ADULT GRAPHIC MEMOIRS
"The Best We Could Do" by Thi Bui
An American Book Award winner, a National Book Critics Circle finalist in autobiography, and an Eisner Award finalist. As a young mother, Bui reflects on her own tumultuous childhood, bringing new eyes to her family’s daring escape after the fall of South Vietnam in 1975 and their effort to build new lives for themselves in America. This memoir documents parental sacrifice, excavates family history, and grapples with the inherited struggles of displacement and diaspora. (Available at MPL)

"Epileptic" by David B.
From one of Europe’s best known graphic artists comes this striking and emotionally resonant autobiography about growing up with an epileptic brother. In search of a cure, their parents dragged the family to acupuncturists and magnetic therapists, to mediums and macrobiotic communes. But every new cure ended in disappointment. The author learned to cope by drawing fantastically elaborate battle scenes, creating images that provide a fascinating window into his interior life. (Available at MPL)

"Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic" by Alison Bechdel
A mordant yet funny tale of self discovery, coming of age and family exploration. Distant and exacting, the author’s father was an English teacher and the director of the town funeral home, which the Bechdel’s referred to as “the Fun Home.” It was not until college that Bechdel, who had recently come out as a lesbian, discovered that her father was also gay. A few weeks after this revelation, he died, leaving a mystery for his daughter to resolve. (Available at MPL)

"Can’t We Talk About Something More Pleasant?" by Roz Chast
When it came to her elderly parents, beloved New Yorker cartoonist Chast held to the practices of denial, avoidance, and distraction. But when her mother climbed a ladder to retrieve a souvenir from the “crazy closet,” with predictable results, the tools that had served Roz well through four-color cartoons, family photos, and documents, this memoir is both comfort and comic relief for anyone experiencing the life-altering loss of elderly parents. (Available at MPL and on Libby/OverDrive)

"ME, MYSELF AND I: A GRAPHIC MEMOIR"
Good Talk: A Memoir in Conversations by Mira Jacob
“How brown is too brown?”
“How Indians be racist?”
“What does real love between really different people look like?”
Like many 6-year-olds, Jacob’s half-Jewish, half-Indian son has many questions. As tensions from the 2016 election spread, the answers become more complicated. Trying to answer honestly, Jacob thinks back to where she’s gotten her own answers: her most formative conversations about race, color, sexuality, and, of course, love. (Available at MPL)

“We Are On Our Own” by Miriam Katin
The author retells the harrowing story of her and her mother’s escape on foot from the Nazi invasion of Budapest in WWII. With her father off fighting for the Hungarian army and the German troops quickly approaching, Katin and her mother fake their own deaths and flee to the countryside. Leaving behind their belongings and loved ones, and unable to tell anyone of their whereabouts, they disguise themselves as a Russian servant and her illegitimate child, while staying a few steps ahead of the German soldiers. (Available in BCCLS)

“Marry Me a Little” by Rob Kirby
Marriage doesn’t define a relationship. Unless you want it to. With humor, candor, and a near-whimsical drawing style, the author recounts his experience of marrying his longtime partner just after same-sex marriage was legalized in Minnesota in 2013, and 2 years before the Supreme Court decision made same-sex marriage the law of the land. This is a personal story—about Kirby’s ambivalence (if not antipathy) toward the institution of marriage, his relationship with his partner and the happy life that they share together—set against the historical and political backdrop of shifting attitudes toward LGBTQ+ rights and marriage. (Available in BCCLS)

“This Country: Searching for Home in (Very) Rural America” by Navied Mahdavian
Before the author moved off the grid with his wife and dog from San Francisco to a cabin in rural Idaho, he had never gardened, hiked, fished, hunted, or lived in a snowy place. But there they could own land, realize his dream of being an artist, and start a family. Over the next 3 years, he leaned into the wonders of the landscape and found himself enjoying a slower pace of living. But beyond his own 6 acres, he was consistently confronted with the realities of America’s politics, forced to ask himself: Do I belong here? (Available in BCCLS)

“American Splendor” by Harvey Pekar
The inspiration for the award-winning movie, with stories by Harvey Pekar and art by R. Crumb among others, “American Splendor” has been called “the world’s first literary comic book.” A V.A. hospital file clerk and writer in Cleveland, Ohio, Pekar chronicles daily life in stories both funny and touching. His sharp eye for the frustrations and minutiae of the workaday world mix in a delicate balance with his insights into personal relationships. Pekar has been compared to Dreiser, Dostoevsky, and Lenny Bruce. (Available at MPL)

“Worm: A Cuban American Odyssey” by Edel Rodriguez
Best known for his iconic Time magazine covers, Rodriguez is a prominent contemporary political artist. Now for the first time, he draws his own life, revisiting his childhood in Cuba and his family’s passage on the infamous Mariel boatlift. This memoir tells the story of a Cold War boyhood and a family’s displacement and longing for those they left behind. It recounts the coming-of-age of an artist, who, witnessing American’s turn toward extremism, struggles to distinguish his adoptive country from the dictatorship he fled. (Available in BCCLS)
“The Arab of the Future: A Childhood in the Middle East” by Riad Sattouf
A #1 best-seller in France. Riad Sattouf’s childhood was spent in the shadows of 3 dictators—Muammar Gaddafi, Hafez al-Assad, and his father. In a striking, virtuoso graphic style meant to capture both the immediacy of childhood and the fervor of political idealism, Riad Sattouf recounts his nomadic childhood growing up in rural France, Gaddafi’s Libya, and Assad’s Syria—but always under the rule of his father, a Syrian Pan-Arabist who drags his family along in pursuit of grandiose dreams for the Arab nation. (Available at MPL)

Stitches by David Small
A classic in the genre. One day the author awoke from a supposedly harmless operation to find he could barely speak. A vocal cord removed, his throat slashed and stitched together like a boot, the 14-year-old boy had not been told that he had cancer and was expected to die. His own father, a surgeon, may have triggered the cancer by ordering radiation treatments for Small’s coughs and colds. Taking us from horror to hope, the author portrays his road to physical, emotional, and artistic recovery. (Available at MPL)

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“Maus: A Survivor’s Tale” by Art Spiegelman
This frequently banned Pulitzer Prize-winning classic tells the story of a Jewish survivor of Hitler’s Europe, and his son, a cartoonist coming to terms with his father’s story. In Spiegelman’s haunting tale within a tale, he portrays the Nazis as cats and the Jews as mice. His father’s harrowing story of survival is woven into the author’s account of their tortured intergenerational relationship. “Maus” studies the bloody pawprints of history and tracks their meaning for all of us. (Available at MPL)

“It’s Lonely at the Center of the Earth” by Zoe Thorogood
The author records six months of her own life as it falls apart in a desperate attempt to put it back together again in the only way she knows how. This is an intimate look into the life of a selfish artist who must create for her own survival—and also an examination of the graphic art form itself. A poignant and original depiction of a young woman’s struggle with mental health—through the ups and downs of anxiety, depression, and imposter syndrome. (Available in BCCLS)

Impossible People: A Completely Average Recovery Story by Julia Wertz
A New Yorker cartoonist chronicles her haphazard attempts at sobriety and the always challenging, sometimes funny, and occasionally absurd cycle of addiction and recovery. Opening at the culmination of a trip to Puerto Rico, the first page of this memoir finds Wertz standing in the middle of the jungle beside a rental Jeep she’s just crashed. From this moment, the story flashes back to the beginning of her five-year journey towards sobriety that includes group therapy sessions, relapses, an ill-fated relationship, terrible dates, and an unceremonious eviction from her New York City apartment. (Available in BCCLS)