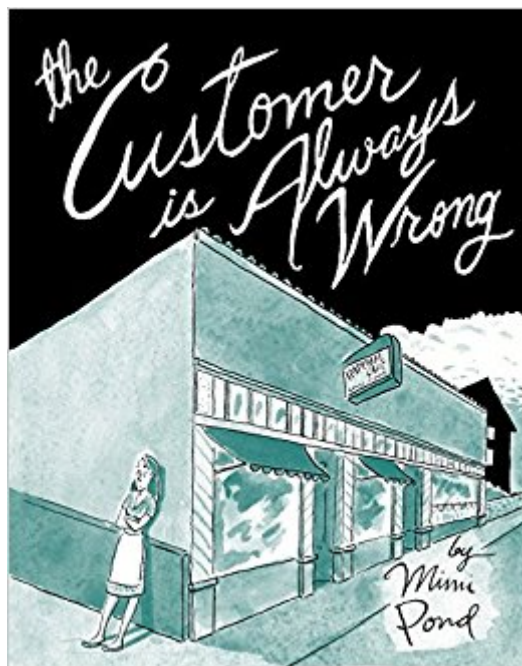


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# The Customer Is Always Wrong



## Synopsis

A young woman's art career begins to lift off as those around her succumb to addiction and alcoholism. *The Customer is Always Wrong* is the saga of a young naive artist named Madge working in a restaurant of charming drunks, junkies, thieves, and creeps. Oakland in the late seventies is a cheap and quirky haven for eccentrics and Mimi Pond folds the tales of the fascinating sleaze-ball characters that surround young Madge into her workaday waitressing life. Outrageous and loving tributes and takedowns of her co-workers and satellites of the Imperial Cafe create a snapshot of a time in Madge's life where she encounters who she is, and who she is not. Told in the same brash yet earnest style as her previous memoir *Over Easy*, Pond's storytelling gifts have never been stronger than in this epic, comedic, standalone graphic novel. Madge is right back at the Imperial with its great coffee and depraved cast, where things only get worse for her adopted greasy spoon family while her career as a cartoonist starts to take off.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 448 pages

Publisher: Drawn and Quarterly (August 8, 2017)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1770462821

ISBN-13: 978-1770462823

Product Dimensions: 6.3 x 1.8 x 8.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.6 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 stars 11 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #32,561 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #5 in [Books > Comics & Graphic Novels > Publishers > Drawn and Quarterly](#) #38 in [Books > Comics & Graphic Novels > Biographies & History Graphic Novels](#) #49 in [Books > Comics & Graphic Novels > Graphic Novels > Literary](#)

## Customer Reviews

"Set in late 1970s Oakland, this comedic graphic novel from *Over Easy* author Pond follows a waitress named Madge whose career as a comic artist finally starts to take off." *Entertainment Weekly* "Mimi Pond is a treasure, one we ignore at our own risk... Her latest book is a thick, semi-autobiographical bildungsroman called *The Customer Is Always Wrong* might be her greatest work to date. It's a lengthy and detailed portrait of a young woman working at a restaurant in late-70s Oakland and the cast of characters

around her. Some of them shady, some of them lovable, and all of them compelling. Pond's hand is confident and her figure work hops balletically across the page; her facial acting is simple, but searing. "Vulture" "Immensely enjoyable." "Kirkus Starred Review" "The sleazeballs, drunks, and assorted weirdoes of the Imperial Cafe are the backdrop for a book that manages to make an epic out of the life of a struggling artist serving up coffee to a cast of characters both funny and deeply human." "Barnes and Noble Blog" "Madge is like a boho '70s Dorothy traveling through Oakland's edgy Oz: a place of drugs, sex, racial tensions, heartbreak and, sometimes, redemption. I love Mimi Pond. I love Madge's journey towards self-discovery. And I love the "Imperial Cafe," which, all these years later still makes the best cheddar, green chile scrambled eggs you've ever tasted." "Peggy Orenstein, Author of Girls & Sex: Navigating the Complicated New Landscape" "Madge's coming of age is hilarious, terrifying, moving, and compulsively readable. Great drawings and great writing." "Roz Chast, author of Can't We Talk About Something More Pleasant?"

Mimi Pond started her career as a cartoonist at the National Lampoon in the late 70s. In the years following, she wrote and illustrated five humor books and contributed regularly to dozens of national magazines and newspapers, including the Los Angeles Times. In 2014, she published the first part of her coming of age memoir, *Over Easy*. She lives in Los Angeles with her husband, the painter Wayne White.

I first "met" Mimi Pond when she first started appearing in the National Lampoon. In those days, I sought out all the cartoon magazines that I could, such as *Punch* and *The New Yorker*. It was the next step up from *Mad Magazine* and I got to recognize her cartoons, the way I recognized Shary Flenniken, who did *Trots* and *Bonnie* in the same publication. Since then, I have followed her work, as best I could, and was happily surprised when she published her memoir of her time working as a waitress through, or rather after art college *Over Easy*. I didn't know there was more to tell, until she came out with this latest, the second part of her story, of her time as a waitress, while she tried to establish herself as a cartoonist. This wraps up her story nicely, and shows that the world of restaurants, and easy drugs, and what happens to all the people in the first book. You don't have to have read the first book to understand what is going on, in fact it has been three years since the first book came out, and I didn't bother to reread it before I dived back into it, although, once I did finish it, I went back to reread *Over Easy* again. If you have liked Mimi Pond in the past, if you have read her other books, well, this is really nothing like them, although the humor is there. Here she is

examining a time in her life, where she is running around, with what we used to call a "bad crowd". She is young, on her own, and trying to escape Oakland, after having escaped San Diego, to get her career on track to being a cartoonist. It is a hefty book, coming in at nearly 500 pages, but the story needs those pages to be there, to see what was happening, to tell her version of what happened, thought as she says, she has moved things around, to make a better story. Would recommend this to everyone, to those who want to be cartoonists, to those who have been in the service industry, to those who have eaten at restaurants, and to those who know how Oakland was in the '70s.

"The Customer Is Always Wrong" by Mimi Pond is the exceptionally good follow up to "Over Easy", the adventures of waitress and artist, Madge. In a world where we're constantly being fooled into watching or reading or listening to some manufactured nonsense, "The Customer Is Always Wrong" is a dose of honest, super classy, no-bullshit, storytelling and cartooning. It's smart and touching and relatable and everyone who loves stories about life and real people should read it.

If you ever had a drudge job that you had to work at order to escape, to keep you dream alive, you'll be enthralled by this tale. I picked it up from my local comic shop and didn't put it down until I was done. I just ordered her 1st book "Over Easy" from , because I didn't want to wait a week for the comic shop to get the 1st book in for me. I only heard of her after I read an article on AV Club about her comics and that she was kept out of the Simpsons writer's room a la Sam Simon. Little did I know I've been enjoying her work for years, in the New Yorker, National Lampoon, etc. If you're on the fence about this purchase, just jump and buy it, you'll be glad you did.

Mimi Pond is a wonderful story teller and gifted artist. The Customer is Always Wrong continues the story of Madge when she worked at the Imperial Cafe. If your like me you won't put the book down until your finished. Like all young people Madge meets people on her jounicy who teach her life's lessons. Read this book, you won't be sorry.

Mimi Pond, thanks for going Over Easy with us on your previous graphic novel. This was a little darker. A little more life sucks, still funny, and with the door wide open for a new beginning as your career takes off, and I can't wait! Once again, I apologize that I read this almost start to finish realizing what it must have taken for you to ink every page. If it's any consolation I went back through to realize all the funny asides in the backgrounds of your drawings...just couldn't put it

down.

As artist, writer, and waitress, Mimi is the best! (Am I wrong?)

If you're reading this and thinking.. I should pick this book up. You're right!! And if you're leaning towards passing on it... you are wrong. Be right!!

The story continues... Another brilliant creation by the hilarious and talented Mimi Pond, my co-conspirator in the search for the perfect cocktail while traipsing the streets of Oakland as young and cynical art students. Enjoy!

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