retrospective on the Syrian refugee situation. The back matter of this graphic novel include first-hand account of refugee settlements and the efforts on the part of those making the difficult journey and those receiving and tending to their needs. Brown presents the story through a perspective of personal account with voices of the images breaking through a sense of a "fourth wall" to address the reader directly in regard to difficulties, losses, motivations, hopes, dreams, and determination.

As a textual braid, Don Brown's graphic novel would work well with the picture book, *STEPPING STONES: A REFUGEE FAMILY'S STORY* and Alan Gratz's *REFUGEE*. We've added graphic novel categories to our shelves to capture the idea that this graphic novel is part of an ongoing event and world concern to which our students could become aware and plugged into with the release of books like this one in this particular format.

Isaiah says

"The Unwanted" written and illustrated by Don Brown is about the struggles that Syrian refugees have to go through to get out of Syria and what it is like afterwards it also mention how and why all of the fighting started because the people of Syria did not like how their government ran and so they tried starting a revolution. The book has stats about how the refugees migrated and where they migrated to. The book did not have any main characters are any characters really at all but still made you feel connected to the people it was about. The illustrations in the book were amazing and really showed the scenario well. I really like how Don Brown made you feel for the refugees while you read about their journey. My favorite part of the book was a story about how two Syrian civilians were fleeing from the fighting in Syria and when they ended up in Germany they thought they were going to get sent back but instead were helped it made me feel good knowing that people still help each other out even if they are not supposed to. I did not like how the jumped around to much, it would start a story about a group traveling and suddenly go back to life in Syria. I would recommend this book to people that are interested in the Middle East and what the life of a refugee is like. I would give this book a nine out of ten.

Jon(athan) Nakapalau says

This GN really gives you lots to think about in relatively few panels - each story gives you the feeling of standing by and watching something horrible happening; looking for answers that are long overdue. Powerful and heartbreaking.
